

CMSI 370-01

INTERACTION DESIGN

Fall 2012

Assignment I204 Feedback

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1e — You make effective affordance choices here, showing a good understanding and application of the concept. You not only have the rotating arrow prompt but the instructions as well. Finally, the fade transition between symbols as the object is rotated reinforces their meaning. Well done. (+)

3a — You clearly demonstrate user interface construction knowledge from the perspective of standalone web pages. What is specifically missing in this assignment is the reusability aspect of being a “widget.” An easy way to think about reusability is to ask yourself: if you need *more than one* male/female selector on your web page, do you need to modify your code beyond just adding another HTML element to convert into a male/female selector? As written, the answer in your submission is yes; good componentization would answer no (see, for example, the various Bootstrap components—one JavaScript file, any number of drop-downs, search fields, menus, etc.). (|)

3b — Your event handling here is pretty advanced and well-executed. There is one functional loophole; this is addressed in 3d because it involves one particular aspect of your event-handling code. The overall picture is otherwise quite nicely done. (+)

3c — Your work shows a certain degree of MVC understanding, with one gap here in terms of the coverage of your CSS. More detail is included inline with your CSS file, but overall you defined way more CSS than you really needed, *and* this excess CSS is defined in a way that can conflict with Bootstrap. This matters because components are meant to be “mix-and-match”-able. A software developer should be able to pick and choose the prewritten code that will help him or her expedite what is being developed. It would be one thing if you had never heard of Bootstrap, but you have (and have used it too), so your own code should be designed so that it either *depends* on Bootstrap or can be used *alongside* it. This is particularly important for this assignment because it is meant to be reusable and not standalone. (|)

3d — Your low-level breakdown of high-level events is decent overall, with one loophole: your mouse dragging uses absolute positioning. What I mean is this: upon loading the page, start a drag on the upper-right corner then rotate clockwise. The symbol predictably goes from male to female. Now, begin another drag, *at the same starting point (upper-right corner)*—notice how the gender symbol *jumps* back to being male, and you have to drag it back to being female. Ditto if the symbol is at the male position, and you start your drag at the bottom center. In both cases, you get a bit of a disconnect with user expectation, and the cause is the same: you set the symbol according to the mouse’s *absolute position*, and not the *relative distance* that it has been dragged. If you track things *in relation to* where the mouse started, you will not get this “jump” and interaction will feel more natural.

Another issue here lies in what happens if the drag ends “midway”—your widget is left in a limbo state, neither male nor female. I suggest that you implement a “snap” functionality that makes the symbol go one way or the other, if the drag ends abruptly. This will avoid the limbo state.

Really good, bulletproof low-level event handling really is a meticulous and detail-oriented affair, so in the end these glitches do not hurt you too much. But I hope this helps open up some additional things to pay attention to if you get around to coding something like this in the future. (|)

4a — Functionally, your code works largely well and correctly. There are assorted mini-points of improvement indicated inline with your JavaScript code. Structural/widget/component issues have been pointed out elsewhere, so those do not drag on this outcome. (+)

4b — Proper widget structuring and reusability was not achieved in this version as already mentioned, and that does detract from your separation of concerns and MVC. (|)

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4c — Your code is generally straightforward to read and easy to understand. Comments appear frequently and include good information. There are some spacing choices that I would disagree with, but things are good overall. (+)

4d — Your work certainly shows a good amount of additional information gathering outside what was given in class (e.g., advanced CSS, additional JavaScript functionality like `setInterval`, etc.). (+)

4e — Commit phasing is of decent frequency with good messages. Started a little late though. (|)

4f — Submitted largely on time, with a few tweaks after the due date. (+)