

Module 7: Usability

Required Reading	<p>For Module 7.1,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 9 & 10 in the “designing from both sides of the screen” textbook - Article 1: http://www.uie.com/articles/usability_testing_mistakes/ - Article 2: http://www.codeproject.com/tips/usability_testing.asp - http://www.usability.gov/ - http://www.stcsig.org/usability/newsletter/index.html - http://www.useit.com - http://amazon.com <p>-Activity Task: Resources/Module 7/activity1task.htm</p> <p>For Module 7.2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - http://coe.sdsu.edu/eet/articles/usabilitytestin/start.htm - intro.html [Resources/Module 7] - Debriefing questions.htm [Resources/Module 7]
Audio Files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mod7.1.mp3 - mod7.2.mp3
Assignment Due Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete Module 7.1: Activity 1.1 by Tuesday, April 29th at noon - Complete Module 7.1: Activity 1.1 by Friday, May 2nd at noon and Sunday, May 4th at noon - Complete Module 7.2: Activity 1.1 by Thursday, May 8th at noon - Complete Module 7.2: Activity 1.2 by Saturday, May 10th at noon

I. Introduction

The purpose of usability testing is to determine if the product is easy to learn, satisfying to use and contains the functionality that the users desire. **It is an essential form of acquiring feedback from users in that it can:**

1. help designers and developers find out and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the system
2. help designers and developers understand how users really use the system
3. help designers and developers discover how to improve the system
4. help designers and developers arrange content grouping

5. improve user satisfaction by providing a good user experience

The elements or quality components of usability testing can be:

- 1. Usefulness:** Does the system provide information that meets the needs of users?
- 2. Learnability:** How easy is it for users to accomplish basic tasks the first time they encounter the design?
- 3. Efficiency:** Once users have learned the design, how quickly can they perform tasks?
- 4. Satisfaction:** What about the attitude of the user about the system?

The process of usability testing includes:

1. Developing test plan
2. Selecting participants
3. Preparing testing materials, e.g. tasks for participants to complete
4. Conducting the test (preparing the users, observing users, etc)
5. Debriefing the participants
6. Analyzing and transforming data, finding problems, and making recommendations.

In the first week of this module, you will be given a task list, and you will experience a usability testing as a user yourself. After that, you need to report the problems you encountered in the process, and what improvements you think are necessary for that system. In the second week, you will design and conduct a usability test yourself.

In this module, each student has a buddy.

No.	Buddies		No.	Buddies	
1	Appleton, Lucy	Schodowski, Patricia	6	Boedenauer, Catherine	Sample, Angela
2	Clauser, Terry	Van Tassel, Jane	7	Durboraw, John	Vanithbuncha, Piyanun
3	Goeders, Michelle	Pepin, Colleen	8	Hicks, Stephanie	Howard, Genevieve
4	Howey, Tracy	Nieuwenhuizen, Lisa	9.	Huang, Yanyan	Martin, Kelley James, Josiah
				(Yanyan review James, Kelley review Yanyan, and James review Kelley)	
5	Marmolejo, Gina;	Vo, Ngoc Necibi, Semi			
	(Gina review Ngoc, Ngoc review Semi, and Semi review Gina)				

We suggest reading Module 7.2 right away and at least start planning for it during week 1.

II. Module 7.1

There are two activities in Module 7.1. **Here are the learning tasks for the Activity 1.1:**

1. Listen to the audio component to Mod 7.
2. Begin reading chapter 9 and 10 in the “designing from both sides of the screen” textbook.
3. Review articles and links about usability testing below:
 - A. Article 1- http://www.uie.com/articles/usability_testing_mistakes/
 - B. Article 2- http://www.codeproject.com/tips/usability_testing.asp
 - C. Here is a site everyone should be at least familiar with so go browse it a bit.
<http://www.usability.gov/>
 - D. Explore the links below:
<http://www.stcsig.org/usability/newsletter/index.html> & <http://www.useit.com>
4. Read the pdf titled “evaluation” in Resources: [evaluation.pdf] (optional)
5. **Join the weekly discussion** on the Mod 7 discussion board. We will post a question in Module 7 discussion forum: **Module 7 Weekly Topic Discussion**

to get our conversation started. Please respond to it, but also start to add your own ideas and questions from the readings. Feel free to also use the discussion board to ask questions or clear up issues about the course. For our discussion we'll use the discussion forums under **Module 7 Discussion** section. **Please complete Activity 1.1 by Tuesday, April 29th at noon.**

Here are the learning tasks for the Activity 1.2:

Most of us have experience shopping with <http://amazon.com>, but probably most of us have not examined the website from the perspective of performance support. In this activity, each of you will do a list of tasks with Amazon. Here are the steps for you:

1. go to the Mod 7 subfolder in **Resources/Module 7** folder. Find and read document about the task you need to do (**activity1task.htm**). The task list is a starting point. Feel free to do more than simply the specified tasks on that document.
2. After step 1, then complete the tasks and write a report. Your report should include these components:
 - What was easy to do or learn about the system?
 - What attributes of the system are most responsible for the ease of use?
 - What problems have you encountered during the testing?
 - What attributes of the system are most responsible for the problems?
 - What improvement do you think the website needs?

Post your report to the DB named: "**Mod 7.1 (Act 1.2) Amazon Report**" no later than **Friday, May 2nd at noon**. You also need to respond to your buddies report. Your response should include **at least one positive and one negative comment**. Your response should be posted no later than **Sunday, May 4th at noon**.

III. Module 7.2

Here are the learning tasks/steps for the Activity 1.1 in Module 7.2:

1. Review <http://coe.sdsu.edu/eet/articles/usabilitytestin/start.htm> about some ideas about usability testing on user interface.

2. In this activity, you need to design and conduct a usability testing for the interface you were designing and prototyping in module 6. You need to design the task list, find appropriate subjects (at least 1), and conduct the testing. Before the testing, you need to prepare the users: tell them your purpose, tell them to be relaxed, and hopefully you will use “think aloud”. You also need to debrief the user after the testing. You can either video tape or audio tape the process. **You can use the intro, task and debrief htm docs [under Resources/Module 7 folder] samples for what you will need to do, but of course you will need to customize them to your work.** Keep in mind that your prototype doesn’t have much functionality so you need to plan out ways to have your users experience the interface, such as holding screen shots in front of them and asking them how they might accomplish the task, etc.
3. After the testing, you need to analyze the data and prepare your report based on your usability testing.
4. Please create a folder with your last name in Resources, and put your report into it. Your report should include:
 - The purpose of the testing
 - A brief introduction to the system or the component of the system
 - A profile of the user
 - How you prepared your users
 - The task list users needed to complete during the testing
 - A brief description of how you conducted the testing
 - How you debriefed your user
 - Summary of aspects of the system that seem appropriate for use
 - Summary of aspects of the system that seem problematic and may need improvement
 - Recommendations to improve the system or the component of the system

Post your report to the **Mod 7.2 Submission** folder under Resources/Module7 no later than **Thursday, May 8th at noon.**

For activity 1.2 in Module 7.2, you also need to respond to your buddies report. Your response should include at least one positive and one negative comment. Post responses to buddies in the DB named: **“Mod 7.2 (Act 1.2) Feedback.”**

Title your post – response to “your buddies last name”. Your response should be posted no later than **Saturday, May 10th at noon**.

VII. Reflection

When you have completed all of the work of Module 7 answer the following questions and submit your answers via the **Assignments** tool (Module 7 Reflection). You may type or paste your answers in the textbox and submit it by **Saturday, May 10th at noon**.

We are interested in trying to understand how students participate and contribute in a social learning setting and also in helping you reflect on how your actions add to or detract from your own learning and that of others.....so for this module We will ask you to respond to this same set of questions about your participation and also **reflect on how the email digests (emails with information about the activity level in class and groups) influences how you worked in your group**. We will not use your self rating to influence how I assign points for the module, but I do require completion of these reflection statements as part of your module work effort.

For the RATING QUESTIOND please rate yourself (1 to 7 with 7 being excellent and 1 being poor) and then rate your classmates by saying if you feel you are above or below the class average along these dimensions of social learning for this module. For example: Participation "5 above". Also if you have some insight about how or why it worked out for you that way I would love to hear it. I'd also appreciate any thoughts you have about the extent to which these ratings are hard for you to make.

- 1. Rate your Participation:** All students are engaged in that they read and produce what is necessary to complete the assignment, whereas participation means taking on the role of a speaker or knowledge producer within the class, not just accepting what is presented but trying to make it your own.
- 2. Rate your Contribution:** Does the student contribute to the class discourse and project work in ways that build meaning and lead to mutual understanding. Not only building new knowledge for yourself as in Participation, but contributing to the knowledge development of the class or group within the class.

- 3. Describe your use of the email digest** (used the group digest everyday, used the class digest to see what to do next, never opened it, etc.). Then also explain whether you think the digests helped or hindered your participation and contribution in the module. It would be very helpful if you can provide an example of how you used it.
- 4. Rate your Identity:** Does the student take a responsible role in the community such that he/she answers questions posed by others, identifies ways to improve practice, and/or assumes leadership when tasks/issues/problems arise? Does the student take on a role of self regulation and self control for their own learning (internal form of monitoring and regulation)?
- 5. Did the email digests help you understand your classmates better and did it help you establish and play your role in the class?** Explain if you felt the digests helped or hindered classmates to know each other and work with each other in the module.

Your answers do not need to be long, just thoughtful.

VIII. Assessment

Your Module 7 assignments will be graded based on the following criteria:

Assignments	Points
Module 7.1:	
- Participate in Module 7 Weekly Topic Discussion	1
- Complete Act 1.2 report	2
- Post feedback for your buddies report	1
Module 7.2:	
- Complete Act 1.1 Usability Test report	9
- Post feedback for your buddies UT report	1
Reflection (submit via Assignments tool)	1
Total Points	15

****Note.** Points given will base on the quality of work.