

# CIT 425: Human-Computer Interfaces

Makayla Moster, Ph.D.

Spring 2026

**Email:** mosterm@uncw.edu

**Office:** Congdon 2022

**Classroom:** Congdon 1007 (MW) & 2055 (F)

**Final Exam:** Wednesday, May 6 from 3-6pm

**Email Response Time:**  $\leq$  48hrs

**Office Hours:** MW 9–11AM & by appt

**Time:** MWF 2-2:50pm

Congdon 1007

This syllabus is subject to change, but only with sufficient notification.

## Course Description

Human-computer interaction for information technology professionals. Analysis and design of systems from the point of view of HCI.

**Course Expectations:** This course aims to provide students with a practical understanding of design principles to become better designers of Human-Computer Interfaces. A key component of the Information Technology discipline is the user's understanding and advocacy in the development of IT applications and systems. IT graduates must develop a mindset that recognizes the importance of users and organizational contexts and employ user-centered methodologies in the development, evaluation, and deployment of IT applications and systems.

**Major Topics Covered:** Interaction Design, User Experience, Interaction Types, Social Interaction, Emotional Interaction, Interfaces, Data Gathering, Data Analysis and Interpretation, Establishing Requirements, Design, Prototyping and Construction, Evaluation of Designs, Accessibility Standards, and Human Factors.

**Prerequisites:** MIS 310

## Required Materials

- *The Design of Everyday Things* by Don Norman
  - ISBN: 9780465050659, can be rented or purchased from the bookstore
- *Design Methods* by Amy J. Ko
  - Free online resource provided by Dr. Amy J. Ko
  - <https://faculty.washington.edu/ajko/books/design-methods/>

## Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students can articulate and apply common design principles for making good decisions in the design of user interfaces.
2. Students will apply heuristic evaluation methods to evaluate the usability of an interactive system and analyze the results.
3. Students will build prototypes at varying levels of fidelity, from paper prototypes to functional, interactive prototypes.
4. Students will be able to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and impact of incorporating users in the technology design process.

## Course Policies

**Attendance:** From the [UNCW Faculty Handbook \(Section V, Part A.1.b, Page 131\)](#):

Students are expected to be present at all regular class meetings and examinations for the courses in which they are registered. It is the responsibility of the students to learn and comply with the policies set for each class in which they are registered.

To succeed in this course, you will need to attend class. You are expected to attend every class, be present at the start time, and stay for the duration. I will be much less likely to make allowances (e.g., make-up quizzes, accepting late work, etc.) for students with more than two unexcused absences.

At the beginning of the course, you will be introduced to the semester-long course project where you are required to work in a group. I provide plenty of in-class time for your group to get a substantial portion of the project done *in the classroom* throughout the semester. **Part of your project participation grade will be determined by your in-class attendance.**

The following is a partial list of *unexcused* reasons for absence, tardiness, or early departure:

- My significant other/roommate and I are having problems.
- I have an appointment.
- I am going on vacation.
- I have to work.
- I got locked out of my apartment.
- I overslept.
- I couldn't find my car keys.
- My dog/cat/bird/etc. got out.
- I was hungover/I was out late the night before.
- My alarm/roommate/friend/significant other did not wake me up.
- Traffic was bad.
- I was having one of those days so I went back to bed.
- It's raining.

**Instructor Communications:** If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about the course at any time, please feel free to reach out to me at [mosterm@uncw.edu](mailto:mosterm@uncw.edu). I will respond as soon

as I am able to, generally on weekdays that means within 24 hours and on weekends within 48 hours. If you have not received a response to your email *after* 48 hours have elapsed, please send a follow-up email. **Please include CIT 425 in your email subject line for faster responses.**

**Calendar:** It is the student's responsibility to check the online calendar (which is subject to change) and to complete the assignments as indicated on Canvas. Failure to check the calendar daily is not an acceptable excuse for missing a due date.

**Recording Policy:** To maintain a respectful and distraction-free learning environment, as well as protect faculty copyright and intellectual property, audio or video recording of class sessions is strictly prohibited unless prior written permission is obtained from the instructor or required as part of an approved accommodation through the Office of Disability Services. Unauthorized recording may violate university policy and applicable law.

**Collaboration:** You may discuss course content with your peers. You may seek out additional resources (i.e., the Internet) to help you *understand* the course content.

All coursework is to be completed *individually* except when explicitly indicated by the instructor. If collaboration is permitted, the collaborative coursework must include the names of all collaborators on the team and all collaborators must contribute equally. Grading on collaborative assignments may be weighted by individual contribution and peer evaluation.

**Cheating:** Obtaining answers to assignments, quizzes, exams, or projects from any source other than your own brain is cheating. Any person completing work on your behalf is cheating. All coursework is to be completed individually unless explicitly stated otherwise (i.e., it's a collaborative assignment).

Incidents of cheating will be addressed according to the policies in the [Student Academic Honor Code](#). The minimum penalty for cheating is an F on the assignment and an Academic Honor Code violation filed with the Dean of Students. Repeated or severe infractions will result in an F for the course and an Honor Code violation.

**AI Usage:** Unless explicitly stated in an assignment's instructions, AI should not be used in this course. The use of AI will be considered cheating and a violation of the UNCW Honor Code.

## Grading Breakdown

You are expected to take an active role in your learning. Please keep up with the readings and turn assignments in on time.

**All assignments** are due at the time and date indicated on Canvas. Late submissions will receive a grade of zero. There are no make-ups for assignments that are late or incomplete for unexcused reasons. Make-ups for excused absences will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. If you know that you will struggle to meet a deadline, email me directly so we can discuss the situation.

**Missed quizzes** will result in a grade of zero. No make-up quizzes will be given except for reasons of illness or other verified emergency.

- **Attendance** (10%)

- I will randomly take attendance, which counts towards your attendance score.
- Assignments included in this category: attendance
- **Individual Assignments (20%)**
  - Assignments such as reading reflections, non-project interface development assignments, individual in-class assignments, etc. will be counted towards this category.
  - Assignments included in this category: individual assignments
- **Quizzes (20%)**
  - There will be regular quizzes on the reading material from *Design of Everyday Things* and *Design Methods*. Keeping up with the readings is essential.
  - Assignments included in this category: quizzes
- **Project (30%)**
  - There will be one large group project that we will develop over the semester. The project will be divided into milestones containing presentations, written assignments, and multiple prototypes.
  - Assignments included in this category: pitch presentations, experiments and write-ups, final report, prototypes
- **Project Participation (10%)**
  - Group participation in the project is mandatory. A charter will be issued so everyone is on the same page about communication and duties.
  - Attendance for group project related class days will be taken and counted towards your project participation score. Additionally, throughout the semester, your teammates will evaluate your performance and contributions to the group project, those scores will be counted here.
  - Assignments included in this category: in-class group activities, project work day attendance, combined teammate evaluation scores
- **Final Prototype & Project Presentation (10%)**
  - Your project presentation will be conducted during our final exam time.
  - **Final Exam: Wednesday, May 6 from 3-6pm, Congdon 1007**
  - Assignments included in this category: project presentation, final prototype iteration

## Grading Policy

All grades will be posted on Canvas, but please be advised that Canvas may not always be correct in your weighted grade. Please calculate your grade based on the above percentages. If you have questions about your grade, or how the grading works, please talk to me.

You have one week from when a grade is returned to dispute it.

I reserve the right to curve the scale dependent on overall class scores at the end of the semester. Any curve will only ever make it easier to obtain a certain letter grade.

Numeric Score	Letter Grade
94 – 100	A
90 – 93	A-
87 – 89	B+
84 – 86	B
80 – 83	B-
77 – 79	C+
74 – 76	C
70 – 73	C-
67 – 69	D+
64 – 66	D
60 – 63	D-
0 – 59	F

## Campus Policies and Information

### Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodation in this course, you should inform the instructor of this fact in writing within the first week of class or as soon as possible. If you have not already done so, you must register with the Office of Disability Services in DePaolo Hall (extension 2-7555) and obtain a copy of your Accommodation Letter. You should then meet with your instructor to make mutually agreeable arrangements based on the recommendations of the Accommodation Letter. At least a week prior to any test or exam, you should work with the instructor and the Office of Disability Services to arrange a mutually agreed arrangement for accommodation.

### Honor Code

All members of UNCW's community are expected to follow the academic Honor Code. Please read the UNCW Honor Code carefully (as covered in the UNCW Student Handbook and available here: <https://uncw.edu/about/university-administration/student-affairs/departments/dean-students/honor-code/>).

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated in this class. If you cheat, you should expect to fail the course.

Please be especially familiar with UNCW's position on plagiarism as outlined in the UNCW Student Handbook. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty in which you take someone else's ideas and represent them as your own. Here are some examples of plagiarism:

1. You write about someone else's work in your paper and do not give them credit for it by referencing them.
2. You give a presentation and use someone else's ideas and do not state that the ideas are the other person's.
3. You get facts from your textbook or some other reference material and do not reference that material.

### UNCW Copyright and Intellectual Property Policy

Any dissemination of class notes, lecture slides, recordings, handouts, copies of exams, or any other course materials without permission of the instructor is prohibited by UNCW policy.

[UNCW Copyright Use and Ownership Policy](#) specifies that class notes and related materials are considered derivative of original intellectual property of the course instructor. Therefore, the instructor (not the student) owns the copyright and must provide specific permission to distribute and/or reuse those materials for anything other than personal use and scholarship by the student. Commercial use, display, or dissemination of such notes, copies, or recordings—as well as posting to websites—will generally constitute an infringement of copyright and the Honor Code. Materials that qualify as student-owned are listed in the policy.

## Responsible Use Policy

The University's policy on the responsible use of electronic resources also applies to all work for this course. See <https://uncw.edu/about/policies/technology/07.100.00-responsible-use-of-information-technology-resources>.

## Title IX

UNCW takes all forms of interpersonal violence very seriously. When students disclose, first- or thirdhand to faculty or staff about sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence and/or stalking, this information must be reported to the administration in order to ensure that students' rights are protected, appropriate resources are offered, and the need for further investigation is explored to maintain campus safety. There are three confidential resources who do not need to report interpersonal violence: UNCW CARE, the Student Health Center, and the Counseling Center. If you want to speak to someone in confidence, these resources are available, including CARE's 24-hour crisis line (910-512-4821). For more information visit <https://uncw.edu/titleix> and <https://uncw.edu/care>.

## Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades are given rarely and only in very specific situations. First, the student must be passing. Next, the student must be able to complete the work of the course entirely on his or her own. Finally, the student must be prevented from completing the course by verified, unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the student. These conditions must be documented and verified before an incomplete grade may be given.

## Project Overview

For the semester-long group project in this class, you and your group will be designing (or redesigning) a user interface for an app or a website using the principles of good design that we'll learn throughout the semester. Below you will find a chronological overview of the assignments associated with the group project.

Additionally, throughout the semester, you will complete team participation surveys. Each teammate will rate you on your team participation and these scores will be averaged together for your total project participation grade.

- **Project Proposal Presentation** (Individual)
  - Each student will submit and present a project idea to the class
- **Project Proposal Survey** (Individual)
  - Each student will choose their top 3-5 projects to work on
  - Groups will be created using this information
- **Group Charter** (Group)
  - Together as a group, a charter will be created that outlines the expectations of each member of the group
  - The charter includes information such as availability, contact information, how to resolve disputes, etc.
- **Mission Statement** (Group)
  - You and your group members are now part of your product's company
  - To understand your company goals/values, a mission statement will be created
- **Conceptual Model** (Individual)
  - Individually, you will create a conceptual model for how you think your product is going to work
- **Conceptual Model & Report** (Group)
  - As a group, review each member's conceptual model and add/take away any ideas to create a cohesive model
  - As a group, write a 1-2 page report on how each individual model was created and how they contributed to your group conceptual model

- **Customer Needs Identification – Interview Script (Group)**
  - As a group, you will create an interview script to identify the attributes of your product that customers actually want
- **Customer Needs Identification – Interviewing Users (Individual)**
  - Each group member will individually interview potential customers using their group's interview script and interpret their needs from your data
- **Customer Needs Analysis & Report (Group)**
  - As a group, you will analyze the data gathered by each team member by removing redundant needs and finding themes
  - As a group, you will write a 2-4 page report on how the interview script was generated, how each teammate's interviews went and what data was collected, what themes were found in the collective data, and what features of your product customers actually want to see
- **Identifying Needs: Surveying + Report (Group)**
  - As a group, you will create an Importance Survey to identify the importance of the customer needs
  - Each group member will individually survey potential users using their group's importance survey
  - As a group, you will create a hierarchical list of needs (from most to least important) from the survey data and write a 1 page report on the process and findings
- **Hand-drawn Product Prototype 1 (Individual)**
  - Individually, you will use the data you collected to create 3 hand-drawn prototypes of your product
- **Hand-drawn Product Prototype 2 + Report (Group)**
  - As a group, you will create 2-3 different prototypes using the features of the individual prototypes
  - As a group, you will write a 2-4 page report on the features of your individual prototypes and how they were combined into the 3 group prototypes
- **Medium Fidelity Prototype 1 (Group)**
  - As a group, you will create a medium fidelity prototype from one of your hand-drawn designs using Penpot
- **Medium Fidelity Prototype 1 User Testing + Report (Individual)**
  - Individually, each team member will conduct user testing with this initial medium-fidelity prototype and collect feedback to improve the next iteration
  - Each teammate will write a 1-2 page report on how the prototype was created, how testing went, and what improvements will be made for Prototype 2
- **Medium Fidelity Prototype 2 (Group)**
  - As a group, you will take all of the feedback into consideration and make updates to your prototype in Penpot
- **Medium Fidelity Prototype 3 User Testing + Report (Individual)**
  - Individually, each team member will conduct user testing with this medium-fidelity prototype and collect feedback to improve the next iteration
  - Each teammate will write a 1-2 page report on how the prototype was updated, how round 2 testing went, and what improvements will be made for Prototype 3
- **Medium Fidelity Prototype 3 (Group)**
  - As a group, you will take all of the feedback from the previous iteration into consideration and make updates to your prototype in Penpot

- **Medium Fidelity Prototype 3 User Testing** (Individual)
  - Individually, each team member will conduct user testing with this medium-fidelity prototype and collect feedback to improve the final iteration
- **Final Presentation** (Group)
  - As a group, you will present your project and the process from start to end to the class
- **Final Report** (Group)
  - As a group, you will write a report detailing the process of creating your final prototype from start to finish
- **Final Prototype** (Group)
  - As a group, you will submit the finalized version of your prototype