

Spring 2007

IDIA 630.185 - Information Architecture

Mondays 5:30 – 8:00

Academic Center Room 219

Shannon R. Tucker
stucker@rx.umaryland.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment
410.706.1538 / 443.956.3681

Prerequisites: PBDS 660 or passing score on the Hypermedia Proficiency Exam.

Course Catalog Description: Teaches students to gather requirements data, model information structures, and develop a variety of documents to communicate the information architecture to other participants, including technical experts, usability experts, clients, and users. Students learn to determine a target audience, develop personas or user profiles, refine and validate requirements and create site maps and other "specs and wire frames.

Extended Course Description: This course provides a practical understanding of the fundamental concepts and methods of value to anyone involved in the building and managing large scale web sites. Information architecture includes:

- The combination of organization, labeling and navigation schemes within an information system.
- The structural design of an information space to facilitate task completion and intuitive access to content.
- The art and science of classifying web sites to help people find and manage information.
- A discipline and community of practice focused on bringing principles of design and architecture to the digital landscape.

Required Textbooks:

Information Architecture for the World Wide Web: Designing Large Scale Web Sites
Peter Morville and Louis Rosenfield, 3rd Edition
O'Reilly
ISBN: 0596527349

Design of Sites: The Patterns for Creating Winning Web Sites, 2nd Edition
Douglas K. van Duyne, James A. Landay, Jason I. Hong
Prentice Hall
ISBN: 0131345559

Readings From:

Articles from www.boxesandarrows.com

Ambient Findability*

Peter Morville
O'Reilly
ISBN: 0596007655

The Elements of User Experience*
Jesse James Garrett
ISBN: 0735712026

Information Architecture: Blueprints for the Web*
Christina Wodtke
ISBN: 0735712506

ACM Digital Library*

Journal of the American Society for Information Science*

**Note: Students who do not have access to these materials will be provided with handouts during class.*

Other Resources:

Elements of User Experience Diagram
Jesse James Garrett
<http://www.jjg.net/elements/pdf/elements.pdf>

Information Architecture Library
<http://iainstitute.org/library/>

Grading:

Class Participation and Presentations: 20%
Assignments: 30%
Final Project: 50%

Assignments:

Analysis Assignments

Each analysis assignment provides an opportunity to learn and demonstrate knowledge on the application of information architecture online. To complete each analysis assignment, students will be required to:

- Present findings to the class (*Internet access will be provided*)
- Prepare a 5-7 page report

Assignment 1 – Organization, labeling, and navigation analysis

Assignment 2 – Controlled Vocabulary and Search

Assignment 3 – Select a web site pattern group and analyze two web sites comparing their implementation of patterns presented in the group.

Strategic Analysis

Students will be asked to analyze the ACM SIGGRAPH web site and do a comparative analysis of their mission, goals, and purpose as stated on their web site. This assignment will provide you with an opportunity to learn more about the ACM SIGGRAPH organization and help familiarize you with the core organization mission that should be reflected in your final projects.

Your analysis of the site should be 3-5 pages.

Content Analysis and Site Map

Analyze the content of the ACM SIGGRAPH web site. Pay particular attention to the division between the ACM SIGGRAPH web site and web sites for arts.siggraph.org, chapters.siggraph.org, wiki.siggraph.org, and the SIGGRAPH conference web sites. Your analysis should include all relevant information about the content, including:

- Targeted user group
- Location within the current site
- Subject
- Content format and document type

Students should also plan to include a site map of the current site.

Final Project

The spring 2007 IDIA 630.185 Information Architecture class will be assisting ACM SIGGRAPH with the design of the proposed SIGGRAPH student services web site.

Background

ACM SIGGRAPH is the Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques. Founded in 1969, the organization's mission is to promote the generation and dissemination of information on computer graphics and interactive techniques.

ACM SIGGRAPH Overview

<http://www.siggraph.org/about/acmsig>

ACM SIGGRAPH and Students

Students are highly encouraged to become involved in ACM SIGGRAPH and the annual SIGGRAPH conference. Student involvement in the organization as presenters, through student chapters, and participating in the conference Student Volunteer program allows students to become involved in the organization early and provides many students with opportunities that may help shape their career direction.

A select group of ACM SIGGRAPH volunteers is currently in the process of forming a Student Services Committee. One goal of this committee is to expand the information and opportunities available to students in computer graphics and interactive techniques

beyond ACM SIGGRAPH Student Chapters and the SIGGRAPH Student Volunteer Program.

Final Project Deliverables (*Overview*)

- Project Plan
 - Team member roles & responsibilities
 - Team communication process
 - Team issue management process
 - Documentation process and tools
 - Tasks by deliverable with workflow/schedule
- Strategy Report
- User personas and user scenarios
- Navigation Design
- Information Design
- Interaction Design
- Recommendations for content development to support organization/project mission

Project Support

I will serve as your primary contact for communications with the committee at this time. However, committee members and other ACM SIGGRAPH volunteers may be available via e-mail and phone to answer questions as needed.

The committee will work to provide you with access to proposed audience members to conduct user research. Research will be conducted mid-semester. ACM SIGGRAPH may direct specific user research requirements. Discussions are underway to determine need and scope desired by the organization for user research and other specific requirements.

Course Schedule:

Note: Check the course web site frequently for changes in due dates, reading assignments, and the additional readings.

Week 1: 01/29/2007	Introduction to Course and Final Project Introduction and Principles of Information Architecture (IA) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morville & Rosenfeld, Chapters 1,2,3
Week 2: 02/05/2007	Organization, Labeling, and Navigation Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morville & Rosenfeld, Chapters 4,5,6,7• Van Duyne, Landay, & Hong, Pattern Groups B,K• Morville, Ambient Findability, Chapter 2• Card Sorting, a definitive guide
Week 3: 02/12/2007	Search <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morville & Rosenfeld Chapter 8• Van Duyne, Landay, & Hong, Pattern Group J• Google Webmaster Guidelines• Search Engine Glossary• Are Vertical Search Engines the Answer to Relevance?

- [2006 Search Engine Wrap Up](#)
- [Search Market Predictions for 2007](#)
- [Google's copyright Fix](#)

In Class Exercise: informal presentations on Analysis Assignment 1
Due: Analysis Assignment 1

Week 4:
02/19/2007

Faceted Classification, Controlled Vocabularies, Thesauri, and Meta Data

- Morville & Rosenfeld, Chapter 9
- The Sociosemantic Web, Ambient Findability, Chapter 6
- All about Facets & Controlled Vocabularies
 - [Introduction](#)
 - [Part 1: What is a Controlled Vocabulary](#)
 - [Part 2: Creating a Controlled Vocabulary](#)
 - [Part 3: Synonym Rings and Authority Files](#)
- [The Semantic Web](#)
Tim Berners-Lee, James Hendler, and Ora Lassila

In Class Exercise: Snack Classification

Week 5:
02/26/2007

Strategy and Process

Morville & Rosenfeld, Chapters 11,17,18

User Research

- Morville & Rosenfeld, Chapter 10
- Van Duyne, Landay, & Hong, Part 1, Appendix E
- [Making Personas More Powerful: Details to Drive Strategic and Tactical Design](#),
George Olsen
- [Personas: practice and theory](#)
(ACM DL)
John Pruitt & Jonathan Grudin
- [Web Traffic Analytics and User Experience](#)
Fran Diamond
- [Bring Your Personas to Life!](#)
Zef Fugaz

In Class Exercise: informal presentations of Analysis Assignment 2
Due: Analysis Assignment 2

Week 6:
03/05/2007

Design and Documentation

- Morville & Rosenfeld, Chapters 12
- Wodtke, Chapter 9
- Metrics for Heuristics: Quantifying User Experience
[Part 1](#)
[Part 2](#)
Andrea Wiggins
- [Site Diagrams: Mapping an Information Space](#)
Jason Withrow
- [Where the Wireframes Are](#)
Dan Brown

- [Real Wireframes Get Real Results](#)
- Stephen Turbek
- [Representing Content and Data in Wireframes: Special Deliverable # 10](#)
Dan Brown

In Class Exercise: Discussion of Strategy Analysis
Due: Strategy Analysis (www.siggraph.org)

Week 7:
03/12/2007

Information Architecture in Practice

- Morville & Rosenfeld, Chapters 13,14,16
- [Content Deliverable Samples – Adaptive Path](#)

In Class Exercise: Bring in at least two examples of Information Architecture Plans/Projects/Samples on the web for discussion

Due: Content Analysis and Site Map
Due: Project Plan Draft

Week 8:
03/19/2007

No Class – Spring Break

Week 9:
03/26/2007

Information Architecture in Practice (con't)

- [Storyboarding Rich Internet Applications with Visio](#)
- [Wireframe Annotations in Visio: Special Deliverable # 11](#)
Dan Brown
- [Practical Applications: Visio or HTML for Wireframes](#)
Jeff Gothelf

Final Project Discussion

In Class Exercise: Visio Tutorial/Team meetings/ Project Draft Review

Week 10:
04/02/2007

Tentative: Guest Speaker

Week 11:
04/09/2007

Site Patterns

- Van Duyne, Landay, & Hong, Pattern Groups D,E,I,H,L

In Class Exercise: informal presentation and discussion of Analysis Assignment 3

Due: Analysis Assignment 3
Due: Draft findings from User Research

Week 12:
04/16/2007

Content Management Systems/ Databases

- Readings TBA

In Class Exercise: Team Progress Update, feedback on User Research Drafts

Week 13: No Class Meeting – Work on Final Projects
04/23/2007

Week 14: **Content Management Systems/ Databases**
04/30/2007

- Readings TBA

In Class Exercise: Team Progress Updates

Week 15: Class Presentations
05/07/2007

Week 16: Class Presentations
05/14/2007 **Due:** Final Project Reports

Class Policies

Class Cancellation/Schedule Modifications: In the event of class cancellation, the class schedule and schedule of assignments may be adjusted to ensure course objectives are met prior to the semester's end. This may include the posting of additional online content or class sessions.

Notification of class cancellation due to inclement weather can be found on the University of Baltimore web site (<http://www.ubalt.edu>) or through the UB Weather Line at 410.837.4201. Students will be notified in class, by e-mail, and/or the class web site of class cancellations that are not a result of an emergency university closure.

Attendance Policy: You are expected to attend class, to arrive on time, and to stay until the end of class. You are responsible for finding out from others what you have missed from class if you are late, leave early, or are absent from class. A list of class members and listserv of class members will be posted to assist your communication with other class members.

Submission of Assignments: All student assignments should be posted to your student web site on student-iat. Information on how to post your information is included on the spring 2007 IDIA 630 class web site. All assignments must be posted on "index.htm" or a subordinate page to be graded. If you do not create a page on the student server or do not post your work to the server or fail to clearly label your work, it will not be graded.

Late Work: Assignments should be posted to the student-iat server prior to the beginning of the class period in which they are due. Late work will not be accepted without a demonstrated emergency. If a situation does arise that will prevent the submission of an assignment on time, you must provide notification prior to the due date of the assignment and make alternate arrangements for the submission of your assignment.