Critique and Graphic Design

No screens

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COMS 6998
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You already know **front-end web dev**: HTML, JavaScript, Bootstrap, jQuery

And design:
Iterative design, critique

You will learn **back-end web dev**:
- **Server-side programming (Flask)**,
- **Databases (Sqlite, SQLAlchemy)**
- **Real-time Communication (Socket.IO)**

And practice web design by:
- **Rebuilding IMDB.com**
- Rebuilding twitter
- Pursuing your own project
Last week:

Build a web app that meets a specific user need in the movie data domain

(That is not a specific need that IMDB supports well)
Last weeks goal

• Make your own application using IMDB data and CRUD operations.
  • Define your own high level goal: a specific user need to solve
    • Define 7-10 low level goals you will need to achieve this.
  • Functionality is the most important thing.

  • Create at least 1 paper prototype – test it on at least 1 person.
    • Report one thing you learned from it
  • Graphic design should be GOOD ENOUGH to not repulse people in user tests.
  • Test it on at least 1 person
    • Report on thing you learned

• Must use Flask, SQLite. You don’t have to use SQLAlchemy
• We have not talked about users yet or sessions yet. Stay tuned!
Today’s Agenda

• Review the difference between criticism and critique

• **Studio**: 45 minutes of individual peer+instructor critique
  • Is the user need specific?
  • Does the interface meet that specific need?

• Next week: Second iteration on this interface
  • With a focus on graphic design

• Review principles of iteration and of graphic design.
Specific User Needs

Review!
General Vs. Specific Goals

General Goal: “Clean the house.”

Specific goal: “Fold that basket of laundry.”

General goals sound appealing, but specific goals are actionable: What **person** will take what **action** on what **object**?
General goals are really **domains**. By picking a **specific need** in the **domain**, you can then **generalize** other other thing in that **domain**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Specific Need</th>
<th>Generalized to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online shopping</td>
<td>Uncommon books</td>
<td>Clothes, Food, Other sellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Network</td>
<td>Harvard students to look up each other’s classes</td>
<td>Ivy League, US Colleges, Everyday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Email client | Web-based  
No page reload  
Never Delete                         | Chat, GDrive                         |
In the domain of “movie data”
IMDB has lots of data just waiting to meet a specific user need
Giving And Receiving Critique
Criticism vs. Critique

“DO YOU HAVE A SINGING TEACHER? GET A LAWYER AND SUE HER.”
Criticism is entertaining to audiences, but hurtful to makers AND not useful to making things better.
Criticism vs. Critique
Critique

“"I like...”
• Forces you to more closely observe the artifact.
• acknowledges positive things the design should keep.
“I like...”

I like that the name and course number are clear.

I like that there is a link of Piazza.

I like that the colors are Columbia themed, and different than the intro class, 4170.
Critique

“For me..., what if ...”

• Is to help people see new potential in their design.
• Talk about your *personal* frustrations and interpretations.
• Help the designer see their design through your eyes.
#1 Which of these is a good critique?

A  “You need to make the navigation bar bigger.”

B  “I had trouble finding the navigation bar. I wish the navigation bar was more easier to find.”
#2 Which of these is a good critique?

A  “I had trouble reading the text. What if you changed the font or colors?”

B  “The colors aren’t dark enough.”
#3 Which of these is a good critique?

A  “People aren’t going to scroll to get more information.”

B  “I didn’t realize I could scroll to get more information.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s the difference?</th>
<th>“You need to make the navigation bar bigger.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The colors aren’t dark enough.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help designers identify the potential problems.</td>
<td>“I had trouble finding the navigation bar. I wish the navigation bar was more visible.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t try to give them the solutions.</td>
<td>“I had trouble reading the text. What if you changed the font or colors?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Critique needs to focus around a goal

- Is the user need specific?
- Does the interface meet that specific need?

I like...
For me..., what if....
Critique needs to focus around a goal

- Is the user need specific?
- Does the interface meet that specific need?

I like...
For me..., what if....
Studio Time: 45 minutes

Critique:
• Present your specific needs
• Present your interface by walking us through a user’s path through the system to meet their goal.
• Everyone presents, everyone critiques.

Today by 9pm - post the most important next risk to prototype on Piazza
Next’s weeks goal

• Make another iteration of your product.
• It should now be feature complete and ready for users!
• Give a user persona
• The graphic design should still be minimal, but should reflect the intended path through the system.
  • Layout
  • Position
  • Images
  • Color
  • Font
We use iteration to minimize risk by **prototyping** the riskiest elements first.

**Idea:**
Help NBA fans recognize the strategy during games.

**Resources**
- Paper!
- Google it!
- User test!

**Design**
- Technical
- Design
- Idea
- Design
We use iteration to minimize risk by **prototyping** the riskiest elements first.

**Idea:**
Help NBA fans recognize the strategy during games.
Graphic Design

How to use visual elements to convey what is important to users.
You are cordially invited to Robert and Alexandra’s delectable after dinner party. Wine and nibbles will be served. When: February 20th, 2018 at 9:30pm. Where: the pad. If you need directions, ping us. Kindly let us know if you will be attending by February 1st.

Problem: This does not convey what is important.
You are cordially invited to Robert and Alexandra’s delectable after dinner party. Wine and nibbles will be served. When: February 20th, 2018 at 9:30pm. Where: the pad. If you need directions, ping us. Kindly let us know if you will be attending by February 1st.
What is most important?

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Version 2 has a good Hierarchy of Information

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Users can’t focus on everything at once. They have a spotlight of attention.

A visual hierarchy of information allows designers to guide users’ attention.
Tools for conveying importance
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1. Location indicates Importance
2. Whitespace indicates importance
2. Whitespace indicates importance
3. Size indicates importance
3. Size indicates importance
4. Images indicate importance
5. **Contrast** indicates importance

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When: **February 20th, 2018 at 9:30pm.**  
Where: **the pad.** If you need directions, ping us.

Kindly let us know if you will be attending by **February 1st.**
5. **Contrast** indicates importance
6. Color indicates importance
6. Color indicates importance
6. Color indicates importance
BUT use structure first, then color to enhance
BUT use structure first, then color to enhance
Tools for indicating importance in the visual Information Hierarchy

• Conceptual grouping
• Location
• Whitespace
• Size
• Images
• Contrast
• Color
What specific need do these sites satisfy?

How is it conveyed?
Book unique homes and experiences.

WHERE
Anywhere

CHECK IN
mm/dd/yyyy

CHECK OUT
mm/dd/yyyy

GUESTS
1 guest

Search
Use graphic design to convey the specific needs your site serves.

- Conceptual grouping
- Location
- Whitespace
- Size
- Images
- Contrast
- Color
Next’s weeks goal: Iterate

• Iterate on your application
  • Define your own high level goal: a specific user need to solve
    • Define 7-10 low level goals you will need to achieve this.
  • This should be the next riskiest thing

• It should now be feature complete and ready for users!
  • Give a user persona so you know that it is ready for at least one user.
  • The graphic design should reflect the intent of the application to the user.
    • It can be minimal, but it should convey the purpose of the side and guide the user’s attention through the task
  • Create at least 1 paper prototype – test it on at least 1 person.
    • Report one thing you learned from it
  • Test it on at least 1 person
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