INF1005

Section 0107: Users helping users: software learning, video tutorials design, and the wisdom of the crowd

Instructor: Dr. Aviv Shachak

Room: BL632

Contact Information

Dr. Aviv Shachak (instructor)

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Office hours: by appointment

The preferred way of communication is by e-mail: aviv.shachak@utoronto.ca I usually respond to e-mail messages within 48 hours; however at busy times or if out of office it may take longer.

Note: This course has non-standard add/drop dates.

Course Description

Despite advances in user interfaces, software help, and user manuals, software users still often need help learning new software applications or performing unfamiliar tasks using them. Video tutorial are becoming a common way of providing training and assistance for software users. In this workshop students will review current research on, and learn the best practices of designing video tutorials for software application. They will then explore video tutorials produced by software vendors as well as tutorials posted on social media (YouTube) by software user in an attempt to identify additional best practices and elements of effective design. Finally, they will apply this knowledge in the design of a software video tutorial of their own.

Objectives

The intention of the workshops is to broaden students' exposure to various areas of information. At the end of this session students will be able to demonstrate:

- the ability to integrate the skills, perspectives, and knowledge introduced in the other core courses;
- understanding of information architecture, cognitive, and design issues related to software tutorials in general and video tutorials in particular;
- application of analytic skills to understanding the tacit knowledge embedded in video tutorials posted on social media and vendor websites;
- effective group work.

Requirements

- Be prepared for class, read papers in advance
- Participation in class discussions; facilitation of paper discussion (10%)
- Project report- analysis part (20%)
- Progress presentations: 4 Weekly 5 minute presentations of group work progress, followed by facilitated discussion. A different group member would be responsible for the progress presentation each week. (20%)
- Final (complete) project report (in-class presentation: 25%; written report: 25%)

Academic integrity

Please consult the University's site on Academic Integrity. The iSchool has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism as defined in section B.I. 1. (d) of the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. You should acquaint yourself with the *Code* and Appendix "A" Section 2. Please review the material you covered in *Cite it Right* and, if necessary, consult the site How Not to Plagiarize,

Writing support

The [SGS Office of English Language and Writing Support](#) writing support for graduate students. The services are designed target the needs of both native and non-native speakers of English and include non-credit courses, single-session workshops, individual writing consultations, and website resources. These programs are free. Please avail yourself of these services, if necessary.

Grading

Please consult the [University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy](#) and the iSchool's [Grade Interpretation Guidelines](#). These will form the basis for grading in the course.

Late submission policy

All papers are due by the deadline specified on the assignment's description. Late papers will be graded a full grade off (10 points) for each day late. If you would like to request an extension for health or personal reasons, please contact me before the submission due date. For long extensions that require late grade submission you will need to fill in a [course extension form](#) and, for first extension, submit it to the graduate unit (NOT to me). Subsequent course extensions require the approval of both the graduate coordinator and Vice-Dean, Students of the School of Graduate Studies.

Accommodation of students with disabilities

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the [Accessibility Services Office](#) as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let them and me know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Time table

Week		Topic(s)	Readings (Note: Internet connection through UofT may be needed to access the full text from the link provided)
1		Introduction to the workshop; Introduction to software tutorials and user manuals; Printed tutorials	Lazar, J., Jones, A., Hackley, M., & Shneiderman, B. (2006). Severity and impact of computer user frustration: A comparison of student and workplace users. *Interacting with Computers*, 18(2), 187-207. doi: DOI 10.1016/j.intcom.2005.06.001 van der Meij, H., Karreman, J., & Steehouder, M. (2009). Three Decades of Research and Professional Practice on Printed Software Tutorials for Novices. *Technical Communication, 56*(3), 265-292. Van der Meij, H., & Gellevij, m. (1998). Screen Captures in software documentation. *Technical Communication, 45*(4), 529-543.
2		Video tutorials: rationale, best practices, and design guidelines	Baecker, R. (2002). *Showing instead of telling*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 20th annual international conference on Computer documentation, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Plaisant, C., & Shneiderman, B. (2005). Show me! Guidelines for producing recorded demonstrations. *2005 IEEE Symposium on Visual Language and Human-Centric Computing, Proceedings*, 171-178. Swarts, J. (2012). New Modes of Help: Best Practices for Instructional Video. *Technical Communication, 59*(3), 195-206.

			van der Meij, H., & van der Meij, J. (2013). Eight Guidelines for the Design of Instructional Videos for Software Training. *Technical Communication*, *60*(3), 205-228. **[full text will be provided]**
3	Project submission: part 1	Are video tutorials effective (part 1)? [Student facilitated paper discussions] Weekly progress report Independent group work	Palmiter, S., & Elkerton, J. (1993). Animated demonstrations for learning procedural computer-based tasks. *Human-Computer Interacion, 8*(3), 193-216. [Group 1] Despotakis, T., & Palaigeorgiou, G. (2010). Known and unknown weaknesses in software animated demonstrations (screencasts): a study in self-paced learning settings. *Journal of Information Technology Education, 9*, 81-98. [Group 2]
4		Are video tutorials effective (part 2)? [Student facilitated paper discussions] Weekly progress report Independent group work	Tversky, B., Morrison, J. B., & Betrancourt, M. (2002). Animation: can it facilitate? *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies, 57*(4), 247-262. doi: Doi 10.1006/Ijhc.1017 [Group 3] Höffler, T. N., & Leutner, D. (2007). Instructional animation versus static pictures: A meta-analysis. *Learning and Instruction, 17*(6), 722-738. doi: 10.1016/j.learninstruc.2007.09.013 [Group 4]

| 5 | | Innovations in video tutorials [Student facilitated paper discussions]

Weekly progress report

Independent group work | Grossman, T., & Fitzmaurice, G. (2010). *ToolClips: an investigation of contextual video assistance for functionality understanding*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 28th international conference on Human factors in computing systems, Atlanta, Georgia, USA. [Group 5]

Chilana, P. K., Ko, A. J., Wobbrock, J. O., & Grossman, T. (2013). *A multi-site field study of crowdsourced contextual help: usage and perspectives of end users and software teams*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Paris, France. [Group 6] |
| 6 | Final project submission | Final project presentations

Independent group work | |