

CSE 440: Introduction to HCI

User Interface Design, Prototyping, and Evaluation

Lecture 04:
Critique

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Tuesday/Thursday
10:30 to 11:50
MOR 234

Guest lecture

Hi, I'm Matt

I'm a PhD student in Computer Science & Engineering. I do research in personal informatics.

But! I also have some background in visual art.

This Quarter

You will learn how to both give and receive critique

Each skill is important and takes practice

Many sections will consist of group critiques

Each group will present an artifact

Other class members and TA will offer critique

Starting today!

Critique of CI Plan

Why do Critique?

Critique helps us evaluate early, often, and cheaply

Applicable to artifacts of many types

Compare to other expert methods covered later, like heuristic evaluation

You are not your own worst critic!

The room has more collective knowledge than any one of us

It is *very* hard to see past your own decisions (see also: mental models, etc)

See past your infatuation

Why do Critique?

Critique is not just for design

It applies to many artifacts and domains: visual art, writing, design, code (i.e. code review), ...

Over time, you should gather people who can give you high-quality critique in everything you do

You may meet some of those people in this class

What is Critique?

Critique is a method of peer & expert feedback

It is not just a list of complaints

1. **Presenters** sit down with peers/experts (the **critics**)
2. Quickly explain their artifacts (< 2 min)
3. Critics ask questions
4. Presenters respond, also write down everything that is discussed

Critique is not Criticism

Again, it is not just a list of complaints!

Critics offer honest feedback

Presenters should be able to learn what works well and what is problematic about their artifact

Both positive and negative

Presenters should be able to learn what works well and what is problematic about their artifact

It is the presenter's responsibility to sort through feedback and decide what is important

Take notes!

Tips for Presenters

Critique can be hard, especially at first

Try to avoid being defensive

You are not your work: separate yourself

Remember the expertise you bring

Even if “the room” knows more about design, you know more about your problem / artifact (or you should)

Tips for Presenters

Taking advice is not giving up authorship

You still make the final decisions

A half-baked suggestion does not contain all the details of a finished solution

Design your critique

The artifact you show invites different forms of feedback

Indicate what kind of feedback you want verbally, but also in form (this course will guide you heavily here)

Tips for Presenters

Keep an eye out for design rationale

You probably made some decisions without good reasons at the time

Critique can help give a rationalization for past decisions in explaining to others

Exploit failure!

A “failed” artifact (plan, design, ...) should teach you a lot about the design space: what won't work, and *why*

Tips for Critics

There are many strategies for giving critique

Hamburger method

I like, I wish, what if

Socratic method

These provide ways to give critique that help the conversation go smoothly

They may sound silly, but they can give you a question to ask when you don't have one and a way to ask it that doesn't hurt others' feelings

Tips for Critics: Hamburger method

“Bun, meat, bun”

Bun:

Something fluffy and nice

Meat:

The real criticism

Bun:

Something fluffy and nice

Tips for Critics: I like, I wish, what if

I like:

Lead with something nice

I wish:

Some criticism (often leading off what you like)

What if:

An idea to spark further conversation

Better than “I think you should have done ...” or “Why didn’t you ...”: gives the presenter benefit of the doubt if they *did* already think of your idea

Tips for Critics: Socratic method

When all else fails, point to something and ask “why?”

Good when you don't know what to say

Forces presenter to give (or make up) explanations for things, which can help build design rationale

Not fundamentally negative and hard to get defensive about

Summary

Fall *out* of love with the things you build

Let us help you see past the infatuation

Get quick, cheap feedback from experts

Refine ideas

In brainstorming, we were not *criticizing*

In critique, we are not *defending*

You will learn to both give and receive critique

Each are skills that take practice. If you are having difficulty, please come talk to us

Let's do it!

In sets of 2-3 groups

15 minutes per group

1-2 minutes: present your plan

The rest of the time: critique

Remember hamburger method, I like/I wish/what if, Socratic method

Try not to get defensive

Take notes!