Smart Social Places

Working in teams of three or four, students will investigate possible futures, working in emerging design spaces where no social mores exist to define what should be. Teams will leverage breakthroughs in UbiComp and social computing technology to envision provocative interactive service-systems designed to support the needs of a target set of users in a specific location. Teams will select from one of the following:

- An instrumented city hall lobby that supports dialog between citizens and government; a lobby that supports and encourages protest and contested opinions in order to engage citizens in defining what their city should be.
- An urban garden that brings communities together; that creates a place for neighbors to socialize and for children to play with each other, giving the community a sense of collective identity.
- A hospital emergency room or nursing home; here digital information augments the experiences of those physically present to guide and reassure them.
- A place of religious or spiritual practice (e.g. church/synagogue/mosque) that enhances tranquility, togetherness, and a sense of the divine.
- A exercise facility that encourages physical activity and team spirit. Using this facility, communities of recreational or professional athletes are motivated to achieve greater wellness and/or competitiveness.

Process

The design process involves research on the target users and context; generation of 50+ concepts; filtering and development of +10 storyboards, speed dating using needs validation with target audience, and production of a video sketch that documents the design concept and the manner in which it improves people’s quality of life.

During the design process, teams will produce:

1. Presentation detailing their design plan and preliminary research findings.
2. 50+ design concepts.
3. 10+ storyboards with lead questions intended for needs validation.
4. Presentation detailing outcome from speed dating session.
5. Script and storyboard for video sketch.
6. Rough cut of video sketch.
7. Final cut of video sketch.
8. Web process book with a summary of the process and a collection of the generated artifacts.
Critiques

Mar 25/26: Report on design plan and preliminary research findings.
Apr 3/4: Report on research findings, concept generation, issues to explore via needs validation, and selected storyboards designed for needs validation.
Apr 8/9: Report on findings from speed dating and ideas for final design.
Apr 15/16: Report on final design. Share preliminary video sketch script and storyboard (read script while showing images from storyboard)
Apr 22/23: Show rough cut of video sketch with all dialog and images; possibly foley, music, and animation
Apr 24/25: Pitch of design concept including a summary of the process, details of the design, and a video sketch communicating the experience of use.

Grading Criteria

Problem Selection and Design Process
- Has the design team identified and articulated an interesting problem framing of the underlying design challenge?
- Did the team perform a broad exploration of the solution space? Have they broadly explored the interaction possibilities?
- Did the team effectively use speed dating to re-understand the opportunity space? Did they find an unexpected opportunity? Did they learn what not to do?

Design Solution
- Based on the research findings, has the team generated an interesting and provocative solution that appropriately leverages emerging technologies?
- Have they generated an interaction design that fits with their intention and has the possibility to improve the quality of people’s lives?
- Have they generated a video sketch that captures the most relevant features of their design concept?

Craft
- Visual appeal of the demo.
- Visual appeal of presentation.
- Timeliness and professionalism of the uploaded materials.
- Production quality of the video sketch.
- Quality of the pitch.

At the end of the project, students will complete an assessment of their team members' performance. This assessment has the potential to move an individual student's grade by 10% (5% up or down).