

Usability Report #1

Title: Alpha Usability Report

Project: Professor Harris' CompE 572 Website Redesign

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Section: Thursday 7pm

Number of Subjects: 5

Survey: Users feedback on existing website before redesign.

Findings and Summary

The survey contained eight questions and there were five participants. The participants were computer engineering majors that had yet to enroll in the course and were unfamiliar with the website. Analysis revealed three major areas that needed improvement;

1. The course syllabus, announcements, and assignments were difficult if not impossible to find.
2. Information in regards to what the course is actually about and its relevance to the new students major is nonexistent.
3. The combination of the first two areas, along with additional comments by the participants, suggests that the overall layout of the webpage needs to be changed so that items can be found at a glance without having to scroll or do extensive searching.

Details of Website Redesign

1. A sidebar titled "Course Materials" will be clearly visible on the right hand side of the webpage. It will be subdivided into three distinct sections with menu items.
 - The top section will have the course syllabus listed.
 - The middle section will list lectures, homework, projects, and exams.
 - The bottom section is a link to software tools that will be used in the course.

The items on the sidebar are prioritized in the order of interest to a new student on the first day of class. The idea is to minimize the amount of time needed to get organized and start working on the course material.

2. The course title and name will comprise the main banner of the home page; "CompE 572 - VLSI Circuit Design". Directly beneath that in the center of the page will be a course overview about what the student will be learning, it's relevance to their major, and content to draw the reader in and generate interest and enthusiasm.
3. The bottom third of the webpage will have two columns; "Announcements" and "Schedule & Due Dates". The most recent items in these columns will be listed at the top, but there will be scroll bars for each column if a student needs to review past agendas.

The overall look and feel of the webpage design will be similar to a state of the art chip design and manufacturing corporation. Images of computer chips and manufacturing processes along with major brand name logos such as Intel and AMD will be visible. A menu bar at the top will have links to major industry websites as well as the credentials of the presiding instructor.

The redesigned webpage should make the student feel as if what they are going to learn is relevant to current industry trends and they are actually beginning their career as a computer engineer. The webpage will get the student excited about the class and make them feel good about their chosen major.