

Sweet-Talking Clients into Changing Their Web Sites: A Usability Project

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Students work in groups on a semester long project to research recommendations for improving a client web site, usually one belonging to a campus department or program. Students survey the web site's target audience, college students, and report findings in a formal written report and a presentation to the client. Teams will prepare the following documents:

IRB Certification 1/student.¹

Appropriate Communication with Client 1/team. Communicate as needed, but the first introductory email is a homework assignment. Do cc me as well.

Report on One Face to Face Meeting with Client 1/team. Either the whole team or team reps can go, but the result of the meeting must be drafted in a report outlining the client's priorities and your plans for the next steps. Remember, we do not want to pester clients or abuse their time.

Internal Proposal for Usability Study 1/team. As an internal proposal, this document will seek approval for the team's idea from management. You must include the following sections, at minimum, in a memo submission:

- Purpose (purpose of memo)
- Introduction
- Proposed Tasks
- Schedule (include a Gantt chart)
- Experience (experience of teammates with this content or usability)
- References (if sources are used)

Draft of Usability Test Proposal 1/team.

This will be an informal report (using the relevant headings covered in the textbook). Please take notes. The goal here is to show a plan for the eventual test; this will serve as a draft that shows the team's awareness of what needs to happen to make the test a useful data collection experience. It should include research questions and the plan for what you will ask of your participants.

IRB Application 1/team. A sample is available upon request. Submit draft to me; the final version will be submitted on our college's IRB system, irbnet.com.

¹ According to my IRB office, each student needs to have a certificate. Training was free with the NIH until Fall 2018. Check with your university to verify updated IRB workflows.

Team Contract 1/team. This is a chance for your team to communicate about expectations and commit to collaborative excellence and, if needed, request the removal of a negligent teammate.

Progress Report 1/team. Follow guidelines from textbook for this genre of report. Due in email to instructor and client.

Presentation & Packet 1/team. Teams will create summary presentations to report on their outcomes. Each member of the team should take a part. The best presentations will be shared naturally, out of the enthusiasm and deep engagement with the material. You will be graded on the following components:

- Presentation style and content
- Script submission
- Citation accuracy
- Visual aid/slide use
- Focus on recommendations and awareness of client needs

Presentation Evaluation 1/team.

This is designed to be a reflection on your team's presentation product. You may draft a 1-2-page memo detailing the challenges, your successes, and what you learned from the presentation process.

Usability Study Report 1/team. This highly formal manuscript style recommendation report should include the standard sections for the genre.

Front Matter

- Transmittal Letter
- Title Page
- Abstract
- TOC
- Executive Summary

Content

- Introduction
- Methods (what you did)
- Results (what you discovered)
- Recommendations
- Visual Aids (tables and/or figures)

Usability Study Self Reflection & Group Evaluation 1/student. You may access the team and self-evaluation templates in Canvas. Please also include a detailed, reflection report (using headings) which summarizes and analyzes your contributions to the team and any kudos or concerns you have with teammates' work. Share the team's challenges, successes, and what you learned from the experience.