

Course Projects for DLC Course, Spring 2005

Swiki Location: Project

General Objectives

The central purpose of the **course project** is to gain an in-depth understanding of a theme relevant to the course. While we encourage you to do a project accompanied by an implementation of a new system or the further evolution of an existing system, we will also accept projects that engage in conceptual work accompanied by empirical analysis of existing approaches, systems, and websites. Projects need to be carried out through a learning-by-doing approach throughout the rest of the semester, preferably as a **collaborative** activity.

Recommendations:

- To achieve something non-trivial during the semester, work together in a group (you can work in the same group as the "independence research" groups, but you do not have to).
- You should see the project as an application and opportunity to apply and critically evaluate the themes that we are discussing in the course.
- We will post a list of sample projects in the Swiki in the near future.

Timetable

due date – posting in the Swiki	objective
2/21	articulate your interest and ideas; discuss collaborations
3/2	initial description (one page statement)
3/16	Project Proposal
4/4	First Progress Report and discussion in class
4/13	Second Progress Report
April 27	Final Report due: 9:00am (posted on Swikis) Presentation of Projects in class; extended class meeting (5pm –8pm)

Requirements for Projects

Initial Description

Format: one page max or less

Things to Do:

1. team:
 - 1.1. name the members of your team
 - 1.1. anticipated emphasis of individual contributions
1. Think about what you want to do! Why is the problem interesting to YOU?
1. Describe your project idea commenting on the following specific issues:
 - 1.1. Goal: which problem do you want to address?
 - 1.1. Objective: what do you want to achieve?
 - 1.1. Means: which media/technologies do you expect to use?
 - 1.1. Specific challenges: what do you consider the most challenging aspect of your project?
 - 1.1. Relationship to course: in which way is your course project related to the course

Project Proposal

Format: A maximum length of 2 pages

Content — The proposal must contain the following sections - statement of the problem, rationale, technical approach and implementation. Each section will be graded on appropriateness, completeness and clarity.

1. *Statement of problem-*
 - 1.1. What is your project all about? Be specific. You should operationalize your terms in order to clarify the problem you are trying to address as well as the approach you will pursue. If appropriate: use literature citations and references to other systems to support your arguments and descriptions.
1. *Rationale -*
 - 1.1. State the reasons why you want to explore what you are. Why is this a good idea for a project? What do you believe you will learn by doing it? Derive the implications from your project to design, learning, and collaboration.
1. *For non-implementation projects:*
 - 1.1. Develop null hypotheses for the questions you would like to investigate
 - 1.1. Articulate clearly how your work will investigate issues beyond what is already known
1. *For implementation projects:*
 - 1.1. *Outline and justification of technical approach* — how will your program work? What tools do you intend to use? Why do you think your approach is reasonable? What other potential approaches seem to be feasible?
 - 1.1. *Implementation Plan* — proceed in a way that you consider early implementation efforts as prototypes to give you a deeper understanding of the problem.
1. *References* — List the key references, other systems, previous projects on which your work will be based.

First Progress Report

Format: maximum length of 2 pages.

Evaluation: Progress reports will be evaluated like the proposals, based on relevance, appropriateness, completeness and clarity. Refinement and potential redefinition of goals should be emphasized.

Content — The progress report must contain a description of your progress against your original schedule. If you have changed your plans (based on your work), it must include a clear description of the revisions and arguments for them.

Second Progress Report

a refined version of the first progress report emphasizing the progress made since the first progress report

Final Report

Format A maximum length of 6 pages

Evaluation: The final report will be evaluated based on relevance, creativity, appropriateness, completeness, and clarity.

Content — The final report must include the following sections (it is encouraged to extend and reuse arguments from previous reports):

1. *Statement of the Problem* — including how your understanding of the problem has changed while you have worked on it over the period of the course
2. *Rationale* — it explains why is the problem interesting or important? Relate it to other systems and the literature! Why should someone else be interested in the problem chosen by you?
3. *Non-Implementation Projects:*
 - 3.1. Articulate clearly your contribution
 - 3.2. Describe how you advanced the knowledge (e.g., questionnaire, testing of developments, new conceptual framework, empirical data)
4. *Implementation Projects:*
 - 4.1. *Technical approach* — discuss the impact of the tools (which you have selected) on the problem solution. Contrast your approach with other approaches to similar problems described in the literature.
 - 4.2. *Description of the system* — describe the structure of your system in sufficiently abstract terms (so that the reader does not get lost in technical details).
 - 4.3. *Description of the system behavior* — what does the program do? Illustrate it with a scenario!
 - 4.4. *Evaluation of the program / system* — it should address questions such as: how well does it work? What are the shortcomings and limitations? Which theoretical issues does it clarify?
 - 4.5. *Potential further developments of your program /system* — assuming you would have another year to work on: what would you do?
5. *References* — List the key references, other systems, previous projects on which your work will be based.