USER INTERFACE DESIGN & FOCUS GROUPS

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USER INTERFACE DESIGN

- Is not a science, not the result of a formula or diagnosis
- The result of a creative process between application needs, technological capabilities, conceptual model and collective bargaining between contributors
- Design is a result of negotiation between tradeoffs: what seems like a good design and tradeoff for me may not be for others
- Multiple contributors & perspectives are vital!

COLLECT REQUIREMENTS

- What is purpose? What are goals?
- Who is audience?
- What are use-case scenarios?

TECHNICAL AFFORDANCES AND LIMITATIONS

- What is range of devices and technologies that will be used?
- What are their current and foreseeable capabilities, affordances, and limitations?
- For example, mouse vs. trackpad vs. touchscreen > No hover on most touchscreens

GUI DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Create clear and consistent conceptual model of data and process
- Deploy clear and familiar metaphors
- Group similar things together in visual space
- Create intuitive spatial movements and patterns
- Provide good default settings: user only inspects/changes if needed
- Invite the user to explore the interface

FOCUS GROUPS

- Use collaborative tools for presentation, feedback & revision (i.e., GoogleDocs)
- Bring multiple perspectives together to collaborate & critique
- In brainstorming stage, allow uninhibited input before “editing”
- Present proposals for feedback (avoid blank slate syndrome!)
- Stages: Conceptual design, GUI design, Implementation details