Current Topics in Media Computing and HCI - Summer Semester 2006
Assignment 6: Wrapping it Up
Due: Wednesday, June 5, 2006 during the exercise

In this last assignment, you will prepare a mock Diploma/Masters thesis proposal in an area of your choice (i.e., no one will ever ask you to follow this proposal). The idea is to pick a topic that we have discussed in DIS1, DIS2 and this course that you find interesting, and might be interested in pursuing further.

This assignment is to be completed in groups of 2. If you cannot find someone to work with, you may work on your own. Working in groups of 3 is possible, but may be harder (see below).

Task

Begin by brainstorming a particular topic that you are interested in – (e.g., zoomable interfaces, post-desktop user interface toolkits, time-based interactive multimedia interfaces, text navigation, etc...). Then, look for existing research in this topic (e.g., Google Scholar, Citeseer, ACM Portal). From there, formulate a problem statement for an as-of-yet unsolved problem that you think could be reasonably completed in 6 months x number of people in your group.

The idea is that you find a topic that both people in the group are interested in, and split the work such that each person in group contributes independently to the project. In the end, your solution is able to solve a bigger problem than each of you would have been able to tackle on your own.

Examples of past Diploma theses at our chair are available from our website: http://media.informatik.rwth-aachen.de/thesis.html.

Submission

There will be 3 deliverables for this assignment:

Wed, Jun 28 (during the exercise): Each group will discuss with David or Eric individually the topic area you have chosen, the literature you have found, and which problem you are trying to solve.

Wed Jul 5 (during the exercise): Two-minute Madness + Written proposal.

Two-minute Madness: Each group will have two minutes (one per person) to briefly describe and "sell" their idea to the rest of the class. Please submit **one** Powerpoint slide to Eric (eric@cs.rwth-aachen.de) by noon on Monday, July 3. The order of presentations will be posted on the class website by Wednesday morning.

Written Proposal: Each group should submit a written proposal (roughly 3 pages). It should contain the following elements:

Abstract: 350 words briefly summarizing the purpose and objectives of the proposed research, its significance, and expected results (if any).

Problem Statement and Scope: Explain the problem you are trying to solve in more detail, and what you hope to accomplish in the 6 months time. Who are your users? What are the usage scenario(s)? Why is it significant for them?

Related Work: For *at least two* of the papers related to your proposed area of research, describe: who did it; what they did; and how your work is different/improves upon their work.

Research Design: Proposed method/approach to solve your problem. Include a rough timeline of how you would complete your work in 6 months, and show how you plan to divide the work amongst the individual members in the group.

List of references: List of related literature that you came across while completing this assignment. The format of the bibliography should be similar to what is found in conference papers (see the list of research publications on our website for examples).

Your written proposal is to be submitted during the exercise on Wednesday, July 5.

Grading

The assignment will be graded on the following rough scale (out of 100):

15 points: Jun 28 deliverable.

25 points: Two-minute madness presentation.

The remainder will be divided amongst your proposal as follows:

15 points: How well is your proposal is written/organized?

15 points: Scope of your problem - is it appropriate for a Diploma thesis in Media Computing? Is it too ambituous or too narrow?

15 points: How interesting/novel is the problem you aim to tackle?

15 points: How in-depth did you do your background literature research?

Late assignments will be graded with a penalty of -10 per 24 hour period after the due date.