

HCIM Program Committee Meeting for March 2021

March 12, 2021
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM
Virtual meeting

Meeting called by:	Bill Kules	Type of meeting:	Monthly Committee Meeting
Facilitator:	Carol Boston	Note taker:	Emilia Azar
Timekeeper:	Carol Boston		

Attendees: Bill Kules (5 / 5), Carol Boston (5 / 5), Amy Asadi (5 / 5), Niklas Elmqvist (5 / 5), Ge Gao (5 / 5), Kate Izsak (4 / 5), Alex Leitch (5 / 5), Jeff Waters (5 / 5), Wayne Lutters (2 / 5)

Agenda and related documents [here](#)

Minutes of the Meeting:

Agenda item: (1:00) [For adoption] [December meeting minutes](#)

Presenter: Bill Kules

Discussion: Minutes of the December meeting were adopted unanimously.

Agenda item: (1:05) Operational updates: portfolio mentoring project, Capstone vs. Thesis information session, 2 Jenny Preece/Ben Shneiderman Awards for HCIM Excellence to be administered by Awards Committee, 5 Information Architecture conference student scholarships (replacing HCIM travel awards during pandemic)

Presenters: Bill Kules, Carol Boston, Emilia Azar

Discussion:

- The HCIM program hosted a Capstone vs Thesis information session for rising 2nd-year students at the end of February and also asked about 1-credit preferences.
 - Most students will choose the Capstone option for the Fall; 2 sections will be offered for the first time.
 - Students are interested in a 1-credit course on the psychology/neuroscience of UX design, and have a continued interest in a VR/AR-related course.
- The second annual Jenny Preece/Ben Shneiderman Award for HCIM Excellence will be administered through the Student Awards Committee.
 - Please nominate graduating students when you receive the notice about the award.
 - 2 prizes of \$1,000 will be awarded.
- The UX Terps are preparing for a virtual Makeathon, April 2-3 with design challenges from CommunicateHealth, the Trace Center, and the iSchool Alumni Network.
- We piloted a portfolio mentoring project for first-year students in January that included a general portfolio presentation by four alums (Lacey Sabado, Chris Bonk, Jessica Yu, Kausalya Ganesh) plus an opportunity to receive individualized advice and feedback on their portfolios from one of

these mentors. Twenty first-year students signed up and 16 students plus all 4 portfolio mentors/coaches completed a follow-up evaluation: See [Portfolio Coaching Evaluation Form Analysis](#).

- The overall feedback was highly positive from both students and coaches.
- The coaches indicated that students in general need to work on building their personal brand and re-writing case studies to be less wordy and more concise.
- About 45 people have signed up for the HCIM Admitted Students presentation on April 6 so far.

Agenda item: (1:15) [For discussion] Final debrief on 2020-21 admissions process (see [notes from December](#)) and identification of potential changes to 2022 application (including review of [MIM](#) and [MLIS](#) short-answer questions)

Presenter: Bill Kules

- Bill noted key takeaways from the debrief discussion in February.
 - The process of reviewing applicants via a ratings sheet and individual PDFs went well this year.
 - We are still working through how to calibrate what a 2 & 3 or 3 & 4 indicates for design ratings.
 - Alex agrees that the new HCIM Committee should further clarify the numerical ratings in January for the next applicant pool.
 - Jeff is not sure if we will be pulling applicant PDFs next year or if the new application system will be mature enough for everyone to work within that.
- The MIM and MLIS applications include short, targeted prompt questions. HCIM can add these to the application for Fall 2022 applicants to provide additional clarity about applicants' specific qualifications that can be hard to glean from Statements of Purpose.
 - Any changes would need to be made by May; Jeff will convey them to the Graduate School.
 - Niklas likes the structured prompt questions provided they do not add a significant extra workload onto the applicant.
 - Amy suggested requiring only one or two prompts.
 - Kate and Jeff believe that using prompts has helped the MIM and MLIS programs draw a more focused applicant pool.

Conclusion: Jeff, Bill, and Alex volunteered to draft HCIM prompt questions as a subcommittee. They will create draft questions to present during the April committee meeting.

Agenda item: (1:30) [For discussion] Updates from PLO subcommittees since December

Presenters: Bill Kules, Ge Gao

- a. Alex/Amy/Bill on [Design and UX Strategy Competencies](#) (Interaction Design Studio, Visual Design, HCIM Capstone) - Approve Design Competency rubrics and review recommendation for initial design assignments to assess in Spring 2021
- b. Niklas/Ge/Carol/Jeff on [Research & Evaluation](#) and [Professional Competencies](#) (UX Research Methods, HCIM Capstone/Thesis) - Review update

Discussion:

- Bill shared his new 2020-2021 Capstone Portfolio Assessment assignment, which reflects the new Design program learning outcome.
 - Capstone students will be invited to provide their feedback on the PLO and also what might be missing.
 - Bill clarified to students that the Capstone portfolio is not the same as their professional portfolio.
 - Alex suggested asking the students to write a reflective essay for their Capstone in place of two different portfolios
 - In Dan Shilov's 1-credit portfolio development class, Amy learned about having a concise portfolio (akin to a Highlights reel of work) and a separate portfolio of PDF slides about projects (akin to an actual movie) that can be utilized during an interview. This approach of Highlights reel vs. movie could eventually be incorporated into the Capstone Portfolio Assessment.
 - Alex has seen positive impact after providing the Design PLO as a rubric in their Interaction Design course. It enables them to self-assess their work quality to some degree.
- Ge introduced a fleshed-out rubric she had created for assessing the Research & Evaluation PLO especially in relation to INST 710: UX Research Methods and posed general questions about ways to add more quantitative methods instruction into the program.
 - Bill asked the Committee members to read over Ge's notes and questions and make comments on the document.

Conclusions:

Committee members will review Ge's notes and provide feedback, so Ge and Niklas can complete the Research & Evaluation by the end of the semester.

Agenda item:	(1:40) [For continued discussion] Big-picture look at curriculum: number of credits, composition of core courses/desired electives, targeted enrollments/class sizes, to align with new PLOs	Presenters:	Bill Kules and Emilia Azar
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Competitive analysis of other HCIM programs related to number of course credits (proposal to increase from 30 to 36 credits) and Advanced Usability and Visual Design courses as elective vs. core b. High-level summary; Results table) 		

Discussion:

- Bill shared several updates about the Capstone.
 - Since 40-45 students are expected to enroll in the Capstone in Fall 2021, we will need two sections, including a likely second instructor.
 - The addition of Google sprints and the new focus on the Agile model is working well.
 - Bill will start to focus the projects differently. Instead of a one-year project, he is going to have a core project focus in the spring semester and use the fall semester as a practice time for design sprints and teaching UX strategy.
- Emilia presented takeaways after completing a comparative analysis of regional and aspirational HCIM programs. In particular:
 - If we aim to change the program to be more in line with aspirational programs (e.g., CMU, Georgia Tech, University of Washington), the data supports:
 - Requiring a minimum of 36 credits for our program
 - Adding Advanced Usability Testing as a required course
 - Adding Visual Design as a required course
 - If we focus on regional programs alone, the data does not support any of the three above changes.
 - Alex and Amy believe we should bump up the program to 36 credits to better compete with the aspirational programs.
 - Wayne mentioned that if we want part-time students, then 36 credits is a 6-year program.
 - Kate added that the two extra classes would probably not affect part-time students' attraction to the program.
- Carol volunteered to be on a sub-committee for creating a 36-credit program proposal.
- Bill asked the Committee to think about offering a second-level programming course.

Agenda item:	(2:10) [For discussion] Identification of Spring HCIM Committee priorities , subcommittees, and timelines	Presenter:	Bill Kules
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Discussion:

Following review of Fall accomplishments and remaining goals for the year, the Committee agreed to establish subcommittees to work on completing three key tasks by the end of the Spring semester:

- The Research PLOs (Niklas, Ge)
- The supplemental questions to add to the HCIM application for next year (Alex, Bill, Jeff)
- A proposal for 36-credit program (Carol, Amy)

Conclusion: Timelines for tasks are listed below.

Agenda item: (2:25) Review action items & wrap up

Presenter: Bill Kules

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
<input type="checkbox"/> Proposed short-format application prompt questions due by May	Jeff, Bill, Alex	April 2
<input type="checkbox"/> Add comments to Ge's proposed changes on the Assessment & Rubric: Research and Evaluation document	All committee members	April 2
<input type="checkbox"/> Another revision back of the Research & Evaluation PLO, including qualitative recommendation	Niklas and Ge	April 9 committee meeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Subcommittee work on proposal for 36 credit HCIM program	Carol, Amy	April 2

Next Meeting: Friday, April 9, 2021, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
via Zoom

[Rolling agenda items](#) for future HCIM meetings