

SPIRE-EIT 2024



SUMMER PROGRAM FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION – EMERGING INTERFACE
TECHNOLOGIES



0028



July 31, 2024



Alessandra Winters

Day 65. Today we have been working on our research paper. We are almost finished with it tonight and will submit no later than 5pm. We received the prints of our posters today and they look great. Tonight we are all going to be relaxing, playing games, working out, and getting ready for a day of video recording and presentations tomorrow.



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0027



July 23, 2024



Alessandra Winters

Day 57. Today we have agreed on a long work day. We are working on our blogs for another 10 minutes. Then we will all collectively work on our poster for 30 minutes until the meeting at 2pm begins. From there we will proceed to work on the paper for an hour and unity for an hour after that. Once it is 5pm we will then proceed to create and consume pasta for two hours. After 7pm we will commute back home to continue working on the paper for an hour, publish a draft for revision, split our slide show for presentation, and then read the assigned case studies for our ethics course tomorrow. All in all our work day will not complete until 2145 tonight.



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0026



July 22, 2024



Alessandra Winters

Day 56. This weekend was calm. Not much occurred. Today, Monday, we are working on the presentable for the project, so the power point and poster that are due later this week. We are also working on the research paper. We are on track to be able to get everything done. It should be a calm week and next week will a chill end to the ten weeks here.

0025- HCI homework

 July 18, 2024  Alessandra Winters

Day 52.

There are many different things that hold my interest, but the main three are as follows:

- Automotive
- Game Design
- Story Telling

A research question based around these three topics might be along the lines of:

How does spending a significant amount of time in driving-based video games effect driving skills and habits in real life?

 Blog Posts  1 Reply

0024: Heuristics & Indecision with Design Elements

 July 16, 2024  Alessandra Winters

Day 50.

When considering my application and how people bring biases into any decision made, I found that the following three heuristics seemed highly likely for the target audience for our VR application. While these are all common for all users, I felt that addressing these three would make our application as strong as possible.

Anchoring – overly influenced by initial information we learn

Familiarity – favorable opinion of things, people, or places experienced before

Availability – opinion based on ease of recalling relevant information, correct or not

In several of my degree courses we discussed the 8 golden rules of design as suggested by Ben Shneiderman (<https://www.cs.umd.edu/users/ben/goldenrules.html>). I picked the following design principles based off both his suggestions as well as another more general UX design site (<https://www.uxdesigninstitute.com/blog/ux-design-principles/>).

Hierarchy – make important information readily available, in obvious and easy to access spots. Important information needs to guide your application. The sooner the information is seen the more influence it will have on the user experience

Consistency – maintain consistency throughout your applications as well as applications from other developers. many people are familiar with an application or game style and the closer it is to that general layout without copying the application exactly, the better experience users will have. Information and functions will be where they expect, icons and colors will mean what they already understand them to be. Icons & colors especially are huge! People have very firm ideas what colors and

icons mean and are easily confused by large variations in either. Often the slightest confusion or frustration about an application can cause it to fail.

Reduce Short Term Memory Load – Also huge. The more people have to remember the more frustrated they will get. Forms with repeating information should be easy to reference previous information, information and data needs to be easy to find and logical. The more people can rely on the application to remember things for them, the more likely they will be to use it. An application should be able to stand alone. If someone is having to write information from an application down on paper to remember then the application needs quite a bit of work.

Overall the goal of application design should be to focus entirely on the User Experience. The application needs to work for them, not necessarily you. But it also needs to convey what you need it to or to fulfil the function you intended it to. Consider every aspect of how the user will use the application and if you have built a successful application the user should be able to pick it up and navigate it like a pro within just a few minutes without getting frustrated.

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0023

 [July 12, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

Day 46.

Last night we worked on the paper for our project. Today we are working on our project some more. We were able to overcome some of the errors we were receiving yesterday during work. We are making decent headway towards finishing our project.

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0020 – 0022

 [July 11, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

Day 43, 44, & 45.

Here are my notes from today's lecture on technical ethics and from our guest speaker during our luncheon lecture.

There is never a 100% correct answer to ethical dilemmas

Capital System works if $\text{Gross Revenue} > \text{Expenses}$ otherwise your out of business

Recognize when there is an ethical dilemma & create a standard for going about answering it

Loss of reputation:

- Loss of job/income
- Black listed from hiring
- Whistle Blower

Back room conversations about work & employees do happen and can be detrimental to careers

TECHNICAL ETHICAL GUIDELINES

- ABET — Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology
- NSPE — National Society of Professional Engineering
- ASME — American Society of Mechanical Engineers

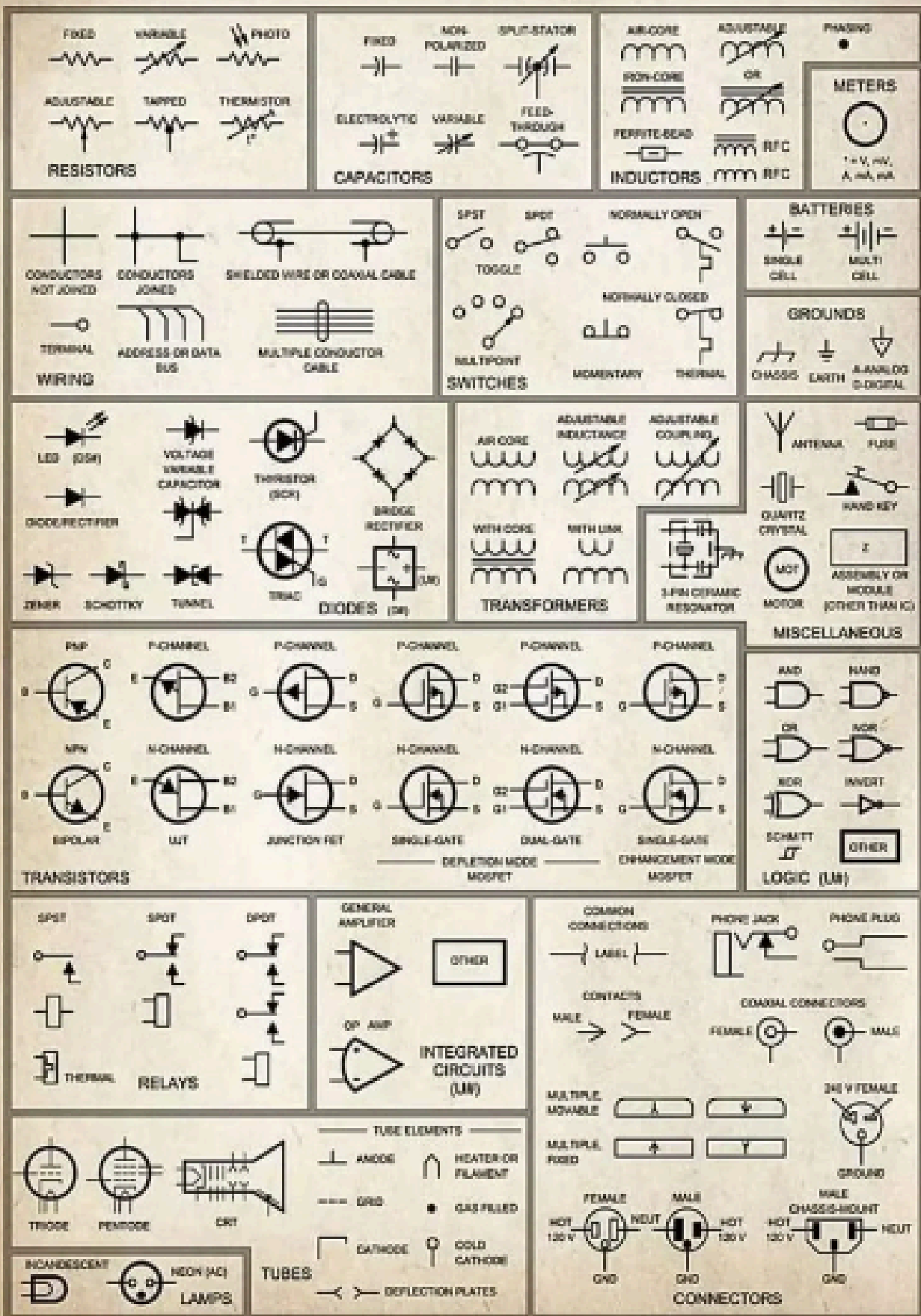
Ethics are achieved by following a mixture of moral, legal & personal Values

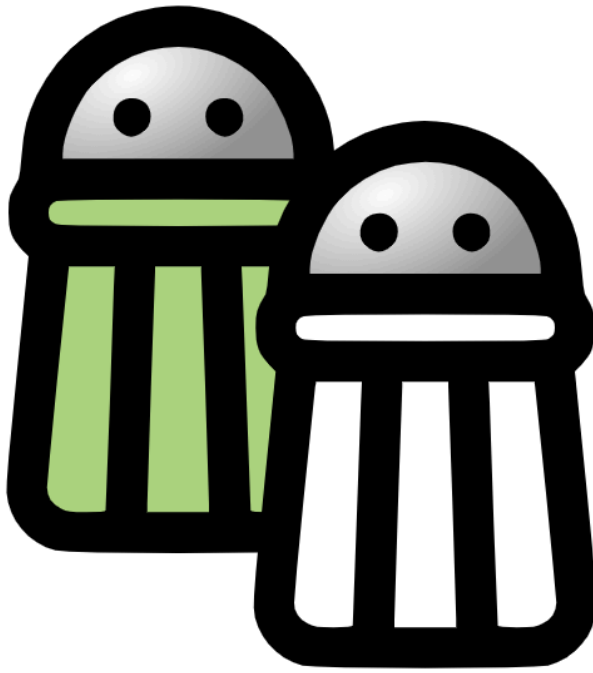
Important Quotes:

- In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, in the expert's mind there are few
- A PHD is a bad marriage. You have to find a reason to stay.
- I would never know if I was any good if I couldn't make the students good enough to come back to destroy me

On Wednesday we...

ELECTRICAL SCHEMATIC SYMBOLS





And many many pages of changing notes on the project.

Today:

Running out of time to blog because I have project things to do.

Github. Assets. Etc

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0019

 [July 8, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

Day 42.

We had a presentation about poster presentation preparation. Here are my notes from today's lecture:

Presentation Date: July 30th

- concise summary
- 2-3 min of discussion (elevator pitch)
- 2-3 hr session average
- vibrant (and exhausting) space

Why a poster?

- visual summary of research
- good for networking and collaboration
- chance for feedback

Key Elements of a poster

- Title → clear, concise, main idea, easy to read
- Intro → brief background, problem statement
- Method → visual, describe research and data collection
- Results → key findings, also include visuals
- Discussion → interpret results, relate back to research
- Conclusion & Future → where this can go in the future

Q&A

- a chance to engage w/ industry professionals and faculty
- big for networking

Based off this presentation and the presentations from the other groups, here are my questions:

Comm Heat:

- Is your research focused locally?
- What does an affinity diagram look like? What does it do? How did it affect your project?
- Did your research touch on ways to adjust our environment to reduce the frequency and intensity of heat events? (Ie replace concrete with ..., reduce this type of pollutant, etc)

Curiosity:

- What types of activities seem to help students engage?
- Is there research into why student engagement is decreasing?
- Do you have any research about how technology affects engagement?

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0018

 [July 3, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

Day 37. Today we have been working on presentations of our deep dives. My slides are finished, and I am ready to present. While I am waiting for the presentations to begin, I am working on other work for the STEM XR group project. We have considered researching in the realm of Arduinos and Raspberry Pis. Other than that, today has been calm and we have the weekend off.

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0017

 [July 2, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

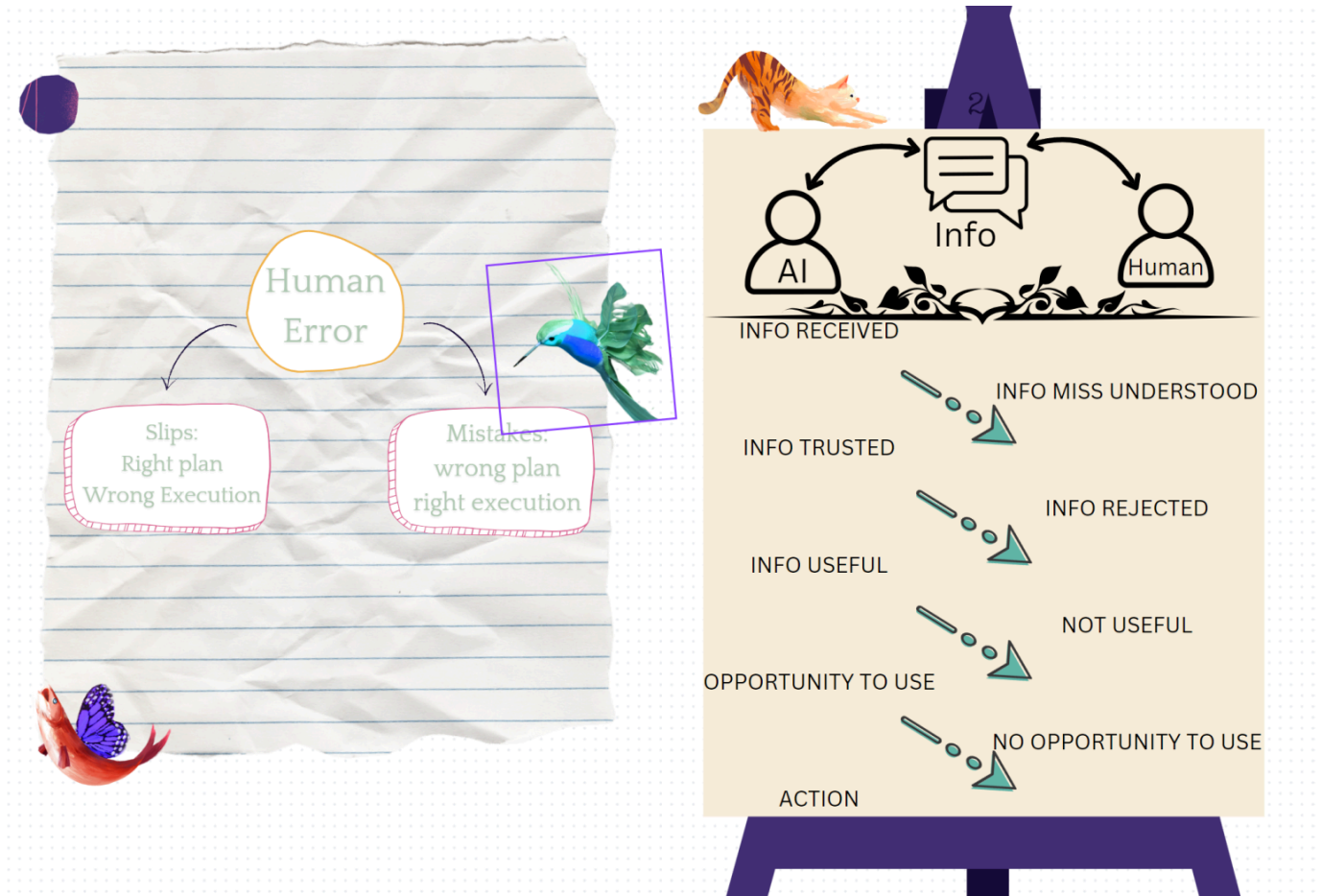
Day 36.

Today we discussed the rural communities of Iowa, why they exist, what their mind set is, and why they are shrinking. We discussed various budgets including how college football coaches make in the realm of 4 million a year.

Here were my notes from today's lecture on risk analysis:

- Black Swan– event that breaks all models and understanding and often changes history because of it

- What is the likelihood your software will be misunderstood
- resilience engineering– assume everything will break and build to fix it
- most failures are from human error



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0016

July 1, 2024 [Alessandra Winters](#)

Day 35. This morning when we arrived at VRAC we continued to work on our MCA presentations. They are getting close to completion and should be ready by Wednesday for presentation. Our Machine Learning models have not yet been created as the computer to run them has been occupied over the weekend.

Lunch today was rice, meat, cheese and a soda. We spoke to the other REU interns from other SPIRE programs. It was excellent conversation.

I predict this afternoon should be much of the same with a calm evening.

[Blog Posts](#) [1 Reply](#)

0015

June 28, 2024 [Alessandra Winters](#)

Day 32.

On the way to lunch today we discussed our meal plans for the weekend. I believe someone is going to make brisket. We then ate lunch. I was informed of some typos on my previous blog post which I will now return to and correct.

This morning my group worked on the presentation for our Deeper Dive topic which we will be presenting next week.

Today has been efficient.

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0014: Cars & Phone experiment

 [June 27, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

Day 31.

If I were to design a phone and driving experiment, I would test the GPS mapping functionalities. Stephen mentioned a school shooting and direction detection experiment here at Iowa State and I think something like that would be excellent for testing phones while driving.

Question

Does GPS type (audio vs visual vs combination) affect distracted driving level?

Variables

Independent: The type of GPS and the type of driving environment

Dependent: The level of distracted driving

Design

We will have two lists of routes: a list of cities with high, but similar, traffic styles. we will also have a list of long distance routes with complex directions, long stretches of roads, and similar traffic and stops.

We will select subjects from both city and rural driving areas at home in all states to get a large cross section of data. We will be testing the subject's data against themselves.

Subjects will be presented with lists of cities and driving routes. Subjects will then mark which cities they have visited and which routes they have driven over 51% of*.

Each subject, based on the lists they have provided us, will be asked to drive 8 different routes total, three in cities they have never visited and three long routes that are unfamiliar to them. One will be a city route that they are familiar with to gauge driving style and another will be a long route that they are also familiar with to gauge rural driving style.

The first route driven for both long distance and city will be a combination of audio played through the car speakers and a visual map displayed by a phone mounted on the dash. Both groups will use a proprietary software for directions (similar to google or apple maps). Route two will be an audio only provided route and route three will be a visual only provided route.

Data Collection & Measurements

We will be measuring how distracted drivers are while driving. The variables we will be collecting are:

time eyes left the road
number of times of hard breaking
number of accidents which occurred during the test
time while in hard acceleration
number of time evasive maneuvers had to be conducted
number of missed turns
number of illegal turns and lane changes
number of times they were pulled over by officers
how long their speed was greater than 5 over the speed limit in favorable conditions
how long their speed was under 5 under the speed limit in favorable conditions
how far off predicted arrival time they were

Based off of these measurements we will determine the relative levels of both distracted and aggressive driving, comparing their 6 GPS routes to their regular routes.

*we will decide 51% of routes driven by presenting them with a map of all the routes we will be conducting experiments on marked on the map. Participants will then be asked to draw a line through the areas where they have traveled or driven through. We will then measure the distance of each length of subject drawn line to calculate percentage along each route. If there are several routes that are below 51% we will select the three routes with the lowest percentage totals.

Hypothesis

Visual based GPS driving will cause more hazardous driving conditions while audio-based GPS will cause longer route times.

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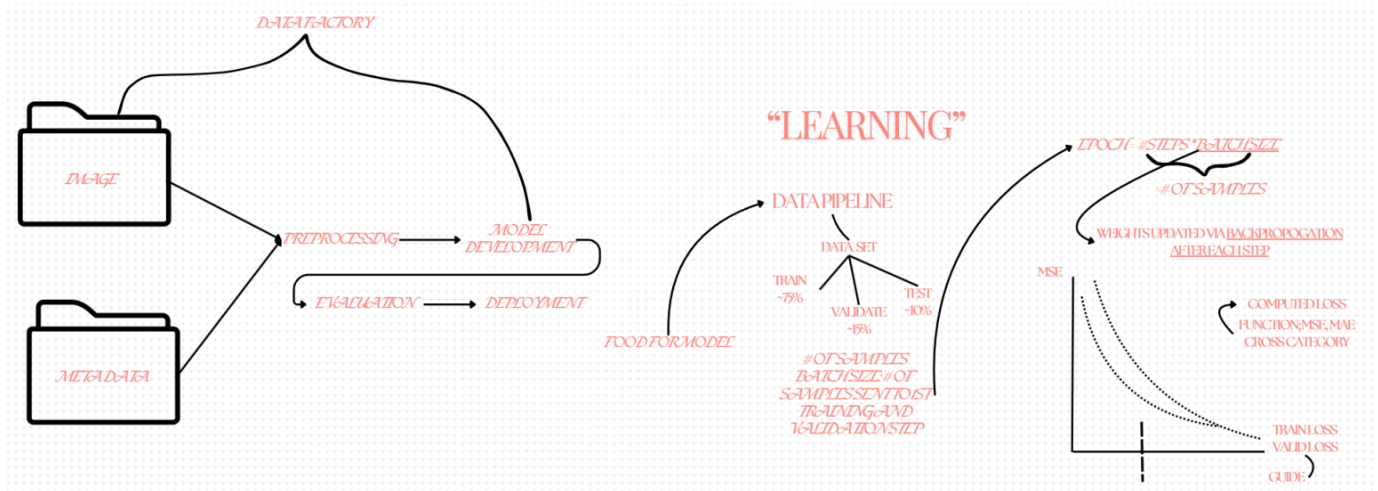
0013

 [June 26, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

Day 30. here are my current notes from yesterday and today.

- TAG: talented and gifted students
- Integrated sci:
 - question and exploration-based learning
 - can be frustrating for students as no rote memorization
 - more engaging for students
 - students remember content better
 - technology is welcome
- students enjoy anime style art, graffiti block lettering
- escape room style or puzzle games are favorite in vr
- watch mainly anime and adult style cartoons (south park)
- Tick Tok and Instagram are common
- phones are an issue in the classroom
- mobile games included:
 - fruit ninja

- temple run
- subway surfers



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0012

June 25, 2024 [Alessandra Winters](#)

It is day 29. Today I will include my notes from this morning's lecture about blogging:

- Journaling = positive effect on mental health
- blogging = form of reflecting and documenting day to day experiences
- a way to solidify progress
- practice writing
- avoid talking to friends and family by posting a short brick of text and sharing a URL
- share experiences relating to research projects, courses etc.
- blog = your life story
- make blogging exciting through positive reinforcement training
- make it fun (add pictures, comedy, etc.)

Furthermore, I will share my notes about plagiarism also from this morning's lecture:

- deliberate (evil) or inadvertent use of another's work
- Common types of plagiarism:
 - replication
 - duplication
 - 2nd source
 - misleading attribution
 - invalid source
 - paraphrasing w/o citation
 - repetitive research
 - unethical collaboration
 - verbatim
 - complete

Later today we will be traveling to the City of Storm Lake to converse with a teacher and students. I will also plan on taking out the trash sometime tomorrow.

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0011

 [June 21, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

Day 25 and I am falling asleep. So I'll make this short. The question of the day is: have you ever shaved a cat?

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0010

 [June 19, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

It is now day 23. There was rain last night. There was rain again today. I like the rain, the rain is good.

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0009

 [June 18, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

It is day 22. A ponderance upon the self was embarked on. Elodin once asked who art thou? And only through the ramblings of the wind and the journey of names can one discover themselves. For while Tom Petty is claimed to have once said, "You have four years to be irresponsible here. Relax. Work is for people with jobs. You'll never remember class time, but you'll remember time you wasted hanging out with your friends. So stay out late. Go out on a Tuesday with your friends when you have a paper due Wednesday. Spend money you don't have. Drink 'til sunrise. The work never ends, but college does" you must question the wisdom of his ways. For Epistemologists' minds never rest, never cease to be, Entrepreneurs never cease to pursue, and artists and writers never cease to create. The world is large and there are many paths to pursue but to determine where and when to start is the most difficult event of life. There is a wisdom in Tom Petty's words, but there is also a fault. Enjoy your time, go out with friends, get out of your room and your nose out of a book, but don't consider it "free" time— all time is precious, all time is valuable. Spend your time with friends getting experiences, seeing the world, being in it, surrounded by it. Get to know the world and all things in it. While college ends and the work begins those experiences will never fade.

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0008

 [June 17, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

It is day 21. It is a Monday. I received an email from my brother detailing the unusual activity he encountered over the past week. However, since his stories are not mine to tell, I will leave the story at me having read an email. I spent many an hour in the world of Minecraftia. I cooked some rice.

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HCI– late night contemplations of bad UI



June 15, 2024



Alessandra Winters

There have been several bad UI's that I have encountered. But the worse two are as follows:

-NASA'S website

-Delt Airline's Phone Application

The thing that is awful about the NASA website is that there are layers upon layers upon layers of nested menus which seem to have no end. You get to one page of the site then immediately are presented with a another set of buttons which bring you to even more pages which are sometimes circular. One example is when you scroll to the Contact NASA button and select it. You are then presented with a very odd customer service page, as in, there is no real customer support. Instead it fulfills the duty of an FAQ page. It also lists Careers at NASA as a menu option as well as Jobs at NASA.

9:32

N 5G 74%



nasa.gov/contact,



37



How to become an astronaut



Careers at NASA



Jobs at NASA

Jobs at NASA are advertised on USAJobs



International Space Station




Using NASA images



Current robotic





When you select Jobs at NASA you are brought to a different website entitled USAJobs where you can then search for open positions. However if you select Careers you are then faced with the following webpage:

9:33

5G 74%



nasa.gov/careers/



37



Careers at NASA

There are jobs and there are careers. But at NASA, our work is more than just a profession — it's a lifelong pursuit, a passion — and a chance to change the history of humanity. Together, we stand poised to usher in a bold new era of discovery.

Search USAJobs for All Openings



PEOPLE

**18,000+ Civil
Servants**

LOCATIONS

**10 Centers and
Facilities**

OCCUPATIONS

150+

YEARLY NEW
HIRES

500-1100





But if you select the button “Search USAJobs for All Openings” you are then brought to the following page:

USAJOBS

Sign in

Help

Search

National Aeronautics and Space Administration X

X [Remove all filters](#)

Filters
1

Sort by

Save
search

Viewing 1 – 25 of 32 jobs

Senior Scientist for Mars Exploration

Headquarters, NASA

Anywhere in the U.S. (remote job)

Starting at \$147,649 Per Year (SL 00)


This job is open to: 

🕒 Open 05/13/2024 to 06/14/2024

Program Analyst

Headquarters, NASA

Anywhere in the U.S. (remote job)



Which is exactly the same page that the Jobs at NASA link brings you to, but with an extra step to get there. To me this interface is convoluted and unnecessary. You do not need two buttons for the same purpose, even if one appears to be different than the other. This is a wasted use of menus and makes the night unnecessarily complex to navigate. You stop at the first menu and ask yourself if you want a job or career at NASA, which takes time, and then after deciding on either one you are brought to the same page which made your initial ponderings a waste of time. If they were to simplify their sight, consolidate repetitive information, and remove layers of menus to make the sight more user friendly then the UI of this webpage would be greatly improved and make for a much more enjoyable exploration of the space program.

The next poorly designed UI is the Delta Airline's application for phones. The app in gneeral looks very similar to most other airline based applications (such as United or Southwest), except for this specific page:

Secure Flight Passenger Data



Delta collects Secure Flight Passenger Data for all passengers in accordance with the [Transportation Security Administration](#). [Learn More](#).

Please visit delta.com to update your information

Please make sure your full name is entered exactly as it appears on your government issued identification. (example: Jane Elizabeth Doe)

PREFIX

FIRST NAME

Alessandra

MIDDLE NAME

•••

LAST NAME

••••••••

SUFFIX

GENDER

Female (F)

DATE OF BIRTH

Jan ••••••

REDRESS #

KNOWN TRAVELER #

T••••••••

CANADIAN TRAVEL #

DIGITAL ID



THIS CHECK INDICATES YOUR CONSENT TO STORE YOUR SECURE FLIGHT PASSENGER DATA CONSISTENT WITH OUR PRIVACY POLICY. FOR DELTA MEMBERS, BY CHECKING THIS CHECKBOX, YOU ALSO CONSENT TO DELTA AIRLINES, INC. SHARING YOUR INFORMATION WITH TSA TO BE CONSIDERED FOR TSA PRE✓[®] AT SELECT TSA CHECKPOINTS.

The issue with this page is very subtle, but it is at the top. When I first received my TSA precheck number, I needed to add it onto the flights I had booked for both my trip to Houston a few weeks ago as well as the traveling to and from here. My Houston flight had been booked through United Airlines. Their phone application allowed you to enter the settings from the app, input your KTN, and then apply it to your flights. When I received my boarding pass there were no issues and my Precheck was printed correctly. With Delta however, you have to click on a link at the top of the settings page in the application which brings you to a website that you have to log into, then you can change your settings. The KTN number then shows in your application. However, there is no way to “apply” it to your flights or to check if there was an issue with getting it added to your ticket. When I arrived at the airport the very kind lady at the counter informed me (after I had discovered the Precheck had not printed with my boarding pass) that she was unable to add my KTN to my ticket for some unknown reason. The number said it was correct and my name had not been misspelled, but there was an error with the information in the Delta System and it was preventing me from accessing my precheck benefits. The reason I feel that this is poorly designed UI is that because it is such a complex system, having multiple data input and transfer points, that it was easy for it to have an error or failure which prevented the proper data from being transferred the date of the event and no way to check prior to your flight if precheck was going to print. Their UI would be significantly better if you did not have to leave the app to input any data, if there was a way to “apply” the data to your fights, and if there was a way to check to see if there were any issues with the data or the flight information which may prevent it from being added to your ticket prior to your departure date so you have time to rectify the problem.

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to read my TSA Precheck annoyed ramblings. Live long and prosper.

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0007

 June 13, 2024  [Alessandra Winters](#)

Today is day 17. It feels like the Thursday it is. Thursdays are bad days– it is the day the world ended in the popular novel where the key part of hitchhiking is always having a towel. There is nothing wrong about today, today has not had anything go wrong. But it is a Thursday so, therefore, today is inherently a bad day.

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0006

 June 11, 2024  [Alessandra Winters](#)

It is now day 15 in the wild Ames. The elusive ChuChu was last spotted outside the window on a velocipede and the daring Rodney explored the alternate world of the Apple. Bakugan were exchanged and syrup based bubbly beverages were purchased. On the daring 3 Blue bus-ride, the return began well into the night. It had faded between light to dark in the time between passenger delivery and retrieval. Once the bus had been boarded and passengers seated, the journey began. The first stop was driven past as there was no one waiting, and no one requested a stop. We then stopped at what is believed to have

been a transfer station. The bus came to a halt, the doors opened, and then nothing. No one left the bus. One person entered through the doors and sat, but then nothing. We sat, waiting for some unknown universal factor to inform the driver to continue onward. For 1.8 eggs we waited. And then the universe blessed us and the doors closed and the bus began to move. For a time we drove until a stop was requested. The man stood. He walked towards the doors. Then nothing. The bus continued onward passing his stop. The bus halted at the next stop and the man hurried off. The doors closed once more and the bus began to move. Then, past a stop light, it took a right turn into what appeared to be a school. Slowly it crept forward until it halted. The turn was extremely narrow, and the driver had to stop before completing the turn. A horrible grinding noise came from the front of the bus and the lights flickered off. In the darkness the bus moved in reverse, then halted again. Then more grinding noises proceeded as the lights flashed back on. The passengers looked at one another. Another horrible noise and the bus began forward. Then the front wheel hit a curb and up the bus lifted. Then it dropped. Then the back right wheel lifted and fell to the ground as the driver completed his turn, left the parking lot, and returned to his route. Speedily through the neighborhood the bus driver proceeded. A stop was requested and the bus came to a stop. The passengers left. And then the bus driver left. The doors remained opened. The driver walked around to the left side of the bus, was gone for a few minutes before returning to his seat, closing the doors, and proceeded to finish the route. Several stops later I found my self on the straight walk back home having survived the very unusual bus ride.

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0005

 [June 7, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

It is now day 11 here in Ames. The scenery is very much still the same but the weather has dried and the temperature risen. I have risen above the ground upon the face of a boulder and spent many an hour running through hills in search of the legendary Minecraft Dark Oak.

Walmart Shopping List:

- Sour Gummy Worms
- Milk Chocolate M&Ms
- Queso
- Hint of Lime chips
- Sharpie
- Tacobell Mild Sauce

We meandered along the main streets of Ames to view the arts of the city. We consumed subpar food at the local cafeteria– the only food place we can find open that accepts our meal swipes so far. Photos were taken, roofs were not walked upon. A Journey to the Center of the Earth was began. Goods were ordered from the mystical Amazon and addresses were adjusted to appease the delivery drivers. Wings were consumed late into the evening and the debate upon Octopi, Octopuses, and Octopodes was pondered upon until the conclusion was ㄟ(͜ʖ)ㄟ.

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0004

 [June 6, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

It has been 10 days now here in Iowa. A spider ate my cookie.

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0003

 [June 5, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

It has been 9 days. The logic trees have grown and code born from its brain thoughts. The elaborate colors on the black page show the efforts of the mind. We converse upon the wondrous question on how to help rural communities with their STEM education. The hopes of the many to persuade the few to pursue the curriculum in places of higher learning. But the question remains— how.

The Freddy's of the burger world holds a warm place in my heart, a reminder of home with its fry sauce and steak-based patties. Shoe string fries coated in the seasoning of the burger pantheon. Oh how I miss the wondrous food from my home afar.

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0002

 [June 4, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

It has been 8 days in the humid forests of Vietnam – sorry I meant Ames, Iowa. Survival is proving difficult here as the bus system refuses to show when the 6 Brown South bus is arriving. The options are to wait for a potentially non-existent bus or walk through the thick warm forests to the cool center of survival (VRAC). The days grow longer and sleep scarce – this definitely has nothing to do with video games. We have conversed upon the statements of question regarding the most important topic of the universe—how to create XR STEM curriculum for rural communities—and have experimented with mystical technology—Microsoft cloud programs. We have heard from the mystical industry & academic leader James Oliver, a wonderful example of all the potential we have at our disposal for our future endeavors. (Dr. Oliver really was excellent to hear from. I learned a lot from his education and career journey.)

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0001

 [June 3, 2024](#)  [Alessandra Winters](#)

It has been 7 days since we have arrived here in Iowa. There is significantly less corn and corn paraphernalia than I expected. There are trees and hills which make biking difficult since I am unpracticed in distance biking. We have learned the ways of Aldi and I now possess the ever-important Aldi cart quarter. Time is a cruel mistress— especially when trying to write code to display the hours, minutes, and seconds when you are only provided user imputed seconds. You must learn quick to survive out here in the forests of Ames— for example you must not take the 6 Brown North Bus to try to get to the VRAC, you must take 6 Brown South Bus which boards slightly earlier and directly across the street. You can also jump off the 6 Brown North Bus at the next stop light, cross the street, and board the 6 Brown South Bus. Nick says hi, he is [insert positive adjective here as per request]. Learning is key and sleep deprivation is a requirement (but not a VRAC requirement, just college student life requirement).

