


Ethics & IRB

Doing right by your participants

1




Evaluation Means People

Recall:

- Users and their tasks are identified
- Needs and requirements are specified
- Interface is designed, prototype built
- *But is it any good? Does the system support the users in their tasks? Is it better than what was there before (if anything)?*
- Evaluating your design requires human participants
- Issues of rights, respect, ethics


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IRB, Participants, & Ethics

- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
 - ❖ <http://compliance.gatech.edu/>
- Reviews all research involving human (or animal) participants
- Safeguarding the participants, and thereby the researcher and university
- Not a science review (i.e., not to assess your research ideas); only safety & ethics

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Ethics

- Testing can be arduous; privacy is important
- Each participant should consent to be in experiment (informal or formal)
 - ❖ Know what experiment involves, what to expect, what the potential risks are
- Must be able to stop without danger or penalty
- All participants to be treated with respect


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Ethics Certification

- Ethics is not just common sense
- Training being standardized to ensure even and equal understanding of issues
- Required Online CITI TRAINING:
 - ❖ <http://www.compliance.gatech.edu/irb-required-training/>
 - ❖ www.citiprogram.org


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Protocol Approval

- Obtain IRBwise username & password
- Submit protocol, including description of experiment, participants, consent form, etc
- Modify as necessary to ensure compliance
- Obtain approval
 - ❖ Including approved consent form
- Conduct study appropriately


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Recruiting Participants

- Various "subject pools"
 - ❖ Volunteers
 - ❖ Paid participants
 - ❖ Students (e.g., psych undergrads) for course credit
 - ❖ Friends, acquaintances, family, lab members
 - ❖ "Public space" participants - e.g., observing people walking through a museum
- Must fit user population (validity)
- Motivation is a big factor - not only \$\$ but also explaining the importance of the research
- Note: Ethics, IRB, Consent apply to **all** participants, including friends & "pilot subjects"


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Consent

- Why important?
 - ❖ People can be sensitive about this process and issues
 - ❖ Errors will likely be made, participant may feel inadequate
 - ❖ May be mentally or physically strenuous
- What are the potential risks (there are always risks)?
 - ❖ Examples?
- "Vulnerable" populations need special care & consideration (& IRB review)
 - ❖ Children; disabled; pregnant; students (why?)


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Before Study

- Be well prepared so participant's time is not wasted
- Make sure they know you are testing software, not them
 - ❖ (Usability testing, not User testing)
- Maintain privacy
- Explain procedures without compromising results
- Can quit anytime
- Administer signed consent form


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During Study

- Make sure participant is comfortable
- Session should not be too long
- Maintain relaxed atmosphere
- Never indicate displeasure or anger


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After Study

- State how session will help you improve system ("debriefing")
- Show participant how to perform failed tasks
- Don't compromise privacy (never identify people, only show videos with explicit permission)
- Data to be stored anonymously, securely, and/or destroyed


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Attribution Theory

- Studies why people believe that they succeeded or failed--themselves or outside factors (gender, age differences)
- Explain how errors or failures are not participant's problem---places where interface needs to be improved


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IRB Contact Information

- Georgia Tech IRB Contact:
 - ❖ Melanie Clark (melanie.clark@osp.gatech.edu)
 - ❖ <http://compliance.gatech.edu/>
- More details on the Project web page


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Project Reminder, Update

- Start P1
 - ❖ Context
 - ❖ Users
 - ❖ Tasks
 - ❖ See Project Web page
- Survey the landscape
 - ❖ What has been done?
 - ❖ Who are the experts available?
 - ❖ What does the literature or market offer?

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Upcoming

- Task Analysis
- Evaluation

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