

## Principles of UX/Usability Research & Testing

### Overview of the two-day version of this class

UX/Usability research & testing plays a critical role in developing all types of products, from programmable TV remotes to intuitive apps for your phone and is even utilized in pacemakers and insulin pumps. Usability testing leverages many of the skills qualitative researchers already have [e.g., designing and managing qualitative research projects, building rapport, probing for clarity, getting below top-of-mind responses].

Students will gain an understanding of the best practices in usability testing as well as when and how to apply this method in their own work. While the focus of this course is on usability testing, students will learn about other UX research techniques such as remote and in-person card sorting, the System Usability Scale, affinity diagramming and tree testing and how to integrate these methods into a usability study.

Students will gain skill in:

- Running a usability study from start to finish: how to plan, moderate, collect data, analyze and report on a usability study
- Being able to analyze an interactive product to identify usability issues
- Techniques for measuring usability
- Methods to produce usability insights that drive business decisions
- Recruiting for a usability study, using personas to identify key participant characteristics
- Approaches for running studies at different points in a product's development (e.g., concept, early prototype, released product)
- When to do in-person, remote, or automated usability testing
- Methods for gathering feedback on interactive digital, mobile, and physical products
- How to integrate usability into other forms of qualitative research
- Managing observers and running debrief discussions

Students will receive a comprehensive work book, an example test plan, test script, recruiting screener, and usability report that they can use as a template to adapt for use in their own practice. The course material includes a detailed bibliography with information on where to learn more about usability testing user experience research so that they can incorporate these techniques into their own qualitative practice. The class will include an overview of the Morae recording software which is designed to capture video, participant and observer interaction during usability studies and UX research.

### Educational Plan

#### Day 1

Definition of usability, usability testing, and types of products and services that can be usability tested, where usability fits into “Design Thinking”, good reasons to run a study, exploration of how usability testing fits into other forms of qualitative research, frameworks for evaluating interactive products, setting usability study objectives, gauging your overall testing approach to the product development phase, developing criteria to measure usability, using personas to clarify recruiting requirements, recruiting for a usability study, developing the task list and discussion guide, moderating the usability study – how it is similar and different from other forms of qualitative moderating, ethics around running studies, basic data collection, dealing with observers, In-class exercise: each student will have the opportunity to moderate and to observe a usability study

### Day 1, Evening:

About 2 hours of homework developing your own task list against an interactive product of your choice

### Day 2

More detailed discussion on data collection: defining task success/failure, time-on-task, user ratings, video recording sessions, role of Morae, System Usability Scale (SUS) and Product Reaction Cards, affinity diagramming for synthesizing data collected during a usability study. Using the task list they have developed students will moderate a usability session with an outside participant, creating reports that drive decisions and satisfy stakeholders who have different information needs, variations on a theme: considerations for remote and mobile sessions, how to usability test physical products, card sorting, overview of key UX learning resources and organizations.

### Kay's Background



**Kay Corry Aubrey** has over 25 years' experience as a consultant, trainer and expert in usability research and user interface design. As founder of Usability Resources Inc of Bedford, MA, Kay has helped organizations maximize their competitiveness through evaluation and optimization of the usability of their products. She is a feature editor for the QRCA VIEWS Magazine and a lecturer in usability and design at Northeastern University. Kay is a RIVA-certified Master Moderator and Trainer.

Kay has a Master's degree in Information Systems from Northeastern University's School of Industrial Engineering, a Masters in Social Work from Boston University, and a BA from McGill University in Montreal. She has written many articles on Qualitative Research as it relates to technology and has spoken on this topic locally and throughout the United States. Please visit [www.UsabilityResources.net](http://www.UsabilityResources.net) for more information.

### Testimonials from past students

- *"I learned about something almost completely new in a very engaging and comprehensive way...instructor is obviously an expert and is able to convey her expertise very effectively."*
- *"For the time allotted, I believe I gained a large set of baseline tools to use in my future usability test. Ms. Aubrey answered all the questions I had regarding unique circumstances that I will encounter in the future."*
- *"Very well thought out/taught and extremely easy to understand and comprehensive. The instructor was very knowledgeable and friendly."*
- *"Good content, engaging trainer, hands on practice"*
- *"The whole class had value for me. From the Q&A portion to the demonstration, I have gained valuable experience to use my career"*
- *"This was a great course, very glad I could attend and I learned a lot that will be very helpful for my work."*

For more information, please call 781-276-3020 or send an e-mail to [Kay@UsabilityResources.net](mailto:Kay@UsabilityResources.net)