

User Interface Design - Course Outline

SWEN 303: 2013 Trimester 1

This document sets out the workload and assessment requirements for SWEN 303. It also provides contact information for staff involved in the course. If the contents of this document are altered during the course, you will be advised of the change by an announcement in lectures and/or on the course web site. A printed copy of this document is held in the School Office.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Understand principles of usability engineering;
2. Design a user interface following accepted principles and guidelines;
3. Conduct an evaluation of a user interface and interpret the results to improve a design;
4. Integrate user interface design techniques into the general software engineering life cycle;
5. Identify the opportunities and challenges in designing visualisation systems.

A discussion on how these objectives map to the assessment, as well as to the graduate attributes, can be found in the assignments and projects section below.

Textbook

There is no prescribed textbook for SWEN303. We will use a combination of materials available through the Library's online databases, and some photocopied chapters pursuant to academic use under the University's copyright agreements and New Zealand law.

Lectures, Tutorials, Laboratories, and Practical work

A [schedule](#) of lecture topics, readings, and assignment due dates is available online

Lectures are held in Laby LT118 at: *Monday & Friday, 8:00 - 8:50*

The exceptions to this are that in week one we will meet on *Wednesday & Friday*, while in the final week of lectures we will also use the Wednesday slot for student presentations. Note we will not have a lecture on the *Monday* of the final week due to it being the Queens Birthday public holiday.

Assignments and Project

Assessment is split between a user experiment report (covering objective 3), a software project (covering objectives 1 - 5), and an external exam.

A deeper description of the project is in the Practical Work section later in this document.

The project will assess your ability to apply user interface engineering principles to a real world problem, and critique the proposed solution (BE graduate attributes [3\(a\)](#), [3\(b\)](#)). Identifying and designing a unique solution to a real world problem will demonstrate leadership (BE graduate attributes [2\(a\)](#)). Your report assessing the process and product (BE graduate attributes [3\(d\)](#), [3\(f\)](#)) along with your project presentation and research essay, will further develop your communications skills (BE graduate attribute [2\(b\)](#)).

Assessment that is submitted late will incur a one grade point penalty on the assessment item for each day that the assessment is late.

Workload

In order to maintain satisfactory progress in SWEN 303, you should plan to spend an average of at least *10* hours per week on this paper, and at least 150 hours over the entire course. A plausible and approximate breakdown for these total hours would be:

- Lectures: 20
- Readings: 15
- Project: 85
- User Experiment Report: 20
- Exam: 10

It should be noted that the total grade percentage assigned to an assessment item is does not equal to the percentage of the total course time spent on that item. This is due to the fundamentally different activities involved.

School of Engineering and Computer Science

The School office is located on level three of the Cotton Building ([Cotton 358](#)).

The notice board for SWEN 303 is located on the second floor of the Cotton Building.

Staff

The course organiser and lecturer for SWEN 303 is [Stuart Marshall](#). Stuart's contact details are:

- [Stuart Marshall](#)
- [Cotton 261](#)
- +64 4 463 6730
- Stuart.Marshall@ecs.vuw.ac.nz

Announcements and Communication

The main means of communication outside of lectures will be the SWEN 303 web area at http://ecs.victoria.ac.nz/Courses/SWEN303_2013T1/. There you will find, among other things, this document, the [lecture schedule](#) and [assignment handouts](#), and the [SWEN 303 Forum](#). The forum is a web-based bulletin board system. Questions and comments can be posted to the forum, and staff will read these posts and frequently respond to them.

Assessment

Your grade for SWEN 303 will be determined based on the following assessment weightings:

Item	Weight
User Experiment Report	20%
Individual Project Report	30%
Oral Presentation	10%
Final Examination	40%

Tests and Exams

The [timetable for final examinations](#) will be available from the University web site and will be posted on a notice board outside the faculty office. The final examination will be three hours long. No computers, electronic calculators or similar device will be allowed in the final examination. Paper non-English to English dictionaries will be permitted. The examination period for trimester 1 is 14 June - 3 July.

Practical Work

The practical work will consist of an individual project. The project will you analysing, designing, implementing and testing a user interface for a software system.

You can propose your own problem domain that you want to prototype a user interface for. However, the problem domain must relate to the United Nations Millenium Development Goals that can be found at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>. You must submit a short proposal by the end of the first week, and the course coordinator will check for the appropriateness of the problem and the scope of what is being attempted.

The project has four milestones that must be met. Milestones that are not met will incur a one grade point penalty (on both the report and the presentation).

Plagiarism

We encourage you to discuss the principles of the course and assignments with other students, to help and seek help with programming details, problems involving the lab machines. However, any work you hand in must be your own work.

The [School policy on Plagiarism](#) (claiming other people's work as your own) is available from the course home page. Please read it. We will penalise anyone we find plagiarising, whether from students currently doing the course, or from other sources. Students who knowingly allow other students to copy their work may also be penalised. If you have had help from someone else (other than a tutor), it is always safe to state the help that you got. For example, if you had help from someone else in writing a component of your code, it is not plagiarism as long as you state (eg, as a comment in the code) who helped you in writing the method.

Mandatory Requirements

To satisfy mandatory requirements, a student must gain at least a **D** grade in the exam, and at least a **C** grade in two of the internal assessment items.

Passing SWEN 303

To pass SWEN 303, a student must satisfy mandatory requirements and gain at least a **C** grade overall.

Withdrawal

The last date for withdrawal from SWEN 303 with entitlement to a refund of tuition fees is Friday 15 March 2013. The last date for withdrawal without being regarded as having failed the course is Friday 17 May 2013 -- though later withdrawals may be approved by the Dean in special circumstances.

Rules & Policies

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study>.

Find out about academic progress and restricted enrolment at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress>.

The University's statutes and policies are available at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>, except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar> (See Section C).

Further information about the University's academic processes can be found on the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic>

All students are expected to be familiar with the following regulations and policies, which are available from the school web site:

[Grievances](#)

[Student and Staff Conduct](#)

[Meeting the Needs of Students with Disabilities](#)

[Student Support](#)

[Academic Integrity and Plagiarism](#)

[Dates and Deadlines including Withdrawal dates](#)

[School Laboratory Hours and Rules](#)

[Printing Allocations](#)

[Expectations of Students in ECS courses](#)

The School of Engineering and Computer Science strives to anticipate all problems associated with its courses, laboratories and equipment. We hope you will find that your courses meet your expectations of a quality learning experience.

If you think we have overlooked something or would like to make a suggestion feel free to talk to your course organiser or lecturer.

[Course Outline as PDF](#)
