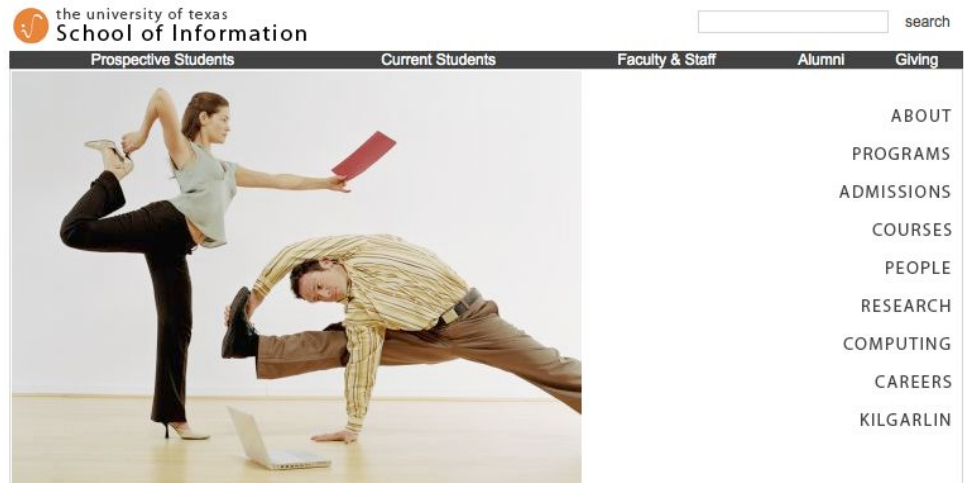


# Usability Test of iSchool Website



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April 2009

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## Overview

### ***Background/Introduction***

The School of Information is currently working on a redesign of its website. In order to inform the design project, we are undertaking a comprehensive usability review of the existing school site.

University of Texas, School of Information website: <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/>.

### ***Purpose***

The purpose of this test is twofold: first, determine what challenges users face while interacting with the current site; next, create a baseline of time-on-task benchmarks, against which the new design can be assessed in terms of overall usefulness (findability + utility) for each target audience.

### ***Goals***

- Determine problem areas in finding desired information for each target audience
- Determine subjective reactions to the site through the use of an online survey
  - Determine if users feel the site is useful for their specific needs
  - Determine if users feel the graphics/visual elements of the site facilitate site use and understanding
- Suggest changes to the website that aim to improve the profitability of website by:
  - Creating an archive of benchmarks to use for future designs
  - Decreasing service and support calls to iSchool staff
  - Acquiring a competitive edge by producing a more usable website, decreasing time-on-task and increasing overall satisfaction
  - Minimizing the risk of releasing a new design with existing usability problems

## Usability Test

### *Characteristics of Test Participants*

<b>Participant Type</b>	<b>Desired Number of Participants</b>
Prospective Grad Students	4
Current Students	4
Alumni	4
Staff/Professors	4
Donors	4

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Desired Number of Participants</b>
Female	10
Male	10

<b>Age</b>	<b>Desired Number of Participants</b>
17-21	2-3
22-32	4-5
33-43	4-5
44-54	4-5
55-65	4-5

<b>iSchool Website Experience</b>	<b>Desired Number of Participants</b>
No Experience	2-3
Some (up to 1x/month)	4-5
Moderate (2-4x/month)	8-10
Frequent (5+/month)	8-10

### ***Methodology***

The methodologies utilized in this test will result in both performance and preference data. This information will assist in our attempt to measure the overall usefulness of the website, with participant success rates correlating to performance while the interview and survey align with preferences.

### **Test Methods**

An example of each method is included in the *Appendices* section.

### **Performance Metrics:**

- Laboratory Testing (Within Subjects, Counterbalanced) – Composed of observations, recordings, and assessments as participant attempts to complete tasks
- Closing Interview – Composed of questions/statements to assess participant's opinions and feelings about the site's ease of use and ease of learning

## Preference Metrics:

- Background Questionnaire – Composed of questions/statements to reveal the participant's experience, attitudes, and preferences in all area that might affect how they perform
- Webmonkey Web Survey – Composed of questions/statements about user's overall experience, attitudes, and preferences regarding the iSchool website

## Task List

### Goals for Prospective Graduate Student Participants

1. What programs are offered at the iSchool?  
Find Programs (/programs/)
2. How many hours are required for completion of the MSIS degree?  
Find degree requirements, paragraph 2 (/programs/masters/)
3. How much is the estimated tuition cost for in-state students to complete 9 hours academic year 2009-10?  
Tuition & Fee Rates \$4325 (w/o fees)  
([www.utexas.edu/business/accounting/sar/t\\_f\\_rates.html](http://www.utexas.edu/business/accounting/sar/t_f_rates.html), link to PDF...)

### Goals for Current Graduate Student Participants

1. Find Course schedule for Professor Melanie Feinberg's course "Organizing and Providing Access to Information"  
<http://courses.ischool.utexas.edu/feinberg/2009/spring/INF384C/schedule.php>
2. Find the Spring 2009 Short Course Schedule for the Information Technology Lab web page  
<http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/technology/about/facilities.php>
3. Find current student job listings for the Austin area.  
<http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/jobweb/Search.php>

### Goals for Current Faculty/Staff Participants

1. Find Quinn Stewart's phone number  
<http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/people/students.php>  
<http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/people/staff.php>
2. Find the current academic calendar  
<http://registrar.utexas.edu/calendars/08-09/index.html>
3. Find the travel funds request form  
[http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/forms/faculty\\_funds\\_request.doc](http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/forms/faculty_funds_request.doc)

### Goals for Alumni/Donor Participants

1. Make a immediate cash donation to the school  
<https://utdirect.utexas.edu/nlogon/vip/ogp.WBX?menu=GL>
2. Find information on alumna Laura Alfaro  
[http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/people/alumni\\_updates\\_03012006.php](http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/people/alumni_updates_03012006.php)
3. Find out about Mission and Vision of the school  
<http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/about/vision.php>

## Description of Test Environment, Equipment, Logistics

We will use a controlled setting to conduct the sessions. The study will take place at the iSchool *Information eXperience Lab* on the University of Texas campus in Austin, Texas. The IX Lab is located in rooms 313 and 314 in the Flawn Academic Center (FAC).

<http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/technology/ixlab/>

Room 314: Participants will use a PC running the Windows operating system using an Internet Explorer browser with a high-speed connection to the Internet. Morae software is installed on the computer to capture any activity on the participant's screen as well as mouse clicks, keyboard activity, and web page changes. Additionally, we'll capture audio and video through a web camera and microphone.

### Test Moderator Role & Interviews

The two moderators will introduce the session (in person), conduct a short background interview, and then introduce the tasks list that will be printed for the participant.

Room 313: The test moderators will sit in the room next door while conducting the session.

The moderators will take detailed notes to capture questions, participant behavior and comments, both in Morae and outside the system.

### Data to be Collected & Evaluation Measures

The variety of testing methods employed will capture performance and preference data, with both sets being evaluated quantitatively as well as qualitatively.

#### Success Criteria:

- Participants will be able to find specific information within defined time constraints. A series of tasks will be specified, along with benchmark times. Each task will be timed during the evaluation, and we estimate users will complete the tasks within 10% of the benchmark times.
- Participants will have no more than 1 false attempt in locating specified information
- Participants will be able to successfully perform tasks without any online help documentation

### **Performance Measures (Quantitative):**

- Number and percentage of tasks performed correctly, without prompts or assistance
- Number and types of prompts given
- Number and percentage of tasks completed incorrectly
- Count of all incorrect selections/errors
- Count of errors of omission
- Count of incorrect menu choices
- Count of incorrect icons selected
- Number of searches performed
- Number of searches performed that returned useful results

### **Preference Measures (Qualitative):**

- Usefulness of the website
- How well the site matches expectations
- Ease of overall use
- Ease of learning
- Ease of accessibility
- Ease of reading text on screen

## **Usability Evaluation Report**

The final report will include the following sections:

- Background Summary including:
  - Goals
  - Methodologies
  - Participant characteristics
  - Logistics
- Findings from the lab test
  - Screenshots, as appropriate
- Heuristic Review
- Ethnographic Research
- Implications of the results of the Lab Test, Heuristic Review, and Ethnographic Research
- Recommendations for next steps
- Suggested follow-on research

## Appendix 1 – iSchool Website Survey

Jana Tate and Andrea Richeson are reviewing the usability of the iSchool website for a class project. The students seek your anonymous feedback about the usability of the site.

**Please read the descriptions below and then answer a few questions about your Internet use.**

1. What kind of Internet user would you say you are?
  - High-end – “I rely on the Internet for things like file sharing, blogging, Web site creation/design and Chat/Online discussion.”
  - Medium – “I use the Internet to visit Web sites and check e-mail, but not much else.”
  - Low-level – “I rarely use the Web or e-mail.”
2. How frequently do you access the Internet?
  - Never
  - Once a month or less
  - 2-4 times a month
  - Several times a week
  - Daily
3. How do you most commonly navigate to information on the Internet?
  - Search engine (Google, Yahoo, etc.)
  - Navigating around or following links from other sites
  - Using bookmarked or saved sites
  - Typing in specific Web page addresses (URLs )
  - Clicking on links in E-mail
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
4. How easy is it for you to find information on the Internet?

***Please answer the following questions in regards to the iSchool website.***

5. How frequently do you access the iSchool site?
  - Never
  - Once a month or less
  - 2-4 times a month
  - Several times a week
  - Daily
6. How do you most commonly navigate to things on the iSchool site?
  - I have never been to the iSchool site.
  - External search engine (Google, Yahoo, etc.)
  - Navigating around or following links from other sites
  - Using bookmarked or saved sites

- Typing in specific Web pages or URLs
- Search function on the iSchool site
- E-mail links
- Calling someone at the iSchool

7. If you have visited the iSchool website, how easy is it for you to find information on the iSchool site?

Very Easy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very Difficult
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	

8. Have you visited the iSchool website for any of these reasons?

(check all that apply)

- Find programs are offered at the iSchool
- Find how many hours are required for completion of the MSIS degree
- Find the estimated tuition cost for in-state students
- Find Course schedules
- Find details about Information Technology Lab short courses
- Find current student job listings
- Find a staff member's phone number
- Find the current academic calendar
- Find the travel funds request form
- Make a immediate cash donation to the school
- Find information on alumni
- Find out about Mission and Vision of the school
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

9. Have you ever encountered the following problems while using the iSchool website?

(check all that apply)

- Unable to find information I am looking for
- Unable to find a page I know is out there
- Unable to return to a page I once visited
- Unable to determine where I am
- It takes too long to load pages
- Links that do not work
- Problems with my browser (freezing up, timing out)
- New information not posted fast enough
- Out of date information Inaccurate information
- Pages with too many graphics or useless graphics
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

10. Please rank the following iSchool site issues in importance to you:

	Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very Important
Easy site navigation		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Page load speed		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Accuracy		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Improved search		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Consistent design		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
ADA accessibility		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Privacy and security		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Timeliness		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
A different design		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

11. Please tell us what three features could be added to improve the iSchool site:

12. Please tell us what three things should be deleted from the site.

13. Would you be interested in creating an iSchool account that required registration and provided customization to such options as news, information, account services, etc.?

- Yes
- No

13. Which of the following statements most closely reflects your level of comfort when it comes to filling out online registration forms?

- I don't fill them out.
- Only if I trust the site.
- I usually fill them out.

15. What is the main thing that would keep you from filling out an online registration form at a website? (check one only)

- I always register
- Takes too much time
- Requires me to give my name
- Requires me to give an e-mail address
- Information is not provided on how the data is going to be used
- Accessing the site is not worth revealing the requested information
- I do not trust the entity collecting the data.
- The site has no privacy policy.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Demographics

16. Do you sometimes access the Internet using a mobile device (cell phone, PDA)?

- Yes
- No

17. What is your age?

- Younger than 17
- 17-20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61-70
- Older than 70

18. What gender group do you identify with?

- I do not wish to provide this information.
- Female
- Male

19. Do you have any physical disability or impairment? (check all that apply)

- I do not wish to provide this information.
- No physical disability
- Vision disability
- Hearing disability
- Motor disability
- Cognitive disability

20. If you have a disability or impairment, how easy is it for you to use the iSchool site?

Very Easy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very Difficult
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

21. What are the frustrations you have when using the iSchool website?

22. What suggestions do you have for improving the usefulness of the iSchool website?

**(Submit Survey)**

## Thank you for completing this survey.

We appreciate your help in designing a usability review of the iSchool website.

### ***Upcoming Website Usability Testing***

Jana and Andrea plan to conduct a series of website reviews in coming weeks to test the current iSchool site. These tests will offer members of the iSchool community to interact with the current site and to elaborate and share their opinions on the topics in this survey. If you are interested in participating in these website reviews, please provide your contact information below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail : \_\_\_\_\_

(Submit Contact Information)

## Appendix 2 – Session Script Usability Testing ischool.utexas.edu

### Preparing for the sessions

To get ready for the sessions, we will

- Distribute copies of the session script, participant characteristics, and session schedule to web site team
- Rehearse with the team and adjust the script
- Set up bookmarks and links for participants to use
- Make sure the lab is reserved

Before each session

- Make sure Morae is set up properly
- Make sure the browser is set up properly
- Gather forms for the participant
- Set up the starting point

After each session

- Close browser sessions
- Clear the history and cache in the browser
- Close Morae
- Note particular issues and surprises
- Debrief with observers

## Session introduction

“Thank you for agreeing to take part in our research study. My name is Jana, and this is Andrea. May I have your signed consent form, please? Thanks. *[If they haven't brought a signed one with them, give it to them now and have them review and sign.]*

“During the rest of the session, I'll be working from a script to ensure that my instructions to everyone who participates in the study are the same.

“I'm here to learn about how people use the iSchool website.

“During the session, I will ask you to use the web site to do a variety of things and will observe you while you do them. As you do these things, please try to do whatever you would normally do.

“Please try to think out loud while you're working. Just tell me whatever is going through your mind. Please know that we're not testing you, and there is no such thing as a wrong answer. Your doing this helps us understand what works or doesn't work about the site.

“By the way, I'm an independent researcher who had nothing to do with the design of the site you're about to try out. So please be honest in your feedback – I need to know exactly what you think, not what you think I want to hear.

“The whole session will take about 20 minutes.

“Do you have any questions before we begin? *[Answer any questions.]*

## **Task Matrix**

Great! Let's get started!

For the session today, I'd like you to try to complete a variety of tasks that a variety of iSchool site visitors might carry out. The tasks are on the printout on your desk.

- *Direct the participant to the printout.*

*Time: 20 min    Start at: <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/>*

1. What programs are offered at the iSchool?
2. How many hours are required for completion of the MSIS degree?
3. How much is the estimated tuition cost for in-state students to complete 9 hours academic year 2009-10?
4. Find Course schedule for Professor Melanie Feinberg's course "Organizing and Providing Access to Information"
5. Find the Spring 2009 Short Course Schedule for the Information Technology Lab web page
6. Find current student job listings for the Austin area
7. Find Quinn Stewart's phone number
8. Find the current academic calendar
9. Find the travel funds request form
10. Make a immediate cash donation to the school
11. Find information on alumna Laura Alfaro
12. Find out about Mission and Vision of the school

## ***Moderator Session Notes***

### **Issues to Explore**

How easily does the participant know where the information is on the website?

- No problem
- Wrong turns, but completed without assistance - how many?
- Needed prompting
- Needed specific instructions

Where was the participant stuck or confused?

What surprised the participant?

Was the surprise Good or Bad?

- No surprises
- Good?
- Bad?

How well did the participant understand the information they got from the website?

- No problem
- Had questions; what?
- Needed help
- Needed to be told specifically the meaning of the information they got

### **Success Criteria**

- They find the answers to the questions without help from the moderators.
- They find the information without taking any incorrect paths.
- They complete the tasks within the estimated time-to-completion.

## ***Close the session***

*Time: 5 min*

Having used the site now... I have one more thing for you to do. [*Hand the participant the closing questionnaire.*] Please read each statement aloud and then circle the choice that most closely matches your answer and tell me what it is.

### Closing Questionnaire

Please rate these statements from 1 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree) by clicking your choice on the rating scale.

1. I thought the information I got from this website was useful.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Strongly Agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Why or why not?

2. I can do everything I would expect to be able to do on the website.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Strongly Agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

If the site is not meeting your expectations, please describe the issues and problems you have encountered:

3. Overall, the website was easy to use.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Strongly Agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Why or why not?

## Data measures

### Quantitative data

- Number of tasks completed correctly with and without prompts or assistance
- Number and type of prompts given
- Number of tasks completed incorrectly
- Count of visits to the top navigation, home page, or site map
- Time on each task (start & end time)

### Qualitative data

- “Think aloud” verbal protocol
- Look for “Quotable Quotes” for the final report.

### Preference measures

#### Ratings and rationale concerning:

- Usefulness of the web site
- Appropriateness of site’s functions to users’ tasks
- Ease of use

## Informed Consent

Students from the *Introduction to Usability* class are conducting research to evaluate the usability of a web site for current and prospective students, staff, faculty, alumni and donors. We will use the results of these sessions to help improve the usability of website.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to use the website in the presence of a researcher and share your thoughts and insights as you use it.

In this short session, you will

- Complete several tasks using the website
- Be interviewed by the moderator about using the website
- Complete a brief questionnaire and interview about your overall experience.

Your participation will take approximately 30 minutes. There is no risk to you if you participate in this study. We will use the information that you provide, along with information from other people, to improve the design of the website.

Any information you share will be kept confidential; your name will not be associated with the data we collect from your session. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate at all, may refuse to participate in certain procedures or answer certain questions, or may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. Your decision to participate will not affect your relationship with any local, state, university or Federal organizations, or the person who identified you as a potential participant. Agreeing to participate and signing this form does not waive any of your legal rights.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact one of us by email or phone.

Andrea Richeson ([aricheson@gmail.com](mailto:aricheson@gmail.com)) 512-773-1077

Jana Tate ([jana.tate@yahoo.com](mailto:jana.tate@yahoo.com)) 512-215-2659

If you voluntarily agree to participate in this research, and have had all your questions answered, please sign below.

---

Participant's Printed Name

---

Participant's Signature

---

Date

## Appendix 3 – Background Questionnaire

Thanks very much for participating in our Usability Evaluation!

We realize your time is extremely valuable, so we've kept this short and simple.

1. What is your affiliation with the University of Texas School of Information?  
(please select one):

- Prospective Graduate Student (might enroll in the future)
- Current Graduate Student (enrolled now)
- Current Faculty / Staff
- Alumni / Donor

Have you visited this website? <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/>

- Yes
- No

If yes, please estimate the frequency? *Radio Buttons (mutually exclusive)*

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Once a Year