CIS*6890 - Technical Communication and Research Methodology – Fall 09

Instructor: Yang Xiang

Coverage

- The role of technical communication.
- It is not about writing in English.
- Evolution of this course.
- Source of materials
  – No text has been written from the CS perspective.
  – Materials are from references as well as instructor's own experience as the author and advisor.
- Emphasize research and communication from the perspective of a grad student, but extend beyond.

Expectations

- Some materials are common sense.
  – Common sense can fly out of the window.
  – Not necessarily used systematically.
- Some examples may not be from your research field.
- You may not comprehend some examples fully.
- Default audience.
- Lecture style.
- Overall organization
  1. Research methodology
  2. Technical communication

Lectures and Course Work

- Lecture time
  – 70%: Instructor lectures
  – 30%: Student short talks and mini-lectures
- Course work
  – Computing with Integrity tutorials and quiz
  – Literature review paper
  – Short talk
  – Mini-lecture
  – Peer review

Computing with Integrity Quiz

- Academic integrity has become a serious issue.
- Study Academic Integrity Tutorial, Univ. of Guelph.
- Enroll to CIS*6890_F09 at CIS Moodle Site.
  – The enrollment key is …
- Study Computing with Integrity Tutorial, Dept. CIS.
- Complete Computing with Integrity Self Test.
  – Before Oct. 1.
- The instructor will be notified of your completion.

The Issue of Academic Integrity

- Internet has been a double edged sword.
- Plagiarism disadvantages honest students.
- Plagiarism makes offenders unprepared for the future career.
- Plagiarism erodes the foundation of science.
- Plagiarism can degrade the society.

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Paper, Short Talk and Mini-Lecture

- The topic is selected from a given list.
- Technical level
  - Short talk: General public
  - Mini-lecture: CS undergraduate
  - Literature survey paper: CS graduate
- Range of topics
  - Short talk: do it yourself, sports, popular science, etc.
  - Mini-lecture: topics from 3rd and 4th year CS courses.
  - Literature survey paper: Advanced topics on CS.

Peer Review

- Conference review
  - Calendar description
  - It requires significant research and writing experience well beyond a starting grad student.
- The peer review component
  - Lecture about what is involved.
  - Practice through short talks and mini-lectures.

Assignment Submission

Submission Format	Hardcopy	Turnitin
Literature survey	√	√
Short talk slide		√
Mini-lecture slide		√
Peer reviews	√	

- Submission procedure.
- All submissions must be typed.

Use of Turnitin

- A commercial software widely used in Canadian universities.
  - Purpose
  - How does it work
  - Controversies
- Merits
  - Honest students are assured fairness.
  - Facilitate learning in relation to technical communication.
  - Allow instructors to focus on teaching.
- Students' consent.

Overall Schedule

1. Research process
2. Literature survey
3. Research methods and skills
   - Student literature survey paper due
4. Technical communication
5. Audience and purpose
6. Research proposals
7. Oral presentations & dialogs
8. Journal and conference articles
   - Student short talk
9. Thesis (4)
10. Communicating persuasively
11. Definition, description and proof
12. Revising, editing and proofreading
   - Student mini-lecture