

Postgraduate studies in the field of HCI

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1 Introduction

In September of 2007, the Tampere Unit for Computer Human Interaction (TAUCHI) at the University of Tampere and The Unit of Human-Centered Technology (IHTE) at the Tampere University of Technology initiated a joint effort to increase collaboration in the field of human-technology interaction (HTI). One of the main aims was to develop higher quality education for university students and to carry out joint internationally recognized HTI research. Both research units have their own master and postgraduate students while the focus of education is at IHTE on usability and human-centered design of interactive products and services whereas TAUCHI focuses on human-technology interaction developing it by harmonizing the potential of technology with human abilities, needs, and limitations. Based on our joint analysis we know now that together TAUCHI and IHTE are offering an internationally competitive master's program consisting of more than 40 basic, intermediate and advanced level courses. Although both units are partners in the national Graduate School in User-Centered Information Technology (UCIT) led by TAUCHI we have recognized a clear need for developing and systematizing our doctoral education.

One of the main aims in our collaboration in the field of education is to create a doctoral program that meets internationally recognized needs for education. On the other hand the aim is to provide more extensive and at the same time more systematized postgraduate studies for both national and international students in the area of HTI. At the same time we hope to make our education internationally recognized and provide possibilities for our own students to include international fertilization and studies in their university degrees. Finding reasonable educational practices can be challenging. This results, for example, from the cases that different educational institutions have developed a variety of conventions in their curricula. In addition, different sources of funding can create challenges for collaborative efforts. Our basic and profound notion is that a need for developing high-quality researcher skills is a must in the multidisciplinary field of HTI. Therefore, we would like to invite conference participants to share and discuss postgraduate HTI studies in order

to identify future needs and develop educational approaches that satisfy these needs. By doing this we also look future possibilities to collaborate internationally.

2 Interest and relevance of the SIG to INTERACT 2009 and assumed attendee background

We are aiming to collect ideas and opinions to such questions as, has HTI contributed to improved IT use in practice, are existing methods and tools for the design of usable systems sufficient, and are they well connected to the kind of HTI education that is required in the future.

The purpose of this SIG is to share and discuss experiences of designing international postgraduate studies and to provide an open forum to discuss topics of interests. Furthermore, the aim is to identify future possibilities and challenges that should be addressed by the HCI community.

The following topics are suggested to be discussed:

- What are the main challenges of designing international postgraduate HTI studies?
- What kind of education and courses a HTI doctoral student would need in order to have a high quality doctoral education. Please think both research and business skills.
 - Do postgraduate HTI studies differ from other areas of education?
- What are the concrete opportunities for collaboration?

We invite all interested conference participants to attend this SIG. Particularly those conference participants,

- who are educators,
- who are instructors in education, and
- who are or plan to be postgraduate HTI students may find this SIG interesting.

4 Format of discussion

The first part of the SIG will focus on developing a vision of structured doctoral education. The idea is to have brief introductions to the first two key topics followed by informal discussions and groupwork of existing curricula and experiences of participants (about 30 minutes each). The second part will investigate needs and possibilities for collaboration.

At the conclusion of this SIG, we hope to be able to answer our key questions. In addition, we plan to submit a summary of the SIG's conclusions to SIGCHI Bulletin or Interactions.