# EECS 3461

## Paper Prototyping and Storyboarding

Based on slides by M & A Davoudpour (Ryerson U.)

# Paper Prototyping

- Why create paper prototypes?
  - To find usability problems early
    - They help you gather usability data as early as possible
  - They're easy, simple, fast, and cheap to create (a low-fidelity prototype)
  - They can usually be created faster than software equivalents (including HTML)

# Paper Prototyping

- Why create paper prototypes (con't)?
  - They're a great way of visualizing a design that's in your head
    - They help you describe that design to others
    - They let you visualize different possible designs
  - Sample users are willing to suspend their disbelief
  - Users know it's not the final version, so they don't feel bad being critical about it

# Paper Prototyping

- Why create paper prototypes (con't)?
  - Allows technical and non-technical people to collaborate on the interface design (development, marketing, support, documentation, training)
  - More than one person can work on the paper design at once
  - Can mix screenshots of an existing system with paper prototypes to test changes to the system

# Paper Prototyping

- Why don't people use them paper prototypes more often?
  - Too simple, too fast, too obvious?
  - Too "low-tech"?
  - People don't think they'll get much out of a method that's so cheap
  - It feels like you're cheating!

# Paper Prototyping

- How to use paper prototypes
  - Create the design(s) on paper
  - Test different designs with different users, with you pretending to be the computer
    - The user uses a pen as a mouse and writes into textboxes
    - You emulate “drop down” menus, select tabs, display different windows, display data in labels, etc.
    - The “computer” isn’t allowed to give hints to the user
  - Evolve the designs based on user feedback, sometimes immediately

# Paper Prototyping

- What's in a paper prototyping "kit"?
  - Paper ☺, transparency film, markers, scissors, glue, sticky notes
  - Printouts of buttons, textboxes, dropdown menus, tabbed sheets, dialog box outlines, etc.

# Paper Prototyping

- When shouldn’t you use paper prototyping?
  - When evaluation of detailed screen elements is required
  - When you’re in a late stage of the design cycle