Course C11
After the Interviews: Making Sense of Fieldwork Data
1 unit

Instructor: Sara Bly, Sara Bly Consulting

Benefits:
A growing number of HCI researchers and practitioners use the results of fieldwork to guide the design of interactive systems and technologies. Often it is tempting to assume that collecting the data is the main task of fieldwork. However, the need for systematic analysis of the data is a critical part of uncovering and justifying valid findings. This course provides an overview of several methods for making sense of the fieldwork data with examples and in-class exercises.

Origins:
A fieldwork practicum tutorial was offered at CHI 2005 and as part of Ron Baecker's CSCW course at the University of Toronto, fall 2005. This course is based on the analysis section of those courses.

Features:
- An overview of analysis methods for open-ended interviews and observations.
- An introduction to debriefs, collections and summaries, representations, team brainstorming, and verification with participants.
- An emphasis on the importance of multiple perspectives and patterns in fieldwork data analysis.

Intended Audience:
The course is intended for participants who have some familiarity with open-ended interview and observation techniques and for participants who have some experience conducting fieldwork and wish to broaden their repertoire of techniques. It is not intended for those who are trained in qualitative study methodologies or for those with considerable experience in fieldwork data collection and analysis.

Presentation Style:
Lecture, case study examples, class exercises, discussion

Instructor's Background:
For over 15 years, Sara has practiced fieldwork as a major component in her design and evaluation of computer technologies. She worked at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center as part of multi-disciplinary teams including anthropologists, designers, and computer scientists. Currently a consultant, Sara has worked in a variety of companies and development teams and has experience teaching user studies for both industry and academia.