

# Cynthia Putnam

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## Current position

**Assistant Professor:** Autumn 2010 to present  
College of Computing and Digital Media | DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois

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## Education

### **PhD Human Centered Design & Engineering, 2010**

University of Washington | Seattle, Washington  
Human Centered Design & Engineering  
Advisors: Dr. Beth Kolko and Dr. Jennifer Turns (co-chairs)

### **M.S. Technical Communication, 2006**

University of Washington | Seattle, Washington

### **B.S. Industrial Design, 1984**

University of Washington | Bellingham, Washington

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## Current research:

- Use and adaptation of human-centered design methods to support technology design for underserved diverse communities.
    - How movement-related videogames are used in rehabilitation treatments for people who have suffered a brain injury.
  - Bridging the design/research dialogue gap which entails improving how designers access, utilize and integrate user research in their work.
    - How human-computer interaction (HCI) professionals do their jobs; e.g., methods that professionals use to (a) investigate and (b) communicate about end-users.
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## Publications

### Journal Articles

- [J.3] Kolko, B, Putnam, C., Johnson, & E. Rose, E. (2011). Reflection on research methodologies for ubicomp in developing contexts. *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing*, 15 (6), 575-583.
- [J.2] Putnam, C., Johnson, E. Rose, E.& Kolko, B. (2009). Adapting User-Centered Design Methods to Design for Diverse Populations. *Special HCI4D Issue of Information Technologies and International Development (ITID)*, 5(4), 51-73.
- [J.1] Walton, R., Putnam, C., Johnson, E.& Kolko, B. (2009). Skills Are Not Binary: Nuances in the Relationship Between ICT Skills and Employability. *Special ICT Skills and Employability Issue of Information Technologies and International Development (ITID)*, 5 (2), 1-18.
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## Refereed Conference Proceedings

- [C.7] Putnam, C., Kolko, B and Wood, S. (2012). Communicating about users in ICTD: leveraging HCI personas. (Accepted) In *Proceedings of International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development, ICTD 2012*, Atlanta, Georgia, March 12-15 (upcoming).
- [C.6] Putnam, C. and Kolko B. (2010). The Social Meaning of ICTs: Patterns of Technology Adoption and Usage in Context. In *Proceedings of International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development, ICTD 2010*, London, UK, December 13-16. (Acceptance rate 14.1%)
- Presented December 14, 2010
- [C.5] Anderson, R.E., Brunette, W., Johnson, E., Lustig, C., Poon, A., Putnam, C., Salihbaeva, O., Kolko, B.E., & Borriello, G. (2010). Experiences with a Transportation Information System that Uses Only GPS and SMS. In *Proceedings of International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development, ICTD 2010*, London, UK, December 13-16. (Acceptance rate 14.1%)
- [C.4] Putnam, C and Kolko B. (2009). Getting Online but still living offline: the complex relationship of technology adoption and in-person social networks. In *Proceedings of Advances in Social Networks and Mining, ASONAM '09*, Athens, Greece, July 20-22, 33-40. (Acceptance rate 18%).
- Presented July 20, 2009
- [C.3] Putnam, C., Rose, E., Walton, R. & Kolko, B. (2009). Mobile phone users in Kyrgyzstan: A case study of identifying user requirements for diverse users. In *Proceedings of IPCC 2009*, Honolulu, Hawaii, July 20-23, 2009. (Acceptance rate 32.6%)
- [C.2] Kolko, B. & Putnam, C. (2009). Computer Games in the Developing World: The Value of Non-Instrumental Engagement with ICTs, or Taking Play Seriously. In *Proceedings of International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development, ICTD '09*, Doha, Qatar, April 17-19, 2009, 46-55. (Acceptance rate 18%)
- [C.1] Putnam, C. and Chong, L. (2008). Software and technologies designed for people with autism. In *Proceedings of the 10th Annual ACM Conference on Conference on Computers and Accessibility, ASSETS '08*, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, October 13 - 15, 2008, ACM Press, New York, NY. (Acceptance rate 36%)
- Presented October 13, 2008

## Invited talks and Colloquia

- [IT.8] University of Oregon. "Bridging the research-design dialog." Eugene, Oregon, April 2011.
- [IT.7] Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis. "Maximizing communication among research and design in industry". Indianapolis, Indiana, April 2010.

- [IT.6] DePaul University. "Bridging the gap between user experience research and design: An analysis of personas". Chicago, Illinois, April 2010.
- [IT.5] Google. "Communication among design and research". Palo Alto, California, March, 2010.
- [IT.4] Puget Sound SIGCGI. "An analysis of personas". Seattle, Washington, March, 2010.
- [IT.3] University of Washington. "Using the data you have for persona creation". Presented as part of a workshop designed for a graduate class. Seattle, Washington, January 2010.
- [IT.2] University of Washington. "Design for Inclusion: Using Familiar Methods for Unfamiliar Contexts." Presented with Emma Rose and Beth Kolko as part of the seminar series: "Current Issues in Human Centered Design & Engineering. Seattle, Washington, January 2010.
- [IT.1] Microsoft Corporation. "How to maximize personas as a communication summarization for designers". Redmond, Washington, December 2009.

### **Other conference and workshop proceedings**

- [O.4] Birge, C., Putnam C., Kolko, B. 2010. Online Privacy Perception in Central Asia. In *Proceedings of the 6th Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security*, Redmond, WA, USA, July 14-16. (Poster)
- [O.3] Kolko, B. and Putnam, C. "Computer games in the Developing World". *Change conference*, University of Washington (October, 2009). (Poster)
- [O.2] Putnam, C. and Kolko, B, "Modifying methods for persona creation". *Change conference*, University of Washington, (October, 2009). (Poster)
- [O.1] Rose, E. J., Putnam, C. and Birand, G. "Designing for Digital Inclusion: Investigating social networks within resource constrained environments." *Society for Technical Communication: University of Washington Research and Design Showcase* (May 2007). (Poster)

### **Manuscripts under review, in progress or preparation**

- [ip.2] Putnam C. and Kolko, B. (2012). HCI Professions: Differences, definitions and methods. Submitted to: *Proceedings CHI 2012*, Austin, TX, USA, May 5-10.
- [ip.1] Putnam C. and Kolko, B. (2012). Extending the persona method: Using large datasets not intended for persona distillation. Submitted to: *Submitted to: Proceedings CHI 2012*, Austin, TX, USA, May 5-10.

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## Teaching

(Only includes teaching activities at DePaul University)

2011 Autumn	<b>GAM 226</b>	Game design for majors
2011 Spring	<b>HCI 590</b>	HCI Capstone
2011 Winter 2011 Spring	<b>HCI 454</b>	Interaction Design
2011 Winter 2011 Autumn	<b>HCI 445</b>	Inquiry Methods and Use Analysis
2010 Autumn	<b>HCI 511</b>	Design for accessibility and diverse users

### Curricular Development: new courses

**GAM 312**      **Game user research and playtesting**  
(Co-developed with Jose Zagal)

### Curricular Development: re-design of existing courses

**HCI 454**      **Interaction Design**  
Redesigned this course for Winter 2011: created all new materials and assignments.

**HCI 511**      **Design for accessibility and diverse users**  
Redesigned this for Autumn 2010: created all new materials and assignments.

### Guest lectures

2011 Spring	CSC 426 (Values and Computer Technology)
2011 Winter	GAM 395 (Capstone)
2010 Autumn	HCI 594 (Capstone)
2010 Autumn	HCI 445 (Inquiry Methods and Use Analysis)

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## Grants

### Funded Research Grants

Title	"Exploring user-experience professions in human-computer interaction"
Recipient	Cynthia Putnam
Grantor	University Research Council   DePaul University
Grant Amount	\$3200.00
Grant Status	Funded Spring 2011

**Grants under review, in progress or preparation**

Title	Supporting therapists in motion-based gaming: A recommender and rating system for commercially available games
Recipient	Cynthia Putnam
Grantor	University Research Council   DePaul University
Grant Amount	\$3490.00
Grant Status	Submitted Autumn 2011

Title	UCDE Lab for human-computer interaction: Support for user-centered approaches to design and evaluation of games, software and other technologies
Recipient	Cynthia Putnam
Grantor	Academic Technology Grant   DePaul University
Grant Amount	\$7500.00
Grant Status	Submitted Autumn 2011

Title	Motion-based gaming for brain injury: Supporting therapists and game design
Recipient	Cynthia Putnam and Jose Zagal
Grantor	National Science Foundation
Grant Amount	\$500,000.00 (Estimated)
Grant Status	Due December 20, 2011

**Unfunded Research Grants**

Title	Considerations of user research within a network of caregivers: Exploring how technology supports people with cognitive disabilities and their supportive networks
Recipient	Cynthia Putnam and Adam Steele
Grantor	University Research Council   DePaul University
Grant Amount	\$3500.00
Grant Status	Not funded Autumn 2010

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**Work Experience**

- 2010                      **User Experience Researcher**  
Microsoft/Xbox games group  
Redmond, WA
- 2008-2009              **Research Consultant**  
PATH - Safe Water Project / Gates Foundation grant  
Seattle, WA
- 2008                      **Data Analyst (Consulting)**  
Valid Concept (contract for Nokia phones)  
Seattle, WA

- 2007-2010            **Research Assistant**  
University of Washington  
Seattle, WA
- 2004-2007            **Senior Art Director**  
True North Consultants Inc. (Hasbro Corporation)  
Renton, WA
- 2004                    **Designer/3D Animator**  
Microsoft Corporation : eHome Group (contract)  
Redmond, WA
- 2002- 2003            **Product Designer**  
Microsoft Corporation : Works Group (contract)  
Redmond, WA
- 2001 - 2002            **Senior Product Designer**  
Pacific Edge Software  
Bellevue, WA
- 1997-2000            **Designer/Creative Director**  
Cendant Corporation  
Bellevue, WA
- 1994 - 1997            **Co-owner/Creative Director/Manager**  
enVision Design, Inc  
Redmond, WA
- 1987 -1994            **Senior Designer**  
Color and Design Exhibits  
Seattle, WA

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## Service and Community

### School: College of Computing and Digital Media

#### 2011-2012 Committees:

- Local Review Board (Chair)
- HCI/IM Program
  - Subcommittee reviewing the IM degree
- School of Computing Curriculum
- PC/Gaming Program
  - Subcommittee reviewing production and game design track

#### 2010-2011 Committees:

- Local Review Board
- Online Task Force
  - As part of the sub-committee on student concerns, I evaluated prior survey responses and helped design focus group sessions.
- HCI/IM Program
  - Helped to re-write the learning goals for the HCI program.
- School of Computing Curriculum
- PC/Gaming Program

## School Events

- New graduate student reception (09/10/2011)
- Spotlight event for prospective students and families (08/12/2011)
- New graduate student reception (04/01/2011)
- Strategic Town Hall meeting (01/28/2011)
- New graduate student reception (01/07/2011)
- New graduate student reception (09/10/2010)

## Volunteer work in the Community

- Anixter Center, New Focus, (September 2010 to present). I volunteer working with people who have suffered a traumatic brain injury
  - This work is directly connected to my research interests in how motion-based gaming is used for people who have suffered a traumatic brain injury.
- Overnight Nerdy Challenge. (August 2011). Volunteered as a judge at an event where designers and developers create websites for local non-profit organizations.
- Streetwise. (July-August 2011). Helped create a questionnaire to explore the feasibility of fruit vendor stands that support homeless and underemployed people in Chicago.
- University of Washington's Experimental Education Unit (EEU). (2006-2007). Volunteered teaching/playing with children with autism
- Bellevue Youth Theatre. (1997-2002). I designed and created sets/props with theatre participants. The theatre has an inclusive philosophy and is committed to working with both typically developing children and children with disabilities

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## Professional Activities

### Memberships

- The Usability Professionals' Association
- Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)
- Interaction Design Association (IXDA)

### Review and Referee Work

- November 2011 | ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing (CHI 2012)
- May 2011 | National Science Foundation (Proposal review panel)
- February 2011 | Cognitive Science Society (CogSci 2011)
- December 2010 | ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing (CHI 2011)

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## Recognition

Outstanding Female Graduate Student Award: University of Washington Society of Woman Engineers Department of Human Centered Design & Engineering, 2010.

Outstanding Female Graduate Student Award: University of Washington Society of Woman Engineers Department of Technical Communication, 2007.

Excellence Award: Puget Sound chapter of the Society for Technical Communications for the Microsoft Works Product Tour, 2004.