Usability Evaluation Methods
- Skill assignment 3: Courseware usability -

General idea
- Pairs of students will have to construct a questionnaire, based on the article of Squires and Preece (1999), (and possibly other relevant literature) that can be used by investigators to examine the usability of certain education software.
- Then, this instrument will be used to evaluate BSCW which can be used as a courseware tool.

Procedure
- In the workgroup classes, the article of Squires and Preece (1999) will be discussed. Also, questionnaire design for usability practices will be looked into, by examining related questionnaires. Resources:
  - http://www.ucc.ie/hfrg/resources/qfaq1.html#whatisaquestionnaire
  - http://www.acm.org/~perlman/question.html

Then, based on the article (and possibly other relevant literature), a questionnaire has to be designed, which has to be a valid instrument to evaluate courseware by focusing on learning aspects.

- Regarding BSCW, the student has to look into the following issues before the usability evaluation itself:
  - the functionality
  - the context in which it will be used as courseware in the university (including typical users)
  - the interface
  - ...(other possible issues)

- The evaluation process will be standard in some respects:
  - The evaluation session should last approximately 2 hours.
  - The student should accurately identify and report the findings, among which usability problems.

Report
- Each pair of student should write a report concerning:
  - A description of relevant literature on evaluating educational courseware.
  - the development of the questionnaire (approx. 30-40 questions with rating scales)
    - rationale: how is the questionnaire constructed and why.
    - what problems have you encountered in the development process and what was your solution to these problems?
  - a description of (important aspects of) BSCW as a courseware tool (see also section ‘Procedure’ above),
  - a description of the evaluation itself,
    - how was the evaluation done, how did you structure it, etc.
  - (both positive and negative) findings, which logically arise from the evaluation,
  - based on the findings, recommendations for improvements of BSCW as a courseware tool.

- Marks will be given based mainly on students’ mastery in constructing a usability evaluation tool for specific purposes, and applying it to a system. Overall quality of the reports will also be taken into consideration.

Literature
Use the literature of lecture 5 (Usability evaluation of groupware applications)