Activity 7 – CS 3724 (Bowman)
Focus: Usability Inspection methods
Task: Perform a heuristic evaluation of a familiar but complex website

In advance: Review the section on inspection methods in general and heuristic evaluation in particular from the textbook. If you have a laptop with wireless internet access, please bring it to class.

Instructions: In your group, take a look at the “My VT” portal website at my.vt.edu. Log in to the system using the PID of one of your group members. Understand the content on the site, the options for customization, and the tasks students can perform using the site.

1. Identify three critical tasks for students using My VT. For each of these critical tasks, make a list of the steps that students must take to accomplish the task. If there are multiple ways to do a task, list each method.

2. For each task you’ve identified, perform a heuristic evaluation of the interface using Nielsen’s list of heuristics.
   a. Identify at least three potential usability problems for each task,
   b. Classify the problems under one or more of the heuristics, and
   c. Estimate the severity of the problem on the scale of 1 (not severe) to 5 (very severe).

3. Of your nine or more usability problems, select the two most severe and provide suggestions for redesigning the site to address those problems. Make sure your suggested redesign satisfies the heuristic that was violated by the original design.

4. Be prepared to present your findings to the class on the board or using a set of slides on a laptop.