Team White Cheddar Project Proposal

The Team
- **DJ Gallagher (Implementation Coordinator):** Strong in programming, especially with Java, VB, and webpage design. Can also contribute effectively to overall design.
- **Steven Krumholz (Coordination Coordinator):** Strength in design and non-programming skills. Very organized and strong communicator.
- **Michael Wu (Design Coordinator):** Overall proficiency in most categories. Strong attention to details, especially in graphic designs.

Problem Statement
As a small school with limited space resource, Olin requires a room reservation system to ensure that meetings are not double-scheduled in the same location. Olin’s current room scheduling software is clunky, unintuitive, and downright horrible. It appears as though it is designed for a much bigger institution where people don’t know about the possible rooms in which they could schedule their meeting. The reservation process is inflexible, and does not allow multiple sensible paths towards room reservation (i.e.: picking a time first or picking the room first). The order in which data must be entered seems arbitrary and the quantity of required data is excessive. Further, there is no apparent notification or confirmation process after a room is reserved. In addition to difficulties with room scheduling, the interface for gaining information about any particular room could certainly use improvement, since the presentation of information is unintuitive and leads to a dead-end (i.e.: once a desirable room is found, one cannot progress to reserving it from that location). Finally, though some aspects of display of the campus’s schedule of events in the software are well designed, these features are buried under difficult-to-find drop-down menus. We hope to create a system that intuitively caters to the needs and conceptual models of the many users on a small college campus.

Characteristics of Primary Users
Most users are likely to be busy and relatively knowledgeable of the possible meeting rooms that can be reserved. There are likely to be no users external to Olin, since they would not be the ones reserving rooms and/or scheduling meetings. The technological expertise of users will range from little (but still some) experience to expert programmers and software engineers. Users will likely be reserving rooms on behalf of or as the leader of organizations, committees, or other groups of people that require use of the room. They will either know when the planned meeting time will be, or will be trying to find when a specific room is available. Users will want to reserve a room quickly and effectively and/or see when a particular room is available to be reserved.

Contacting Users
Since anyone at Olin is a possible user, it will likely be easy to find volunteers to contact and work with. We will likely want to get users from a good cross-section of the Olin Community, including staff, faculty and students. There is a possibility that we might want to extend to other, larger universities, time permitting, but Olin will be our primary focus.

Initial Suggested Design
Our design will be flexible to allow for different paths to room reservation. Further, it will offer a more intuitive and flexible interface that provides more information at any given time than the current system, in an intuitive and understandable way. We would like to implement many different ways to look at reservation, from one room’s availability over time to a snapshot
of available rooms at any given time. An easy comparison between multiple rooms might also be nice to have. Our system will also have an active confirmation system that informs the user that they have successfully reserved a room. We would also be interested in adding other features that our users might desire. In the design, we would like to implement an intuitive user interface that allows users to choose which information they wish to enter first, and continue along the user’s desired path of data entry, room selection, and room reservation. Room selection will likely be somewhat graphical, and information on each room will include its schedule and capabilities together in one viewing pane. Data entry will include only that information which is important for back-end users to know, and will also likely be linked to the user’s login. Finally, the schedule of events within the program will have a graphical calendar-like view for intuitive and easy viewing of both what rooms are available at any given time and what events are occurring elsewhere at that same time.