I was a UI Designer at MIT for 4 years and I worked as web designer for many years before that. I worked mainly on Stellar, MIT's course management system and Sakai an open source alternative to WebCT/Blackboard.

Now working for a software company in Cambridge called ATG that sells software that supports e-commerce and online customer support.

I'm on the long path through Simmons, taking my last class now. My course work has helped me understand of databases, information retrieval and taxonomy - very relevant to working with web applications.
What is a user interface?

This is an early user interface. Type in commands, and the computer interprets them.

Mice and menus and folders were added creating the now familiar "graphical user interface."

With the emergence of the web, user interface design and the concept of usability became even more important. How do you make these things easy to use?
There are a dizzying array of job titles and specialties trying to define a field that is still new. In the presentation I try to unpack some of these. You can also try looking these terms up in Wikipedia to get a feel for the variations and rationales of the various titles - they don't all mean the same thing.
Who makes software?

Product Managers (requirements & user analysis)

User Interface Designers

Technical Writers & Copy Writers (writing and documentation)

Usability Consultants (usability testing)

Business Analysts (functional specs)

Developers (coding)

QA engineers ('quality assurance,' finding bugs)

Project Managers (nagging)

These are some of the roles involved in developing software. The specifics vary from team to team, and often one person takes on several roles (or all the roles!).
Wireframes are the most common product of a UI designers work - there is much more that happens, but wireframes are central to the process.

This wireframe was created with a program called Visio on the PC (Mac users use OmniGraffe) and printed out for paper prototype testing.
Here is a simpler wireframe meant to be attached to functional specifications and passed to a development team.
You don't need fancy software

Most UI designers sketch by hand to get ideas out quickly (on paper or whiteboards). Some go straight from hand sketches to HTML, in order to shorten the development process.

Source: http://37signals.com/papers/introtopatterns/
Design patterns

Shilimar of India Restaurant
(617) 547-9280
www.shilimar-of-india.com
546 Massachusetts Ave
Cambridge, MA 02139
Map it | Get directions

Seizing the Light: A History
by Robert Hirsch (Author)
Explore: Citations
Average Rating (3)
Read 2 reviews
List Price: $52.50
Price: $52.50 & this item
Availability: In Stock. Ships from

Yahoo Design Patterns
Design patterns from other genres

Google’s add event pop-up form shows where the user clicked using the visual vocabulary of comics.
What could be better about this screen?
Imagine a page that shows your class schedule online.

What do you want to see on this page?

Brainstorming rules: No shooting down ideas right now

Respond to someone’s point by saying “Yes, and…”
Project Runway

• Split into groups
• Take 10 minutes to sketch a UI wireframe of the page
• I’ll walk around to check in with everyone.
• Review work on screen together

You can get links to the sites mentioned in this workshop, and more, at:

http://benbr.backpackit.com/pub/716443