

GDD 221- 40 Web Design I
3 credits Spring 2007
Monday, 6:30- 9:30pm, Parker 332

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Course Objectives and Purpose:

This course will introduce beginners to the art of creating intelligent, user-oriented and aesthetically pleasing websites. Students will learn the tools and techniques for creating a well designed interactive website. Several mini-projects based on concepts gained throughout the semester will culminate into a comprehensive multi-page website. Effective visual communication and the elements of graphic design concepts will be the underlying foundations of this course.

Course Content:

Internet History, HTML, User Interface, Design and Aesthetics, Browser Differences, Usability and Navigation, File Transfers, Rollovers, Javascript, Web Design Authoring Software, Real world strategies, and a brief introduction to Flash animation.

Instructional Methods:

Classes generally will go like this:

1. Review and group discussion of previous homework assignment or project.
2. Demonstrations; looking at professional/commercial materials.
3. Introduction of day's topics, demonstration of new techniques. Students generally do in-class mini-assignments to learn new skills.
4. Presentation of homework or project for upcoming classes. Students then have time to work in class and receive individual help.
5. In class peer review of assignments and final project.

Required Texts/Tools:

Learning Web Design, 2nd edition by Jennifer Niederst ISBN-10: 0-596-00484-2 (O'Reilly Digital Studio) available at Amazon.com for \$25.17 (plus \$3.99 shipping)

This book is also available in an online format at <http://safari.oreilly.com/0596004842>

Optional texts: *Learning Dreamweaver 4 Hands on Training* by Garo Green and Lynda Weinman

You will be required to purchase a portable external storage device, such as a Flash drive (also known as pen, thumb or jump drive).

Evaluation Criteria:

Attendance/Class Participation	20%
Quizzes/Mini-projects	30%
Final Project	50%

Attendance:

This course is designed as a studio course; therefore, attendance is mandatory in order for the ultimate exploration of educational and creative benefits. Please let your instructor know either by e-mail or telephone message if you will be missing a class. It is the responsibility of the student to turn in all projects and assignments by the date due.

Academic Regulations/Grading:

Grading is based on a rubric as defined below. The assignments and projects will be given a numerical grade from 0-100. Participation in group critiques and professionalism is important and will be reflected in your final grade. Students will receive a grading scoring sheet with each project, outlining where points were lost or given. Grading for each assignment will be measured as follows:

- A 90-100 Highly imaginative, creative and original. Concept is flawless in execution and presentation.
- B+ 87-89 Original and imaginative concept. Execution is done well.
- B 80-86 Project shows a solid grasp of the problem presented and was executed well.
- C+ 77-79 Project shows a good understanding of the problem but the execution and/or actual concept needs improvement.
- C 70-76 There is a basic understanding of the problem presented, however, the concept, execution or presentation lacks professionalism and needs improvement.
- D 60-69 Project is not complete and does not fully demonstrate a grasp of the problem presented.
- F 0-59 Project is not complete and does not demonstrate a grasp of the problem presented and is poorly executed.

All projects turned in one week after the due date will result in the loss of one letter grade. Any projects handed in two weeks after the due date will not be accepted.

Suggestions: Back-up all work in progress. I recommend saving your projects under different names literally every time you make a change. It just takes one quick click...and could save you hours (if not days) of frustration. **Always back-up everything!** Expect the unexpected. If you have an assignment due on Wednesday, try to get it done a few days before. That way, if and when you are having technical problems, you will have some extra time to fix mistakes and troubleshoot. Remember: *It is always better to show what you are working on than to show nothing at all.* We can try to solve the problem in class if necessary.

Important Information:

Class Participation

Class participation is extremely important in a class such as this. The student's participation in weekly lectures, demonstration, critiques and other discussions is highly recommended and encouraged. ***Each student will obtain a sketchbook for this class which will demonstrate the student's thought process during the creation of projects and assignments.*** Keep this sketchbook handy not only for your benefit to brainstorm and compose but also to be reviewed by the instructor during class time.

Original work and academic misconduct

While cooperation and collaboration is an important part of academic work, class assignments should not be duplications of work done by others. All assignments should be the original work of the student and or student teams as determined by the instructors and include appropriate citations where applicable.

Class attendance

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and attendance is required. Excessive unexcused absences (3 or more) or tardiness (5 or more) will result in a lowering of the final course grade.

Description of Projects:

Project 1 – Preliminary website using HTML code – 2 pages (Due February 12th, Week 4)

Create a 2-page site using HTML coding only. Emphasis right now should be on functionality. Don't worry about design and aesthetics yet. Just make sure everything works. There should be text, image(s), and working links to other pages.

Project 2 – Website Analysis (written assignment, Due February 19th, Week 5)

Choose 3 sites to review for aesthetics and fits into your idea of what a good website should be. List each website's URL on paper and explain why you like the site. Look at all elements; color scheme, layout, navigation, user-friendly (usability), interactivity (if there is any), fonts, images, etc. Start to think about how you'd like your own site to look for the next assignment.

Project 3 – Create a site map and design plan (sketch in Illustrator or by hand, Due February 26th, Week 6 or March 12th Week 8 depending on progress of class)

1. A list of categories (pages) for your site. (home, resume, portfolio, etc...)
2. A navigation chart for entire site (site architecture or site map)
3. Interface designs (colors, fonts, themes, style)
4. A site map page, using the navigation chart

Project 4 – Create Page Layouts (using Photoshop, comps due March 19th, Week 9)

Using Photoshop, layout the home page and at least 1 interior page of your site.

Mini-project – Create a short Flash movie to be used in your final website (using Flash, due April 9th, Week 12)

Project 5 Draft – Dreamweaver Website (due April 23rd, Week 14)

Time to create your website or portfolio with at least 6-8 fully functioning pages. There must be at least one instance of Flash, simple rollover or swap image AND a site map page included. All accessibility tags (ALT, IMG) must be used properly throughout the site. Meta tags (Description and Keywords) should be indicated on home page. **All content should be carefully proofread for proper spelling and grammar.**

Project 5 Finished – Final Website/Portfolio Presentation – CD format (due May 7th, Finals Week 16)

This is your finished site. Everything should be working, there should be sufficient content, it's easy to navigate, and it looks good.

Course Syllabus (subject to change):

Week 1 Introduction/Overview

- Introductions
- Review course syllabus
- Discuss the programs and projects
- Terminology (<http://www.designtalkboard.com/glossary/web/interactive.php>)
- History of the Internet and WWW
- Examination of sample sites (good and bad and what is possible: Shockwave, Flash, Java, etc...)
- Introduction to HTML, XHTML, DHML

For Next Week: Read Chapters 6 and 7. Work through the exercises in the book. Bring in images and text to use for project #1.

Week2 Designing with HTML (online resource: http://www.w3schools.com/html/html_intro.asp)

- File naming conventions
- Markup tags
- Create simple page
- Table construction
- Formatting text
- Working with images
- HTML and Color

In Class Assignment: Project #1: Begin to create first, simple web page using HTML code and image using SimpleText.

For Next Week: Read Chps 9, pgs 139-152 and Chp 10. Continue to work through exercises in the book.

Week3 Visual Communication

- Discuss creative team – Designer, Web Developer (programmers), Client
- Utilizing design principles – color, line, repetition, shape
- What is effective visual communication in multimedia?
- Creating site architecture of web content
- Content – who is your audience? How to develop for web (varies with discipline...research, heavy on text; arts/entertainment...heavy on graphic imagery; commercial...lots of info at once).
- Balance of function and aesthetics

In Class Assignment: Continue to work on project #1.

For Next Week: Read Chp 2 and 4. Start to work on project #2, (Choose 3 websites that you think are aesthetically worthy (incorporate design principles) and write a review.)

Week4 **Project #1 Due – Critique in class**

Web Basics and “**why** do I need to know HTML anyway?”

- File management/extensions
- Platform differences (MAC vs. PC)
- Screen size and resolution
- Colors (web safe palette) and backgrounds
- Image preparation – scanning, working with photos, creating graphics
- Text, sizes, fonts (readability) images and backgrounds
- Beginner’s aesthetics: Do’s and Don’ts

In Class Assignment: Website review...choose your websites to review for project 2, due next week.

For Next Week: Read Chp 5. Continue to work on project #2, due next week.

Week5 **Project #2 Due – Hand-in**

Creating a layout in /Photoshop/Illustrator (Page Layout, Image Preparation)

In Class Assignment: Start working on next project, creating a site architecture and design plan. You can use Illustrator or create hand-drawn sketches or both.

For Next Week: Read Chp 14. Work on Project #3, due next week.

Week6 **Project #3 Due – Hand-in**
Dreamweaver Basics – Introduction to the Interface

In Class Assignment: Mini Quiz (HTML and Web Basics). Start Dreamweaver Tutorial. Start working on layouts for Project #4 (using Photoshop CS2).

For Next Week: No reading assignment. Continue learning Dreamweaver using Tutorial and working on page layouts for Project #4).

Week7 **SPRING BREAK!!!**

Week8 Dreamweaver Basics

- Set up site definition
- Using a tracing image
- Working with tables and layers

In Class Assignment: Continue working on Project #4 due next week.

For Next Week: Read Chps 16 and 18.

Week9 **Project #4 Due**
Slicing your Photoshop files for import to Dreamweaver
Image optimization

In Class Assignment: Storyboard simple flash project (keep it simple). Start Flash tutorial.

For Next Week: Read Chp 22, pgs 412-414. Complete storyboard for Flash project to be used in class next week.

Week10 Advanced Dreamweaver

- Linking
- Working with behaviors
- Pop-up windows
- Drop down menus, simple rollovers

Intro to Flash

- Timeline, Library, Stage, Layers
- Toolbar, panels
- Planning a simple movie – storyboard ideas
- Flash Basics - tweening symbols

In Class Assignment: Create simple Flash movie for mini-project to be used in your final website.

For Next Week: Continue to work on Flash project.

Week11 Flash cont'd

- Creating graphic buttons (symbols, instance)
- Effects – alpha, motion, break apart

In Class Assignment: Work on Flash project due next week.

For Next Week: Continue to refine project #5. Complete mini-project due next week.

Week12 **Mini-project due**
Website meta tags

In Class Assignment: Develop keywords and descriptions for meta tag use.

Week13 *Workshop Day* – use this day to work at home or in school. I will be on campus to field any questions.

For Next Week: Read Chp 20. Project #5 Draft is due and will undergo peer assessment.

Week14 **Project #5 Draft due**

In Class Assignment: Project critique by fellow classmates. Buddy up with a partner and have them go through your website and critique. Assessment sheets will be provided for guidelines.

For Next Week: Read Chp 3. Continue refining site based on peer review.

Week15 Web Publishing Basics/ Lab Day:

- Review concepts gained during semester
- Q&A on any application
- Assign students presentation day
- Assist with final presentation (Proofread)
- Publishing your site on the WWW (use of FTP-file transfer protocol)
- Search engine optimization (SEO)

For Next Week: Read Chaps Create meta tag headers for project
Continue refining project

Week16 **Project #5 Final Due (hand in final project on CD)**
Final Presentations – Critique in Class

Suggested Resources:

Robin Williams and John Tollett, *The Non-Designer's Web Book – 3rd edition*, Peachpit Press
Lynda Weinman, *Designing Web Graphics 4*, New Riders
Bryan L. Peterson, *Using Design Basics to Get Creative Results*, North Light Books
Darcy DiNucci, *Elements of Web Design*, Peachpit Press
Steve Krug, *Don't Make Me Think*, New Riders
Robin Williams, *Web Design Workshop*, Peachpit Press