

DESIGN 378: Information Architecture & Web Design | Spring 2016 | M/W 2:30–5:20 PM

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course description

This course aims to introduce students to web design and development, as well as the basics of screen-based usability. It will:

- Empower students to analyze and critique interfaces from the perspectives of both user and designer
- Develop the student's ability to use essential design software to create interfaces and assets
- Introduce students to writing hand-coded HTML and CSS as it applies to the practice of web design
- Illuminate the thought process of the user by discussing and applying fundamental concepts of usability design

A primary component of this course will be the creation of websites using hand-coded HTML and CSS. By engaging with the technology directly, students will learn both the limitations and capabilities of the medium, forming a base knowledge that will be useful for acquiring further web development skills or working with professional web developers.

learning outcomes

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Understand fundamental technologies of the web and how they work together to create a website
 - Use HTML and CSS to create basic websites with single and multi-column layouts
 - Create hierarchy in an interactive layout in a way that promotes clarity and usability
 - Understand the disposition of web users as it applies to creating usable interactive experiences
 - Troubleshoot design and technical problems using online and printed resources
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textbooks and software

We will use Sublime Text (or another text editor of your choice), the Adobe Creative Suite, and Cyberduck. Please install all software on your laptop prior to the first day of class. See the Canvas page for links. Our textbooks will be:

HTML & CSS: Design and Build Websites by Jon Duckett. 2011.

Don't Make Me Think, Revisited: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability by Steve Krug. 2014 (3rd ed).

Additional required readings will be available online or distributed in class.

technical questions

I will not respond to technical/coding questions over email. We will use discussion boards on Canvas for all technical questions and, as needed, design feedback outside of our class critiques. This will provide a space for everyone to answer questions and view solutions to other students' issues — because if you have a question, chances are someone else has the same one, too.

email

The best way to reach me outside of my office hours — but not for technical questions (see above) — is to send me a message in Canvas. Please allow a minimum of one weekday for an email response. Critiques via email are generally ineffective and inefficient. Plan ahead and take advantage of class time and office hours.

class expectations

Be prepared at the start of each class, on time, with assigned work with your laptop turned on and the correct software installed. This includes the presentation of sketches, mock-ups, and prototypes in required form for critiques, and/

or uploading in-progress projects to a web server so we can view them. Students who are not prepared and do not participate in class critiques should not expect private critiques with faculty at a later date or at the end of class.

You are responsible for all material covered in class, regardless of your attendance record. **Absences do not equate to automatic deadline extensions.** If you have been absent, you must contact a classmate for notes and assignments.

Do not use the internet for Facebook or other personal use during class. I will occasionally ask you to put your laptop to sleep during lectures or demos, at which time it must be closed.

assignments & grading

Considerations for assignment grades will be spelled out in more detail on assignment sheets, but they generally include:

- Concept, developmental process and execution
- Presentation and craft (this applies to neatness and commenting of code)
- Design aesthetic and usability
- Class participation and professionalism in critiques and discussions

The final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

Project 1: Online Guide	30 points
Project 2: Travel Micro-Site	70 points
Exercises	5 points each

Any project not submitted correctly and in its entirety by the beginning of the class period in which it is due will be considered late, and will automatically receive a deduction of 10% of the maximum score. The grade will continue to drop at a rate of 10% per class meeting. Requirements for project submission are clearly stated on the project handout and in class and must be followed exactly. Due to university deadlines, the final project may not be submitted late.

The instructor will not issue an incomplete grade or grant an extension without a serious, documented excuse.

It is essential that you save files in multiple locations. Remember Jack Schofield's Second Law of Computing: "Data doesn't really exist unless you have two copies of it." Accidental erasure is not grounds for a deadline extension.

grade scale

3.8–4.0 ("Wow")

This grade is given to a student who has exhibited the highest possible performance in all aspects of the course — final projects, the design process and participation are excellent. This student independently seeks out additional information on design and is highly committed/passionate about his/her work.

3.4–3.7 ("Very good")

This grade is given to a student who exhibits superior performance in all aspects of the course — the final projects, design process, and participation are uniformly of high quality. This student has a thorough understanding of all concepts presented, and is motivated to improve and succeed.

2.9–3.3 ("Good")

This grade is given to a student who has good performance in most aspects of the course. This student follows a thorough design process, has good design work, and consistent participation that reflects a clear understanding of almost all concepts being presented.

2.5–2.8 (“Poor”)

This grade is given to a student who has fair performance in the course. The final work is adequate, with a design process that reflects the minimum needed to complete assignments. Participation and motivation are moderate.

2.4 and below

This grade is given to a student with poor performance in the course. Projects are incorrectly prepared, incomplete or missing. This student does not understand the majority of concepts presented and rarely participates in class. This student is not prepared for subsequent courses in design.

Note: All students are required to pass every design studio class with a minimum grade of 2.5. Receiving a grade below the 2.5 benchmark will result in a one-quarter probationary period. Continued failure to pass subsequent design studio courses with a minimum 2.5 grade could result in expulsion from the design major.

policies

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as using in your own work the creations, ideas, words, inventions, or work of someone else without formally acknowledging them through the use of quotation marks, footnotes, bibliography, or other reference. Please check with me if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism. This guide may also be helpful: depts.washington.edu/pswrite/plag.html. Instances of plagiarism will be referred to the Vice Provost/Special Asst. to the President for Student Relations and may lead to disciplinary action.

After-Hours Access to the Art Building

For after-hours access to the Art Building, please bring your Husky Card to the Art Advising Office (RM 104, Open M-Th, 9am-3pm). Student cards will be swiped, and you will receive an access sticker for your Husky Card. Access is instant after swiping. Access will be removed at the end of the academic year.

Access and Accommodations

UW Disability Resources for Students (<http://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs>) offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have already established accommodations with DRS, please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course. If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary or permanent disability that requires accommodations (this can include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability.uw.edu. When you contact the DRS office, their staff will work to establish reasonable accommodations for you through an interactive process between myself, you, and their office.

Violence Prevention

—Always call 911 if you or others may be in danger.

—Call 206-685-SAFE (7233) to report non-urgent threats of violence. For referrals to UW counseling, see www.washington.edu/counseling. Note UW safety resources here: www.washington.edu/safety.

—Don't walk alone. Campus safety guards can walk with you on campus after dark. Call 206-685-WALK (9255) or the shuttle/NightRide program: www.washington.edu/facilities/transportation/uwshuttles/nr.

—Stay connected in an emergency with UW Alert by registering your cell phone at www.washington.edu/alert to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text/voice messaging. For more information, visit the UW Safe Campus website at www.washington.edu/safecampus.

—Proper student conduct is important for maintaining a healthy environment at UW. Please familiarize yourself with the UW Student Code of Conduct: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=478-120>