
Introduction to Web Design AVT 217

Spring 2016 MW 7:20 pm - 10:00 pm

Art and Design Building 1021

Instructor: Abraham Garcia

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Course Syllabus

The syllabus and project statements serve as your guide throughout the semester. Refer to them frequently. You are expected to know and understand this information.

Catalog Description

An introduction to web design, in particular to standards as a successful tool in design communication. Students gain hands-on experience on design issues specific to web based presentations, learn web page layout and effective navigation, and delve into the design process.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- A. Apply basic design concepts and principles of web delivery
 - B. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the components and mechanics of a website
 - C. Acquire a web host, practice web file management and version control and launch a web site
 - D. Utilize web software tools at an introductory level
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General Format

The semester will consist of workshops, seminars, exercises and projects. Workshops will be in-class lessons about specific techniques with code or processes. Seminars present opportunities to discuss and debate critical issues regarding web culture. Projects will happen largely outside of

class and should be thoughtful investigations based on a given problem statement. You will apply what you've learned in exercises, workshops and seminars to projects. Class meetings will be structured around workshops, seminars, work sessions, guest speakers, and critiques on projects. Your grades will be determined like so:

There are 400 total points for all projects and assignments.

Project 1 - 75 points

Project 2 - 75 points

Project 3 - 125 points

Weekly assignments - 50 points

Class Participation - 55 points

Exercises - 20 points

This is the grading scale:

386-400 = A+

371-385 = A

360-370 = A-

347-359 = B+

334-346 = B

320-333 = B-

307-319 = C+

294-306 = C

280-293 = C-

240-279 = D

below 240 = F

Exercises

Exercises will be given a score of 2 for correct completion and submission. A 1 will be given for exercises with errors or that have been submitted incorrectly. At the instructor's discretion, a 3 can

be given for work that shows a great deal of consideration and significantly and substantially exceeds the requirements.

An average of 2 equates to full credit for the exercise portion of your grade. Late exercises are never accepted, but your lowest exercise score will be dropped.

Project Grades

- 25% Participation/Process: contributing to class discussions and critiques; improving work as a result of research and iteration
- 25% Concept: responding to problem statement innovatively; thinking critically about work based on critiques, readings, and discussions
- 25% Formal Resolution: making work that is aesthetically sophisticated and effective and appropriate given concept and context
- 25% Craft: taking care in manufacture of work; showing technical ability

Project 1. Single Page Website (3 Weeks)

We will begin the semester with the very basics which include low-fidelity sketching/wireframing and iterative design in the browser.

The learning objectives include:

- To learn image size, format, and optimization for web use
- To implement your knowledge of design principles into website design
- Familiarize yourself with the web design process

Project 2. Web Page Design and Development: You've Probably Never Heard of This Band (3 Weeks + Spring Break)

You will be creating a multimedia website for a fictitious cover band. You will be designing the album covers, implementing track listings, tour schedules, press photos and audio clips.

- To learn web page structure through the use of grid and CSS
- To learn the basics of HTML & CSS authoring
- To learn the basics of web navigation
- To implement your knowledge of design principles into website design
- To practice web file management and publishing

Final Project. Portfolio Web Site Design and Development (4 Weeks)

This project will introduce you to the Bootstrap framework. The end result will be a dynamic portfolio that will serve as a tool to showcase your voice as a designer and display your body of work.

The learning objectives include:

- To learn the website design and development process
 - To learn the basics of information structure and usability
 - To learn the basics of web prototyping
 - To learn the basics of responsive frameworks
 - To learn the basics of Content Management Systems
 - To further develop your skills in HTML & CSS authoring
 - To implement your knowledge of design principles into website design
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Workshops

HTML Basics (January 25)

Sketching and Prototyping (Feb 1)

CSS and CSS Preprocessors (Feb 15)

Front End Frameworks:Bootstrap (Feb 21)

Version Control: Git and Git Deployment (March 4)

Seminars

Memetic Theory and Online Culture [February 10]

Beauty in Web Design (March 30)

Required Text

Memes in Digital Culture by Limor Shifman. 2013

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

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

Additional readings will be posted to Blackboard throughout the semester.

Design Process

You should follow the recommended design process as outlined in the Project Statements. The quality of your design process is an important factor in the project grade.

Important Notes

This course is very demanding. You are expected to spend a lot of time outside the class to work on the exercises and projects. If you can not put in the time and effort, please take this course when you can make this commitment.

Projects and Exercises Submission

Unless otherwise noted, the due date for each exercise (both in-class and homework) is the first class day of the week following the day when the exercise is assigned.

Projects/assignments are due at the beginning of class without exception. It means that you should make sure all the files (include the required design process files) work properly on your web site

before class starts and come to class on time. Late submissions receive a full letter grade down for each class day of delay. If you arrive late that day, your project will be considered late and the grade will be lowered one full letter grade. Projects will not be accepted after one week from the due date.

You need to come to class and present your project on the due date. Otherwise your project will be counted as late even if you uploaded it to the server.

Class Policy

If you miss a class, you are responsible to catch-up. You may ask classmates for updates and notes. E-mails to the instructor for the purpose of getting the lecture material and the homework will NOT be answered.

Failure to turn in any project will automatically result in a fail grade

Students arriving late for fifteen minutes or more will be marked tardy. Students arriving late for thirty minutes or more will be marked absent. Three tardy marks equal to one absence. Students who leave before the class is dismissed will be counted as absent.

If you miss 3 classes (including excused or unexcused), your final grade will be reduced by a letter grade. Each accumulative absence beyond three will result in a letter grade mark down.

Perfect attendance will earn you 10 credit points. You will get 6 credit points if you only miss one class or have less than four tardies.

There will be no makeup for a project.

Students must be prepared for class to be counted as present, i.e., having all necessary supplies, computer files, sketches with you. Attendance to critiques is mandatory. You may be counted as absent if you do not have the required work to present at the progress and final critiques.

Materials

- A web hosting account (recommendations will be covered in class)
- Sketchbook (dot grids recommended)

- Dropbox account
- Github account
- Codepen Account (free version is fine)
- Adobe Creative Suite Account (including Typekit)
- Atom Text Editor

Additional Free Coding Resources

Code Academy

<http://www.codecademy.com/>

Stack Overflow (Always a good place to ask questions if you get stuck)

<http://stackoverflow.com/>

W3Schools

<http://www.w3schools.com/css/>

University and School of Art Policies

In accordance with George Mason University policy, turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Commitment to Diversity

This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be

respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design

As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours

SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

ArtsBus - Dates for Spring 2016

February 20

March 19

April 9

ArtsBus Credit

- Each student must have up to 5 AVT 300/Artsbus credits before graduation. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment.
- If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please go to the

ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.

- Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need Artsbus credit BUT may need to go on the Artsbus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center of the Arts. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.

Visual Voices Lecture Series Spring 2016

Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20-9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater: <http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/>

Important Deadlines

<i>January 1 Day of Week</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 18
First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Tue Jan 19
Summer 2016 Graduation Intent Available via Patriot Web	Mon Jan 25
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Tues Jan 26
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Tues Feb 2
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	Fri Feb 19
Last day to file your Spring 2016 Graduation Intent	Fri Feb 19
Immunization Record Deadline	Tue Mar 1
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 15 – Fri Mar 18

Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	Mon Feb 22 – Fri Mar 25
Spring Break	Mon Mar 7 – Sun Mar 13
Incomplete work from Fall 2015 due to Instructor	Fri Mar 25
Incomplete grade changes from Fall 2015 due to Registrar	Fri Apr 1
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline	Fri Apr 29
Last day of classes	Mon May 2
Reading Days Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	Tue May 3
Exam Period (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 4 – Wed May 11
Commencement and Degree Conferral Date	May 14

Add/Drop

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the SOA office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed), LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences

If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center

(SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

Official Communications via GMU E-Mail

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss a workshop with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Honor Code

Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously.

No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff. Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*.)

The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, “When in doubt, cite.”

Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

Writing Center

Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

The Collaborative Learning Hub Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ittraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.