Web Design and Architecture

MASTERS IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

Western University

Course: LIS 9723A, Web Design and Architecture
Website: http://instruct.uwo.ca/fim-lis/9723/
Lecturer: Mark Rayner
Email: marayner@uwo.ca
Office: FNB 4063
Time: Thursday 1:30-4:30 pm
Location: FNB 2230, FNB 3010
Office hours: Wednesday 11:30 am – 1:30 pm, or by appt.

Description

In this studio course, you will learn about web design and architecture at two levels. In our lectures we'll discuss the elements, theory and disciplines required to produce enterprise-level websites. In the lab we will use Brackets to code HTML5 and CSS. By the end of the course, you will be able to create a basic, static website. This specific practical work will further illuminate the deeper principles of web design and enrich your overall understanding of the web.

Objectives

Web Design and Architecture has several objectives. In addition to the primary goal of helping you acquire the basic skills you will need to produce a good website, you will learn about:

- information architecture
- communications planning
- navigation and search systems
- usability, UX & accessibility
- semantics, writing and typography for the web
- how to learn new software
- principles of ethical, user-centered design
- syntax of HTML5 and CSS
- understanding of file structures
- colour theory & Gestalt design principles

Evaluation

Participation (10%) will be based on your contributions during labs and lectures.

Coding Test (10%) is an online test that will show you understand the basics of how HTML and CSS code works. **Date: Feb. 13 (online)**

File Structure/FTP Test (10%) This is an in-lab test that will show you understand how file structure works and that you are capable of using the file transfer protocol to publish your files and folders to the web server. **Date: Mar. 26 (in class)**

Lab work (10%) will be based on the number of lab exercises you have completed -- note, lessons and tutorials are not graded, only the exercises, listed at the class website under the "exercises" section. These are pass/fail exercises (if you complete the exercise — even partially and imperfectly — you get the points). However, they

<u>must be posted to your webpage</u> by the deadline or you will <u>not receive the points</u>. So I urge you to double-check to ensure that you can see the exercise on the web after you've completed and published the exercise. **Due date: Mar. 26 (5 pm)**

Website Proposal (20%)

Write a communications plan to address how you will reach your audience for a subject of your choosing. Design the architectural blueprints for the website, and create a detailed content map – what information needs to be available at what point on the site. Include the file structure with this map. Also, make some wireframes or mock-ups to show what you believe the site will look like. What design elements will best communicate your ideas? Consider the overall tone, colour, and layout. This is your best chance to get the site right – it should be fully planned before you begin creating it. Keep form and content in mind. Required elements:

- communications plan (one page is okay)
- architectural blueprint
- detailed content map, including file structure
- wireframes

To get a higher mark:

- other relevant materials such as content, mock-ups, graphic elements, palette, SWOT analyses, brainstorming, scenarios, etc.

Please submit as a hard (paper) copy. You may refer to a web page for color palettes, images, etc.   **Due date: Feb. 27 (9 am)**

Website Production (40%)

Produce the site that you have envisioned, proposed and designed. Keep everything that we have discussed in class in mind, but remember that we are focusing on creating original sites that are easy to use in this class. The site will be a minimum of 15 web pages in size (separate static html files) and a maximum of 25 pages (you can build a bigger site, but I'll stop reading at 15 pages). There should be a minimum of 150 words per page (on average.) A complete marking criteria will be provided on the class website, but the following factors will weigh heavily in the final mark:

- originality and effectiveness of content **(NB: NO verbatim content from other sources!)**
- content that is written for the web
- download times
- ease of use
- browser compatibility
- persistent navigation & local navigation
- basic accessibility (alt tags) and good page title information
- sensible file structure and good semantics.

Please submit your project by emailing the URL to me at: marayner@uwo.ca.
                                            Due date: Apr. 9 (5 pm)

Lateness penalties and bonus marks:

If you need some extra time to complete assignments, that's usually not a problem, but

please ask me well before the due date. Assignments that are late will be penalized at 5% per day. For Website Production, sites cannot be accepted after the 12th. There is a 10% bonus if you can submit your site by March 26th at 5 pm.

Texts, Readings & Support:
Please check the class website for the reading schedule. The textbooks are on reserve in the GRC. Note that the class website "lessons" section has walk-throughs of all our tutorials, and is printable. Finally, check the "resources" section for links to online tools and videos.

Don't Make Me Think: Common Sense Approach to Web Usability, 3/e   (*Think*)
By: Steve Krug, Roger Black
New Riders; ISBN: 0321344758

Information Architecture for the World Wide Web, 3/e   (*IA*)
By Louis Rosenfeld, Peter Morville
O'Reilly & Associates; ISBN: 0596000359

Optional:
HTML5: Up and Running
By: Mark Pilgrim
O'Reilly Media; ISBN:978-0-596-80602-6 | ISBN 10:0-596-80602-7

Statement on Academic Offences
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Support Services
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Western's "Health and Wellness" http://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Land Acknowledgement
Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the *Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak* and *Attawandaron* peoples who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

Tentative Schedule (this is subject to change)

Week:	Class/Lab	Assignments Due
Jan. 9	Introductions, Elements of Web Design Lab: site critiques	
Jan. 16	HTML, CSS & Other Nerdy Things Lesson: Writing HTML & Using FTP Exercise: Your homepage; Exercise: Personalizing homepage	
Jan. 23	Lecture: Writing for the Web Lesson: Writing Semantic HTML; Lesson: Web Typography Exercise: Creating "scannable" text, Exercise: CSS Typography	
Jan. 30	Lecture: Usability & UX Lesson: CSS, File Structure and Organization Lesson: Writing CSS, Exercise: Using CSS	
Feb. 6	Lecture: Conceptual Design Lesson: Simple CSS Layouts with Floats Exercise: Create a 2-col layout; Exercise: Make a 3-col layout	
Feb. 13	Lecture: Navigation Color Lesson: CSS Linking styles and CSS3 tricks Exercise: Toaster Uprising; Exercise: Big Red Dot	**Coding Test (online)**
Feb. 20	**Reading Week**	
Feb. 27	Lecture: The Search Engines Lesson: Externalizing CSS; Lesson: WAIS Exercise: Create layout with external CSS	**Web Proposal**
Mar. 5	Lecture: Perception & Gestalt Principles of Design Lesson: Compressing Images; Optional Lesson: GIMP Basics Exercise: Hybrid Art Image	
Mar. 12	Lecture: Accessibility Lesson: CSS drop-down menus Exercise: Add a drop-down menu to Big Red Dot	
Mar. 19	Optional Lecture: File Structure Review Optional Lesson: Creating and Using Dreamweaver Templates to Generate Pages	
Mar. 26	FTP Test Work Period	**Exercises** **Bonus Mark - Site**
Apr. 2	Work Period	
Apr. 9	Work Period	**Site Due (5 pm)**

Note: please consult the class website for readings (schedule), videos (resources) & self-help tutorials (lessons).