Intro to Interactive Media

MEJO 187.001 | Online | Summer Session 1 | 2017

Instructor

Sarah Riazati
sriazati@unc.edu
sarahriazati@gmail.com

Office Hours

Refer to class Google Calendar for scheduled times, and also available by appointment

Course Description

Multimedia authoring tools provide communicators with some of the most powerful and effective storytelling options available. Understanding these tools is essential for anyone who plans a successful career in the media industry. However, the ability to resourcefully and proficiently use these tools is an even greater asset. The goal of this class, therefore, is to help you gain knowledge of both these aspects. You will examine and understand the value of multimedia in the journalism industry and begin to develop the skills to execute your ideas.

Course Site

The Course Site is your primary learning resource for this class. The URL for the course site will be delivered via email in advance of the first day of class. On the site, lessons are organized by day, and lessons combine a mix of Lynda.com videos, YouTube videos recorded by your instructor, homework assignments and readings.

Course Format

In **Part 1,** we will learn HTML, CSS, and the front-end framework Bootstrap. We will also learn principles of design, typography and color theory, and how to build functional prototypes in Adobe Experience Design.

In **Part 2**, we will learn about content management systems and, using Wordpress, we will build portfolio sites using CSS, HTML & PHP to customize themes. We will also cover information architecture, search engine optimization and other advanced topics.

Expectations

This is a self-directed online course that requires independent learning (see below for further details). The course website organizes topics by day, and the expectation is that you will

complete each day in real-time. The lessons are designed sequentially, so each builds on the next. Avoid the temptation to rush through everything, as some topics are deep and may require you to re-watch videos or experiment with applying new topics on your own. Alternatively, do not procrastinate or fall behind on the lessons. You should plan to spend 3-4 hours watching videos and writing code every weekday throughout this course, and you should allocate additional work time for working on assignments over the weekends.

Participation

Participate by actively watching all videos and following along with exercise files. You will also submit weekly summaries (see below). Finally, use Piazza to post questions, share resources or answer your peers' questions.

Course Materials

There is no assigned textbook for this course. All learning materials are available online. Professional developers and designers set up their own digital workspaces for ease of use, efficiency and speed. This course will introduce you to some common workflows and approaches, and it will be your responsibility to integrate them into a workflow of your own.

Lynda.com

We will rely very heavily on Lynda.com video lessons to introduce new concepts in programming and design. You can access Lynda.com using your UNC onyen. Following instructions available here: http://software.sites.unc.edu/lynda/

Web Domain + Hosting

You will need to purchase a domain (your URL for this course) and hosting space to host your project files. Information about how to purchase this is available in the first day presentations. Domains are available by the 1 year (usually <$15), and hosting is purchased by month (usually <$4/month), with a minimum of 3 months. Check out the Class 1 presentation for how to use GoDaddy coupons to get the best deal on one year of domain registration and hosting.

FTP Client

See the first day presentation for further details. For Mac users, you can download Fetch here. PC users can use Cyberduck, available for free here.

Integrated Development Environments (IDEs) & Code Editors

The IDE you use is a matter of personal preference, but I will be using Sublime Text 3, [available here.](#) Other popular text editors include Dreamweaver, Komodo, Coda and Atom. See the first day presentation for further details.

Adobe Creative Suite

Available for free for UNC students. We will be using Adobe Experience Design, Photoshop, Illustrator and Acrobat. Install all of these tools on your working computer. Follow instructions here: http://software.sites.unc.edu/software/adobe-creative-cloud/

Browser

We will be using Google Chrome, available here https://www.google.com/chrome/browser/desktop/index.html. See the first day presentation for further details.

Independent, Online Learning

In this class we will rely heavily on Lynda.com tutorials. Learning from Lynda requires active, self-directed participation. Make sure you download the tutorial project files and follow along. In this class, we will be learning several new languages. Just like learning Spanish or French, you have to practice speaking for the language to really "click". It's not enough to just "watch" the videos, you will need to practice applying the concepts as they are introduced. Don't just speed through the Lynda videos at 2x speed without playing around with code, or you'll be behind on the projects.

In order to succeed in this assignments, you *have* to do the readings and watch the Lynda videos. I won't assign quizzes on this content, but if you decide to skip the videos, it will be obvious to me when I grade your projects.

This course will frequently require you to do your own research. Don't know what wireframe is? Look online for an article, video or Lynda tutorial to explain topics you don't quite understand.

Collaborative Online Learning via Piazza

This term we will be using [Piazza](#) for questions and class discussion. The system is highly catered to getting you help fast and efficiently from classmates and myself. Rather than emailing questions to the teaching staff, post your questions on Piazza. If you have any problems or feedback for the developers, email team@piazza.com.

You can use Piazza to pose your own questions or answer others questions. Your participation in Piazza via providing answers to others' questions will be considered for your final participation grade.

[Find our class Piazza page here.](#)

Asking Questions

Researching answers to your questions is an important skill web design and development, and especially so in an online course. If you have a question, rest assured that someone has asked that question before in an online forum. Before directing your question to the professor via email, follow these steps to uncover the answer on your own:

1. Research the question online by typing a keyword-heavy question directly into Google, (i.e. "What is the syntax for writing comments in CSS"). Open several of the top links and read all the answers / pages / tutorials. Stack Overflow, a forum site, will be a great resource here.
2. Check Piazza to see if someone has already asked this question. If not, post your question in the Q&A section. Make sure to include all relevant documents, including code files or snippets, so others can help answer your question in full.

Do not submit questions related to course content to the professor via email. All course-related questions should be submitted via Piazza. Only personal questions, meant for an audience of one (the professor), may be submitted via email.

Learning Resources

Refer to the course [Resources](#) page for helpful resources.

Course Work

Deadlines

All deadlines are posted on the Assignments page of the course website, and on the class Google Calendar. All work is due by 8pm on the deadline, unless otherwise specified. The responsibility for keeping track of deadlines lies on you. Late assignments will not be accepted for grading. **Late assignments will not be accepted for grading**, though you may still request feedback on your work. Additionally, it's your responsibility to make sure that your assignments have been submitted correctly. Incorrectly submitted assignments are effectively late assignments, and thus will not be accepted.

Assignments

Weekly assignments will help you develop your coding and design skills and allow me to regularly review and give feedback about your work. Assignment descriptions will be posted on the course website. All assignments will be hosted on your own domain, and you will submit links to your projects via Sakai.

Weekly Participation Summaries

You will submit a participation summary every Friday via Sakai. This is an opportunity for you to take ownership over your learning in this course and to select topics that relevant to your interests. This is how I will get to know each of you, so please take advantage of the open nature of this assignment and make it something interesting to you. You may choose to:

- Summarize what you learned this week and what you found interesting / did not care for
- Present a new topic you encountered that interests you
- Share a relevant article and your take on how it relates to our course
- Review how you debugged/troubleshooted an error in your code
- Your own topic?

Summaries should be no longer than one page. Each summary is due by 8pm on:

1. Friday, May 19
2. Friday, May 26
3. Friday, June 2
4. Friday, June 9
5. Friday, June 16

Projects

There will be two projects during this course. Additional information about all of these projects will be provided in the online course site. Late projects will not be accepted.

1. The first project will challenge you to design a website using Adobe Experience Design and use a front-end development framework (Bootstrap) in combination with HTML and CSS to build a five-page website. **Project 1 is due by 11:55pm on Sunday, June 4.**
2. The second project will challenge you to create your own personal portfolio website using WordPress. You will customize an existing Wordpress theme and prepare all the content for this site. **Project 2 is due by 5pm on the last day of class, Monday June 19.**

Web Critique Paper

You will be asked to critique and lead a discussion about a professional multimedia project of your choosing for the class. More specifics about the requirements of this presentation and the accompanying paper will be provided during class.

Assessment

Participation	**15%**
Assignments	**15%**
Website Critique Paper	**10%**
Project1	**30%**
Project 2	**30%**

Your success in this course will be determined by participation, assignments, your web critique paper and two projects. I follow the University's Grading Standards, as adopted by the Faculty Council:

- **"A"** Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected of students at a given stage of development. The "A" grade states clearly that the student has shown such outstanding promise in the aspect of the discipline under study that he/she may be strongly encouraged to continue.

- **"B"** Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The "B" grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study.
- **"C"** A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The "C" grade states that, while not yet showing any unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development.
- **"D"** A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The "D" grade states that the student has given no evidence of prospective growth in the discipline; an accumulation of D grades should be taken to mean that the student would be well advised not to continue in the academic field.
- **"F"** For whatever reasons, an unacceptable performance. The "F" grade indicates that the student's performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content. A grade of F should warrant an adviser's questioning whether the student may suitably register for further study in the discipline before remedial work is undertaken.

Important: Although grades are not negotiable, I will give every consideration to any concerns you have about an assignment grade, as long as the concern is identified promptly. If you have questions about or dispute a particular grade, you must raise your question **within one week of receiving that particular grade**. Questions about assignments or requests for extra credits raised at the end of the semester will not be considered, unless the assignment falls within the one week range.

Grading Scale

A	94% and higher		C	74 - 76
A -	90 - 93		C -	70 - 73
B +	87 - 89		D +	67 - 69
B	84 - 86		D	60 - 66
B -	80 - 83		F	59% or below
C +	77 - 79			

Honor Code

You are expected to conduct yourself within the guidelines of the [University honor system](). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. The full document, *The instrument of student judicial governance*, [is available online here.]()

Diversity & Inclusion

The School of Media and Journalism adopted diversity and inclusion mission and vision statements in spring 2016 with accompanying goals, [which you may view here]().

Additionally, the University has a policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination [outlined here](). In summary, UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Harassment: UNC does not tolerate harassment based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture, disability, or for any other reason. It is also a violation of the Honor Code and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Title IX of the Educational Amendments. If you need assistance with a harassment issue or problem, bring it to my attention or The Office of the Dean of Students, [dos@unc.edu]() or 919/966-4042.

Special Accommodations: If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let me know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Accessibility Resources & Service Office website at [https://accessibility.unc.edu/](), call 919/962-8300, or use NC Relay 711.

Accreditation

The School of Media and Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. [Learn more about them here](). No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas. In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis with these six bullet points under "Professional values and competencies" in the link above:

- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.