MEJO 187.3
FOUNDATIONS OF INTERACTIVE MEDIA

Spring 2020 / TR 6:00–7:45 pm / Carroll Hall Room 60

INSTRUCTOR

Scott Geier, Lecturer

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843.906.3035

OFFICE HOURS: After class or 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 FORMAT

This course will consist of four interactive media projects and a student presentation on an interactive document or product; quizzes, assignments, critiques and class discussions on practice and readings.

COURSE PROGRESSION

- Part I: User Experience: Content Strategy, Information Architecture, User Interface, Design
- Part II: HTML & CSS
- Part III: Content Management Systems
- Part IV: JavaScript

ATTENDANCE

This course is demanding. Each session will teach skills that you will need to proceed with your assignments, and missing a class will leave you behind. Therefore, attendance is required, participation is expected and deadlines are absolute.

Each student will be allowed **one** unexcused absence. **Additional unexcused absences will result in a 2% reduction in your final grade**. Excused absences (e.g., doctor's note or a situation cleared with me in advance) do not affect your grade.

Additionally, you are expected to arrive to class on time. If you will be late or must leave early, please let me know as soon as possible. Arriving more than 15 minutes late or leaving more than 15 minutes early without a valid reason will count as an absence.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Most class sessions will consist of two parts: 1) lecture/demonstration, and 2) lab time for working on your current assignment. Do not plan on finishing your assignments during our time in class; to meet expectations and produce good work, you should plan to spend a generous amount of time outside of class on readings, tutorials and projects. You will get out of this course what you put into it. You are expected to come to every class on time, interact with your classmates and the instructor, and work hard.

Once class has started, please do NOT check your cell phone or browse non-course related websites. This distracts your fellow students and your instructor. Failure to adhere to the "no phone" policy will lower a student's participation grade.

Also, please be aware that you will be working in a computer lab filled with expensive equipment. Therefore drinks and food are not allowed on desks next to computers.

COURSE MATERIALS

Web Domain and Hosting

You will need to purchase a website domain (around $10) and website hosting with HostGator (around $6 a month for one year). We will discuss this process in class. If you already have a domain name and hosting service, that's fine, but please let me know at the beginning of the semester so that I can get a tally of students with preexisting accounts.

Textbooks

There are no required textbooks, but you may find the following resources helpful as you move through the course:

HTML & CSS: Design and Build Websites
Jon Duckett
John Wiley & Sons (2011)
ISBN-13: 978-1118008188

JavaScript & jQuery: Interactive Front-end Web Development
Jon Duckett
John Wiley & Sons (2014)
ISBN-13: 978-1118531648

Don't Make Me Think! A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability
Steve Krug
New Riders Pub. (2006)
ISBN-13: 9780321965516

Tutorials and Coding Platforms

LinkedIn Learning (formerly Lynda.com) is a software training and tutorial video library that is offered free to UNC students. We will use these tutorials throughout the semester. To learn more about LinkedIn Learning,

visit the ITS website at https://software.sites.unc.edu/linkedin/. For HTML, CSS and JavaScript exercises, we will often use JS Bin. It is free and provides a great way to experiment with your code before deployment.

Software

Some software programs are required for this course, including Adobe Experience Design (XD). All of the programs you need will be available on the lab computers. If you wish to have Adobe XD on your personal computer, your best option is to sign up for an Adobe Creative Cloud (CC) account and install the XD app from the cloud. An Adobe CC account is free for UNC students at adobe.unc.edu. It includes a host of terrific programs that you may want to use in your projects (e.g., Photoshop, Illustrator). I highly recommend that you take advantage of this free resource.

Adobe software can also be purchased through the UNC Ram Shop online or in store. Contact: (919) 962-2422 or ramshop@email.unc.edu. Software programs are nonrefundable, so be sure you are buying what you want.

ASSIGNMENTS

Projects

There will be four main projects during this course:

- Project 1 – create a website mockup using Adobe XD and employing the design techniques we discuss in class.
- Project 2 – design and develop your first web app from scratch, using HTML and CSS.
- Project 3 – create your own personal portfolio website using WordPress.
- Project 4 – create an interactive dashboard using HTML, CSS and JavaScript.

Additional information about all of these projects will be provided during class.

In-class Exercises and Quizzes

In-class exercises will cover the reading assignments and material pertaining to the particular week's lessons. There may also be a couple unannounced quizzes on reading assignments and class discussion. If you keep up with the

reading assignments and pay attention in class, the quizzes should be easy to complete.

Website Critique

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

Your success in this course will be determined by participation as well as completion and effort on assignments. There will be smaller assignments, quizzes and four main projects throughout the semester.

Finally, it is crucial that you take part in critiques and informal class discussions. Learning comes through communicating and teaching others. To facilitate this process, each class will begin with a brief, **student-led review** of the material we discussed in the previous session. Each student will lead at least one review during the course of the semester, and slots will be assigned at random. This will be part of your participation grade. Attendance, of course, plays into this; if you are absent without excuse and your number comes up for leading the next class review, you'll be unable to contribute.

Deadlines

Please note that **deadlines are absolute**. Extensions will only be granted because of extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness, etc.), and you must notify me as soon as you are aware of the problem. Your workload -- either in this class or in combination with others -- is not an extenuating circumstance. Unexcused failure to submit your work by the deadline will result in a **five-point deduction** for the first 24-hour period, followed by **10-point deductions** for each day thereafter.

Feedback

I will record screencasts as part of the grading process for most of your major projects. The screencasts provide real-time feedback, akin to having an employer sitting next to you at the computer and pointing out strengths, weaknesses, coding errors, and suggestions for improvement. I recommend that

you watch them. They are short (no more than 15 minutes) and will help you debug and learn new techniques.

Final Exam Period

Please note that while there is no final exam in this class, per se, **we are required to meet during the scheduled final exam period**. We will use that time to view the final projects, offer feedback, and discuss what we've learned over the course of the semester. Consider it your exit interview.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

ASSIGNMENTS	% OF GRADE
Exercises and Quizzes	15%
Project 1	15%
Project 2	15%
Project 3	15%
Final Project	20%
Website Critique	10%
Participation	10%
Total	100%

LETTER GRADE	%
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76

C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	0-59

HONOR CODE & PLAGIARISM

It is expected that each student in this course will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the UNC honor code. All academic work should be done with the high level of honesty and integrity this university demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please talk with me or Senior Associate Dean Charlie Tuggle. You may also speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

In this course, it is acceptable to use coding resources (such as tutorials and libraries) and *some* source code from sites like GitHub. But **the software license must allow for the usage, and the source should be credited**, **linked and commented in your code and credited visibly on the site, either in the footer or a credits page.** The source code should merely serve as a launch pad for your own, original work; it should not be copied wholesale. Information about software licensing is readily available in most sites that provide coding resources.

SEEKING HELP

If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, *ask for help as soon as you realize you need it* – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness. Don't be afraid to admit that you need extra guidance. Web design and development can be daunting, and some of the core concepts can be difficult to grasp at first glance. Before long they will be second nature to you.

DIVERSITY

The School of Media and Journalism adopted Diversity and Inclusion Mission and Vision statements in spring 2016 with accompanying goals – http://www.mj.unc.edu/diversity-and-inclusion.

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.

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Accessibility Services website at https://accessibility.unc.edu/

ACCREDITATION

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication'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: http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps

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 on the "Professional values and competencies" listed below.

- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.

- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

SCHEDULE - SPRING 2020

Note: Schedule is subject to change.

WEEK 1 – Introduction and UI/UX Basics

WEEK 2 – Web Design

WEEK 3 – Layout and Grid Basics

WEEK 4 – Usability

PROJECT 1 – UI/UX Design – DUE

WEEK 5 – HTML

WEEK 6 – HTML and CSS

WEEK 7 – CSS Grid and FlexBox

WEEK 8 – More HTML, CSS Grid

PROJECT 2 – Website – DUE

WEEK 9 – WordPress

WEEK 10 – Plugins and Themes

PROJECT 3 – Portfolio – DUE

WEEK 11 – JavaScript Parts 1 & 2

WEEK 12 – JavaScript Parts 3 & 4

WEEK 13 – jQuery, Google Charts and Interactive Infographics

WEEK 14 – Final Project Development

WEEK 15 – Publish

PROJECT 4 — Interactive Dashboard — DUE LAST DAY OF CLASS

FINAL EXAM — Friday, May 1st at 7:00 pm