

Details

MEJO 187 | Foundations of Interactive Media

Carroll 58 | TTH 6:00 PM - 7:45 PM

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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.

Objectives

These are skills a student should be able to demonstrate at the conclusion of the course:

- Outline the steps necessary to design and develop a website from scratch
- Communicate the attributes that make a website usable and accessible
- Use the internet to search for design ideas, development ideas, and royalty-free assets
- Use Adobe XD to create website prototypes and document crucial design assets
- Markup information for a website using semantically correct HTML
- Responsively design and style a website using CSS
- Implement interactive features for a website using JavaScript
- Troubleshoot development issues using MDN web docs, Chrome DevTools, and Stack Overflow
- Version and Deploy code using GitHub
- Manage WordPress features such as posts, pages, categories, themes, and plugins
- Communicate clearly about web design and web development, and deliver meaningful feedback

Required Materials

This class does not require you to purchase any materials. I will assign instructions on how to provision the following:

Computer

Some common problems students have include running out of storage, running out of memory, having an out-of-date operating system, or having poor window management. Learning to code can sometimes be a frustrating experience; make sure your computer isn't making it harder than it needs to be!

Slack

A communication platform for collaboration, tips, and public/private help requests.

Adobe XD

A UI/UX design tool for creating interactive prototypes of web apps and mobile apps.

Visual Studio Code

A highly customizable open source text editor.

GitHub Account

A free internet based service where you can store, version, and deploy your code.

Git

An open source version control software that keeps track of changes made to your code.

Seeking Help

Ask Early, Ask Often

Do not delay asking for help. The skills in this class build on one another, so failing to get help early on can hurt your overall experience and performance in the course. I am always happy to help and I aim to be one of the most accessible instructors you have at UNC.

Part of this course focuses on learning to troubleshoot things on your own. This is a valuable and empowering skill that I want you to acquire. Sometimes this means that my first response may be more of a point in the right direction instead of a step-by-step fix. For common problems, I might point you to FAQ videos I have made. For content covered in class, I might ask you to review the lecture.

If you have given it another good try after our first chat and are still having trouble, message me again and I will provide more detailed guidance until the issue is resolved.

Please do not spend more than 15 minutes per round of troubleshooting before checking in with me or your peers on Slack. Ideally working on these projects should be fun. Spending hours troubleshooting a single problem is demoralizing and not what I want for students.

Office Hours

Want personal, live assistance or feedback? I have office hours by appointment most days, and I am happy to meet with you!

Slack

Message me on Slack, whenever you'd like! Triaging all requests to a unified, conversational platform helps me provide fast responses and quality assistance. **Please do not email me a help request, I will ask you to resubmit via Slack.***

* Do email me for formal matters, like excused absences, grades, etc.

How to Ask for Help

Here are some things you can do to submit a quality help request:

- Describe the issue, and what you have tried to fix it.
- Attach photos of the problem (if applicable).
- Make sure your Adobe XD project or GitHub repository is up-to-date, and then link to it in the request.
- Try posting the request as a single Slack message

- Followups should be submitted as a thread on the initial help request

Failure to include these relevant details delays my ability to help. If missing, my first message will likely be a request for the details, instead of the solution to the issue.

Addressing Code Anxiety

Writing code can be intimidating, especially if you have never done it before. If you are worried about the coding aspect of this course, I recommend you meet with me early on so we can go over strategies that will maximize your experience and performance in the course.

Know that several students have been in your shoes and they have all made it through just fine! :)

Assignments

Projects

There will be four main projects during this course. Additional information about all of these projects will be provided during class.

- Project I: create a prototype using Adobe XD and the design techniques we discuss in class
- Project II: design and develop a website from scratch using HTML and CSS
- Project III: design and develop an interactive website using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript
- Project IV: create your own online magazine website using WordPress

Website Critique

Each student will critique and lead a discussion about a professional multimedia project of their choosing. More specifics about the requirements of this presentation and the accompanying paper will be provided during class.

Exercises

There will be exercises associated with most lectures. The exercises are designed to be finished in class, but are typically due before the first class of the following week.

Quizzes

There will be weekly quizzes on the material covered in lecture. No more than five questions per quiz. Quizzes are typically due before the first class of the following week.

Participation

- Engagement: answer open questions, submit examples, volunteer
- Feedback: commentary on the pros and cons of peer's design decisions (should not be repetitive/vague)
- Student Review: each class a student is picked to give a summary of the previous lecture

Grading

Method

I utilize transparent grading rubrics on Sakai for every assignment except quizzes, which are multiple choice and graded automatically. I provide limited written feedback for exercises and peer-feedback, moderate

written feedback for the website critique, and detailed feedback for projects. Additional or early feedback is always available via office hours or Slack help request.

Schedule

I understand that frequent and timely feedback is important to your success. So long as an assignment is submitted on time, feedback and grades will be returned within a week of the due date. Assignments that are submitted late may have to wait up to an additional week.

Scale

- A 94 – 100
- A- 90 – 93
- B+ 87 – 89
- B 83 – 86
- B- 80 – 82
- C+ 77 – 79
- C 73 – 76
- C- 70 – 72
- D+ 67 – 69
- D 60 – 66
- F 0 – 59

IN I automatically assign an incomplete if your final grade is below a C because of missing work.

Weights

Adobe XD Project	15%
HTML & CSS Project	15%
HTML, CSS, & JavaScript Project	20%
WordPress Project	15%
Website Critique	15%
Exercises & Quizzes	10%
Participation	10%

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 (5) deduction for the first 24-hour period, followed by 10-point deductions for each day thereafter.

Attendance

University Policy

No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC).

Class Policy

Each student will be allowed one unexcused absence. Additional unexcused absences will result in a 1% reduction in your final grade. Excused absences (e.g. any absence cleared with me *in advance*) do not affect your grade. Students that attend most often tend to do the best in this class.

Plagiarism

In this course, it is acceptable to copy code snippets from documentation, tutorials, or forum answers. The source should be credited and linked in a comment in your code. Make sure to add comments explaining what the code is doing, how it works, and what you learned from reading through it / using it.

There are some cases that go against the spirit of learning in this class:

- Do not copy and use code that you do not understand.
- Do not copy an entire project or website you find online, replace the text and images, tweak the style, and submit it as your own.

In other words, the majority of the code you submit in class should be your own.

If you have questions about what code you can use, how to properly cite the code, or you would like an explanation on how a piece of code you found works, ask me! I'm more than happy to walk you through a piece of code so you can apply that foundational knowledge in future projects.

Schedule

This schedule is subject to change.

Class	Date	Topic
1	August 19 th	Introduction and Syllabus
2	August 24 th	Web Design Process
3	August 26 th	Web Design Principles
4	August 31 st	Color and Typography
5	September 2 nd	Branding and Visual Hierarchy
6	September 7 th	Project I Lab Session
7	September 9 th	How the Web Works
8	September 14 th	How to Edit, Store, Version, and Deploy Code
9	September 16 th	HTML Part I
10	September 21 st	HTML Part II
11	September 23 rd	CSS Part I
12	September 28 th	CSS Part II

Class	Date	Topic
13	September 30 th	CSS Layout Part I
14	October 5 th	CSS Layout Part II
15	October 7 th	CSS Practical Examples
16	October 14 th	Project II Lab Session
17	October 19 th	JavaScript Part I
18	October 26 th	JavaScript Part II
19	October 28 th	JavaScript Part III
20	November 2 nd	JavaScript Practical Examples I
21	November 4 th	JavaScript Practical Examples II
22	November 9 th	Project III Lab Session
23	November 11 th	WordPress Part I
24	November 16 th	WordPress Part II
25	November 18 th	WordPress Themes
26	November 23 rd	WordPress Shortcodes and Plugins
27	November 30 th	Project IV Lab Session
28	December 7 th	Final Exam Period at 7:00 PM

Final Exam

Our exam period will take place on December 7th at 7:00 PM in the room we normally meet. There is no final exam in this course. We will spend our time presenting projects/critiques, reflecting on the course, and discussing next steps.

AEMJC Accreditation

The Hussman School of Journalism and Media accrediting body outlines several 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: <https://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 several 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.

Honor Code

I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system (<https://honor.unc.edu>). 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. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean C. A. Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Diversity Statement

I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve; I appreciate any suggestions. More broadly, our school has adopted diversity and inclusion [mission and vision statements](#) with accompanying goals. These complement the University policy on [prohibiting harassment and discrimination](#). 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. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies.

Accessibility Resources and Services

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities.

Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email ars@unc.edu.

Counseling and Psychological Services

CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

Title IX

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – titleixcoordinator@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Policy on Non-Discrimination

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](#) offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied.

If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at safe.unc.edu) or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#), or online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

Mask Use

All enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering your mouth and nose at all times in our classroom. This requirement is to protect our educational community – your classmates and me – as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask, or wear it improperly, I will ask you to leave immediately, and I will submit a report to the [Office of Student Conduct](#). At that point you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. Students who have an authorized accommodation from Accessibility Resources and Service have an exception. For additional information, see <https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/university-guidelines-for-facemasks/>.

Syllabus Changes

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.