

**GD110**

Web Design  
 Spring 2015  
 11 weeks  
 4 units  
 Tuesday/Thursday  
 CDM632  
 1.30–3.00

**INSTRUCTOR**

Nathan Matteson  
[nmatteso@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:nmatteso@cdm.depaul.edu)  
 312 362 7983  
[matteson@obstructures.org](mailto:matteson@obstructures.org)  
 312 961 9868  
 CDM473  
 T/Th 12–1.30 and by appt

**DESCRIPTION**

Students will use current industry standard design applications such as Photoshop and WebStorm, as well as hand-coding HTML and CSS for introductory web design. An introduction to visual design fundamentals will include composition, typography, web color, and digital imaging. Informational navigation, structure, front-end design, and implementation will be studied.

**OBJECTIVE**

This class is intended to acquaint the student with the basic languages and design processes necessary for working with the web. By the end of the term, students should be able to read and write HTML and CSS, and use them in the design of functional web pages. While the class focuses on basic coding ability, students will also gain skill in the visual design of material on the web. Students will become familiar and work with basic design and planning techniques.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Understand the basic technologies behind web page delivery
- Understand accessibility concerns inherent in delivering content over the web
- Explore common design patterns used in contemporary web practice
- Create web projects that are usable and show an awareness of audience, ethic, and aesthetics
- Evaluate design in terms of both function and visual harmony

**TEXTBOOK**

None required. A list of suggested online & print material can be found below. Other readings will be supplied through D2L as necessary.

**MATERIALS**

You'll want to get these materials as soon as possible. Paper and pens can be purchased nearby at Blick and/or Utrecht. While we will be using software throughout this class, please bring pen and paper each day.

- **EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE.** You may also use an online service such as iCloud, DropBox, S3, etc. You are responsible for backing up your own work. Failure to turn in a project will result in a zero grade for that project. I'd advise you not to use a 'thumb' or 'flash' drive, as they're notoriously prone to fail without notice.
- **PAPER.** For note-taking and sketching.
- **BLACK INK PEN, BLACK MARKER, PENCIL.** If you don't already have a preferred writing implement, several companies make good writing tools: Staedtler, Copic, and Micron come to mind.

**ATTENDANCE**

You are expected to show up to class prepared and on time. While the university has policies regarding excused absences (see below), in reality there's being here and there's *not* being here. If you chose to miss class, you (and only you) are responsible for the content you miss when you're absent—make friends with someone early if you anticipate being absent later in the quarter. Failure

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to attend will generally result in a lack of participation, and consequently a reduced grade.

**LATE WORK**

Punctuality is integral to a successful design career. So too is turning in your work on time. I do accept work up to 24 hours late—though at the expense of a reduced grade. I also accept revisions of work for a potentially improved grade! So please turn in your work *on time*, and revise it as necessary *after* it's due. The importance of these two skills cannot be over-stated.

**CLASSROOM CONDUCT**

Given the nature of our work, we'll be having discussions and lectures during class. You are expected to participate in these exchanges in a professional manner. Participation in critiques and reviews is not optional. You are expected to both comment on your peers' work as well as offer your work for feedback.

When you're discussing someone else's work, treat them with respect. When someone else is talking about your work, don't take it personally.

**COURSE STRUCTURE**

This course will revolve around two major projects designed to reinforce material covered in class lectures. Periodically we'll have a quiz, but these will not be a surprise. Class time will be divided amongst lecture, lab time, and critique.

**GRADING POLICIES**

Grades are perhaps the least interesting (and, from a professional standpoint, possibly least *important*) component of a design education. Generally, employers won't be asking you what your GPA is, or nit-picking over the fact that you graduated *magna cum laude* rather than *summa cum laude*. They are however an important part of teaching methodology, and they should at least mean something.

Final grades will be based on your projects throughout the term, as well as class participation. Final grades are calculated based on standard deviation (ie, a so-called bell curve)—though this does *not* mean that only one person gets an A and most people get Cs.

Participation includes (but is not limited to) contributing to discussions in class; participating in critiques and design reviews; asking your peers for help during lab time, and offering help if you're able. Failure to be an active member of the class will result in a lower grade.

Each project grade is based on the following components of your work. Bear in mind that not every project will require the same amount of each component.

- **THOUGHT.** This is the intellectual or conceptual component of a project. You might equate it with 'art direction' or 'strategy'.
- **STRUCTURE.** Your use of the basic 'elements and principles of design' as we say. How well you've managed to communicate the previous component. Sometimes we call these two aspects of our work: form and content.
- **CRAFT.** Ability to follow project parameters and instructions. Attention to detail. Desire to have a clean X-acto cut rather than a raggedy one.

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- **PROCESS.** This is where we collect some aspects of our work that are perhaps a bit more intangible. Both 'effort' and 'professionalism' fall into this category. Your ability to show up to class on time, participate meaningfully in critiques, attempt things that seem beyond your reach, etc.

The grade 'breakdown' is as follows:

- **PARTICIPATION.** 30%
- **PROJECT 1.** 20%
- **PROJECT 2 DESIGN.** 25%
- **PROJECT 2 CODE.** 25%

**OTHER RESOURCES**

The 'state-of-the-art' tends to change quite rapidly on the web—hence the lack of a required textbook. Generally, you can find information of the same quality, and higher reliability, online for free. Below is a list of both printed and web-based resources that you'll find helpful throughout the term, and in the future.

It's worth noting again that material regarding web design and development becomes obsolete rather quickly. Be careful that the publication date of what you're reading is recent (generally within 12 months)—or the information may be out-of-date and essentially useless. Note that the two printed works below are a bit old now, but are still useful as basic, entry-level texts.

- Jon Duckett. *HTML & CSS*. Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 2011.
- Elizabeth Castro and Bruce Hyslop. *HTML5 and CSS3 Visual Quickstart Guide*. San Francisco: Peachpit Press, 2011.  
*One or the other of the above should be sufficient.*
- [w3schools.com](http://w3schools.com) is the hands-down best online reference web-based programming languages.
- [codecademy.com](http://codecademy.com) is a good resources for coding tutorials if you're having trouble getting the hang of HTML or CSS.
- [css-tricks.com](http://css-tricks.com) is a pretty good collection of tutorials with a lot of focus on the newer features available in CSS3. While I harbor enormous disdain for the idea of learning through 'tips and tricks', and I think this site deserves a better name, it's quite good and well-thought-out.
- [htmlandcssbook.com](http://htmlandcssbook.com) contains several online resources related to the HTML & CSS book listed above.
- [alistapart.com](http://alistapart.com) is a collection of articles about all aspects of web design, both very informative and well-written. We'll be referencing several articles from alistapart in this class.

Also, please sign up for the DePaul Graphic Design Mail List: [mailman.depaul.edu/mailman/listinfo/design](mailto:mailman.depaul.edu/mailman/listinfo/design).

And be aware that DePaul has recently acquired an institution-wide license for lynda.com, which is a wonderful resource for all kinds of technical training. You'll need to sign in with your DePaul user and password using the link found at [software.depaul.edu/training](http://software.depaul.edu/training). Lynda.com covers everything from using Photoshop, to micing a drumkit, to writing an operating agreement for your startup.

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**COURSE TOPICAL SCHEDULE**

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC
One	Mar 31	Introduction to the course. Overview of software options.
Two	Apr 2	Basic HTML syntax: tags and attributes. Semantics, and the relationship of form to content. Begin coding project 1.
	7	Basic CSS syntax: selectors, properties and values.
	9	The id and class attributes. How, why, and when to use them. Links: anchor tags, paths, nav.
Three	14	The box model. CSS positioning, margins, padding, borders. Background properties.
	16	Debugging in the browser.
Four	21	Typography for the web.
	23	Design reviews.
Five	28	Web page layout strategy. Grids and proportioning systems.
	30	Wireframing.
Six	May 5	Mockups in Photoshop.
	7	Converting a static comp into markup.
Seven	12	Header and nav markup.
	14	image, audio, and video tags. Image formats for the web.
Eight	19	Design reviews.
	21	Design reviews.
Nine	26	Active footer design.
	28	Form building and implementation and basic user experience.
Ten	Jun 2	TBD / Labtime
	4	TBD / Labtime
Eleven	11	Final presentations, 11:45–2:00

**MY SCHEDULE**

I'll be available on-campus outside of class during the week. My office is CDM473, and my office hours are listed on the CDM website. Also, I have another office downtown, about 2 blocks from CDM—you're welcome to come by if I'm not on campus. Please text or email to let me know, as sometimes I'm out for a meeting, etc. I'm in the Monadnock Building at 53 W Jackson, Suite 660.

**COMPUTER LABS**

Computer labs are available for your use outside of class. For schedule information, please check here: [www.cdm.depaul.edu/cim/academics/Pages/CIM-](http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/cim/academics/Pages/CIM-)

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[LabResources.aspx](#). You'll need to swipe into the rooms with your DePaul ID, so please be sure it's activated.

**TEACHING EVALUATIONS**

Instructor and course evaluations provide valuable feedback that can improve teaching and learning. The greater the level of participation, the more useful the results. As students, you are in the unique position to view the instructor over time. Your comments about what works and what doesn't can help faculty build on the elements of the course that are strong and improve those that are weak. Isolated comments from students and instructors' peers may also be helpful, but evaluation results based on high response rates may be statistically reliable (believable). As you experience this course and material, think about how your learning is impacted. Your honest opinions about your experience in and commitment to the course and your learning may help improve some components of the course for the next group of students. Positive comments also show the department chairs and college deans the commitment of instructors to the university and teaching evaluation results are one component used in annual performance reviews (including salary raises and promotion/tenure). The evaluation of the instructor and course provides you an opportunity to make your voice heard on an important issue—the quality of teaching at DePaul. Don't miss this opportunity to provide feedback!

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at [academicintegrity.depaul.edu](http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu).

**PLAGIARISM**

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Plagiarism in web design can be a tricky thing. While it's common-place to copy and paste small bits of code that you find in tutorials and such, lifting large portions of code—or blatantly copying the design of another site—is a different matter. If you're concerned with whether or not you're on the right side of the law, please don't hesitate to ask me. If you are in fact copying the bulk of your code, without making significant changes, your grade will be reduced, and you will risk failing the course. This is a situation in which it is definitely better to ask for permission rather than forgiveness.

Also, be aware that I am obligated as a professor in the university to report all academic integrity violations, no matter how minor they may seem.

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**RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: Student Center, LPC, Suite #370; phone number: (773) 325 1677; fax: (773) 325 3720; TTY: (773) 325 7296.

**WITHDRAWAL**

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system ([campusconnect.depaul.edu](http://campusconnect.depaul.edu)). Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or nonpayment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

**RETROACTIVE WITHDRAWAL**

This policy exists to assist students for whom extenuating circumstances prevented them from meeting the withdrawal deadline. During their college career students may be allowed one medical/personal administrative withdrawal and one college office administrative withdrawal, each for one or more courses in a single term. Repeated requests will not be considered. Submitting an appeal for retroactive withdrawal does not guarantee approval.

College office appeals for CDM students must be submitted online via MyCDM. The deadlines for submitting appeals are as follows:

- AUTUMN. Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent winter quarter
- WINTER. Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent spring quarter
- SPRING. Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter
- SUMMER. Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

**EXCUSED ABSENCE**

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at [studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html](http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html). Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

**INCOMPLETE**

An incomplete grade is a special, temporary grade that may be assigned by an instructor when unforeseeable circumstances prevent a student from completing course requirements by the end of the term and when otherwise the student had a record of *satisfactory progress* in the course.

An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death

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in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final, and approved by the Dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.

CDM policy requires the student to initiate the request for incomplete grade before the end of the term in which the course is taken. Prior to submitting the incomplete request, the student must discuss the circumstances with the instructor. Students may initiate the incomplete request process in MyCDM.

- All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptions cases will receive such approval.
- If approved, students are required to complete all remaining course requirement independently in consultation with the instructor by the deadline indicated on the incomplete request form.
- By default, an incomplete grade will automatically change to a grade of F after two quarters have elapsed (excluding summer) unless another grade is recorded by the instructor.
- An incomplete grade does *not* grant the student permission to attend the same course in a future quarter.

*This syllabus is subject to change at any time, with notice.*