

## SYLLABUS: GD 215-501

# WEB DESIGN FOR COMMERCIAL PROJECTS

*“Design is a plan for arranging elements in such a way as best to accomplish a particular purpose.”*

—CHARLES EAMES

*“Pay attention to what users do, not what they say.”*

—JAKOB NIELSEN

*“Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.”*

—STEVE JOBS

*“Design isn’t crafting a beautiful, textured button with breathtaking animation. Its figuring out if there’s a way to get rid of the button altogether.”*

—JAKOB NIELSEN

## Web Design for Commercial Projects: GD-215-501

**CLASS INFO:**

Winter 2016

Section: 501

M/W 10:10AM - 11:40AM

CDM Center, Room 526

**Your Final Exam is on Wednesday, March 16, 2016, from 8:30 AM to 10:45 AM**

Instructor: Heather Quinn

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mobile: 617.901.0284

Office: CDM 473

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesdays 12:45-1:15pm

*January 17: Last day to drop classes with no penalty*

*Syllabus last edited December 29, 2015*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course students will gain an understanding of the standard design process used to create a “Commercial” Website. They will undertake a semester long re-design of an existing Website and will work on various tasks and projects including, Existing Website Analysis, Competitive Landscape Analysis, Creative Brief and Design Strategy, Participatory Design, Information Architecture, Content Strategy, Visual Design for Website and its Mobile counterparts, Understanding of Responsive Design, Process/Project Documentation, and Specifications for Developers (Style Guide).

In addition to the above tasks and projects, students will also gain an understanding of the History of the Web (last 20 years), as well as both the categories of Websites that exist (marketing sites, e-commerce, task based sites—i.e. project management and intranets), and standard industries (technology, finance, retail, publishing, academia, etc.).

Lastly, though this class is practical in nature, students are encouraged to think about the future potential of user experience and the Web, and to push the conceptual boundaries of design.

**Please Note: This class is focused on design strategy. Though we will discuss how technology affects design, there is no coding/web development in this class.**

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Understand the historical context—study the last 20 years of Web design and how the role of the designer has changed from Graphic Designer to Visual Designer to User Experience Designer, and what we can expect in the future.
- Work with standard industry standards and processes (Strategy, IA, Research, Content, Design, Documentation).
- Enact and understand the various roles and dependencies involved in Web design.
- Design a Website from start to finish.
- Create a strong user experience across Web/Mobile.
- Develop documentation of process, and a Style Guide for developers to build and maintain the Website.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Students will understand how the Web came about and how it has developed over time. This historical context will help them consider how the Web may change in the future, enabling them to design with foresight.
- Students will understand industry terms, methodologies and processes, and how the role of Visual Design fits in. By taking part in the full process, including Strategy, IA, Content and Technology, they will be able to design more effectively through the understanding of other roles (context and dependencies). Additionally, this will give greater understanding to the role of the Visual Designer and how they can best add value, ultimately undertaking a higher-level Creative Director type approach/mindset.
- Students will learn how working directly with users can influence a design to effectively work for both the site business goals as well as its target audience's desires.
- Students will gain an understanding of the different types of online experiences that exist, so that they can develop visual experiences appropriate for the type of product and industry.
- Students will learn how the Visual Designer affects User Experience through both function (usability) as well as emotionally (branding).
- Students will learn how designing for the web varies from print, and how to apply visual design (color, grid, layout/ grid, imagery) to a flexible, modular system (responsive, flexible design).
- Students will gain an understanding of how technology affects design, as well as an understanding of what developers/technologists need to both create and maintain the design(s).
- Overall, students will have a solid understanding of creating for the Web, which will give them solid theory and reasoning for their decisions as they design.

**BASIC MATERIALS**

Sketch Book (at least 8.5x11)  
Post-It Notes (at least 4 colors, standard size)  
Pencils, Pens (for sketching)  
Sharpie Markers (black, red, blue), for making Wireframes  
8.5x11 computer paper (for making Wireframes)  
Digital Camera/iPhone camera (a basic one is fine)

**SOFTWARE/TECH**

Microsoft Office  
Adobe CS  
External hard drive/flash drive

**READING MATERIALS AND GENERAL TO-DO'S**

There is no required text for this class. I will provide weekly reading material (online or hand outs) .

*Always bring supplies to every class*

*We will need a few additional supplies throughout the quarter*

**CHANGES TO SYLLABUS**

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

**ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS**

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM**

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

**ACADEMIC POLICIES**

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

**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: [csd@depaul.edu](mailto:csd@depaul.edu).

Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.

Phone number: (312)362-8002

Fax: (312)362-6544

TTY: (773)325.7296

**ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend each class and to remain for the duration. Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student. The overall grade for participation drops one-third after any absence. Three absences for any reason, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course.

**CLASS DISCUSSION**

Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day's topic. Participation allows the instructor to "hear" the student's voice when grading papers and projects. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the reading assignments and projects. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussion.

**ATTITUDE**

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

**CIVIL DISCOURSE**

DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

**CELL PHONES/ON-CALL**

If you bring a cell phone to class, it must be off or set to a silent mode. Should you need to answer a call during class, students must leave the room in an undistruptive manner. Out of respect to fellow students and the professor, texting is never allowable in class. If you are required to be on call as part of your job, please advise me at the start of the course.

**WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS CLASS WEEK TO WEEK**

The class is focused around a semester long project. We will approach this class as we would in industry—with a strategic, user-experience driven design. Though ultimately the final project is a re-designed Website and Style Guide, the focus of the class is on design strategy and approach. There is a fair amount of research, writing and strategy happening each week.

Schedule is Subject to Change. We may have Guest Critics and Speakers throughout the Quarter, including via Skype.

**WEEK 1**

M: Begin Web Analysis (Current State/Competitive Landscape)  
W: *Website Analysis Due*, Begin Creative Brief

**WEEK 2**

M: *Creative Brief Due*, Begin evaluation of Target Audience  
W: *Target Audience Due*, Begin Personas

**WEEK 3**

M: *Personas Due*, Begin SiteMap(s)  
W: *SiteMap Due*, Begin Content Strategy

**WEEK 4**

M: *Content Strategy Due*, Begin Wireframes  
W: Work on Wireframes

**WEEK 5**

M: *All Wireframes Due, PDF of IA Documentation Due*  
Determine key Visual Design Templates (template list)  
Begin Branding/Visual Design Studies  
W: *Visual Design Template List Due*  
Work on Visual Studies (Logo, Type, Color, Grid, Imagery)

**WEEK 6**

M: *Visual Studies Due*  
Begin Visual Design Concepts  
W: Work on Visual Design Concepts

**WEEK 7**

M: Work on Visual Design Concepts  
W: *Visual Design Concepts Due, Select 1*  
Begin work on other visual design templates

**WEEK 8**

M: *Final Visual Design Templates Due*  
Begin Mobile Screen Design/Wireframes  
W: Work on Mobile Screens

**WEEK 9**

M: *Mobile Screens Due*  
Begin Style Guide (Specifications/Summary Document)  
W: Work on Style Guide  
QUIZ (In class)

**WEEK 10**

M: Work on Style Guide  
W: Work on Style Guide

**WEEK 11**

W: *Final Project Due*  
Your final exam/project critique is on  
Wednesday, March 16, 2016, from 8:30 AM to 10:45 AM

**GRADES**

*Grades are a reflection of the effort put forth as stated below. I do not look for perfection or the best final projects. I look for students who take risks, keep exploring, try new things and go back and improve projects after we review them. I want my students to develop a love and a passion for user experience and web design. The course is meant to inspire you to look at the web in new ways. I expect you to work hard.*

GENERAL GRADING POLICIES

*Participation, In-Class Attitude/Attendance*

Everyone should participate in each class. Not everyone is the best presenter, however it's important to become comfortable speaking in a group and communicating.

*Homework Assignments*

Have your homework completed at the start of class. Process, research and discovery are as important as the final result(s). While not required, it is recommended that you keep a sketchbook/process book during the quarter.

*Projects (Design and Craftsmanship)*

Have your assignments complete and take risks. I'd rather see you try something new and fail than have a perfect project. Work on your craft. You need to develop a steady hand and an eye for detail.

*Quiz's/Exam*

Covers what we learn in class lectures and through projects.