

Special Topics: Web Design for Photographers – PH312A

The New England Institute of Art — Winter 2010 Syllabus (revised 1/28/10)

Class Sessions: Thursdays, 12:30pm – 3:20pm in Room 220

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Course Description:

Create your own professional online portfolio by learning Web Design! Students start by clarifying the goals for their site and throughout the course learn industry standard web production processes and technologies including HTML, CSS, information architecture, site-maps, page layout theory, designing interface elements, and preparing images and pages for online publishing via FTP. Students will also learn techniques to smooth the workflow and learn to create sites that are easy to maintain using a dedicated web-hosting service. Customized designs are fleshed out in Adobe Photoshop using each student's own photographs and interface elements. Your finished website, user tested and optimized for search engines and web browsers will be assembled in Adobe Dreamweaver. By the end of the semester the site will be published online and ready to show your work to the world!

Course Competencies:

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify the goals and audience for creating a website
- Explain how the internet works with regard to creating and viewing websites
- Work through the planning and building stages of website from beginning to end
- Create and Identify user friendly website interfaces
- Work with professional web-hosting and domain registration services
- Manage simple “backend” tasks such as accessing hosting accounts and monitoring statistics
- Gather, create and prepare all content (text and images) for web-publishing
- Structure content for the website in a way that makes it easy to use on the site
- Effectively track and manage all files used in the creation of a website
- Use Adobe Dreamweaver CS4 proficiently to build a website using common “Web Standards”
- Use HTML code effectively to create and/or modify web pages
- Use CSS code effectively to control design elements on their site
- Use FTP to publish their website to a remote web-server
- Explain the advantages and disadvantages of using technologies such as Flash or Javascript
- Effectively test a website for bugs and usability

Textbooks:

Required:

Dreamweaver CS4: The Missing Manual, by David Sawyer McFarland, ISBN: 978-0596522926

Recommended:

CSS: The Missing Manual, by David Sawyer McFarland, ISBN: 978-0596802448

CSS Mastery: Advanced Web Standards Solutions. 2nd Ed, by Andy Budd, ISBN: 978-1430223979

CSS Pocket Reference, by Eric Meyer, ISBN: 978-0596515058

Required Supplies and Materials:

- An email address
- A web-hosting service of your choosing
- A domain name of your choosing
- Any form of portable media that you can use to easily store and retrieve your work
- Your own text and images to be used on the website you will build

Departmental Policies

Critique:

Critique is one of the most important processes that you will participate in during your education and throughout your life. You are responsible for the completion of all projects prior to scheduled critique sessions. In-class critiques are all-inclusive and require full class participation. All students must participate by actively engaging with work and offering constructive criticism. Critiques address both conceptual and technical execution of the work presented. Work that is incomplete will not be addressed during critique. All work must be completed by the due date.

Class Participation:

Class participation is essential in developing community and furthering your education. You must come to class prepared to engage with reading assignments, work that is presented during class, and any other assignments or discussions that are presented. Your participation is mandatory and will help you to develop a strong ability to articulate your ideas and interact with your Professors and your peers.

Communication:

All communication with Faculty must reflect upon your professionalism. If you use email, in the subject line of your message please reference the course name or course number. Your message should begin with a salutation, be properly spell and grammar checked, and conclude with a closing such as "Thanks" or "Best" followed by your name. Refrain from typing only in lower case letters -- it is unprofessional and so 1999. Other forms of communication require the same level of professionalism. Make appointments to see your professors, arrive on time, and conduct yourself as a professional.

Attendance:

Attendance of each class meeting is mandatory. There are no 'excused' absences at The New England Institute of Art. Missing class not only affects your education, but also that of your peers. Much of the educational process happens during class time. If you decide to miss class, you must make appropriate arrangements with your professor *before* the class. If there is work due during that class, you must make sure that it is turned in before the class meeting or it will not be accepted. Missing class is *not* an excuse for not turning in your work. Accordingly, the absence policy follows:

1 -2 Absences	No Grade Penalty
3 Absences	Automatic D (unless you have earned an 'F')
4 Absences	Automatic F (Failure)

You must also be early (preferably) or on time for class. Arriving late and/or early departures will not be tolerated. Behave professionally and be ready to begin work at the start of class. Be prepared to work until the end of class. Accordingly, the late arrival/early departure policy follows:

2 Early Departures and/or Late Arrivals	½ of an Absence
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Late Assignments:

Late assignments will not be accepted. You are all aspiring to be professionals. As a professional, you will never be able to miss a deadline without serious repercussions. Missing a deadline will affect your livelihood and cause you to lose your client(s). As such, in your major courses, no late work will be accepted under any circumstances. You are expected to behave professionally. There are no excused absences at this college; as such, you are responsible for submitting your work on time, even if you are not in class on the due date.

Mobile Devices:

The use of mobile devices (such as cell-phones or smart-phones) in class is strictly prohibited. Under no circumstances should you ever make or answer phone calls during class. Text messaging, web browsing, even checking the screen on your mobile device is also prohibited. Your phone should be turned off and put away when you enter the classroom.

Grading and Standards:

Detailed evaluations will be provided for each assignment. Students will be graded on **Production** and **Aesthetics** separately for each assignment, and then the two grades will be averaged. Students have the right to contest their grades. Subjectivity often makes grading difficult in a creative environment and in the interest of fairness, students should feel free to discuss grades or request further clarification.

A (93-100) A- (90-92)	Excellent to Very Good; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; marked perception and/or originality
B+ (87-89) B (83-86) B- (80-82)	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; noticeable perception and/or originality
C+ (77-79) C (73-76) C- (70-72)	Satisfactory; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; some perception and/or originality
D (60-69)	Marginal; minimum of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; limited perception and/or originality
F (<60)	Failing; unacceptable low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; severely limited perception and/or originality; absences in excess of allowable limit

Grading for this course:

There will be 1 major project in this course;

A website that will be created using Dreamweaver and published online by the end of the semester. Your overall grade is broken down into the following 4 categories:

Production: Deadlines & Deliverables	25%
Quality: Design, Navigation & Functionality	25%
In-Class Assignments: only if finished in-class	30%
Participation: Presenting & Critique Feedback	20%

Please be prepared! Students will be asked to provide all content and graphics for their own projects. Failure to provide text or images for your own project will significantly lower your grade in the course. Various assignments throughout the semester will earn you scores in one of the four categories above. Major grades are earned on Presentation/Critique days. When presenting your work and critiquing, you will earn grades under three categories: Production, Quality & Participation. Therefore missing a critique can significantly lower your overall grade.

Exit Exam:

At the end of your first semester, you are required to take an “exit exam” for both PH101 and PH102. These exams have both a written and a practical component. You must pass the exit exam in order to pass PH101 and PH102. The exit exam is designed to confirm/approve your advancement through the program by evaluating core skill competencies. Questions are not intended to discourage you from pursuing this field of study, but to ensure that you are prepared to move forward to the next semester. The exit exam is designed as a non-biased approach to evaluate your understanding of the technical and conceptual modalities covered throughout the semester. In later classes, these topics will be expanded upon with the assumption that this knowledge base is in place. Therefore, all curriculum will be designed with the following core exam policies in place for developmental advancement.

The Photography Faculty designed the Exit Exam policies and principals to evaluate the technical competencies achieved in the PH101 and 102 classes, focusing on the primary curriculum of those courses. The exit exams are Pass/Fail. A board composed of photography faculty without the administering instructor will review the exams. If you have any questions regarding the exit exam, please feel free to contact your Professor or Department chair.

Finally, students are allowed to take PH101 and/or PH102 only two times. If you fail the first time, be sure to pass it the second time or you will be terminated from the college.

Board Reviews:

All students beyond their first semester must participate in Review Boards during finals week. For the boards, students bring all of the photography work (plus any other work you have done that is relevant to the progress as an artist) that have been done for the semester. The student chooses the best project to display and all of the other work should be available for the review committee. The student is responsible for determining the best method of presentation for the work; however, digital files are not adequate. The student should determine the appropriate print size and quantity based on the requirements of the project. Students are expected to present complete work from the entire semester.

While the boards are not designed to prevent students from moving on to the next semester, it is possible to not receive credit in which case you may need to repeat a course in which you earned a passing grade. Potential issues would be a lack of substantial work, lack of appropriate progress in your work or serious technical ineptitude. You must show up for your board review as scheduled; failure to do so will result in a failure of the boards with appropriate ramifications. The Reviewers complete a form during the review. These forms will be kept on file along with the student's digital files. You may ask to see your file at any time to evaluate your progress and to read the results of your Board Review.

Academic Integrity:

Please be familiar with the Academic Integrity policy that is published in the Student Handbook. In the Photography Department, the work that your turn in must be work that you have done explicitly and uniquely for this course and during the semester. You may not turn in any images that you have taken prior to the current semester; similarly, you may not turn in work that you do in other classes that you are taking this semester. Failure to comply by this program-specific requirement will result in a “cheating” violation of the Academic Integrity Policy as published in the Student Handbook and will be dealt with as outlined in the handbook.

Academic Support/Learning Disabilities:

Students with known disabilities should contact their instructors as well as the Student Services Office. Academic Support (tutoring) is provided to any student in need of tutoring. Students who feel they are able to assist with tutoring this course should also contact their instructor and/or the Student Services Office.

***Please Note:** The following schedule is subject to change at my discretion. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out from your classmates what, if any, changes to the schedule have been made. Unless you receive an exemption from me, you will be responsible upon returning to class for the current weeks assignments.

Course Schedule*:

- #1 1/14 Introduction to the course, Email list & photos, Review syllabus
Introduction to HTML and Web Concepts
Review Web Resources and discuss Assignment due next class
- Homework:*
- Email Communication Test*
 - Obtain all required course materials except hosting & domain.*
 - Begin researching hosting & domains*
 - Write website Proposal and print 2 copies.*
 - Read “Casting the Net” and “Tim Berners-Lee” articles.*
- #2 1/21 Introduction to XHTML and Dreamweaver,
Table based Layouts: past & present use. Intro to Div layouts
Creating a Sitemap & Wireframe Prototype
- Homework:*
- Create a sitemap for your website and print 2 copies.*
 - Create a wireframe that matches your sitemap.*
 - Begin collecting and creating text, images, and graphics for your site.*
 - Read “The Content Strategist as Digital Curator” by Erin Scime*
- #3 1/28 Basics of Interface Design and Navigation
Graphics and Imaging for the Web (Raster vs Vector, Resolution, File types, Hex color)
Introduction to CSS, Sketching design concepts
Individual meetings / Work on your Graphics and Sketches
- Homework:*
- Read “Where Am I?” article by Derek Powazek*
 - Make concept sketches for your site design/interface, make 2 copies*
 - Along with your sketches, also bring your copies of the written web proposal and sitemap. Be prepared to present to the class.*
- #4 2/4 **Class Presentations of Site Proposal, Sitemap and Sketches**
- Homework:*
- Purchase your hosting and domain name.*
 - Read “The Details that Matter” by Kevin Potts*
 - Revise your proposal, sitemap, and sketches as per the class discussion*
- #5 2/11 Building a CSS Layout Pt.1 (PT Alpha)
- Homework:*
- Print and bring all info & emails related to your web-host and domain-name registrar, including passwords, I.P. addresses, etc.*
 - Continue to collect or create text, images, and graphics for your site.*
 - Finalize your proposal/sitemap/sketches & wireframe (print 2 copies).*
 - Read “Separation: The Web Designer’s Dilemma” by Michael Cohen*
- #6 2/18 Building a CSS Layout Pt.2 (PT Alpha), External Style Sheets, Back-end Server terminology
Turn in Final Site Plan & Wireframe / Individual Meetings (reviewing your Final Plan)
- Homework:*
- Begin Working on CSS prototypes for each major section of your site*
 - Read “Sketching in Code: The Magic of Prototyping” by David Verba*
 - Fill out your Hosting/Domain Worksheet*

- #7 2/25 Configuring purchased Domains and hosts.
Using your Hosting Worksheet to setting up FTP and Publish in Dreamweaver.
Individual meetings
- Homework:*
- Configure your Domain name to work with your Web host
 - Test and practice FTP connections, uploads and downloads to/from web server
 - Finish collecting and preparing content for your website
 - Finish Working on CSS prototypes for each major section of your site
- #8 3/4 Introduction to Dreamweaver Templates
Individual meetings / Flesh-out your website content
- Homework:*
- Create Templates for your site based on your finished CSS prototypes.
 - Create HTML child-pages for your site based on your Templates and according to your sitemap.
 - Complete and publish your website for Presentation next week.
 - Type up a list of questions you encounter, print and turn in next class
- #9 3/11 Turn in Printed Questions
Group viewing of First-Draft Websites: Design Aesthetics and Functionality
- Homework:*
- Refine your website according to our discussion in class
- #10 3/18 Intro to Floated Layouts, CSS only Navbar
CSS Editors, Firefox plugins, answer your Printed Questions
Individual meetings
- Homework:*
- If it makes sense for your site, refine your layout into a floated one
 - Continue to flesh out your website
- #11 3/25 Email Addresses / Strategies for protecting email addresses. / Forms
Flash in Dreamweaver, Favicons,
Individual Meetings
- Homework:*
- Add a form to your site if necessary
 - Create a favicon for your site
 - If it makes sense, add add a flash element to your site
- #12 4/1 Visiting Artist?, Dynamic Websites, Content Management Systems (CMS)
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
Q&A Session / Individual Meetings
- Email any pending questions for next week's class
- #13 4/8 Lightbox & other alternatives, Browser Market Shares, Hosting Backends
Debugging, Browser Inconsistencies & Fixes
Individual Meetings / Final Polishing of your site
- Homework:*
- Complete and Publish your website:
Final Presentation next week
- #14 4/15 **Group Presentation of Final websites**
Course Evaluations, Usability Testing, Debugging