

[advanced] web design [& usability]

instructor: michael mcdermott

email: mmcderm8@gmu.edu

phone: 202.556.0839

zoom office hours: mon 2-4 & wed 12-2

website: gmugd.github.io/web22-spring

delivery and timing

We will meet once a week in person on Mondays from 4:30 to 7:10 in room 1023 in the Art and Design Building. The classes are required and during our sessions we will discuss work, complete demos, and further our coding and design knowledge. The class is scheduled to run for 15 weeks and you can expect to work for 6 hours outside of class each week.

prerequisites

AVT 217: Introduction to Web Design, AVT 311: Graphic Design Principles and Methods and AVT 313: Editorial Design, or permission of instructor.

course description

Building on existing skills and principles, this course delves deeper into web-related concepts and techniques. Students will gain knowledge in more advanced coding concepts while building their design skills as they relate to the web.

IMPORTANT: a foundational level of HTML, CSS, and web graphics knowledge is assumed to allow us more time to focus on the projects themselves.

objectives

- Develop general design skills
- Apply best practices for accessibility and usability as they relate to the designing and coding of websites
- Build knowledge of more advanced HTML and CSS concepts
- Analyze everyday interactions on the web from a critical perspective
- The use of frameworks and design systems

textbook

There is no specific textbook for this course but there are many digital resources we will use and reference throughout the semester. Those resources can be found on the class website.

programs

There are many different programs available to use for the work in this class. The programs I will be using are highlighted but alternatives are also listed.

DESIGN

Adobe XD, Figma, Sketch, Illustrator, Lunacy. No Photoshop as a design tool.

CODING

Atom, Sublime Text, Brackets. We will not be using Dreamweaver, Notepad, or TextEdit as a code editor in this course.

OTHER

Zoom, **Github Desktop**, **Chrome**, Safari, or Firefox (Internet Explorer is not an acceptable browser for this class)

content

This course consists of exercises, projects, demos, discussions, and critiques. The exercises are to familiarize students with specific concepts and ideas and the projects are to synthesize the concepts and ideas we will cover.

PROJECT 1: TELL A STORY

Design and build a single page, responsive website that tells the history, process, or story of a selected topic. The page can be on any topic and will be built out to include six total sections to help explain the topic.

PROJECT 2: FOR SALE

Design a responsive, four page site for a fictional retail company focusing on usability. The site will include a home page, inventory page, product page, and one additional page of your choice.

engagement

This course has an engagement policy instead of an attendance policy. Your engagement will affect your final grade (and, by extension, the quality of your work) for this course. You are expected to actively and passionately take part in this course in the following ways.

- Attend class meetings
- Create things and be prepared to show them on time.
- Make things thoughtfully, intentionally, and with intensity.
- Meet all deadlines for handing in work and process.
- Actively participate in critiques both in class and out of class.
- Be curious about making things and the things your classmates make.
- Care about yourself & your work, your classmates & their work, and this class.

communication

Your ability to communicate with me is of prime importance in this course. If you are going to be absent, late, or not have your work, it will be your best interest in communicating those things to me in advance. I do not need to know your reasons for being absent, late, or not having your work but I do need to know. A simple, short email will be fine.

The same goes for if you are struggling in this class or having other issues that are hindering your ability to complete work in this class. The more you keep me in the loop the more I can help you and adjust as needed.

weekly schedule

Class is on Monday from 4:30-7:10. Most days we will meet for the entire time but some weeks we will have individual meetings or end early. Unless otherwise specified, all work is due at the beginning of class.

A note—Time management is an important skill to master and should be worked on all your classes. Staying up all night working is not a badge of honor, it typically means you didn't budget your time correctly. Staying up all night isn't healthy and, especially now, making sure you are keeping yourself healthy is your first priority.

semester schedule

The schedule on the following page is an outline of what we will be covering this spring. It is subject to additions, subtractions, and shift and the most current schedule is available on the class website.

WK1: 1/24	1.1: Introduction 1.2: XD Basics	P1: Tell a Story E1: A Little Background
WK2: 1/31	2.1: XD Plugins & Prototyping 2.2: Accessibility	E2: Linking XD
WK3: 2/7	3.1: More XD Prototyping 3.2: CSS Basics 3.3: Classes & IDs	E3: Hover & Animations in XD E4: Build a Flag
WK4: 2/14	4.1: Links 4.2: Responsive Design 4.3: Media Queries	E5: Linking Links
WK5: 2/21	5.1: Web Typography 5.2: Forms 5.3: CSS Box Model	E6: Form Redesign P2: For Sale
WK6: 2/28	6.1: Semantic HTML 6.1: Flexbox 1	E7: Build a Form
WK7: 3/7	7.1: Flexbox 2 7.2: Usability 1	E8: Flexbox Layouts
WK8: 3/14	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK	
WK9: 3/21	8.1: Usability 2 8.2: CSS Grid 1	
WK10: 3/28	9.1: CSS Grid 2	E9: Grid Layouts
WK11: 4/4	CATCH UP DAY	
WK12: 4/11	10.1: Print Styles	E10: The Printed Web
WK13: 4/18	11.1: CSS Animations	E11: Make it Move
WK14: 4/25	12.1: JS Basics 12.2: Plugins	E12: Plug it In
WK15: 5/2	REVIEW	
WK16: 5/16	FINAL CRITS WITH GUESTS?	

discussion of work

You will need to take an active role in both the presentation and discussion of your work. We will review projects in a variety of ways and you are expected to be able to talk and write about your own work and give feedback to your peers about their work. The ability to discuss your work and other student's work is a very important part of your education at Mason. Use this class to improve on those skills.

grading

Grades will be based on engagement (25%), exercises (25%), and projects (50%).

ENGAGEMENT (25%)

This percentage will be based on your engagement in the class which is explained on previous page but will include attendance, discussion, critiques, and overall participation. Be engaged in this course and its content throughout the semester and this should be an easy 25%.

EXERCISES (25%)

The exercises are graded using one of two basic rubrics shown below. The rubric that is used depends on whether it was a coding or design exercise and include your ability to follow the instructions of the exercise and your ability to submit it on time. The exercises are meant to be quicker, skill building tasks that improve your coding and design knowledge.

PROJECTS (50%)

Each project will generate two different grades. One grade will be based on your ability to submit the required, weekly checkpoints for the project. These weekly checkpoints use a simple rubric based on your effort, timeliness, improvement, and completion. The second grade will be based on the final project you submit and has a more extensive rubric. At the end of the semester you will have 4 total project grades that are all weighted equally for this 50%. The rubrics used for grading the checkpoints and projects are on the following pages syllabus.

rubrics

The rubrics used to grade exercises, projects, and checkpoints are on the following pages.



visual voices lecture series

Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on four Thursday evenings from 7:20–9:00 pm.

For Spring 2022, this lecture series will be held online.

school of art social media accounts

IG: @gmusoa / FB: gmu.soa / TW: gmusoa

FEB 10 Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz

FEB 24 Laurel Nakadate

MAR 10 Paul Rucker

APR 7 Mario Rossero

coding exercise rubric (100 points total)

	UNSATISFACTORY (15)	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (21)	SATISFACTORY (23)	EXEMPLARY (27)
STRUCTURE	Unformatted code. No apparent effort has been made to format with indenting or spacing. Does not display clear understanding of proper code structure.	Inconsistent code. Minimal effort has been made to format with indenting or spacing. Multiple instances of misused elements.	An obvious effort has been made to format code for easy reviewing/editing, with limited exceptions. Most elements are used correctly.	Code is written efficiently, indented and spaced for easy reviewing/editing. All elements are used properly.
SYNTAX	Does not demonstrate understanding of correct syntax and the page does not display correctly.	Multiple or repeated syntax mistakes are evident. Elements of the page display incorrectly.	Overall good adherence to correct syntax. A few mistakes are present but the site still displays correctly.	HTML and CSS follows correct syntax. No mistakes present.
COMPLETION	None of the requirements of the exercise are met.	Few of the requirements of the exercise are met.	Most of the requirements of the exercise are met.	All requirements of the exercise are met.
SUBMISSION	Over two days late.	Up to two days late.	Up to one day late.	Early or on time.

design exercise rubric (100 points total)

	UNSATISFACTORY (15)	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (21)	SATISFACTORY (23)	EXEMPLARY (27)
FORM	The design is inconsistent, unorganized and incoherent. No apparent grid is used, inconsistent spacing between elements, no use of white space.	The design is standard, default, unsurprising. A grid is used but not followed, elements are spaced well but inconsistently, use of white space is minimal.	The design is clear and organized. A grid is used with occasional elements not aligned. White space is present and spacing between elements is consistent.	The design is compelling and inventive. The design uses a grid and elements are aligned to it. White space is considered and integrated well.
TYPOGRAPHY	No hierarchy to the typography. Typefaces choices conflict with the content and are illegible and/or unreadable. Principles of good typography do not exist.	Basic hierarchy to the typography with minimal differences between elements. Typefaces choices are default and uninspired. Some principles of good typography present.	Clear hierarchy to the typography on the page with some overlap between elements. Typefaces choices are safe and do not take away from the overall design. Most elements follow principles of good typography with a few exceptions.	Clear hierarchy to the typography with identifiable differences between elements. Typefaces choices are smart and add to the overall design. Principles of good typography are followed.
COMPLETION	None of the requirements of the exercise are met.	Few of the requirements of the exercise are met.	Most of the requirements of the exercise are met.	All requirements of the exercise are met.
SUBMISSION	Over two days late.	Up to two days late.	Up to one day late.	Early or on time.

project checkpoint rubric (total points vary by project)

	NONE (0%)	PARTIAL (50%)	FULL (100%)
REQUIREMENTS (25%)	None met.	Some met.	All met.
EFFORT/QUALITY (25%)	No effort and no care for quality.	Some effort and minimal care for quality.	Noticeable effort and a care for quality.
IMPROVEMENTS (25%)	No improvement from previous week.	Some improvement from previous week.	Noticeable improvement from previous week.
SUBMISSION (25%)	Over two days late.	Up to two days late.	Early or on time.

design project rubric (100 points total)

	UNSATISFACTORY (0)	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (4)	SATISFACTORY (8)	EXEMPLARY (12)
PROCESS	The project was completed without any real process from beginning to end. The project was submitted with little feedback given along the way.	Little process evident through the project. The initial ideas and designs were not pushed very far for the final submission.	Process is evident and minor improvements happened week to week.	Strong process with a commitment to improving and pushing the project throughout the duration.
PROTOTYPE	No prototype is present.	Not all links in prototype work. Places that should be accessible aren't and there are no interactions	All links in prototype work. Interactions such as hover states and other animations not well considered or executed.	All links in prototype work. Interactions such as hover states and other animations are also present.
SPACE	Inconsistent spacing between elements, no use of white space.	Elements are spaced but inconsistently, use of white space is minimal.	Spacing between elements is consistent but too close or too far. Use of white space is apparent.	Elements spaced consistently and appropriately. White space is considered and integrated into the design well.
USABILITY	Designs for elements that aid in the usability of the site (hover states, active states, links, navigation, etc.) not present.	Some elements that aid in the usability of the site are designed but not all. Designs interfere with usability.	Elements that aid in the usability of the site are designed but are basic and default.	Elements that aid in the usability of the site are designed and help guide the user through the site.
CONSISTENCY	Design is inconsistent across pages and/or on the same page.	Some parts of the design are consistent across pages and/or on the same page.	Design is generally consistent across all pages but has a few elements that appear inconsistent.	Designs are consistent across all pages and all elements fit into the design style.
CONTENT	Images are pixelated, text is not real, and glaring typos.	Some images are pixelated, some duplicate or dummy text exists and typos present.	Images are large enough to be used at the scale in the design, text is all real but certain parts feel out of place. Text has a few obvious typos.	All images are high enough resolution, text is real and considered, no typos present.
FORM	The design is inconsistent, unorganized and incoherent. The design interferes with meaning.	The design is standard, default, unsurprising. The content and the design are at odds with one another.	The design is clear and organized. The design fits the content and does not distract from it.	The design is compelling and inventive. The design responds to the content, enhances meaning, and takes advantage of its media/format.
TYPOGRAPHY	No hierarchy to the typography. Typefaces choices conflict with the content and are illegible and/or unreadable. Principles of good typography (tracking, leading, type size, etc.) do not exist.	Basic hierarchy to the typography with minimal differences between elements. Typefaces choices are default and uninspired. Some principles of good typography (tracking, leading, type size, etc.) are apparent.	Clear hierarchy to the typography on the page with some overlap between elements. Typefaces choices are safe and do not take away from the overall design. Most elements follow principles of good typography (tracking, leading, type size, etc.) with a few exceptions.	Clear hierarchy to the typography with identifiable differences between elements. Typefaces choices are smart and add to the overall design. Principles of good typography (tracking, leading, type size, etc.) are followed.
COMPLETION	None of the requirements of the project are met.	Few of the requirements of the project are met.	Most of the requirements of the project are met.	All requirements of the project are met.
SUBMISSION	Over three days late.	From one to three days late.	Up to one day late.	Early or on time.

writing center and library resources

Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center. For Spring 2022, the Writing Center is holding all sessions online, with writers choosing between meeting their tutor in real time on Zoom or uploading a draft for their tutor's written feedback. Please send your questions to wcenter@gmu.edu

Provisions Research Center for Art & Social Change is located in Room LOO1 of the Art & Design Building. This student resource assists students in exploring and engaging new models for artmaking that lead to a more inclusive, equitable, and connected society. Provisions is also a hub for developing art projects through Mason Exhibitions, the Mural Brigade, and art partners throughout the metropolitan area, and beyond. Contact Don Russell for more information: drusse10@gmu.edu

Art and Art History Librarian, Stephanie Grimm, will offer appointments and virtual office hours for the Spring 2022 semester: https://infoguides.gmu.edu/prf.php?account_id=123393

official communications via mason e-mail

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University e-mail account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason e-mail account.

students with disabilities and learning differences

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu>

attendance policies

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class (including sections that meet online) participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

honor code

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>

responsible employee disclosure

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu

commitment to diversity

This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran’s status, or physical ability.

statement on ethics in teaching and practicing art and design

As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

covid protocols and face coverings

For all vaccinated students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors, face coverings are required in all indoor University Facilities (i.e. indoor or enclosed spaces including buildings and vehicles) and traveling to/from sites off University Property for work or study if in a vehicle with other individuals. Face coverings are not required outdoors.

For all unvaccinated students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors, all of the above applies, except face masks are required outdoors at events or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

For additional reference and updates, please see: <https://www.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus/personal-and-public-health/face-coverings>

caps at mason

Counseling & Psychological Services provides a wide range of free services to students. CAPS offers crisis, counseling, and psychiatric services virtually, and limited services in person. Services are provided by a staff of licensed clinical psychologists, licensed professional counselors, licensed social workers, doctoral-level trainees, and a board-certified psychiatrist. Our individual and group counseling, workshops, and community education programs are designed to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance. For

distance learners, please see our Resources for Distance Learning page (<https://caps.gmu.edu/resources-for-distance-learning/>). We also provide consultation to faculty and staff who have concerns about a student

CAPS provides short-term mental health services for enrolled students. When a student's needs require a different level of care, CAPS works with students to transition care to community providers. If a student is currently seeing a professional in the community for therapy and can continue to work with them, we encourage the student to continue care with their current provider.

In order to begin services with CAPS, please call us at 703-993-2380 during our business hours. Due to the rise in COVID cases, we are only offering services via telehealth during this time.

If you are experiencing a crisis after our business hours or on weekends or holidays, please call us at 703-993-2380. Please select option 1 in our phone system to be connected to an after-hours crisis counselor.

If you are interested in connecting with a provider in the community for long term counseling, please visit our Find a Community Provider page (caps.gmu.edu/community-provider-search/) for our database of community provider options and other options for connecting with a therapist. If you have student health insurance through Aetna, you may also choose to access services through TelaDoc (aetnastudenthealth.com/schools/Peace_of_Mind_8.5x11.pdf).

anti-racism statement

The School of Art plays an integral role in building an educational environment that is committed to anti-racism and inclusive excellence. An anti-racist approach to higher education acknowledges the ways that individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural manifestations of racism against Black, Indigenous, and other people of color contribute to inequality and injustice in our classrooms, on our campuses, and in our communities. It strives to provide our community members with resources to interrupt cycles of racism so as to cultivate a more equitable, inclusive, and just environment for all of our students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends, regardless of racial background. An anti-racism approach is an active and ongoing, long-term process. In all our efforts, we uphold a commitment to creating honest, respectful, supportive, and healing spaces where members of our community can meaningfully dialogue and learn from each other's lived experiences for the betterment of our entire community.

land acknowledgment

At the place George Mason University occupies, we give greetings and thanksgivings to these Potomac River life sources, the Doeg ancestors, who Virginia annihilated in violent campaigns while ripping their lands apart with the brutal system of African American enslavement, to the recognized Virginia tribes who have lovingly stewarded these lands for millennia including the Rappahannock, Pamunkey, Upper Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Nansemond, Monacan, Mattaponi, Patowomeck, and Nottaway, past, present, and future, and to the Piscataway tribes, who have lived on both sides of the river from time immemorial.

technology requirements

Note that this course requires/strongly recommends the use of Adobe Creative Cloud applications. If you do not already have an Adobe license and are interested in purchasing one or have an Adobe license and need to renew it, please visit <https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html>. If you cannot afford an Adobe license, you may submit a request for funding to the Student Emergency Assistance Fund. Please visit <https://ulife.gmu.edu/student-emergency-assistance-funding-2-2/> to apply. Please note that the Adobe license agreement is on an annual basis.

The Collaborative Learning Hub Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Reservations are strongly encouraged due to COVID-19 precautions and limited amounts of resources, but walk-ins will still be accepted so long as the occupancy of the lab does not exceed the maximum of 16 people <https://its.gmu.edu/service/club/>

important deadlines

JAN 24 First Day of Spring Classes

JAN 24 Last Day to Submit Domicile Reclassification Application

JAN 31 Last Day to Add: All Individual Sections Forms Due

FEB 7 Last Day to Drop: With 100% Tuition Refund

FEB 14 Final Drop Deadline: Last Day for 50% Tuition Refund

FEB 15–MAR 1 Unrestricted Withdrawal Period: 100% Tuition Liability

MAR 14–20 Spring Break (classes do not meet)

FEB 21–MAR 25 Mid-Term Evaluation Period: 100-200 Level Classes Grades Available via patriotweb

MAR 2–APR 11 Selective Withdrawal Period Undergraduate Students Only (100% Tuition Liability)

MAR 25 Incomplete Work from Fall 2021 Due to Instructor

APR 1 Incomplete Grade Changes from Fall 2021 Due to Registrar

MAY 6 Dissertation/Thesis Deadline

MAY 7 Last Day of Class

MAY 9–10 Reading Days

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the School of Art office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed), LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs in College Hall.