Final Project Preparation

Most of you took CGS1820 last semester or a few semesters ago. For that course you created a website from scratch on a subject of your choosing. This semester you will do something similar. You can either create a brand new website, also from scratch, or use your Final Project from CGS1820 and enhance it with all you've learned this semester. The choice is yours.

Regardless of what job you get after getting your degree, it is 99.9999% certain that you will work on websites. Nowadays, most people have their own websites. So this is more than just a Final Project for a grade. It should be something you can use, expand on, enhance, and be proud of.

Part of your grade for this project is to review your classmates' sites. This means, of course, that others in the class will also review your site. You'll get feedback from people in many different situations -- old, young, male, female, people with children, students right out of high school, people who already are working professionals, and so on. The feedback you receive can be really valuable. Keep that in mind when you do your reviews as well as when you read the reviews everyone provides for you.

Websites aren't built in a day. It takes a lot of careful planning to design a site that looks good, expresses what you mean to say to the world, and holds the attention of people who visit your site. So, before you start to code the pages, take some time to do the following.

- Re-read the chapter in the text: How to design a website.
- Read the Final Project Specifications document carefully.
- Read the last section in the lab manual, Student Projects. You may want to pay special attention to the information from the chapters we covered in Sections 2 and 3 in the text.
- Re-read the chapters on Flexible Box and Grid Layout.
- Jot down notes about ideas you have. Always keep in mind that the Final Project for this class is to be *your own*. Be creative!

Note: Every semester the accounts on the ITE server are wiped clean. This means that the work you have been storing on the server will be deleted at the end of this semester. Be careful that you don't lose all your work!

How can you keep your work? You should, of course, have everything on your own computer or on a flash drive. But computers crash, flash drives get lost, and so on. You should always have a backup. You can get free storage from Google Drive, DropBox, and similar places. And if you want to keep your site live, you can put your site on another web server. You can find out how to purchase a domain name and find a host server by Googling!

Note: Section 4 in the textbook (Chapters 17 & 18) contains information about other skills professional web developers may want or need to use. These include an introduction to JavaScipt and jQuery as well as some information about third-party development tools like Git, Bootstrap, Node.js, and more. You are *not* permitted to use Bootstrap for your final project. You can, if you wish, experiment with a little JavaScript or jQuery but keep in mind that the information in Chapter 18 is barely touching the surface. You will take an entire course on JavaScript after this course. The same is true for Sass and Node.js; these and other tools will be covered in depth in more advanced courses. While experimenting is always a good thing, sometimes a little knowledge can be dangerous. What you will learn in the brief introductions to these tools in this textbook will not make you an expert.