Project 1

Collection Case Study

Introduction

Our first project this term will leverage our knowledge of HTML and CSS, by designing and building a series of pages that exhibit four related concepts, objects, activities, people or places.

An appropriate comparison might be a series of case studies or information graphics, conceived and designed for the web, that showcase the similarities and differences in a collection of things by intelligently organizing information about each. A landing page will allow users to enter the site and make sense of the subservient content.

Expectations

Qualitative

A successful project will be both visually and functionally compelling, while avoiding any critical technological issues. The information presented must be original research (with the exception of any imagery, which may originate in the public domain), and display a sophisticated understanding of its inherent structure.

The selected topic should be reflected throughout the design, using color, typography and imagery effectively. A rationalization of those decisions, as well as the personal relevance of the topic, must be offered when presenting the work.

Types of information that are included must be displayed in a creative, but practical way—numerical data inherently demands a different expression than long reading text, so it must be treated appropriately. In addition to picking a suitable display for this information, the site must standardize those appearances across its pages.

Quantitative

A total of five pages are required:

- *One* main (home) page that presents the sub pages in a creative and appropriate way, while adding context to the experience.
- *Four* sub-pages, comparing a minimum of *six* attributes that the set of objects share.

See the *Example* section for what attributes we might select from if the topic was *Coffee*.

Process

Web projects will, more often than not, require a number of phases that have unique deliverables.

1 Research & Strategy

Student will select a topic and pick four like items for their case studies. The topic should be personally relevant, and the information reasonably accessible.

Consider what the subject matter can or must dictate about the organization and appearance of the information, and produce two distinct variations in its organization in the form of a content outline. Each direction should frame the topic in a unique way— for example, one might approach the topic “Our Solar System” as an OMSI exhibit mini-site, or a futuristic inter-planetary travel agency. For both directions, a content outline must be drafted, outlining the compared attributes and any other supporting page elements that are deemed necessary for the online experience.

The research and strategy phase concludes with a single set of wireframes, representing the structure and placement of content on the page for the selected conceit. Wireframes should be specific about layout, while avoiding dictation of visual design gestures.

2 Design

The design phase will be brief, and yield a polished mockup in InDesign, which will be the canonical guide for development.

The visual design should clarify the outstanding visual theme, while respecting the overall conceit and wireframes from the *Research and Strategy* phase.

3 Engineering

Once a design is established, the development phase begins. HTML is drafted to reflect the organization and hierarchy of data, as established in the content outline and wireframes. CSS is then added to adjust layout and appearance in order to bring the browser’s rendering of the website into agreement with the mockups.

Example

A website on *coffee varietals* might offer the following to satisfy the first phase of work, framed as a coffee roaster's new online shop:

Comparison Attributes

- Name
- Origin
    - Latitude and Longitude
    - Country
    - Elevation
- Flavor Profile Notes
- History
    - Regional Culture
    - Grower
- Caffeine Content

These options offer a variety of granularity and data types. Dig deep, and pick attributes with care— once the list is signed off on, it is the designer's responsibility to represent that information honestly and sensibly, and no changes will be permitted.

Basic Sitemap

Homepage: No-Man's Coffee Co.

- Subpage: Ethiopian Harar
- Subpage: Sumatra Lintong
- Subpage: Mundo Novo
- Subpage: K7

Content Outline

Homepage

- Navigation
- Splash image
- Titling
- Introductory text
- Thumbnail images of roasts linking to sub pages and displaying the varietal name
- Footer

Subpages

- Header Content (Standard)
- Varietal name
- Image of Region
- Short description
- Region History
- Statistics
    - Elevation (Number, in Feet)

    - Origin (Country Outline, with marker for exact location)
    - Tasting Notes (List)
- Footer Content (Standard)

Presentation

Students will be accountable for a small-group presentation, based on the following criteria:

Context

The presenter offers personal and topical context. Why did they pick this subject? What about the items they chose to compare needed special treatment on the web?

Goals

Before discussing solutions, the student should be able to articulate what issues exist with communicating their chosen topic on the Internet. Are the different types of data and their presentation appropriate for the context?

Technology

Projects employ appropriate technology, and the decisions to use them can be supported by pointing to specific needs relating to the content or presentation itself.

Evaluation

The project's design and build will be graded on three categorical criteria.

Design

The design is representative of a thorough process, and shows that the student puts equal emphasis on practicality as expression of content. The designer is an advocate of the content, throughout their process, and allows it to speak without interference. Designs that explore alternative contexts than strictly informational ones will be rewarded. Examples of such integrations might be an eCommerce, Museum or Quiz website, each requiring a unique set of considerations and additional functionality.

Architecture

As a resource on the Internet, the site solves core structural problems with communicating the subject matter in a meaningful and straightforward way. Consistency and relevance of the display of information is key. The site is as understandable without a sophisticated stylesheet as with one. Wireframes and all strategy work is evaluated as part of this mark.

Engineering

The proper HTML and CSS features were used to accomplish the stated design language, layout, typographic and informational hierarchy and use of imagery.

Important Dates

Step	In Phase	Date	Format
~~Topic Selection, Outlines~~	~~1~~	~~28 January~~	~~Written (Drive)~~
Wireframes	1	2 Feb	PDF (Drive)
Design Comps	2	4 February	PDF (Drive)
Development Check-In	3	4–11 February	Slack Post
Final Due	3	16 February	Small-Group Presentation

All deadlines are assumed 12PM, that day, unless otherwise noted on the class website.