

ART341

Interactive Design I

Course Details

Instructor
August Miller

Primary Contact
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Website
teaching.gusmiller.com/2015-winter

Slack
psudesign.slack.com

Class Meetings
Monday & Wednesday
12PM–2:50PM
Shattuck Hall, Room 107

Office Hours
Monday & Wednesday
3–4PM (With Appointment)
Art Building, Room 120

Final Exam
Tuesday, March 19, 2015
8AM–9:50AM

Overview

This ten-week course is a primer on design for the screen. Students will gain technological, architectural and aesthetic literacy through discussion, lecture, research and hands-on activities. While building a series of small websites, students are asked to critically evaluate needs, propose strategies and execute solutions by interpreting raw information, producing polished visual designs and publishing original code to the Internet.

Students will operate in an environment that encourages exploration, experimentation and discovery, and that responds to constructive criticism, individual and group needs.

Objectives

Students exiting this course will be fluent in at least two more languages. In designing and building their first websites, students will explore new tools, processes and media through which to express their creative and analytical problem solving skills.

Concepts to be explored this term can be divided into skills and approaches:

Skills

- Hypertext Markup Language (HTML)
- Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)
- Syntax
- The Document Object Model (DOM)
- File Transfer Protocol (FTP)
- Servers and File Systems
- Design and engineering vernacular

Approaches

- Information Architecture
- User Experience
- Interface Design
- Critique
- Scoping

Expectations

The ideal student is a self-advocating, motivated learner. Above all else, such a student will exhibit respect for their peers, the discipline and the discourse thereof, while contributing considered and appropriate commentary and discoveries, in and out of the classroom. At all times, the student must have a well-calibrated moral and intellectual compass, guiding them to collaboration, curiosity and ingenuity.

From an administrative standpoint, students are expected to attend all twenty sessions, be ready at 9:00AM and dedicated to class proceedings until 11:50AM. Success in this class demands regular exposure to many new technicalities in both design and engineering, and it must be assumed that critical, foundational information will be missed when a student is absent. The implicit penalty for any absence, excused or not, is expertise. Two missed classes (for any reason) do not have a direct effect on a student's grade, unless the absence interferes with a scheduled deadline. The third absence results in a grade *I*, or *Incomplete*, indicating that there were too many issues with participation. An *Incomplete* is also recorded when one or more *Project* deadlines are missed.

During class time, students are expected to give undivided attention to the proceedings. Momentary disruptions like texting or switching to unrelated content online are unacceptable, and resulting confusion will be greeted unsympathetically.

Materials

An Apple laptop running OS X is mandatory for participation in this class with the expectation that time will be allotted to installing and troubleshooting the required software, listed on the [website](#).

Computers used for class work must be backed up to an external hard drive or cloud storage service, as data loss does not exempt a student from late assignment penalties.

A complete resource list is maintained on the class website. This class requires no text books or physical media.

Grading

Each project is evaluated on the same criteria, a summary of which will be distributed in conjunction with the respective brief. However, the granularity of the projects will increase incrementally, and as such, their total weight or influence on a final grade. Students may re-submit one project for re-evaluation, so long as substantial improvements or changes have been made, in order to recover up to half the lost points.

Assignments, on the other hand, are an all-or-nothing point allotment. Satisfactory completion is awarded full points, while a late or substantially flawed assignment is granted none.

Details about the submission process and requirements for each segment of work are communicated on a case-by-case basis.

Scheme

A	B	C	D	F	I
90–100%	80–89%	70–79%	60–69%	Lower	Missing Work

Projects

All projects are divided into phases and involve research and strategy, scoping, content analysis, wireframes, visual design and engineering. The timeline for each project will be announced in class.

- 1 *Collection Case Study*
Students will select a personally relevant topic and create an experience that is appropriate and subservient to an examination of the similarities and differences between a group of associated objects or activities.
- 2 *Re/Design*
We encounter less-than-satisfying experiences on the web every day. Re/Design is an opportunity to identify needs in a local business that are not met by their existing site, and address them with a combination of content strategy, visual design and production-ready code.
- 3 *Nice to Meet You*
The most unmanageable client is always one's self. To wrap up the term, students will create a web presence that reflects their own personality and design convictions.

Presentations outlining techniques, solutions and roadblocks will be given to small groups, and each group will nominate one project to be presented to the entire class. Others may volunteer to present in the remaining time. Critique is expected to occupy the entire session when a project is due.

Assignments

All assignments and respective deadlines or milestones will be announced in class. It is the student's responsibility to check the class website's daily checklists for changes and raise questions and concerns prior to an assignment's due date.

We will be working with Codecademy throughout the term to reinforce classroom lessons.

Articles and other online material may be assigned with the expectation that all students contribute careful responses to *Slack*.

Participation

This class will be heavily integrated with the chat application *Slack*. Students are to check in twice weekly (privately or publicly) at times of their choosing and contribute frequently to public channels, by sharing resources, tips, or asking questions.

Offering valuable perspectives on other students' work during critiques is essential. Specific contributions during this time will be documented and the whole of a student's participation will be judged on merit.

Questions

Please direct comments and questions to *Slack*, unless it is a matter of great urgency, privacy or is an administrative issue, in which case, it should be directed to the *Primary Contact* listed at the top of this document.

Portland State University is sympathetic to the special needs of any students. Please raise any concerns as soon as possible, knowing that all communication with the *Instructor* is confidential and that student interests are always a priority.