

Journalism Design Toolkit

Syllabus Fall 2021

LLSJ 2500 A

CRN 11829

T/Th 6-7:40pm

Aug 30 - Dec 17, 2021

Prof. Irwin Chen

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Zoom: <https://NewSchool.zoom.us/my/irwinchen>

Journalism + Design, Eugene Lang College, The New School

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces a core set of technical skills for practicing journalism design. Topics include basics of computer file systems and the internet, Git and version control, publishing using the Adobe Suite (InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop) for digital and print design. Students will not only be exposed to software, theory, and techniques; they will establish a foundation to teach themselves to extend their skill sets throughout their careers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Identify the four basic components of a computer and describe what each component does.
- Navigate a file system using the Terminal, and execute basic functions on the command line.
- Demonstrate basic file organization and storage principles, and the difference between local and server storage.
- Appreciate the differences between ASCII text, rich text, and word processor files.
- Create and manipulate a raster image file using Photoshop.
- Create and manipulate a vector image file using Illustrator.
- Know when to use various image compression and file formats.
- Code a basic, semantically correct HTML page, style it with CSS, and put it on the web.
- Create a more complex webpage with links, photographs, graphics, and webfonts.
- Use Github to create repositories and bring documents under version control.
- Explain how the Internet works.
- Use Illustrator and Photoshop to lay out a single page document for print.

- Use InDesign to typeset a multi-page document for print

GRADES

Your grades will be determined solely by your performance on a midterm and a final exam.

Midterm	30%
Final	70%

The grading scale will be as follows:

93-100%	A
85-92%	B
77-84%	C
70-76%	D
0-69%	F

The exams will be administered during class time and taken online, and will consist of short answer questions as well as some screen recording of tasks.

REMOTE LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

- Internet access sufficient for instructional tools like Canvas and [Zoom](#) (minimal internet access speeds of 800kbps upload and 1.0Mbps download are required).
- Headset or earbuds (recommended)
- Webcam
- microphone (computer or external)
- A laptop or desktop computer (you really can't do this class with or from a smartphone)
- A quiet place

REMOTE LEARNING COURSE STRUCTURE

This course is designed for both in-person and online class meetings. I will conduct class in person and simultaneously broadcast it via Zoom for those who cannot attend in person. You will not be disadvantaged if you are remote. All materials will be made available online.

COURSE OUTLINE

Each class will consist of a slide presentation on a topic (which will be accessible in Google Drive).

WEEKS 1-3

Introduction: Syllabus overview and basic how-tos (how to do a screen recording, how to use Google Drive)

COMPUTER BASICS

HOW COMPUTERS WORK

The four basic components of any computer and what they do

THE COMMAND LINE; FILE STORAGE

How to use the Terminal and how to organize files

TEXT

The beauty of ASCII and plain text files

GIT and GITHUB

The basics of this extremely useful version control system

WEEKS 4-7

GRAPHICS

RASTER GRAPHICS

Photoshop basics

VECTOR GRAPHICS

Illustrator basics

COMPRESSION; RESOLUTION; FILE TYPES

Optimization, knowing when to use what, and getting graphics files in shape

WEEKS 8-13

THE INTERNET & WEB PUBLISHING

HOW THE INTERNET WORKS

How the Internet actually works. Also wi-fi.

HTML

Basic semantic markup

CSS

Stylesheets and styling HTML with CSS

EMBEDDING IMAGES, MEDIA, WEBFONTS

How to embed images and video, as well as webfonts

GITHUB PAGES

Using Github Pages to publish web pages

WEEKS 14-16

PRINT PUBLISHING

COMPOSING SINGLE-PAGE PRINT DOCUMENTS

Using Illustrator to lay out a poster or a flyer.

COMPOSING MULTI-PAGE PRINT DOCUMENTS

Using InDesign to typeset larger texts.

PDF BASICS

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

- Any desktop or laptop computer is acceptable as long as you can run current versions of the required software.
- We will use Adobe Creative Suite, with emphasis on Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign.
- Our primary web browser will be Chrome (specifically I use Brave for security purposes). We may also use Safari and Firefox.
- A mobile iOS or Android device will be useful for some tasks, but is not required.
- We will use a code-friendly text editor for HTML and CSS. You may use the text editor of your choice. (If you are unsure where to start, consider Visual Code Studio, Atom, Sublime Text, or the free tier of BBEdit.) I will be using Visual Studio Code so you might want to download and use that if you would like to follow along exactly with what I'm doing.
- Each student will use a free GitHub account for this course. Please set up an avatar image on Github.
- We may use pen/pencil and paper to plan, wireframe, and brainstorm.

SUPPLEMENTAL BOOKS

- [Designing the Editorial Experience](#) by Sue Apfelbaum & Juliette Cezzar
- [The Elements of Typographic Style](#) by Robert Bringhurst
- [Web Typography](#) by Richard Rutter
- [Butterick's Practical Typography](#) by Matthew Butterick
- [HTML5 for Web Designers](#) by Jeremy Keith
- [CSS3 for Web Designers](#) by Dan Cederholm

ONLINE ARTICLES

- [Journalist's Toolbox](#) Design/Visual-Journalism links

- [The Elements of Typographic Style Applied to the Web](#)
- [Frontend Focus](#) (mailing list)
- [CSS Tricks](#)
- [W3Schools](#)
- [A List Apart](#)
- Stack Overflow (the [HTML](#) and [CSS](#) tag pages are good places to start)
- Lena Groeger's [Visual Evidence](#) series

INFORMATIONAL VIDEOS & TUTORIALS

- The Coding Train's series on Git and Github is entertaining and essential: [Git and GitHub for Poets](#)

DISABILITY SERVICES

If you are a student with a disability/disabled student, or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Student Disability Services (SDS) at studentdisability@newschool.edu, or 212-229-5626, to coordinate all reasonable accommodation requests.

POLICIES

- Academic Integrity Policy
<http://www.newschool.edu/policies>
- The Intellectual Property Rights Policy
<http://www.newschool.edu/provost/accreditation-policies/>
- For further information on plagiarism, students can be directed to the Learning Center's website: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center>
- Grading policies as found in the academic catalogs or online at <https://www.newschool.edu/registrar/grade-policies/>
- [Meaningful Participation Policy for Students](#)