Module 10

Separation of Content from Presentation

The process of converting the rough material of my design ideas (sketches) into a visually comprehensive product (Photoshop designed pictures of different page views), to actually coding has been everything but easy. I began, like the rest of my class, by learning about HTML and CSS through the class readings, discussions, and Codecademy. At first, it was extremely overwhelming. As time went on, I began to produce my own code through Codecademy and then Codepen. For the most part, I have used Codepen, which has allowed me to plug in codes simply to see how they are going to look on the page. The content I have produced in Codepen is fairly basic and simple, but it actually has a lot of work within it. In regards to the presentation aspect, I am starting to better understand and therefore play with the CSS of my page. I have enjoyed experimenting with colors, margin widths, and the overall layout of my page.

The strategies that I have implemented to separate my content from my presentation have been fairly experimental, especially with the CSS. For the main HTML content, I have followed the layout of HTML structure: doctype, html, header, linking to css, body, paragraphs, a nav bar, etc. laying out the HTML has been the easy part, for the challenges that have arose have come from positioning boxes appropriately within CSS. For example, it took probably forty five minutes and some yelling to get my navigation bar where I wanted it. Most of my strategy for my portfolio has been plug and chug with trial and error, where I simply try things and see if they work. From the design docs, I had an idea of what I wanted my website to look like; I just needed to figure out how to do it. Figuring out how to create content from my designs and then present it in an appropriate form has been a journey, but I’m overall pleased with how the code is translating. The most valuable lesson I have learned is that everything takes time and most importantly structure, without the structure there can’t be anything pretty or exciting.

I still have a decent amount of coding and presenting to go through before my website is ready. A shortcoming that I can’t seem to understand is the time commitment of building a website and building it well. This process has been something that takes not only time, but effort, patience, and planning. I have found that I can’t just throw it together and get something cohesive, I have to actually refer back to my wireframes and design docs then recall codes to ensure the pages turn out how I want them to. To improve the remainder of my website composition process, I will recall the notes and codes that I have learned, dedicate more time to create the designs that I want and be patient with what I’m trying to do.