

Preparatory Materials Overview

Welcome to MLA60970! This folder contains essential preparation materials for the course's design-first approach to web development. These materials will be completed during the first week of class as part of the course schedule.

Quick Start Checklist

Technical Setup - Day 1 (Monday, July 7)

- ☐ Complete Technical Setup Checklist - **IN CLASS**
- ☐ Watch required video tutorials (VS Code and GitHub) - **DAY 1**
- ☐ Install and configure VS Code with web development extensions
- ☐ Create GitHub account and test repository creation
- ☐ Complete VS Code Setup Guide
- ☐ Follow GitHub Setup Instructions
- ☐ Test complete workflow from VS Code to GitHub Pages

Conceptual Preparation - Days 1-2

- ☐ Read Digital Communication Literacy Primer - **DAY 1**
- ☐ Review Design Thinking Preparation - **DAY 2**
- ☐ Study Web Reading and Communication - *Optional reference*
- ☐ Complete Content Audit Worksheet - **DAY 4 (Thursday)**

Material Descriptions

Technical Setup Checklist - DAY 1 IN CLASS

Time Required: 60-90 minutes (guided in class)

Purpose: Complete all technical setup with guided workflow testing - Video tutorials for VS Code and GitHub (watch in class) - Software installation and configuration - Extension setup for web development - Complete workflow testing from development to deployment - Professional setup verification

VS Code Setup Guide - DAY 1

Time Required: 30-45 minutes (guided in class)

Purpose: Configure professional web development environment - VS Code installation and essential extensions - Web development configuration and settings - Live server setup for instant preview - Code formatting and file organization - Professional development workflow

GitHub Setup Instructions - DAY 1

Time Required: 30-45 minutes (guided in class)

Purpose: GitHub account and repository management - Professional GitHub account creation - Repository creation and management - GitHub Pages setup

for web publishing - Version control basics and classroom access - Professional portfolio development context

Digital Communication Literacy Primer - DAY 1

Time Required: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: Foundational understanding of digital communication - What digital communication means for MLA students - Why web skills matter for professional development - Connection between design and credibility - Examples of effective websites

Design Thinking Preparation - DAY 2

Time Required: 20-25 minutes

Purpose: Prepare for Week 1's design-first approach - User-centered design principles for content - How design serves accessibility and engagement goals - Visual literacy basics for effective communication - Preparation for analyzing websites

Web Reading and Communication - *OPTIONAL REFERENCE*

Time Required: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: Reference material for understanding web reading patterns - Differences between print and web reading - Scanning behavior and content implications - Accessibility considerations for diverse audiences - Available as reference during weeks when needed

Content Audit Worksheet - COMPLETE BY DAY 3

Time Required: 45-60 minutes

Purpose: Select and plan your content adaptation project - Evaluate potential academic work for web transformation - Audience analysis and accessibility planning - Project scope and feasibility assessment - Foundation for content strategy development - **Flexible deadline:** Can be completed during first week of course

Learning Progression

Before Week 1: Design Principles and Web Writing

Complete all preparatory materials to understand: - Why design matters for academic communication - How to analyze academic websites effectively - What makes content accessible online - Which of your academic work to transform

Connection to Course Weeks

These materials prepare you for: - **Week 1:** Design analysis and content strategy - **Week 2:** HTML implementation of design insights - **Week 3:** CSS styling

that serves academic goals - **Week 4:** Responsive design for content

Time Investment

Total Setup Time: Integrated into first week of class

Class Schedule Integration: - **Day 1 (Monday):** Technical setup completed in class with instructor guidance (90 minutes) - **Day 1 (Monday):** Digital Communication Literacy reading (15-20 minutes) - **Day 2 (Tuesday):** Design Thinking Preparation reading (20-25 minutes) - **Day 4 (Thursday):** Content Audit Worksheet completion (45-60 minutes) - **Weekend:** HTML Fundamentals assignment completion for Monday - **As Needed:** Web Reading material available as reference during weeks

Note: All preparatory materials are integrated into the course schedule - no work required before the first day of class.

Getting Help

If You Have Questions:

- Review course materials and video resources
- Check with classmates about shared challenges
- Contact instructor during office hours
- Post questions in course discussion forum

If You Have Technical Issues:

- Consult GitHub troubleshooting section
- Try different browsers or devices
- Clear browser cache and cookies
- Contact instructor if problems persist

Success Tips

Approach These Materials With:

- **Open Mind:** Design thinking may be new, but it complements scholarly skills
- **User Focus:** Think about readers' needs, not just your expertise
- **Long-term Vision:** These skills serve academic career development
- **Patience:** Allow time to absorb new concepts and approaches

Take Notes On:

- Key insights about design and professional communication
- Questions that arise about your content audit
- Ideas for your content adaptation project
- Connections between materials and your professional interests

Professional Context

These Skills Serve:

- **Academic Career Development:** Digital literacy for teaching and research
- **Public Scholarship:** Engaging broader audiences with your expertise
- **Professional Opportunities:** Digital skills valued across sectors
- **Lifelong Learning:** Foundation for ongoing digital scholarship

Beyond This Course:

- Apply design thinking to other academic communication challenges
- Use web skills for teaching and research projects
- Develop professional academic web presence
- Contribute to digital humanities and public scholarship initiatives

Take your time with these materials—they provide the conceptual foundation for everything we’ll do in the week sequence. Understanding the “why” behind design decisions will make the technical implementation much more meaningful and effective.