

Data Studio

Columbia University Lede Program

July 8 to August 14, 2019

Mondays and Wednesdays, 10am to 1pm (with exceptions)

World Room

Instructors

Hilary Fung is a designer, developer and journalist whose work has appeared in ProPublica, NPR, ICIJ, Quartz, The Huffington Post, The Washington Post and The Boston Globe. She has taught at The New School and at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY.

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Ashlyn Still has worked in visual journalism for 6+ years. She is currently a member of the graphics team Reuters News, covering politics, policy and economics using reporting, data visualization, design, maps and lots of Javascript. Previously she worked as a news applications and data developer at The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

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Course objectives

Students will build on their data and coding skills to create polished visualizations and data-driven narratives. They'll become comfortable editing professional quality work using Adobe Illustrator, as well as HTML and CSS. Pitching and critique will also be a big part of this class.

Homework

Homework assignments will be made in class, and communication will happen via email and Slack. Please be ready to share and discuss your projects in any class. A big part of this class will be about critique — giving it, receiving it, and using it to improve our work.

Schedule

Class 1 // Monday, July 8 // Hilary

Introduction to visual storytelling

Overview of course format and objectives. Introduction to data visualization in journalism, and the skills and tools we use to create it.

Class 2 // Wednesday, July 10, 9am to 12pm // Ashlyn

Telling stories using HTML + CSS

What are HTML and CSS, and how will we use them in this class? Organizing a visual story in HTML.

Class 3 // Monday, July 15 // Hilary

Introduction to data visualization + Adobe Illustrator

What is data visualization? The basic rules, and how to expand on them. How to create, edit and publish charts in Adobe Illustrator.

Class 4 // Wednesday, July 17 // Ashlyn

Introduction to design concepts

Foundational concepts of visual design, such as color, hierarchy and balance. Lots of practical examples.

Class 5 // Saturday, July 20 // Ashlyn

Designing for the web

Building on our front-end development skills; using CSS to customize a page or graphic. Basics of accessibility on the web.

Class 6 // Monday, July 22 // Ashlyn

Next steps in data visualization

Digging into more chart types. Correlation, showing more than two variables, distribution.

Class 7 // Thursday, July 25 // Hilary

Thinking about grids

How do professional designers lay out web pages? Guidelines that will make any site or story look better.

Class 8 // Monday, July 29 // Hilary

Thinking about mobile + platforms

How does the proliferation of mobile phones and social media affect our design processes? Using CSS to build for all screen sizes.

Class 9 // Wednesday, July 31 // Ashlyn

Exploring alternative storyforms

Outside the box with visual storytelling: “scrollytelling”, steppers, simulators, games. How to think about user interaction.

Class 10 // Saturday, August 3 // Ashlyn

Let's talk about maps

How to work with geographical data. When and how to build a map. Types of geographic data visualizations.

Class 11 // Monday, August 5 // Ashlyn

Data reporting + visualization best practices

Tricky visualizations: How to make fair comparisons, visualize uncertainty, and avoid misleading the reader

Class 12 // Wednesday, August 7 // Hilary

Making your graphic sing

Using smart visual cues and polished design, editing for clarity. How to critique.

Class 13 // August 12 // Hilary

Putting it all together

Revisiting the story as a whole. Considering pace and flow. How graphics work with other elements, such as photos and videos.

Class 14 // August 14 // Hilary

Final critiques, looking forward

What's next? Looking forward in the field of data visualization. Final presentations and critique.