Our B63 Website replacement -- Report

When starting this project, we looked at every course website given. The options ranged from ugly to difficult to read. Other common issues were the excessive use of tables and links. Some paragraphs were more link than text. Specifically, the Bretscher B63 page was filled with inconsistent structure and styling, resulting in a confusing, difficult-to-understand webpage that failed to aid students in their never ending quest to learn when assignments were due.

In response, we styled and structured the website, not just to be visually appealing, but to also preserve legibility and to guide students to the correct sections efficiently. In response to the excessive use of tables and links, we cropped down or outright eliminated their use. This resulted in a more comprehensible webpage that let text flow freely and take up as much space as it needed. As far as the poor webpage structure, we introduced a External Sites drop-down menu that allowed us to folder and categorize more niche links. All in all, our new and improved course website aids visibility and usability while introducing a more effective site structure, creating a more streamlined experience for any student enrolled in B63.

All this improvement was not without difficulty however. Since we subdivided the work between our two members, integrating those changes via git ended up being fairly difficult. This involved branches, merges, as well as 2 painful merge conflicts. Moreover since neither of us are excellent designers, trying to make the webpage look nice was quite difficult, a challenge which we hope we rose to. Another source of trouble was the Flexbox model. We ended up making 3-4 major flex revisions to incorporate the header and footer together properly. This was not helped by the immense difficulty debugging the flex model given that questions like "Why does margin-top: auto not expand the margin at all" seem to have no answer. In addition, we had to change the External sites tab to expand horizontally instead of vertically because it overwrote the footer and wouldn't even display properly on the majority of the webpage. All of this was stacked on top of the difficulty of actually

getting the dropdown menu to work in the first place. Finally, Flask. While I was initially excited to try using flask to cut down on css redundancy, which was probably a decision for the better, I found myself frustrated at every turn working with Flask. All-in-all, through trial and tribulation, we finished the website and both of us feel proud of what we were able to accomplish in the time given!