

Design Rationale Project 1 Final

The audience for my website is anyone wishing to know more general information about me. I kept away from using more specific and personal info because it is not safe to have that kind of information available for all to view. Should anyone want to obtain more information about me they can email me using the link provided at the bottom of most of the webpages. With such a broad audience, my focus was to ensure that the entire website was both easy to read and easy to use by anybody. Making it easy to read was imperative because any person can easily become overwhelmed with information which is not a good thing to happen, especially if it is a potential employer. Making it easy to use is also very important because, even if the information is easy to read, the user can get frustrated if they cannot navigate around the pages in a clean manner so that they can easily find the information that they may be looking for.

Visually, I feel that there are sufficient elements to go with the text so that the pages don't look boring but also not too cluttered with unnecessary images. A potential employer is most likely not too concerned with any visual aspects but rather getting the information that they need but there are still ways to please them from a visual standpoint. For example, they almost always ask for a headshot when submitting applications so I included my headshot front and center on the first page so it is one of the first things that they see. The inclusion of the Cornell University logo on each of the pages pertaining to Cornell specific information is another way to emphasize my school which is probably a bonus for potential employers. Other visual elements are meant to please a more general crowd such as the background color for the whole site which gives it a basic sense of style. The red color of the navigation bar is a reference to Cornell's most well-known color.

For the information, one of my first choices was to center headers, images, and text because it looks very clean and well put together. One of the website testers made a note that the centered was good but not enough since it still extended from one end of the page to the other as seen below:



No margins

As a result, I added margins to all text in the document so that the information would look even cleaner and easier to read as seen below:



Since the first page is both a welcome page and a home page, I figured that having basic information at the bottom would work so that all users could have an overview of who I am before going any further. The navigation bar on this page is located below the header but above the image because it gives the users a chance to go directly to the more specific information and they can easily get back to it if they want to read the entirety of the first page. If they would like to read more, they have the option of choosing between 3 different Cornell specific options with a dropdown menu integrated into the navigation bar. I chose this option over putting each separate page on the navigation bar so that the user knows that each one pertains to Cornell. One of my user testers mentioned that this was one of her favorite features since it allowed her ease of access to find anything that she wanted to know. On the academics page, there is a separate dropdown menu near the bottom of the page allowing users to choose a specific semester to view the classes that I took that semester. If they do look at one of the semesters, the dropdown for looking at other semesters is integrated into the navigation bar. This option was chosen rather than having a separate dropdown menu for the semesters because, as one of my testers mentioned, the page looks less cluttered and makes sense being on its own.

The main changes that have been since milestone 3 have been to find way to mix elements from v1 with elements from v2 in a manner that makes sense and makes the website work as a whole. The most notable ones were integrating the horizontal navigation bar with the dropdown menu which was done to remove clutter but prevent a bulk up of information. I do feel however, that there may be room for extra visual elements (not just images but the visual presentation of information). I also considered adding more to the classes pages but nothing came to mind that would make sense and look fitting.

As a whole, one of my favorite elements is the combination of the navigation bar with the dropdown menu because it really helps out both the easy to read category and the easy to use category. I acknowledge that I am not the most creative person so I went more for efficiency and accessibility. My only question is what visual aspects could I have added to make the site more interesting?