

348 Exit Essay

Coming into this semester, my expectations were that this class would help me to learn more elegant web design and improve my skills with Javascript. I had a good amount of experience with HTML, CSS and Javascript before coming into this class but I wanted to refine my skills and learn some of the more complicated intricacies of each technology. As the semester progressed I started to become more and more interested in developing mobile websites; especially because my assignments at work started to take a more mobile oriented path. One thing that I was especially interested in at the beginning of the semester was HTML5 and learning the powerful new features that it offered beyond what was offered in previous versions of HTML. My goal for the semester was to develop a mobile web application that could be used by one of the companies I work for. In fact, I was able to accomplish this twice. For one of my jobs I developed a mobile web app to be used in-house for viewing customer information that is stored in their CRM database. The mobile site features integration with the CRM Ubersmith as well as ties to the Google Maps API. This website does not utilize HTML5 but does contain a good amount of standard JavaScript and uses cookies to store some information on a per-user basis. The CSS design for this sight was tricky because I had to account for multiple types of devices but after some development my boss and I settled on optimizing the application for use on an iPad. This project is based in jQuery Mobile and was my first time using this technology but it is an extremely powerful tool that I will most certainly use in the future. The second application I built was for a different company and is still in development but many of the key pieces have already been put together. This project is for a client that would like to automate their entire housing rental system and display a robust application on an iPad in their leasing office. This web application utilizes HTML5 as well as jQuery mobile and a heavy amount of JavaScript. There is not yet a back end to this application and everything on the development site is hardcoded but so far I have been able to experiment heavily with jQuery Mobile and CSS inside this application. This has been a trickier project as far as implementing the CSS due to the type of data contained in the application. Moving forward, I plan on continuing to develop both applications, especially the housing rental system application, for both employers and in doing so I plan on continuing to develop my CSS, HTML and JavaScript skills. I feel as though the amount I have learned and the progress I have made, especially in the implementation of jQuery mobile, warrants an A. I have put a large amount of both time and effort into both of these projects and in doing so I learned an extreme amount not only about web design but also about the process of designing and building websites and web applications.

12/12/12

348 EXIT ESSAY

What were your expectations for the semester (and how did they change over time)?

This semester, I expected to be dual concentrating in Telecommunications and Information & Knowledge Management. I planned on getting a lot of work done on my senior project, I thought I'd have a nice time relaxing while I wasn't in class (since I wouldn't have a job this semester), and overall I just wanted to do well in all of my classes.

It turns out that almost none of what I had expected actually happened. I realized how much classwork I would be doing, and I knew I would have an incredibly tough time pulling it off. I ended up switching to a tailored concentration (with your guidance), in which I would actually get to take the classes that I wanted to take instead of everything needed in order to meet the major's requirements. I decided to take ISAT 460, ISAT 461, and ISAT 464 from Telecom and ISAT 348 from IKM. I planned on doing the wireless remote sensor project you had suggested, which would implement all of my sectors, connect all of my concentration classes, and help my senior project. I talked with Dr. Brent about the project, and he told me how expensive the equipment would be. I began to draft a paper/letter in which I would ask Starr Hill for the money, seeing as it would help their business and my schooling at the same time. During the process, the team met up with Robbie, a brewer from Starr Hill, and he informed us of some of the projects he would love for us to get involved with. I ended up scrapping my project AND the tailored concentration. I figured that the whole tailored concentration revolved around the project, and if it wasn't going to happen, I should just stick with one concentration.

I chose Telecommunications in the end, but I decided to stick with ISAT 348 because I had been anticipating the course all summer, and I was really enjoying the class. I have wanted to learn how to create my own website, because everyone uses the Internet all the time, and it seemed like a cool skill to have. I imagined myself creating my own personal websites, sites for family or friends, and maybe even getting paid to make a site for someone. I actually changed my semester plans again because of it: I got a job with JMU's Marketing Department.

I met my current boss maybe a year ago at Jack Brown's. We both love beer, and we both are in to technology, so it's a good fit. He emailed me towards the beginning of the semester about a possible job, working for him, writing HTML and CSS. I had just finished the one pager assignment and I was really starting to like this stuff. He said the job was only ten hours a week, so I knew I would have free time still, and I knew it would be good practice and good experience. I took the job and I don't regret it. I have been able to expand my knowledge of HTML/CSS a little more, while getting some extra cash on the side.

As for the Starr Hill Project, our group has not done much of anything yet, and I am sure we will pay for it next semester. We have taken a few trips to the reservoir and the brewery, but we are just now about to start collecting some data. The only reason I am not completely stressed about it is because our plans have changed so much. We are not trying to do the same thing as the previous Starr Hill team. We want to incorporate the environment aspect as well. I have talked with Dr. Radziwill a few times throughout the semester and she thinks we will be okay, but I still worry. Then again, I worry about everything.

Also, kind of out of nowhere, I decided to pick up CS 139 this semester and go for the Computer Science minor. I remembered taking 252 and learning some of the Visual Studio

stuff, and I had done a tiny bit of Python in some of my Telecom classes, and I was just curious about this introduction to Java. A bunch of other Telecom / IKM guys were mentioning how you only needed to add two more classes to get the minor, so I decided to give it a shot. I have enjoyed learning Java and more about programming in general. I think I will stick with it and take CS 239 next semester. Even though I gave up the IKM concentration, I feel like I am still learning more about it.

What goals did you set for yourself?

For 348 specifically, my main goals were to learn a lot about HTML and CSS. The class was all about web development, and those are the fundamentals. I wanted to learn some JavaScript too as a bonus, if I ever got that far, but I wasn't really interested in the WordPress stuff. I realize that the content of websites is what is important, but from an employer's perspective I feel they would want to see that I can code rather than implement an out of the box website. I did think it was important to at least know how to install WordPress in case I did decide to use it one day. One of my goals was to learn more about how to actually make a website live, and another was to make sure I got to class on time every day.

Did you achieve them, how well, what evidence do you have?

I feel like I did achieve them. I'm still no expert on HTML or CSS, in fact I'm sure I'm still a beginner, but I have learned a lot about the two languages and I enjoyed the class. I never got to the JavaScript, though I have viewed some JavaScript code during my free time at work. There's so much code for something that does so little, it's insane. I downloaded WordPress in my XAMPP folder and got the site running to make sure I knew how to do it, but I didn't pursue any kind of plugin. I have been using my knowledge of HTML and CSS to create my own

website. I have only created a few simple pages, but I am still proud of my work. I searched for other interesting websites to get ideas for mine. I realized that one of the hardest parts isn't actually writing the code, but figuring out how I want to design the site.

I learned about the makeup of a web development stack: the OS, web server, database server, and application server. Some contain SMTP for email and FTP for moving files around, which I learned about in both your class and ISAT 460 with Dr. Bernstein. Before these two classes a lot of stuff was just "magic" to me, and now I at least have some understanding of how they work. It can be tough to explain, especially to someone who doesn't know, but I think I have it right in my head at least. I learned that you need a server to host your website, and you need to purchase a domain name too. I looked into doing this, but it seems kind of expensive for what I have right now. I can just as easily show you my Facebook and LinkedIn pages and you will know just as much about me as this site tells you, so I think I will hold off on purchasing those things until I have something worthwhile.

This is my third class with you, and you may remember how my attendance was in the other two classes. ISAT 252 was definitely the worst for me; I was late at least once a week, sometimes not showing up at all. I got a little better about it in 340, where I was only late on occasion. This semester I have not been late once. In fact, I believe I only missed a single class, and that was because I had an interview on that Friday. Of course, the class starting times have changed from 9:05 to 10:20 to 11:15...but I have been getting better, I swear!

What does this mean moving forward?

I think it would be really cool to get a job in Web Development. I still am not entirely sure what I want to do for the rest of my life (hopefully others are still unsure as well). I am kind

of looking for whatever I can get at this point. I haven't applied to a lot of places yet, but I have had one serious interview with Oracle. I think it went really well, but I still haven't heard back yet. It's for a DBA consulting position. After the last class I know how much you like cable companies, but I am looking at Time Warner Cable as well. I had an internship with them over the summer, and I thought it went pretty well.

What grade to report to the registrar?

I think I deserve an A in the class because I have worked hard on what I wanted to pursue, and I have achieved the goals I set for myself. While my website isn't going to wow anyone into giving me a job at this point, I have learned the basics and I have been slowly picking up helpful information from other websites, forums, and my boss.

Erwin James Will

My expectation for this class was to create working functions for JMUParking. This changed significantly over the semester. It went from having an app that had working functions to an app that could connect to Amazons web services. It also went from connecting to AWS to making a simple mobile application with database connection and push notifications.

I set several goals for myself. One goal was to flush out the JMUParking idea. Another was to wireframe the app. I also wanted to be able to connect to a web database and the design the database. I accomplished everything except for connecting to a web database. I have pictures of the wire framing I also have a word document with the database analysis. I did not accomplish connecting to a web database; I did however set up an AWS account and did try.

I think that moving forward I will continue to learn how work with html, php, css, and jquery. I will also try to figure out how to connect to AWS because once I figure out how to do that I can start actually building features.

I think I deserve an A.

I didn't really know anything about HTML when I started taking this class. I thought it was going to be more like programming. As soon as we started diving into the material I quickly learned that it was nothing like programming. It's much different. You don't have a lot of tags to learn. You do have to learn to figure out which tags you should use in which situations and which will make it easier to style later on. I think as the semester went on I realized that a lot of websites used templates instead of straight up HTML and CSS. I think the possibilities of HTML and JavaScript are really cool. I went through a lot of the w3schools tutorials on JavaScript, CSS, and HTML.

I had Xampp on my computer at the beginning of the semester and did a little messing around in wordpress. My computer died on me a few weeks ago and I haven't been able to get it running again.

I'm a telecommunications concentrator and would like to end up in the IT or security field. I wanted to learn about HTML and web development so I could converse with people who were doing web development and understand what they were talking about. I don't think I will have to build many websites. I took this class to broaden my knowledge of the field. I think a lot of the work in the industry and at companies is done in groups and I thought it would be useful to be able to relate to and understand better what some web developers or programmers were talking about in reference to web development. I think after taking this class it will be easier for me to have a feel for what they are doing.

I think I deserve an A in this class. I only missed three meetings, and two of them were because I was sick. I'm happy with what I got out of this class and I believe I accomplished what I wanted.

I believe that I deserve an A for my semester grade. For this class, I expected to deepen my knowledge of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. I successfully completed this goal through the creation of a website with my group. Though I did not work on it as much as Mike or Sean, I was a valuable resource who was consulted and attended many group meetings. I also did a lot of research into various aspects of the project, especially the CSS. This class, and my previous programming classes, has taught me that I do not want a job that has me coding all day. I realized that I enjoy working in small, cooperative, skilled teams and that I make a great leader for these teams. I am good at dividing the workload and compiling individual work into a final document or program. I also learned that it takes me much longer to code than most people. I do not know if this is from lack of programming experience, but my time would be better utilized in a position more similar to a manager or team lead.

This class was fantastic for my senior project. My research into various APIs and design aspects will help me design a slick user interface for my Blockfinder. I can also create a personal website with a domain name chosen by me. This is a goal of mine and I hope to achieve it eventually in my spare time.

Blaine Loos
ISAT 348
Fall 2012
12/12/12

Preliminary Portfolio Presentation

ISAT 348: The Multimedia Industry

The main objective of this course was to become more comfortable with web design. We started with basic HTML and CSS styling, and worked up to coding in JavaScript and PHP. We were learning to develop plugins and setup a variety of WordPress sites. Anything and everything related to web development could be included as an objective of this course.

The semester project that I have been working on aims to accomplish this objective by utilizing HTML, CSS, PHP, and JavaScript. The project is the creation of a music website for Thom Feucht, an amateur acoustic guitar player and singer/songwriter. Some highlights of the features of the website are: AJAX control for dynamic content loading, non-interrupting music player, graphical dynamic navigation menu, and CSS style control.

Unfortunately, my project is not complete at this time. However, at about 3:45pm on 12/12/12, the page was successfully loading content dynamically using AJAX. There are still a few problems and things to work out, such as graphics (fade in / out) for the page loading, and updating the header link to be dynamic. These will all come in time. I am quite disappointed in myself for not completing the entire project on time. Below I will explain why.

The methods that I have used to complete the objective are the same that I have used in all of my IKM courses with Morgan Benton (ISAT 252, ISAT 340 ISAT 348). The basic template is as follows:

Weeks 1 - 2:

- Complete "Lab 1"

Weeks 3 – 14:

- Attend class
- Absorb information
- Brainstorm
- Don't do much tangible work

Week 15:

- Don't sleep
- Learn how to use the tools / languages / methods that were presented in class
- Complete a large project that shows my understanding of said tools / languages / methods

This template has allowed me to be very successful in the past. My favorite part of Morgan's classes is the freedom to choose how to allocate my time and resources to accomplish what I need to accomplish. This semester was no different; however I have made a few vital mistakes. To highlight a few: choosing a difficult project task to complete, beginning work too late, scheduling other things during the final weeks, etc.

I don't want an A. I need an A. At this moment, however, I do not deserve one. I have full confidence in my ability to learn and implement the skills to make my final project a work of art.

What I am asking for is an extension. Incomplete until I can make something to be truly proud of.

ISAT 348: The Multimedia Industry

When I began this course, I had no idea what it would be about. The multimedia industry is a very broad topic, but I am very glad that the course has focused on the subjects that it has. The main objective of the course, as I understand, was to become more comfortable with web design. The structure of the course allows a number of different avenues to accomplish this goal, but we mainly focused on HTML, CSS, PHP, and JavaScript, as these are the most popular tools used in the industry today. A large amount of focused was placed on building web sites and tools in the easiest way possible. For this reason, we worked with WordPress heavily, since it is a highly customizable template to start from.

Since the course was focusing on WordPress sites, I chose to use WordPress as the template to work from on my semester project. The site that I built (along with Calla Feucht) was a music page for her father, Thom Feucht. We wanted to make something special for him to advance his amateur career. After searching a large number of themes, we found a very nice theme with a dynamic, graphic menu. We used the CSS style sheets to customize the background pictures, menu sizes and behaviors, fonts, colors, and a host of other things. From here we had one main problem to accomplish: embedding a music player that would not reload every time a new page was visited. I learned about AJAX, a way to dynamically load content onto a page, and began to experiment with different ways to implement this. I tried different plugins and themes with very little success, but all of the poking around and experimenting allowed me to learn the characteristics of JavaScript and PHP. This eventually led me to realize that the original theme was already using advanced JavaScript features for the dynamic menu, and allowed me to use the built in tools to get the AJAX methods to work.

Now I have a semi-complete (missing some information about Thom...) website that looks good and functions great, with a music player that doesn't skip or restart when you click on various links throughout the page. I have learned the most basic, and even some more advanced features of HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and PHP to make this happen. At this point, I would definitely say that I am much more comfortable with the design and inner workings of web design, particularly using WordPress.

Since I have implemented basic web design knowledge, and have gone beyond into the use of advanced web design techniques, I believe I have completed the main objective of the course to an above average degree. I did not do perfect this semester; I have made a few mistakes, and have procrastinated significantly, so I don't believe I deserve an A. My knowledge, understanding, and demonstration of the material show that I probably deserve a little less, perhaps an A-.

Exit essay

What were your expectations for the semester (and how did they change over time)?

Coming into this class I wasn't quite sure what to expect because the class was titled "The Multimedia Industry," therefore it could have incorporated quite a few different topics. However after the first week of class it became quite clear it was a web development class. I thought we would go over from start to finish how to create a functional and well-designed website. Throughout the course we did learn about various aspects of web development which are necessary to develop a good website; however we spent a good portion of the class time developing one WordPress plug-in, rather than creating our own website or exploring different ways to create websites. In the end my expectations were just to end the semester with some sort of product that was related to web development, for most people this was a web site, but it could have been a website, a plug-in, a mobile app, etc.

What goals did you set yourself?

In the beginning we had weekly self-evaluations which allowed us to develop weekly goals for ourselves. This worked well in the beginning but unfortunately mid-semester this system was no longer working. Therefore I did not have as much weekly goals in the end; instead I had more semester long goals. These goals included getting familiar with HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript, PHP, and WordPress. In the end, my main goal however was to get a functional website running for the honors fraternity I am apart of. I did get a functional website but it is not live yet because I am still trying to coordinate with the alumni in charge of the domain name.

Did you achieve them? How well? What evidence do you have of that?

In the end I did achieve the goals I set out to do. I am familiar with HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript, PHP and WordPress to the point where I could use my knowledge up to this point and the internet to figure out anything I needed to. The evidence I have is little projects we did throughout the course, and the functional website I created for the semester project.

What does this mean moving forward? (What did you learn?)

This means that I gained enough foundation knowledge that I can start learning more advanced techniques with these technologies and languages whenever I want or need to. This class gave us enough background knowledge to allow us to pursue web development in our time whenever we want. I learned the different technologies that go into web development and got an insight on how professionals build large functional and well-designed websites. I enjoyed this class because it gave me skills that I actually believe I will utilize and use in future endeavors.

What grade do you want to report to the registrar?

I believe that I should get an A for this course. I was very interested in the material, listened and paid attention in class, used the information we learned in class to pursue my goal of creating a functional and well-design website for my fraternity.

Adam Hall

12/12/12

ISAT 348

Final Thoughts on the Course

This course was a valuable learning experience for me in the web design realm. I enjoyed learning about raw coding, CSS, and Wordpress. For me, the key to the course is keeping on top of your work and challenging yourself to get things done and really get something out of your education. Dr. Benton allowed each student to discover that as he essentially told us that what you get is what you put in. It taught me in other areas of life that some things aren't given to you (like deadlines, assignments, readings) and you have to go out and get it in order to benefit from it. That was the coolest thing I found in the course – and it allowed me to be in charge of what I learned and what I was able to design on the web.

My semester project was to create a website for my mom's business. She inspects homes that are under construction for various banks around Richmond. This site is essentially a buffed up resume. Her clients and interested business partners are able to see a well designed website at their leisure. www.bonniehallinspects.com is up and running (thank you Dr. Benton) – and my mom/her business partners really like the site design and the content on the site.

The toughest part of this course for me was learning and being able to recognize the raw code for web design. I understand how important it is to grasp the foundation of web design – and to do this you have to learn some of the code. After working with CSS and designing a few pages, I was able to learn the basics of web design code and was well on my way to using Wordpress. Wordpress was a vital learning tool for me. It is very user friendly and customizable. I would recommend using Wordpress to anyone who is an aspiring web designer. Thanks for a great semester Dr. Benton – cheers good sir.

A

Adam Breeden – Exit interview.

After attending ISAT 348 I feel that my goal of updating my Web skills was attained. My primary interest was learning HTML 5 and CSS. I was also interested in learning a possible way of updating a Web site that I first designed in your class four years ago.

Maybe you recall the Web site I created for a non-profit organization, the Elkton Pentecostal Church, in Elkton, VA. I originally created the site with image slices in Adobe Photoshop and Fireworks. Although this is a dated way to design now, I did not want to change the actual look of the Web site, as it has gotten praise for its artistic look. Unfortunately, designing a Web site this way makes it impossible for their church staff to update, with very little computer experience.

So for the past four years, out of the kindness of my agnostic heart, I have posted news updates to their site a couple times a year. I was wondering if there was a way to have a GUI the staff could use to just update the content areas of the site, without needing to know FTP, and without the potential of damaging the site layout. If so, I could then turn the site over to them completely.

I learned of several options during this course, and I am happy that I was able to accomplish this using WordPress. Since the site is so graphic and layout heavy, I did not want to “reinvent the wheel” by designing the same exact site as a WordPress template.

I was able to learn enough from the materials and resources offered in class to convert all the files to PHP then use a call-in to bring information from WordPress into the site.

I can create user accounts in WordPress and allow them to update the content areas by simply editing the existing blogs I prepared in WordPress.

ISAT 348 – Topics studied this semester:

1. Independent Study of
 - a. HTML5 (new to me) Read complete Zeldman book.
 - b. Dreamweaver
 - c. XAMPP (new to me)
 - d. WordPress (new to me)
 - e. PHP (new to me)
 - f. JavaScript
2. Learning Resources Used other than those discussed in class
 - a. Lynda Training www.lynda.com
 - b. WordPress Forums

A

Questions:

1. Passwords in web files, is that normal??

1. What were your expectations for the semester (and how did they change over time)?

My expectations for this semester started off with a focusing on development in HTML 5, and CSS. I expected this course to cover the basics of web development and implementation and I think for the most part this was covered throughout the course. Over the past year I have picked up many different programming languages, web development was always a side interest, which I knew the basics. This course gave me the chance to spend time developing my skills in HTML, Java-script and CSS. Over the course of the semester my overall expectations did not change much I did however find that I enjoy the art of web development. The thing that attracted me to web development is the opportunity to create a project that can be accessed anywhere and shows almost anything in an art form.

2. What goals did you set for yourself?

My goals aligned with my expectations for this course. I wanted to expand on the basics that I knew and the experience from other programming languages. My ultimate goal was to come away from this class with real working knowledge and to be able to put web development on my resume. I also set the goal of redesigning the CampusNet Staff page for JMU IT, which will be used. This was a real world chance to develop for a client.

3. Did you achieve them? How well? What evidence do you have of that?

I definitely achieved my goals this semester with learning about web development and creating a fully functional page. I was part of a group redesigning the staff page for JMU's CampusNet IT team. This site is the hub for the IT staff at JMU, it consists of multiple pages that hold staff information and troubleshooting solutions. This project had to be run off JMU's servers, which restricted us from using PHP to dynamically change the announcements page. We solved this by storing the information locally and editing the xml manually for now. I was working on a solution to implement JS to connect to an instance on Amazon's EC2 which would read and write, unfortunately I ran out of time to finish the solution this semester but will finish over winter break.

I have the site as evidence of this and it is currently up on JMU's servers which can be accessed through JMU's website and a set of valid credentials.

4. What does this mean moving forward?

I will definitely continue to move forward with web page development, there are still many new things to learn. Over the summer I experimented with Ruby using Sinatra, I would like to continue this and try to master Ruby; I believe this to be a powerful tool in web development. I will also continue the development of the JMU IT site over winter break, there are still some improvements that can be made such as finishing the announcements page and optimizing the code to run faster.

5. What grade to report to the registrar?

A

1. What were your expectations for the semester (and how did they change over time)?

Coming into this class, I expected to finish the course with thorough knowledge of how to build a website. As the class progressed, it became clear to me that I was only going to learn as much as I was willing to buckle down and study myself. I expected more in the way of projects (like the first assignment), and I was pleasantly surprised when I realized that I didn't miss the stress and deadlines associated with assignments like those.

2. What goals did you set for yourself?

The ultimate goal that I set for myself was to be able to build a functional website. Smaller goals preceded that one, for example, learning new or unfamiliar HTML syntax, better understanding CSS, and learning to "read" Javascript.

3. Did you achieve them? How well? What evidence do you have of that?

I did achieve my goals, and thoroughly at that! My evidence is the website I built for my father.

4. What does this mean moving forward?

Moving forward, this means that I have found a new hobby/passion/potential career path! I will also be much more confident when interviewing for positions in the IT field.

5. What grade to report to the registrar?

I believe I have earned an A.

As I started my senior year, my main expectation was to do well in all my classes and network with employers as much as possible. For the most part, my expectations were met. This was the semester that I took the most technical classes out of all. I had some doubts about how well might do in my other technical classes. Specifically for this class, my expectation was to learn and understand the basics of web development as well as apply those theoretical concepts into a practical website that I would build.

Prior to this class, my understanding of website and their development was very little. Web design and development was a skill that I always wanted to have and put on my resume'. In the beginning of the semester I set out to understand how to code in HTML. Our assignment of trying to code Dr. Salib's senior project paper gave me a good introduction into HTML. Then as we progressed into CSS, I set out to learn as much about effectively make a web page look appealing and easy to navigate. My final goal for the whole semester was to be able to incorporate all of this concepts and practices into a personal website that I can show case to other people. Outside of this class my goal was to get an offer from employers for the coming year.

For the most part I have achieved all the goals I had set out to achieve at the beginning of the semester. Specifically for this class, I have learned all main concepts of web development. I have been exposed to every part of the web development stack, starting from downloading XAMPP on my laptop. I have been able to create queries using a MySQL database to store information, played around with writing a PHP command. I got introduced to JavaScript and the broad range of capabilities it provides web developers. Furthermore, I have a really good understanding of the client-server architecture in web development. Another major lesson that I learned from this semester was that sometime things don't go as planned. I wasn't able to achieve my goal of getting an offer from employers, or not yet. I'm still waiting to hear back from Oracle about my interview over the next two weeks.

The website that I built for this semester is evidence of my understanding of web application and development. When I was brainstorming ideas for an applicable website, I thought about the hardships I and my fellow ISATers experienced when trying to decide what senior project topic to pick. We are expected to pick a topic during Junior year, and for most of the students who aren't sure about picking a topic, they just get on any project they find (sometimes without even being interested in it!). Also another problem comes in when trying to find an Adviser who will be willing to work with students.

Then I thought an easy to use website that students can go to connect with each other, advisers and research topics would be a good website to build. By the use of Wordpress, I was able to do just that.

This semester has thought a lot of things, both inside and outside of the classroom. Personally, I have become more confident in my abilities to learn and pick up things quickly. By applying myself to any new ideas, I can learn anything even without the need for a teacher. I also learned that GPA is a minor part of what employers look at (as long as I am in good standing). That is, employers are equally impressed with outside experience, the way one carries himself, and the long term goals he/she has set for their future. And the key part in getting an offer from potential employers is to be able to express all of those qualities in an articulate and confident manner. Life also doesn't always go as planned. The best way to achieve your goals is to know that fact and be ready to react to situations that come unexpected, essentially have a plan B.

When evaluating the knowledge I gained from this class, I look at my understanding of websites prior to this class and after. I believe that I have went from knowing literally nothing about web development (besides what the acronym HTML stood for) to actually building one that looks decent and can very well be used to facilitate the student's decision making process. Beyond the technical skills of web development this class has taught me, it has also sparked my interest in building websites. I have even spoke with my dad about building a website for his contracting business over winter break. This is why I believe you should give me an A for the class.