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|  |  | **ISM 6225**  **Distributed information systems** |

Assignment 1 – Web Look and Feel

Primary objective: Introduction to web interface technologies

Secondary objective: Develop familiarity with user interface design

## Introduction

Web user interfaces are a common mechanism by which users interact with distributed information systems. In this assignment, you will create a static version of a web site that reflects your early professional ambitions. Think of the ideal product or service you would like to work on immediately after graduation, and create a website for the product or service. For assignment 1, hand-code everything on the site including the HTML and CSS. Feel free to use any interface elements such as images, styles, html tags, divs, layouts etc to accomplish your goal. In the next assignment, you can use web interface frameworks such as Bootstrap to simplify the interface design and use JavaScript to add interactions to the website. The goal of this exercise is to draw students’ attention to good user experiences. This is also an opportunity for students to become familiar with the common HTML and CSS elements. There are numerous resources online to learn HTML and CSS. The instructor’s favorite newbie guide to HTML and CSS continues to be the NCSA guide to html: <http://main.put.com/HTMLPrimer.html>.

The reference section has links to contemporary recommendations on website design best practices. Try to incorporate them in your website to the greatest extent possible.

## Activity

Your task in Assignment 1 is to develop a static website that helps you explain your ideal first professional project to friends, family and prospective employers. Build the user interface of the website using static HTML and CSS. Feel free to use any HTML/ CSS elements, the only constraint is that the entire site should be coded by hand using editors such as Visual Studio Code. No frameworks are allowed for this assignment. In the next assignment, you will essentially rebuild the website, with the freedom to use CSS, JavaScript frameworks of your choice to improve the user experience.

It should be useful in this assignment for you to focus on developing clarity within the team for the project concept. What is the specific product or service you would like to describe/ sell? What information would be most useful to display? What user calls to action would be most useful and how best can you present them? These take time, and it may even be useful to develop the concept on pen and paper, whiteboards etc.

A good site structure would be a landing page, a product page, and an about us page. Plan your site and create a fully functional static version of the site. The about us page is mostly meant to facilitate grading and to help the instructors/ TAs learn about your group and its aspirations.

When completed, upload the website to your My Web folder. The upload to My Web should contain all the elements needs for the website to work, including HTML, CSS, and images files.

The assignment is straightforward, and intended to help you practice HTML, CSS to get good design results.

Submit the URL to the My Web home page (typically index.html) as the assignment deliverable for your group.

# Grading scheme

1. (2 points) Content – Website content and the relevance of the site for end users
2. (3 points) Look and feel – professionalism, consistency, adoption of recommended design guidelines and general attention to detail across all pages on the site
3. (1 point) Usability – ease of use, consistency, and navigation of your interface for end users
4. (2 points) Responsiveness – compatibility with small (mobile), medium (tablet) and large (desktop) screen sizes
5. (2 points) About us page – group member details and contributions. This page facilitates grading. Add this page after you have built your site, maintaining consistency with the look and feel of the rest of the site so the page feels like an integral part of the site. The page should include a picture and brief information about each group member and describe each team member’s contribution in brief. You can also use this page to “show off” your work to visitors, including any interesting features on the site you would like to draw attention to.
6. (2 points) Each student should add a self-reflection comment to your submission, reflecting on your learnings, total time required and any recommendations for future assignments. This should go to the comments section of the assignment, so it is easier for the instructors and TAs to access later. Note, for any student that does not submit a self-reflection, credit is deducted for all members of the group.
7. (3 points) Group work – email the completed leader template, assistant leader template and member template as appropriate to the instructor. Credit for individual contribution to the project will be based on these documents.

## References

### Design guidelines:

<https://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/30557/6-guidelines-for-exceptional-website-design-and-usability.aspx>

<https://www.canva.com/learn/20-web-design-principles-follow/>

### A directory of designers

<https://www.webdesignsociety.com/webDevelopers.html>

### Design tools

[Balsamiq](https://balsamiq.com/) (for wireframing – quick, disposable concept diagrams)

[Figma](https://www.figma.com/) (for precise mockups – detailed, pixel-perfect mockups)

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