Journal:

For the purpose of exploration 1, I have dived down into a CSS framework that Is based on the Material Design concept adopted by the current Google’s mobile operating system, Android. Material design boasts a “flat” design across the board and provides an intuitive user interface that is also responsive to the user’s interaction.

The framework I’ll be working on will be the MaterializeCSS (<http://www.materializecss.com>). MaterializeCSS can be installed and implemented on webpages either through NPM or including a script tag for the CDN link provided by MaterializeCSS. This framework also requires the heavy use of Javascript and Jquery for the animation to run smoothly. Installation step could be found on the following link, <http://materializecss.com/getting-started.html>

In this exploration, I have chosen to explore how by using MaterializeCSS to create a responsive and intuitive UI for the user with its forms and preloader element found in their framework.

For the forms element, it is easy to implement a form with the proper animation to show to the user which field is currently active and which is disabled. With the use of data validation, MaterializeCSS could also provide the user with a visual feedback mechanism to show the data inputted by the user has an incorrect format by working with the design. Form elements could be easily controlled by declaring classes with the form elements.

For the preloader element, this allows developers to have a container that could provide a loading animation to the user while waiting for an element or an ajax query to complete loading, instead of providing a blank screen where the user would have to guess if the page has properly loaded. This element could be easily placed into the website by including a few lines of code that produces a turning circle animation with that rotates between three colors.

I did however encountered issues while testing and exploring said elements when the user interface didn’t execute as indicated. After reading through the Getting-Started page of the documentation, I have found out that the MaterializeCSS javascript file needs to be declared after declaring the jQuery javascript library. There is a slight dependency issue with the javascript file as the framework is still in its beta phase.

There is still a lot of elements found in this framework that could create a uniform UI for the user while maintaining the industry standard of clean and functional design that can be incoperated with the Android operating system side-by-side.

Examples of my work could be found here:

<http://cs4830.weixianlow.me/exploration1/forms.html>

<http://cs4830.weixianlow.me/exploration1/preloader.html>

Source code could be found here:

<https://github.com/weixianlow/CS4830_Exploration1_Fall2017>