NSCAD UNIVERSITY

DSGN 3010 - Intermediate Interactive Design
Course Outline

NSCAD University, Fall 2012

Credits:	3		
Prerequisite:	DSGN 2310 or DSGN 2510	Office Hours:	
Time:	Tues. 1300-1600	Office:	Design Division Offices, 2nd Floor North Block
Location:	Room N320c		
Instructor:	Christel LeBlanc	Description:	This course introduces the concepts and application of user interface and
E-mail:	cleblanc@nscad.ca		information design in the production of interactive media.

Objective

This course is an examination of the historical and theoretical foundations of interactive design and communication, with practical studio projects. We will read and discuss some of the seminal articles in hypertext, user interface and information architecture theory and practice, as well as current issues related to modern web culture. There will be opportunities to learn new software and techniques, and to apply this knowledge to solving practical problems.

Format

It is assumed that you have had practical experience of building web pages in XHTML/CSS. All project work will employ a text editor and CSSEdit for web development. PhotoShop and/or Illustrator will also be used, so a basic knowledge of these programs is essential. You will be required to prepare planning documents, which can be done using a word processor or page layout program of your choice.

Assigned projects are normally done out of class, with some class time devoted to presentation and consultation of in-progress and completed work. It is expected that you will spend at least 6 hours per week, in addition to class time, doing your assignments.

All assignments, presentations and reports are due at 1300 hrs on the day they are required. Failure to submit work at these times will result in a grade of zero (documented personal emergencies excepted).

Attendance

Class attendance at NSCAD is expected. Unexcused absences could result in lowered or failing grades. Any absence must be discussed with the course instructor who may request supporting documentation. Missing sequential classes that include essential health and safety training might result in the student having his/her enrolment in the course cancelled. Specific requirements for individual courses will be found in the course syllabus.

Course Workload

Students are expected to devote a minimum of 6 hours to out-of-class work each week.

Written documentation

This course may require that students prepare presentations and submit one or more written documents. Students should consider the following guidelines in preparing their reports, presentations and design strategy documents.

- The style, composition, organisation and presentation of written or presented work may count for up to one third of the grade for the report or paper.

- Spelling mistakes and grammatical errors will reduce the grade for the work.

- Plagiarism (using words, ideas or images of another author without full and proper acknowledgement) constitutes grounds for failure of the paper or report.

Assessments

Most of the assignments have a presentation component. You are expected to present your work-in-progress and final work with energy and enthusiasm; your abilities in this area will be weighted equally with your ability to solve problems and think creatively.

Required Materials

You should maintain a regular digital backup schedule. If you do not have a backup and you lose the work, you will lose your grade for that project.

Health and Safety

All faculty, staff, and students are responsible for safe working practices and procedures so as to safeguard their own individual health and well-being as well as that of other members of the NSCAD University community.

Self-identification

With reference to NSCAD's "General Policy on Students with Disabilities" students should identify themselves as early as possible so that the appropriate accommodations can be made in a timely manner.

Credit Weight and Assignments

WordPress CMS	20%
Web Reading/Presentation	20%
CMS Web Site	50%
Attendance	10%
TOTAL	100%

Late assignments will not be accepted, other than in exceptional circumstances and/or with prior agreement.

Grading System

Letter	GPA	Percent	Narrative
A+	4.3	95-above	excellent
A	4.0	90-94	excellent
A-	3.7	85-89	very good
B+	3.3	80-84	very good
B	3.0	73-79	good
B-	2.7	67-72	good
C+	2.3	63-66	satisfactory
C	2.0	59-62	satisfactory
C-	1.7	55-58	satisfactory
D	1.0	50-54	maginal
F	0	0-49	unsatisfactory

Only a letter grade will be assigned for the final grade. Narrative is shown for information only. Instructors may use percent scores for calculating letter grades. GPA is used for calculating student averages.

Students in the Bachelor of Design Major in Interdisciplinary Design are expected to maintain a GPA of 3.0 (B) or better in all required courses to remain in the program.

DSGN 3010 - Intermediate Interactive Design
WordPress Assignment

NSCAD University, Fall 2012

INTRODUCTION

Web development in the past involved a designer-programmer to produce a website based on content provided by a client before the website is completed. Once the website went live, it remained static until the client requested changes to the site. With the introduction of modern content management systems such as WordPress, your client can have complete control over the website you design.

Using a CMS, the client now has the ability to update content, add pictures, links, news and even change or add more categories to the navigation bar using only a web browser. In many cases, clients themselves use free or commercially-available templates with an open-source CMS like WordPress to build large, capable websites without help from a designer or a programmer.

Clients who do come to designers are increasingly demanding the ability to make changes on a weekly, daily or even hourly basis using just a web browser. The days of developing static sites using Dreamweaver or BBEdit are over.

OBJECTIVE

To learn WordPress basics in anticipation of an actual client-based project in the second half of the semester.

BRIEF

Install a copy of the latest version of WordPress on the server and build a website. You will extend the site with at least two useful, relevant plugins of your choice.

Your site must deliver "search engine friendly" urls.

METHODOLOGY

1. Install the latest version of WordPress on the server.

2. Choose an animal.

3. Research your animal and gather written and visual material.

4. Design an overall structure/sitemap for your website.

5. Choose a theme and install it, along with at least two useful, relevant plugins of your choice.

6. Build your pages.

7. Adjust the theme.

8. Present your site to the class.

SCHEDULE

September 11:	Install WordPress & research
September 18:	Make sitemap, choose theme
September 25:	Build pages
October 4:	Presentation

ASSESSMENT

This project is worth 20% of your total grade. Assessment will be based on your ability to deliver an attractive and useful website using the WordPress CMS.

DSGN 3010 - Intermediate Interactive Design

Web Makeover: Client Project

NSCAD University, Fall 2012

INTRODUCTION

Each student will find a "client" for whom to build a site. The client may be a business, organization or individual that provides a product or service. The business or organization must currently have a live website that needs updating.

You will build a fully functional, professionally-designed WordPress website for your client.

OBJECTIVE

To revise, redesign and revitalize a website for a client.

BRIEF

Install a copy of WordPress on the server and build a website that better suits your client's objectives.

METHODOLOGY

1. Analyze the current website by listing all of the aspects of the site that your client thinks should stay and add those items that you think would appropriately enhance the site.

2. Develop a specification document for client review.

3. Build a sitemap/flowchart of the site.

4. Develop a theme/template (or revise one that you find online) and upload it to WordPress.

5. Build your pages.

6. Test, adjust, and test again.

7. Present your site to your client and the class.

SCHEDULE

October 9: Briefing
October 16: Analysis
October 23: Specification due
October 30: Web Readings
November 6: Web Readings; flowchart due
November 13: Template due
November 20: Design document due
November 27: Build pages
December 4: Client presentations
December 11: Client presentations

ASSESSMENT

This project is worth 50% of your total grade. Assessment will be based on your ability to deliver an effective, useful and attractive website using the WordPress CMS.

NSCAD University School of Extended Studies

Web Design with Wordpress
Instructor: Christel LeBlanc (christel@forestfriend.ca)
Room Number and Location: N320F, 1895 Granville St.
Dates and Times: May 9, 2013 – July 11, 2013, Thursdays 6:00pm-8:45pm (10 sessions)

Course Description
Learn how to design and build full-featured websites by using Wordpress. Wordpress is a free, open-source website publishing platform that is easy to use with great community support. Students will be introduced to major web development languages through customizing the Wordpress core to meet their goals. Languages introduced will include HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP and MySQL. For more information on Wordpress, visit http://wordpress.org. Class limit is 15.

Tuition includes 10 weeks of access outside of class for homework during times scheduled in cooperation with Multimedia staff.

Day 1 (May 9)
General Introduction
        - Students & instructor
        - Overview of Course
        - Expectations

Intro to Wordpress
        - Wordpress CMS vs other platforms
        - wordpress.com vs wordpress.org
        - creating a Wordpress account

Overview of skills and tools
        - Programs:
                Wordpress, CSSEdit, BBEdit, Photoshop, FileZilla, MAMP,
                Omnigraffle/mapping programs, Firebug, MySQL
        - Languages: HTML, CSS, JavaScript
        - Tools: hex colors, Wordpress forum, elegantthemes.com

Setting up Wordpress
        - MAMP localhost setup
        - MySQL database setup
        - installing WP package

Homework: Install and familiarize yourself with the programs listed above.

Day 2 (May 16)
Getting to know the back end
- the Dashboard
- basic WP settings
- types of site (blog, news, landing page, etc.)

Anatomy of a page
- header
- top menu
- primary content section
- secondary content section
- tertiary content section
- other content
- footer
- sidebar and widgets

Homework: Choose a topic for your website. Create a detailed site map using Omnigraffle or another digital mapping tool.

Day 3 (May 23)
Organization and hierarchy
- pages
- page templates
- posts
- custom posts
- categories, tags
Menus
- menu items
- post category links vs page links
- permalinks, slugs, ordering menu items

Homework: Following your site map, create the necessary pages and menus.

Day 4 (May 30)
Themes
- finding themes
- choosing the right theme
- installation and built-in customization (ie. epanel)
- child themes

Advanced customization
- working with CSS and HTML
- finding your way around WP code files
- decoding the page using Firebug
- header and footer code
- modifying theme images
- optimizing for devices

Homework: Choose and install a theme; tweak it to create a unique look.

Day 5 (June 6)
Page and post content
- WYSIWYG
- HTML editor
- short codes

Media
- saving for web/devices
- sizing images
- galleries, video and audio
- PDFs, word docs and other file types
- using the media library

Homework: Create posts and page content and use images to enhance your site.

Day 6 (June 13)
Plugins and extensions
- finding the right one
- installing and troubleshooting
- rundown of useful plugins, JavaScript code as "manual" plugin

Principles of design
- User-centred design
- Profiling for your audience
- Using personas

Homework: Extend your theme using your choice of 3 different plugins.

Day 7 (June 20)
Review of project websites so far
- using free web tools for troubleshooting and problem solving
- tips and tricks for advanced CSS customization
- extra help and problem solving

Day 8 (June 27)
Administration
- managing comments
- setting up additional users
- access levels and passwords
- "Press This"
- integrating social networking

Maintenance
- controlling spam
- updating WP and themes
- SEO
- database backup

Homework: Set up 2 additional users at different access levels. Integrate one or more social networking functions into your site.

3

Day 9 (July 4)
Launching
  - choosing a domain name
  - choosing a host
  - changing name servers and IP
  - installing a new WP package with Fantastico
  - migrating an existing site
  - controlling load times
  - add on domains / subdomains

Web design as a business
  - proposals
  - contracts
  - managing domains for others
  - calculating fees

Homework: Put the finishing touches on your site and prepare to present it to the class.

Day 10 (July 11)
Class presentations of projects

No additional materials required

Health & Safety
All faculty, staff and students are responsible for safe working practices and procedures so as to safeguard their own individual health and well being as well as that of other members of the NSCAD University community. (NSCAD University Occupational Health & Safety Policy, http://www.nscad.ns.ca/info/healthpolicy.pdf). Students should familiarize themselves with relevant health and safety issues regarding proper use of materials and where possible, consult with the technician in that area regarding specific processes and chemicals. Recommended readings available at the NSCAD Library include:
  The Artist's Complete Health & Safety Guide by Monona Rossol
  Artist Beware by Michael McCann
  Safety in the Artroom by Charles Qualley
  Safe Practices in the Arts & Crafts: A Studio Guide by Julian Waller

Specific information relating to media composition and safe handing of such materials can be obtained through current Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) available online at the websites of the manufacturers of the products. The Arts Crafts Theatre website (http://www.artscraftstheatersafety.org) is a valuable resource for health and safety information.

Smoking is strictly prohibited at NSCAD including the deck area as well as an area within 15 meters of entrances / exits.

NSCAD University School of Extended Studies

Digital Page Layout with InDesign

Instructor: Christel LeBlanc (christel@forestfriend.ca)
Room Number and Location: N320C, 1895 Granville St.
Dates and Times: May 8, 2013 – July 10, 2013, Wednesdays 6:00pm-8:45pm (10 sessions)

Course Description
The fundamentals of digital page layout and desktop publishing are introduced using Adobe InDesign CS6 on Macintosh OSX. Discussions, demonstrations, exercises, and projects will explore single and multi-page documents, graphic and typographic elements, colour usage, and printing procedures. Students are expected to complete a final independent project that might include a poster, brochure, business card, or other printed material. Bring a CD-R or USB Flash Drive, notebook and pen to first class. Prerequisite: Must be familiar with Macintosh OSX operating system. Class limit is 11.

Tuition includes 10 weeks of access outside of class for homework during times scheduled in cooperation with Multimedia staff.

Day 1 (May 8)
General Introduction
> - Students & instructor
> - Overview of Course
> - Expectations

Intro to InDesign
> - What is InDesign for?
> - Comparable programs
> - Working with the Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, Bridge, Fireworks)

Overview of interface
> - Orienting to the workspace
> - Toolbars
> - Starting a new document

Homework: Become familiar with the layout of the InDesign workspace and the basic tools.

1

Day 2 (May 17)
Setting up a new page
- sizes
- bleed, margins, guides
- page layout
- different types of documents

Tools
- left hand toolbar
- top toolbar
- right toolbar
- menu > Window
- MiniBridge

Homework: Set up a page and put some content in it! Start thinking about a subject for your poster project.

Day 3 (May 24)
Basic typography
- taxonomy of type
- anatomy of font family, letterform
- "Big 20" fonts
- choosing a font
- using type in InDesign

Using text in InDesign
- character
- paragraph
- manipulating text
- placeholder text

Homework: Begin designing a tabloid-size poster.

Day 4 (May 31)
Basic visual rhetoric
Creating and placing objects
- graphic elements
- lines and shapes
- images, frames and image types
- text wrap
- links
- using graphics and images from other programs

Manipulating objects
- transform, scale, etc.
- alignment
- applying "fx"

Homework: Work on your poster and bring a print of your unfinished poster to class.

2

Day 5 (June 7)
Styling and applying effects
- Colours and gradients
- paths and pathfinder
- using the conveyer
- alignment and spacing
- photoshop effects and object styles

Character and paragraph styles

Homework: Print and present your poster to the class

Day 6 (June 14)
Creating and using layers
- locking and unlocking
- see/hide
- moving layers
- moving objects between layers

Multi-page documents
- formatting
- adding and deleting pages
- moving pages
- using and applying master pages
- liquid layout

Homework: Plan your final project, either a newsletter or a short magazine spread.

Day 7 (June 21)
Working day for getting started on your final project.

Day 8 (June 28)
Using interactive elements
- creating links
- exporting to interactive design programs

Creating apps (the basics)

Homework: Work on your final project.

Day 9 (July 5)
Using colour
- understanding colour profiles
- changing colour profiles in InDesign
- changing colour profiles in other programs

3

Exporting documents
- using Preflight Panel
- file types
- packaging
- dealing with printing problems

Homework: Finish your final project and print it for class.

Day 10 (July 12)
Class presentations of projects

No additional materials required

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