



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: Wednesday Sept 27 - Nov 29, 2017 6:00pm-8:45pm

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.

***Please note: During the first and second weeks of class, students will be instructed to purchase and set up their own website hosting accounts and domain names. The cost per student (paid directly to the hosting company via credit card) will be approximately \$10 per month for website hosting. Additionally there will be a fee of \$10-\$20 per year for domain name registration (depending on the student's choice of domain name).**

Day 1

General Introduction

- Students & instructor
- Overview of Course
- Expectations

Intro to Wordpress

- Wordpress CMS vs other platforms
- wordpress.com vs wordpress.org

Overview of skills and tools

- Programs:
 - Wordpress, Espresso, Photoshop, FileZilla, MAMP, Omnigraffle/mapping programs, Firebug, MySQL
- Languages: HTML, CSS, JavaScript
- Tools: hex colors, Wordpress forum, elegantthemes.com

Setting up Wordpress

- Purchasing domain name & hosting
- DNS configuration

Homework: Install and familiarize yourself with the programs listed above. Purchase a hosting account and a domain name.

Day 2

Website setup on server:

- cPanel orientation
- installing Wordpress

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Day 9

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

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 handling 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.