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MART 341.50: Introduction to Web Design

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Introduction to Web Design

MART 341-50

Fall Semester 2014

Section 50
MART 341
CRN 73290
Introduction to Web Design
3 Credits

Instructor: Justin Lewis
Justin.lewis@umontana.edu
Office Hours by appointment only
Room 123 McGill Hall or via chat/skype if you are outside Missoula
Online Course – Assignments due every Monday
Software: Komodo Edit, Joomla 3, cPanel

Throughout this course we will be gaining many of the fundamental skills needed to meet today's world of website development. Many of the skills and tools we will be using will be applicable across all the major web design platforms. We will see that building a website from scratch using only HTML and CSS, using powerful content management systems, and even creating complex interactive functions and user experiences all have common elements within them. Gaining an understanding of the overall environment of web design technologies will allow for a more integrated set of web design skills and a greater understanding of how the internet works. Although we will mainly be using Komodo and Joomla in this course, we will be placing a strong emphasis on the similarities found within all the major design and content management platforms.

This course is intended to be for beginners design and no previous knowledge of web design is needed. With a little effort, by the end of this course you will have a fully functioning and professional website that you can use for your portfolio, business, personal blog, or any other project that you choose.

Course Outline:

1: Getting started

We will explore some possibly new terms and concepts, how to purchase hosting service so you can publish your website, and look at the many faces of the content management system Joomla!

2: HTML

A basic introduction to HTML code! You are welcome to use any HTML editor you wish, however the class demo videos will be using the free software Komodo Edit, which you can download and use to follow the tutorials.

3: CSS

We continue our coding journey by looking at a basic introduction to CSS. Again, you are welcome to use any editor you wish, however we will be using Komodo Edit for tutorials and examples.

4: Your Story

You will be examining the mission statement and goals of your website. What is your website's story? What does it say to its viewers? What is the intention of the website and who is the target audience? We will also be looking at how to build visual site maps, an important building block to any well planned website.

5: Going Further

By now, all students should have a brand new install of Joomla 3 ready to go using their own web address!

6: A Deeper look at Joomla!

We will create categories and sub-categories, as well as the articles and menu items that you will need for your website.

7: Article Formatting

You will be using an HTML editor in Joomla as well as actually writing code to format the text and images within Joomla articles. You will also be adding images, links, and embedded videos to your new website. Now that you have done some work in Joomla, it's time to create backups of your website files and databases using cPanel and phpMyadmin.

Week 8: Modules

Creating backups of your website files and databases using cPanel and phpMyadmin. The backups will save you when your website goes down. Once you are comfortable with restoring a site from a backup, it is safe to explore, publish, upload, and configure 3rd party modules. You will be adding custom HTML modules as well as finding and uploading 3rd party modules from the huge collection of Joomla extensions available.

Week 9: Creating Galleries

There are countless ways to display images and video galleries in Joomla. In this section we will be exploring some of the more popular tools and tips for creating fantastic looking galleries. Remember to generate a backup of your website and database before you start installing 3rd party modules such as image galleries. A module that isn't compatible or conflicts with existing modules or your template could result in your site going down.

Week 10: Templates

You must have a new template uploaded and installed on your Joomla site. Please note that you are welcome to add a new template at any time before this section on your own, however, as a class, this will be the section that we add a template to our class demo website. It is very important that you generate a backup of your site and your database before you install a template. A template that isn't compatible or conflicts with existing modules could result in your site going down.

Week 11: Firebug, Inspector, and ColorZilla

This week, we will be exploring some of the great tools available that extend Chrome and Firefox for web developers.

Week 12: More Great Ways to Display Content

Add some more functionality to your site by using a slider module such as Gavick news G4 Pro, the Wow slider, Wide Slide, or any of the other interesting modules that display content that you may find. There are 100s of them. Remember to generate a backup of your website and database before you start installing 3rd party modules. A module that isn't compatible or conflicts with existing modules or your template could result in your site going down.

Week 13: User Group Roles, Comments, and Permissions.

Will be exploring the various options for user login and group permissions. Opening up your site to registration could possibly lead to a whole mess of potential problems that are easily fixed if you have a backup of your site and database. Be sure to backup your site and database before you open up your site to user registration or your site could down.

Week 14: Final project presentation.

For the remainder of the course you will be fine tuning your new websites and preparing them for final presentation.

What you will need for this course:

1. Web hosting service with a cPanel and phpMyAdmin. Make sure your hosting package is on a Linux server (just ask your hosting company). **Note that Linux here refers to the host's companies server, not your own computer's operating system. Mac OS, Windows, and Linux are all fine to use.

2. A fresh install of Joomla 3

3. Komodo Edit

Komodo Edit is free code editing software. You are also welcome to use any editor that may be used to write HTML documents.

4. Firebug (or Chrome's Inspector)

These software plugins are free and are invaluable tools for web development.

Extra tools and resources:

In the resources section of this course, you will find links to image resources; free and commercial image cropping and editing software; color picking and other design tools; as well as tutorials from around the web that pertain to the topics discussed in this course.

Grading:

Assignments will be graded on the following criteria:

Assignments must be submitted on time. Late work will result in loss of points.

Fully functioning and accurate execution of the assignments.

Working code without errors

A clear demonstration of an understanding of the assignment and technologies utilized that week.

Please note: Assignments will not be accepted for grading after our website presentation day.

Assignment breakdown:

Assignment 1: 7 points

Assignment 2: 8 points

Assignment 3: 8 points

Assignment 4: 6 points

Assignment 5: 6 points

Assignment 6: 7 points

Assignment 7: 7 points

Assignment 8: 7 points

Assignment 9: 7 points

Assignment 10: 7 points

Assignment 11: 8 points

Assignment 12: 7 points

Assignment 13: 7 points

Final Presentation and class participation: 8 points

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Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php.