



# ICOM897

## Interactive Communication

S3 Day 2014

*Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies*

### Contents

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<a href="#"><u>General Information</u></a>	2
<a href="#"><u>Learning Outcomes</u></a>	2
<a href="#"><u>Assessment Tasks</u></a>	3
<a href="#"><u>Delivery and Resources</u></a>	6
<a href="#"><u>Unit Schedule</u></a>	7
<a href="#"><u>Policies and Procedures</u></a>	9
<a href="#"><u>Graduate Capabilities</u></a>	10

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convener, lecturer, tutor

Alex Mesker

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Y3A 193K

By appointment

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MIntComm or MIntRel or MIntCommMIntRel or MIntBusMIntComm or MA in Media Law and Culture or MCrMedia or MFJ

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit is concerned with web design and reaching new media audiences. It offers practical as well as theoretical instruction on web design and international audience research. The unit includes a practical component during which students will learn Web design skills to build their own site for the purpose of audience research. The theoretical components will study the multidimensional impact of new media on audiences in the context of international communication. Students are encouraged to bring their experiences with new media and their multidisciplinary knowledge learned in their previous studies to the class and contribute to the critical discussions in studying this unit.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Apply current practices and design principles to webpage construction.

Effectively communicate information-rich media to a target audience via the web.

Develop the ability to dissect, analyse and objectively critique web pages, and a familiarity with diverse media formats.

Articulate technological practices, and present a portfolio/brief to a prospective client.  
Demonstrate familiarity with the fundamental technologies required to communicate content through the medium of the Internet.

Develop life-long technological application skills, critical analysis and evaluation skills, and problem solving skills that are paramount in an era of technological literacy.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>In-class practical tasks</u>	30%	Ongoing
<u>Analysis and Proposal</u>	30%	Start of Monday of Week 2
<u>Website production</u>	30%	End of Friday of Week 2
<u>Class Participation</u>	10%	Ongoing

### In-class practical tasks

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **30%**

There will be 5 coding/practical tasks throughout the semester that will encourage students to implement content and concepts discussed in lectures and practical tutorials. These will be small projects to complete in class time and are designed to get students to concentrate on process, technique, form, and function.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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### Analysis and Proposal

Due: **Start of Monday of Week 2**

Weighting: **30%**

Students must analyse a website/web presence and articulate why it is an effective example of

interactive communication. In particular, they should explain how the technologies used facilitate the communication of media content, identity, product, and usability.

Your writing should entail a technical discussion as well as a design/usability appraisal focussing on communication across devices, audiences, and purpose. This should be submitted as a rich-text document. Submission details will be explained prior to due date.

Based on this appraisal, students will write a proposal for their intended final website project. The proposal should:

- Demonstrate a considered understanding of the target audience for the site
- Demonstrate a considered understanding on how best to communicate original content with identified audiences
- Demonstrate competitive analysis with existing similar websites
- Demonstrate a knowledge of information architecture and design principles
- Provide a detailed overview of the aesthetics and layout of the site
- Students are encouraged to include images/mock-ups where appropriate
- Articulate the technologies required to realise/implement the proposed final work

Subject matter: websites can be on any topic but should be discussed/checked with teaching staff. Students should treat this project as though they are proposing a standalone site for a particular purpose or real client.

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## Website production

Due: **End of Friday of Week 2**

Weighting: **30%**

Students should produce a website based on their project proposal. Websites will be assessed based on the following:

- Aesthetic design
- Suitability for intended target audiences

- Structure
- Appropriate use of graphics and images, sound, video, and other media
- Appropriate writing style
- Clarity/quality of code (a lesser amount of well-written code is better than a lot of badly written code)
- Technical functionality
- Adherence to current web standards and practices

This can be done individually or in pairs, subject to discussion with teaching staff.

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## Class Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **10%**

Each week, a couple of students will be individually asked to identify two websites (either bring the URL to class the week before, or post it on the forum prior to the class). One should be an example of a well-constructed website, and the other an example of a poorly constructed website. We will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the sites in class.

Pay particular attention to content, layout, user-interface design, and user interaction, identify a number of positives or negatives about the site, including thoughts on usability, colour scheme, standardisation of layout, information/content, and writing style. Try to be objective. With regard to usability, if it is a site that you regularly visit, try to view it as if you were a new visitor to the site.

Consider the reading/s for that week when analysing the webpage.

As we start to learn more about 'coding' webpages, we'll start taking a look at the HTML behind the pages.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Demonstrate familiarity with the fundamental technologies required to communicate content through the medium of the Internet.
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## Delivery and Resources

**ICOM897 Website & iLearn** | Content (such as links, references, readings, assessment tasks) will be available from either <http://media.mq.edu.au/icom897> or <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au>

**Required Equipment** | No equipment is needed for ICOM897. While use of your own equipment is not discouraged, the Computer Lab has direct access to a web server where your work should be saved. All software is available on the Lab machines, and free software alternatives are available (if students wish to work off-campus). Mac-compatible USB memory sticks (4GB or more) are handy for additionally backing up projects from the server.

**Media Lab** | You may make use of the Y3A Media Labs at any time when there are no classes taking place. The opening hours for the Labs will be 9–5 on weekdays, with possible extensions; this will be discussed in lectures/tutorials.

**Software Compatibility/Assignment Submission** | While there should be reason for document incompatibility (as documents work cross platform). It is your own responsibility however to ensure that any work undertaken outside of the Media Computer Labs is fully functional within the Lab (ie. ensure that all assets are copied to the server).

**Attendance** | Students are required to attend all lectures and tutorials for this unit. Lecture and tutorial attendance is compulsory, and missing more than two tutorials without medical certification or evidence of disruption will result in failure of the 10% 'Participation' component. To avoid being penalised for missing a tutorial, medical certification or other evidence of disruption must be provided. A roll will be taken in the first 10 minutes of every tutorial; students entering late are responsible for making themselves known to the tutor so they can be marked as in attendance.

**Written Assignment Submission** | Written assignments can be handed directly to your tutor in class time. This will be further explained in tutorials.

**Return of marked work** | Marked work will be returned to students in tutorials. For assessments submitted in Week 13, e-mail your tutor for feedback.

**Extensions and special consideration** | Assessments submitted after the due date and time will automatically be deducted 10% per day (weekends included) unless medical certification or evidence of serious and unavoidable disruption is provided. For extensions, contact the course convenor well in advance if you may be unable to submit an assessment on time. Extensions will only be granted on grounds of illness or misadventure, where appropriate supporting documentation is submitted, and are awarded at the discretion of the course convenor.

**Referencing style** | Preferred referencing styles include Harvard [http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm?harvard\\_id=24#24](http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm?harvard_id=24#24) and APA <http://www.usq.edu.au/library/help/referencing/apa.htm>. Either or any style may be used as long as all necessary information is provided and a

consistent approach is taken.

**Recommended reading and research** | The weekly recommended readings/resources for this unit are intended to supplement your core work, as well as enhance students' understanding of concepts taught throughout the course. Readings will not be objectively assessed from week to week, however it is strongly advised that students broaden their understanding of concepts and practices relating to the web, content delivery, HTML, CSS and JavaScript/jQuery by completing all relevant recommended readings.

**Changes made to previous offerings of this unit** | Minor revisions to learning outcomes and assessment weighting.

## Unit Schedule

The following is an indication of the content that will be covered in the unit. Class to class structure may change according to existing competencies.

In a broad sense, the unit comprises:

- Producing content (the technical side of producing content)
- Distributing content (syndicating/disseminating content)
- Dealing with media forms
- Working with content management systems and leveraging existing toolkits
- Technical literacy and the broad technological competencies required for interactive communication

### Class 1

- Introduction to ICOM897 and software we will use throughout the semester.
- The Media server and user accounts.
- What makes a good website?

### Class 2

- Introduction to HTML text tags and attributes.
- The importance of semantic HTML.
- Separation of content and style, CSS.

### Class 3

- Towards new Web standards: HTML5, CSS3.
- Using images, icons, and text.
- Typography.

### Class 4

- Design principles, introduction to project assignment.

- Writing an analysis/project proposal.
- Design and layout with Photoshop.

### **Class 5**

- Taking design to the web.
- Responsive and fluid design.
- User experience, page structure, responsive web design.
- The distinction between content and display.
- Networked and web-enabled devices and the 'viewport'.

### **Class 6**

- Content is primary: writing for the Web.
- Information architecture, contextual elements, designing efficient navigation.
- CMS integration.
- Uploading and FTPing content.
- Social Media.

### **Class 7**

- Overview of the DOM and interface behaviour.
- User interaction and jQuery.
- Audiences, languages, disabilities.
- User contribution.

### **Class 8**

- More responsive CSS.
- Animation and transitions.
- Data visualisation and representation.
- Analytics.

### **Class 9**

- Editing and organising media content/forms for the web.
- Project work time.

### **Class 10**

- Project work time.

### **Class 11**

- Project work time.

### **Class 12**



- Project work time.
- Website project due.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide

appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Apply current practices and design principles to webpage construction.
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- Develop life-long technological application skills, critical analysis and evaluation skills, and problem solving skills that are paramount in an era of technological literacy.

### Assessment tasks

- In-class practical tasks
- Analysis and Proposal
- Website production
- Class Participation

### PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is

the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Apply current practices and design principles to webpage construction.
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### **Assessment tasks**

- In-class practical tasks
- Analysis and Proposal
- Website production
- Class Participation

## **PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability**

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Apply current practices and design principles to webpage construction.
- Develop the ability to dissect, analyse and objectively critique web pages, and a familiarity with diverse media formats.
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### **Assessment tasks**

- In-class practical tasks
- Analysis and Proposal

- Website production
- Class Participation

## PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Apply current practices and design principles to webpage construction.
- Effectively communicate information-rich media to a target audience via the web.
- Develop the ability to dissect, analyse and objectively critique web pages, and a familiarity with diverse media formats.
- Articulate technological practices, and present a portfolio/brief to a prospective client.
- Develop life-long technological application skills, critical analysis and evaluation skills, and problem solving skills that are paramount in an era of technological literacy.

### Assessment tasks

- In-class practical tasks
- Analysis and Proposal
- Website production
- Class Participation

## PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcome

- Effectively communicate information-rich media to a target audience via the web.

### Assessment tasks

- In-class practical tasks
- Analysis and Proposal
- Website production