



MAS 241

Interactive Web Design

S2 Day 2015

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Stephen Collins

stephen.collins@mq.edu.au

Contact via stephen.collins@mq.edu.au

Y3A 191D

By appointment only

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

MAS240 or COMP249

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit teaches the theory and production of web sites in the context of the wider information age and the changing nature of media audiences/users. Students learn the theory underpinning good web design practice, as well as production skills. Students learn to design and create web sites compliant with World Wide Web Consortium standards; identify and cater to target audiences; and critique and evaluate existing web sites through competitive analysis.

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 a critical knowledge of the practices, theories and technologies of contemporary Web design.

Combine HTML, CSS and jQuery in the production of interactive Web-based media.

Solve coding and design challenges.

Work independently, collaboratively and professionally in response to project demands.

Communicate and present information in modes suited to a range of audiences.

Identify and self-assess performance within this unit of study.

Engage in the process of learning

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Coding Tests	30%	See details
Web Site Review	15%	Week 7 - 11th September 2015
Major Project	40%	Week 13 - During class
Reflective Essay	15%	Week 14 - 13th November 2015

Coding Tests

Due: **See details**

Weighting: **30%**

You will be given three take-home coding tests during the semester to assess your understanding of HTML, CSS and jQuery.

The first test will be distributed in week 3 (to be submitted in week 4), the second in week 5 (to be submitted in week 6) and the third test will be distributed in week 7 (to be submitted in week 8).

Each test is worth 10%. More specific details will be disseminated during workshops. You should attend all workshops in case a) you miss the details of the tests or b) actually miss one.

Marking Criteria:

- Demonstrated application of workshop techniques and materials to the problem posed
- Ability to evaluate a problem and present the most efficient and (code) elegant solution
- Valid HTML5 - Correct CSS rules (including knowing when to use a class and when to use an ID)
- Correct and expedient use of jQuery (when required)

Submission

Coding tests will be submitted via the labs. Specific dates are set out in the coding test briefs. HTML and CSS documents and any relevant subfolders or other files should be kept in a folder called "ct1", "ct2" or "ct3" (depending on the particular test). These folders should be stored in your Sites folder. Please see the coding test briefs for full details.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have submitted files correctly. Failure to correctly submit coding tests may result in a late penalty.

Late Submission

A late penalty of 10% per day will be applied.

Extensions

Extensions may only be granted by the unit convenor in line with university policy.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Combine HTML, CSS and jQuery in the production of interactive Web-based media.
- Solve coding and design challenges.
- Identify and self-assess performance within this unit of study.
- Engage in the process of learning

Web Site Review

Due: **Week 7 - 11th September 2015**

Weighting: **15%**

You are required to write a 1500 word (10% either way is acceptable) critical review of a Web site of your choice. You should analyse the site's design, appeal, interface and usability and analyse the positive or negative effects these dimensions have on the target audience. You will refer to the set readings and your own independent research in executing a critical review set against a background of well-researched and informed assessment criteria. Be sure to check the validity of your sources and do not rely on just one for any given assertion. For example the first results in my Google book search gives me: "Jones says the placement of search fields on a homepage doesn't really matter as the viewer's gaze initially falls to the centre of the screen". Whilst Jones is partially correct, "Smith, Brown and Stevens all say that the location and prominence of search fields on homepages is important because about 50% of users will immediately go to a search box rather than browse a site. Brown notes, many users know exactly what they are looking for and Smith adds that it is the Web designer's role to make the user's journey to his destination as quick and easy as possible". In this (semi-fictional) example, reading one source in isolation leads to an incorrect assertion and also demonstrates poor research skills. Remember academia is meticulous, there is a body of literature on every subject you can think of. The purpose of this assignment is you to show your understanding of "why things work" (or don't work as the case may be) and to demonstrate a pragmatic understanding of the theories set out in the unit reader, lectures and your own independent research. You are expected to employ an appropriate system for referencing sources.

The essay will be submitted electronically via iLearn/Turn It In and must be submitted by 11:59pm, Friday 11th September 2015. Hard copies will not be accepted or marked.

Marking Criteria:

- Demonstrated research into Web design theories of usability, audiences and reception, and design
- Application of Web design theories to a case study

- Clear written structure and presentation
- Appropriate sources and referencing

Submission

Web site reviews will be submitted electronically via iLearn. Hardcopy reviews will not be accepted or marked. Once submitted a review cannot be resubmitted. If you have submitted an incorrect version or file, please contact Steve Collins (stephen.collins@mq.edu.au) and ask to have your submission deleted so you can submit the correct version or file. If this occurs after the submission date, the late penalty (see below) will be applied.

Late Submission

A late penalty of 10% per day will be applied.

Extensions

Extensions may only be granted by the unit convenor in line with university policy.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply a critical knowledge of the practices, theories and technologies of contemporary Web design.
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Major Project

Due: **Week 13 - During class**

Weighting: **40%**

Students will be allocated a one-word theme and are to design and build a website that addresses the theme. Students will have to research and develop appropriate content for the site, which must include: text, images, audio and/or video (which can be recorded on smartphones).

Students may work alone or in small groups of up to three members. If a group has multiple members then students must document their individual contributions through comments in the code and the reflective essay assignment.

Major project websites must comply with the following:

- Correct and valid use of HTML5
- An absence of deprecated HTML tags
- Correct use of CSS
- Use of jQuery to achieve user interaction
- Table-based design is prohibited
- Images must be optimised for the Web

- All content must be original or free from copyright/licensing restrictions
- Websites should be comprised of a minimum of five visible pages (i.e. five HTML pages; CSS documents or other 'backend' documents do not count)

Students are encouraged to connect their websites to other relevant content, which includes external websites as well as those created by other students, so take some time to see what else is happening in the class.

Major projects will be assessed under three categories of **design**, **coding** and **content**.

DESIGN

Web sites will embody a design appropriate to theme and audience. The design will enhance the user experience and not detract from the content offered. The design will demonstrate balanced composition, excellent use of fonts, an appropriate and clear balance of colours and an appropriately consistent layout.

CODING

Web sites will demonstrate an advanced understanding of HTML5 (including semantic structure) and CSS. The code will not include any deprecated tags. jQuery will be used to provide user interactions and the code will be concise and expedient.

CONTENT

The content presented will be intuitive and easy to access. It will be clear and concise with language appropriate to the topic and audience. Audiovisual media that contributes to the content will be relevant and presented appropriately. Content that embraces the possibilities of the network environment will be rewarded. Be imaginative and curious. What does the theme mean to you? What issues and interesting points arise? Work it into a narrative.

Although external content may be embedded and utilised (e.g. audio and video), content should be original.

Major projects are to be submitted in week 13.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply a critical knowledge of the practices, theories and technologies of contemporary Web design.
- Combine HTML, CSS and jQuery in the production of interactive Web-based media.
- Solve coding and design challenges.
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Reflective Essay

Due: **Week 14 - 13th November 2015**

Weighting: **15%**

Students are required to submit a reflective essay of 1000 words (10% either way is acceptable). The reflective essay will detail the following:

- The contributions of the individual student to the overall project. This includes planning, project management, design and production duties.
- A reflection of skills learned by the student during the semester.
- Explanation of challenges experienced and how these challenges were overcome.
- Facilitation of communication in a collaborative production environment.
- Application of knowledge and skills to solving problems.
- Reflection on learning outcomes for the unit.

The above points are not exhaustive; please feel free to address anything else pertinent.

Marking Criteria:

- Written structure and presentation
- Demonstrated reflection of practice in design and coding
- Demonstration of problem-solving skills
- Demonstration of time-management
- Understanding of group dynamics where appropriate

Submission

Reflective essays will be submitted electronically via iLearn. Hard copy essays will not be accepted or marked. Once submitted an essay cannot be resubmitted. If you have submitted an incorrect version or file, please contact Steve Collins (stephen.collins@mq.edu.au) and ask to have your submission deleted so you can submit the correct version or file. If this occurs after the submission date, the late penalty (see below) will be applied.

Late Submission

A late penalty of 10% per day will be applied.

Extensions

Extensions may only be granted by the unit convenor in line with university policy.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Communicate and present information in modes suited to a range of audiences.
- Identify and self-assess performance within this unit of study.
- Engage in the process of learning

Delivery and Resources

Lectures will be delivered via videos uploaded to iLearn.

There is no printed unit reader. Links to online articles are provided on iLearn. All other materials are held in eReserve.

Additional resources will be available from <http://www.media.mq.edu.au>

There is no production manual for this unit. Students are required to attend workshops and take notes.

Students are expected to watch all lectures, attend all workshops and complete set readings. MAS241 is a 3 credit point unit and as such students are required to undertake 10 hours of study per week.

Changes to previous offerings:

In 2015 the major project assignment has been adjusted following experiences of the major project last year.

Unit Schedule

Please note that all lectures are delivered via videos embedded into the weekly iLearn topics and all readings are available online either via links to external sources or as scanned readings (see iLearn for details).

Week 1 - Introduction to MAS241

Jeffrey Zeldman. (2005). 'Understanding Web Design'. A List Apart. <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/understandingwebdesign>

Week 2 - What makes a good website?

Australian Interactive Media Association. (2013). 'Judging Criteria'.

AIMIA. <http://www.aimia.com.au/home/awards/aimia-awards/judging-criteria>. Webby Awards. (2012). 'Webby Entries: Judging Criteria'. The Webby Awards. <http://www.webbyawards.com/entries/criteria.php#websites>.

Steve Krug. (2005). Don't Make Me Think. New Riders Publishing: Berkley, California. pp.94-121.

Week 3 - The audience

David Vogler. (2001). 'Thinking About the Audience' in Steve Heller (ed.)The Education of an E-Designer. Allworth Press: Canada.

Manuel Castells. (2010). The Rise of the Network Society. Wiley-Blackwell: West Sussex, UK. pp.355-371.

Week 4 - Information architecture

Steve Krug. (2005). Don't Make Me Think. New Riders Publishing: Berkley, California. pp.50-95.

Jeffrey Veen. (2001). The Art and Science of Web Design. New Riders Publishing: Berkley, California. pp.72-101.

Week 5 - Planning a website

John Shiple. (2010). 'Information Architecture Tutorial (Parts 1-4)'. Webmonkey. http://www.webmonkey.com/2010/02/information_architecture_tutorial/

Jeffrey Veen. (2001). The Art and Science of Web Design. New Riders Publishing: Berkley, California. pp.1-29.

Week 6 - Design I

Brandon Jones. (2011). 'Understanding Visual Hierarchy in Web Design'. Webdesign Tuts+. <http://webdesign.tutsplus.com/articles/design-theory/understanding-visual-hierarchy-in-web-design/>.

Connor Turnbull. (2011). 'Unity in Web Design'. Webdesign Tuts+. <http://webdesign.tutsplus.com/articles/unity-in-web-design/>.

Curt Ziegler. (2011). 'Less is More: Fundamentals of Minimalist Web Design'. Webdesign Tuts+. <http://webdesign.tutsplus.com/articles/design-theory/less-is-more-fundamentals-of-minimalist-web-design/>.

Week 7 - Design II

Thomas Cannon. (2010). 'An Introduction to Color Theory for Web Designers'. Webdesign Tuts+. <http://webdesign.tutsplus.com/articles/design-theory/an-introduction-to-color-theory-for-web-designers/>.

Donald Johansson. (2010). 'Colors on the Web'. <http://www.colorsontheweb.com/>.

Diogo Terror. (2009). 'Lessons From Swiss Style Graphic Design'. Smashing Magazine. <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2009/07/17/lessons-from-swiss-style-graphic-design/>. This is a fairly lengthy piece, but it's mainly images. Do check it out and get inspired.

Vitaly Friedman. (2007). 'Designing with Grid-Based Approach'. Smashing Magazine. <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2007/04/14/designing-with-grid-based-approach/>.

Week 8 - Writing for the Web

John Morke & Jakob Nielsen. (1997). 'Concise, SCANNABLE, and Objective: How to write for the Web'. Nielsen Norman Group. <http://www.nngroup.com/articles/concise-scannable-and-objective-how-to-write-for-the-web/>.

Amber Simmonds. (2007). 'Reviving Anorexic Web Writing'. A List Apart. <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/revivinganorexicwebwriting/>.

Week 9 - Mediating the Web: interfaces

Steve Krug. (2005). Don't Make Me Think. New Riders Publishing: Berkley, California. pp.11-29.

Jeffrey Veen. (2001). The Art and Science of Web Design. New Riders Publishing: Berkley, California. pp.30-71.

Week 10 - Images ... are worth a thousand words

Ahmed Hussan. (2012). 'Visual Direction in Web Design'. Webdesign Tuts+. <http://webdesign.tutsplus.com/articles/design-theory/visual-direction-in-web-design/>.

Ahmed Hussan. (2011). 'The Gestalt Principle: Design Theory for Web Designers'. Webdesign Tuts+. <http://webdesign.tutsplus.com/articles/design-theory/visual-direction-in-web-design/>.

Weeks 11-13 - Project development

There are no readings for these weeks, but workshop time will be invaluable.

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

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

Disruption to Studies Policy 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/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Additional information

MMCCS website https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/departments_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/

MMCCS Session Re-mark Application <http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914>

Information is correct at the time of publication

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) 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

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

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Solve coding and design challenges.
- Work independently, collaboratively and professionally in response to project demands.

Assessment task

- Major Project

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply a critical knowledge of the practices, theories and technologies of contemporary Web design.
- Work independently, collaboratively and professionally in response to project demands.
- Identify and self-assess performance within this unit of study.
- Engage in the process of learning

Assessment tasks

- Web Site Review
- Reflective Essay

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Combine HTML, CSS and jQuery in the production of interactive Web-based media.
- Engage in the process of learning

Assessment task

- Reflective Essay

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific

knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply a critical knowledge of the practices, theories and technologies of contemporary Web design.
- Combine HTML, CSS and jQuery in the production of interactive Web-based media.
- Communicate and present information in modes suited to a range of audiences.

Assessment tasks

- Coding Tests
- Web Site Review
- Major Project
- Reflective Essay

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply a critical knowledge of the practices, theories and technologies of contemporary Web design.
- Combine HTML, CSS and jQuery in the production of interactive Web-based media.
- Solve coding and design challenges.
- Identify and self-assess performance within this unit of study.

Assessment tasks

- Web Site Review
- Major Project
- Reflective Essay

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in

order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply a critical knowledge of the practices, theories and technologies of contemporary Web design.
- Combine HTML, CSS and jQuery in the production of interactive Web-based media.
- Solve coding and design challenges.

Assessment tasks

- Coding Tests
- Major Project

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Work independently, collaboratively and professionally in response to project demands.
- Communicate and present information in modes suited to a range of audiences.

Assessment tasks

- Web Site Review
- Major Project
- Reflective Essay

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Engage in the process of learning

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Identify and self-assess performance within this unit of study.

Late Penalties

Late penalties of 10% per day apply for each assignment. The late penalty reflects the project management aspect of this unit. Students are expected to adhere to submission commitments as though they were submitting commercial projects where deadlines are of utmost importance.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
17/08/2015	Clarification of assignment submission details.