

Course Information

Professor / Lauren Meranda
Email / lauren.meranda@judsonu.edu

Meetings / T TH 1:00pm–3:45pm
Website / www.judsonvis.com

Course Catalog Description

This course will cover visual communication for web and digital media technology. It will begin with understanding site structure and mapping. Students will plan, design, and produce finished websites and other multi media projects. The student will gain a greater understanding of site maps, site navigation, menus, buttons and web graphics for the end goal of intelligent, intuitive, and beautiful web products.

Attendance

Attendance at all class meetings is required. You will be marked late if you arrive after the start of class. Two late arrivals is equal to one absence. More than two absences will impact your grade negatively, and more than three absences are grounds for an F.

Please note: No distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences. You are responsible for maintaining your own schedule.

Late Work

All assignments are due by the start of the next class meeting, unless otherwise notes. An assignment must be posted on the blog AND CORRECTLY CATEGORIZED in order to be considered turned in. Late work will be marked down one grade for each day past the due date, e.g. an A paper turned in after 8am but within 24 hours will receive an A-. If you foresee a potential conflict, then see Prof. Meranda; with sufficient notice, it might be possible to arrange an alternative schedule.

Conduct

You are expected to conduct yourself courteously and professionally. Time spent in the classroom will be dedicated to presentation, discussion, and self-directed work time. Any other activities or behavior not conducive to our coursework will NOT be tolerated. Prohibited activities during class time include use of cell phones for talking or texting, surfing the web or social media for unrelated purposes, private conversations amongst students, rude or insulting language or behavior, and any other form of distraction from the tasks at hand.

We have a lot of exciting work to do, and our time together is valuable.
Let's make the most of it!

Readings

You are responsible for readings from the textbook as well as the material posted on the class website. The reading assignments will be announced in class and posted on the class website. To be considered complete, you must post a two paragraph or more response to the readings before the next class session, unless otherwise noted. It is suggested to print out the readings and have notes available for class discussions. Participation is mandatory and will be factored into your daily participation grade.

Materials**Required Software**

Adobe Photoshop CC
Adobe DreamWeaver CC
Sublime Text 2 (free text editor)

Required Books

HTML and CSS: Design and Build Websites,
By Jon Duckett

Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense
Approach to Web Usability, 3rd Edition,
By Steve Krug

Students can use the lab computers or their own laptop computers with the required software in class and for completion of course assignments. If you don't already, make sure to get a USB jump drive or external hard-drive. ALL hard drives (internal and external) eventually fail, so file safety cannot be guaranteed on ANY computer. Always back up your files. Loss or damage of data or files is NOT an acceptable explanation for late or missing assignments.

Students must have access to the internet and Judson email accounts to use the class blog for posting assignments and feedback. Please make sure you can access the internet from our classroom as soon as possible to avoid any delays.

You will also need to purchase a URL and hosting for your own site. You may want to go in on hosting with a classmate to reduce costs. URLs run about \$15 and hosting can cost anywhere from \$6-10/month. You will need this for our second assignment.

<https://www.godaddy.com/>

Accommodations

Judson University is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist students with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this class and are requesting accommodations, you must contact Gineen Vargas, ADA Compliance Coordinator in the Student Success Center, located in the Linder Tower-2nd floor at 847-628-1556.

The ADA Compliance Coordinator is responsible for coordinating accommodations and services for students with disabilities. Accommodations will not be granted prior to receipt of a current licensed clinician report outlining the disability, possible limitations and reasonable accommodations in order to meet the needs of the post-secondary coursework. Accommodations are never provided retroactively - prior to finalization of the Letter of Accommodation. Gineen will be happy to meet with you to discuss your accommodations. All discussions will remain confidential.

Further information is available by visiting the Student Success Center website
https://myjudson.judsonu.edu/ICS/Student_Success_Center/

Digital Recipe Cards

The task is to style the same HTML in many different ways using pure CSS (no images or illustrations). This means that once the HTML is setup it won't change (or just minimal when necessary). You'll modify the CSS style sheet files instead. Since we don't use images yet you'll focus on two aspects: Styling type and making layout variations using some of the basic dimension and positioning techniques within CSS. Pay attention to quality/originality of the composition and the technical execution. The color, type choice and composition should be a visual representation of your specific dish.

Dimensions: Fixed width = 780px, centered on the screen. Height can be treated as needed.

Colors: A maximum of 3 colors can be used and grey scale. Keep the color palette consistent throughout your designs.

Fonts: Not more than 2 different font-family choices per composition

Experiment with typography (sizes, placement, color, background-color...) and composition. Multi-column/grid layouts are possible. Also consider the browser's background-color as a design element of your composition. Your layout (780px wide) should appear horizontally centered in the browser window (left and right sides are identical even after re sizing the browser). Create (at least) 10 coded recipe layouts.

Create a design for the first five layouts (prior to coding them) in Illustrator, Photoshop or InDesign. Try to code the other five layouts directly without creating a static design first. Upload JPGs (screenshots) of your first 5 designs to this website by Monday, Sept 02.

EXERCISE 1_1: Find a recipe for a simple dish

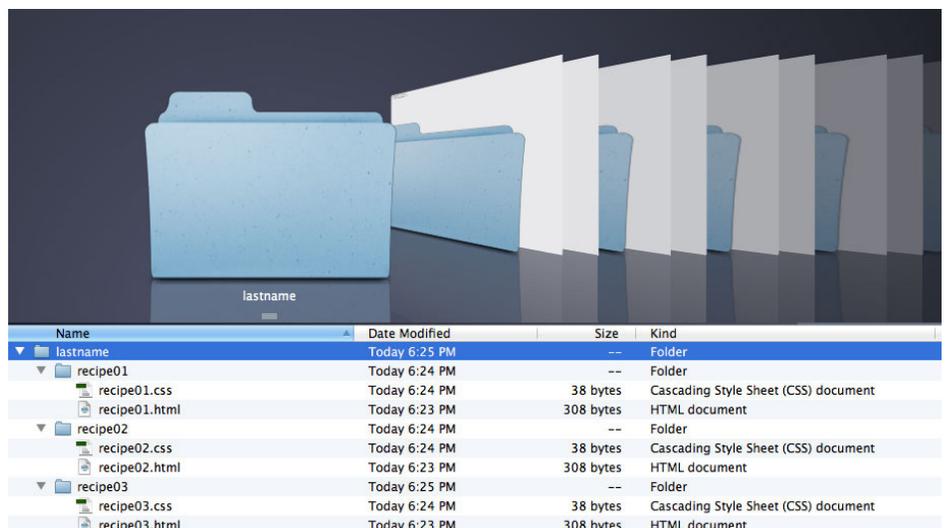
EXERCISE 1_2: Static Designs

EXERCISE 1_3: Write the HTML markup

EXERCISE 1_4: Create a CSS file

FILE ORGANIZATION

You should have 10 folders, one for each different recipe card design. Within each folder, you should have one HTML file and one CSS file.



Responsive Cooking Sites

The task is to create 2 example pages of a fictional cooking/recipe website (home page + recipe page example). We will design the interface first and code it afterwards.

The recipe page should contain the recipe you experimented with in the previous assignment. But create a new design for this assignment since the dimensions are different and the recipe itself should just be part of the larger cooking site. Have one section of your home page be a link to your recipe page (this section on your home page could be “the recipe of the month”, for example). This will be the only “working” link for this assignment. Although technically we still need to create links for all navigation items in order to show mouseovers etc. Instead of linking to an HTML page (link to a URL) just use the # sign as a placeholder (I’ll explain).

In this assignment we’re focusing on a web page layout and some typical divisions. Often sections are divided as follows:

- Header (may contain site title/logo, big image area, navigation elements)
- Navigation (main links of the site, may contain site title/logo, can appear horizontally at the top of a page or vertically in a sidebar)
- Feature area on home page with big image
- Main content (sub-features, articles, or your full recipe on the recipe page)
- Side bar(s) (may contain navigation links, site highlights, ads, embedded twitter feeds...)
- Footer (may contain a site map, social media icons/links, copyright info, contact information etc.)

Divide your layout into these sections. Header and navigation sections may be combined. You may also add sections if necessary. You may use stock images. You can use greek text for all copy and navigation links (except the one that leads to the recipe page).

CONTENT SUGGESTIONS FOR SECTIONS:

(all visible text has to be selectable HTML, no images for text elements or navigation). You can use greek text and generic food images (except the ones for your recipe).

Site title: Recipes.com (or any other title you can come up with)

Header: Site title and a few links (social media icons, contact, sitemap...).

Navigation: About, Featured Recipe, All Recipes, Tips & Tools, News, Blog, Contact (navigation could also go inside a sidebar)

On Home Page: Feature area highlighting one recipe as the “recipe of the month”, use a big image of your recipe on this section.

Main content for home page: highlight 3-4 other recipes (food stock images and greek text).

Main content for recipe page: Your recipe with title, ingredients, instructions, cooking time etc.

Side bar (1 column, all greek text): “News” (3 news items with title and short excerpt), “Blog” (3 blog feed excerpts with date and title)

Footer (3-4 columns): copyright info, main navigation links, contact info, social media icons

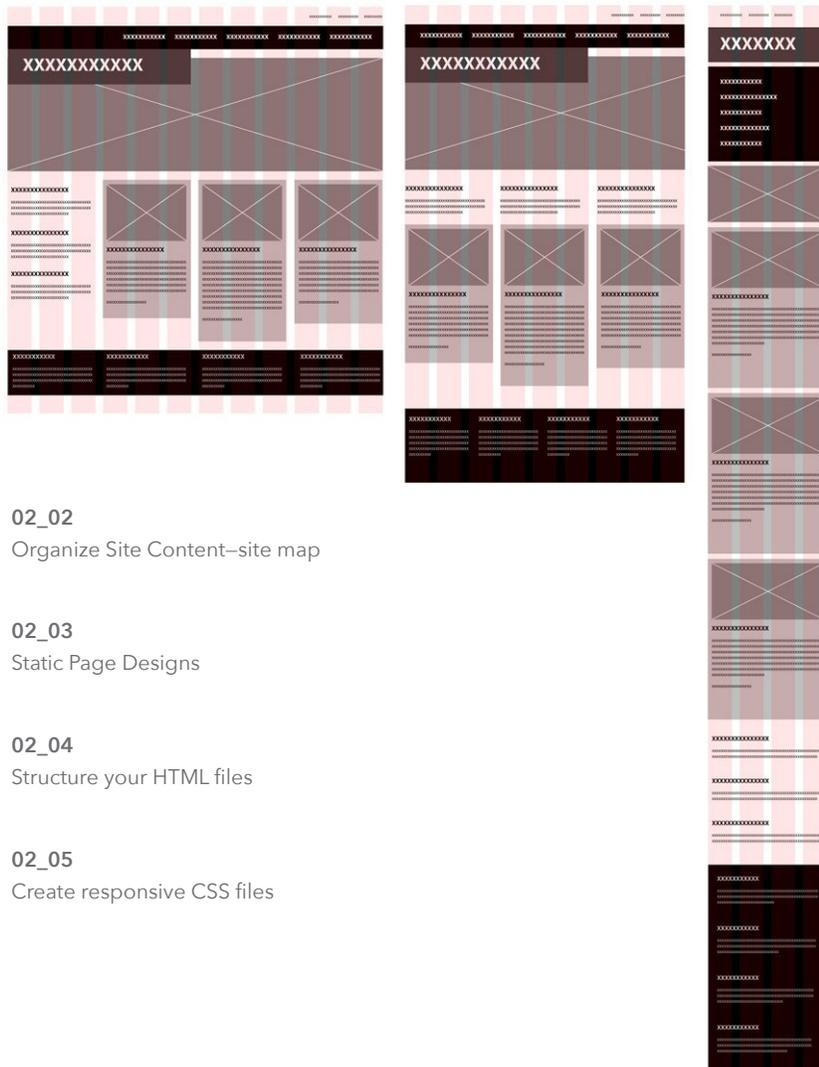
Responsive Cooking Sites

02_01: WIREFRAMES

The page layout should be based on a 12 column grid in combination with a 960px fixed width. 960 pixels is a common width for websites and can easily be divided into 12 or 16 column grids. Click [here](#) to download grid templates that you can use in either Illustrator, Photoshop or InDesign (your choice). These templates contain guides and will speed up the process overall. Open the template in your layout program and make a few layout variations for home page and recipe page. Draw rectangles in different shades of grey (see below). Think about possibilities on how to use the grid for your page divisions. Since we'll be coding a layout for different screen sizes (desktop, tablet and mobile) you need to work on 3 versions for each page.

Desktop: 12 grid units, width = 960px. Tablet: 9 grid units, width = 720px, Mobile: 4 grid units, width = 320px.

"A website wireframe, also known as a page schematic or screen blueprint, is a visual guide that represents the skeletal framework of a website. The wireframe depicts the page layout or arrangement of the website's content, including interface elements and navigational systems, and how they work together. The wireframe usually lacks typographic style, color, or graphics, since the main focus lies in functionality, behavior, and priority of content. In other words, it focuses on "what a screen does, not what it looks like."

**02_02**

Organize Site Content—site map

02_03

Static Page Designs

02_04

Structure your HTML files

02_05

Create responsive CSS files

Personal Portfolio Sites

For this assignment, we will be creating a site that will act as a portfolio for your work. We will be using WordPress as a CMS (content management system) and will be working with previously existing templates. We will all be working from a select collection of template themes in order to learn the basics of WordPress hacking together. Though you will not be coding every aspect of this site, since we are working within preexisting templates, you will need to edit the CSS and PHP to achieve the design you desire.

03_01: COLLECT MATERIALS & BROWSE THEME LIBRARY

Your portfolio is a representation of you and your abilities. Select what you display wisely. Presentation matters; spend time photographing your work. Look through the theme library and other portfolio sites to gain insights on how to design your portfolio site.

03_03: STATIC PAGE DESIGN

Consider the weight of your design. You don't want your website to compete with your work. Design static layouts for each type of page in your portfolio in three versions (desktop, tablet, mobile.) Don't let your design come from the themes. We will make the themes fit your design.

03_04: PREPPING WORDPRESS THEME

Once your static designs have been approved, find the most similar WordPress theme from the given collection. Look at the functionality of the template over the aesthetic. We can easily change most aesthetic differences in the CSS. Make notes on your static designs about elements you will need to change. Note colors, typefaces, and other consistent styles you will need to change from the template design.

03_05: HACKING WORDPRESS THEME

After a demonstration on uploading a WordPress theme and the editor mode, we will use class time and the web browser developer-mode to understand the way the theme developer set up the code. We will go back and forth between the browser editor and the WordPress editor to transform the site into your design.

Interactive Storytelling

Design an interactive visual narrative. Using a found short story, create a website that takes the viewer on an active journey through the narrative using parallax scrolling. You will work as a team to develop an appropriate aesthetic. Each team member will have different strengths and weaknesses in the [web] design process. Use each other to develop a unique and high quality final piece. Each member of the team should be assigned roles at your first meeting.

03_01: SELECT A STORY

Find a short story with a small to medium amount of text that can be cut and reworked if necessary. The story should have very clear plot points that can be used to tell the narrative in scenes. All group members should bring suggestions to the table and agree on one to proceed with.

03_02: VISUAL RESEARCH / BRAINSTORMING

Find action words and descriptive qualities.

Write out major plot points of the narrative (beginning, middle, end) Create options for overall aesthetic (colors, styles, typefaces, etc...)

03_03: STORYBOARDING

Develop the pace and sequence of the story in fully designed steps.

03_04: DEVELOPMENT

Work on illustrations, writing specific language, etc. Break down the tasks that need to be completed and assign to various team members.

03_05: PREPARING FILES

03_06: START BUILDING INTERACTIVITY

Muse
Edge Animate
Dreamweaver/Sublime Text

03_07: TEST & PUBLISH