

Web Programming for Multimedia Journalism

Fall 2014

JMC course number: 40095/60195

DSCI course number: 40910/005

Room: 313 Franklin Hall

Time: 2:15-3:30 p.m. MW

Instructors: Jacqueline Marino, JMC
James Raber, DSCI

Office hours: Marino MW 10-11 a.m. and TH 11 a.m.-1p.m. or by appointment.
Raber available by appointment

Suggested readings for all students:

HTML&CSS: Design and Build Websites by Jon Duckett, 2011

Links to other readings will be on Blackboard Learn.

Who takes this course? Students in this class are journalists, programmers, web developers or designers, or they consider themselves some combination of the above. They are taking this class because they want to create something new and meaningful on the web. This course is designed as a capstone for students in the School of Digital Sciences and as a culminating experience for students in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. However, we welcome other majors and graduate students, particularly those in Computer Science, the School of Visual Design, Management Information Systems and Information Architecture and Knowledge Management.

What will you do in this course? You will create either a digital journalistic startup or an interactive, data-driven website. The topic, mission and intended audience are up to you. In the past, students working in teams have created websites focused on the issues of college suicide and environmental threats to the Cuyahoga River. They have developed tools for travel storytelling, a social network for “geek culture” at Kent State and a startup that provided a recent, hyperlocal feed of what was going on at Kent State (down to the building level). Regardless of your choice of project type or topic, you will learn how to

- work as part of a multidisciplinary project team.
- do the research, planning and production work necessary to build a digital startup or create a journalism website devoted to a cause or issue.
- target a journalistic startup or project to an interested audience.
- learn some coding (if you’re a journalist) and some journalism (if you’re a technologist). Journalists will learn HTML, CSS and some PHP. Technologists will learn journalism basics, including ethics, news values and best practices for story development for web.
- conduct usability testing.

- be on the creative edge of the exciting, increasingly digital media field.

Requirements:

- Individual assignments, including individual progress reports. Quizzes may also be given.
- Group milestone reports
- Peer assessment
- Final project

Special Requirements for DSCI Capstone Students: Your program requires an additional one-page report detailing your learning experience in this course. Please see the handout, “Additional Requirements for Digital Sciences Capstone Students,” for a more detailed explanation.

All students will

- evaluate certain news or storytelling-oriented websites for journalism, information architecture, programming and design.
- become familiar with the challenges and potential of adapting third-party applications to a journalism website.
- work to solve problems as members of a team.
- display professional behavior, including promptness, clear communication, courtesy to others and a positive attitude.
- read required works and contribute to discussions.
- complete a significant part of the content, development or design of the website.

Journalism students will

- find data in a usable form for their website.
- create original content for the site, including photo, video and word stories. Journalism students may also take on design responsibilities.
- learn the basics of HTML, tags, properties, CSS and website development aspects.
- effectively communicate their needs and process to the DSCI students.
- write material promoting the website.

Digital Sciences students will

- do the majority of the programming and development for the site. DSCI students may also take on design responsibilities.
- learn the basics of journalism practices and ethics.
- effectively communicate their needs and process to the journalists.
- expand on their existing skill sets to accomplish their objectives for their project website.

A Note on Group work

All students will contribute to the project according to their areas of interest and

specialization. Programmers will program, developers will develop and journalists will report, write and promote the site. Each student will be evaluated on both the amount of work contributed and the quality of that work. Factored into this grade will be each student's class attendance, contribution to discussions and group problem solving. *Although we will devote some class time to group work nearly every week, it is imperative that you meet with your group in person or remotely during other times. Students are expected to fill out "meeting logs" throughout the semester to show that outside-of-class work is indeed happening.* These meeting logs are found under "Journal" in Blackboard. There should be an entry for every meeting of your group, and you need a total of 10 entries, three of which must be outside of class. More instructions are on Blackboard.

Grading:

Individual Assignments, 25 percent.

Group reports and milestones, 10 percent.

In-class participation, including final presentation, 15 percent.

Fulfillment of the responsibilities affiliated with your role in the editorial, programming, production or design process for your project, 20 percent.

The quality of your work as seen in the final project (includes peer assessment score for professionalism, 30 percent.)

See the handout, "WPMJ Grading Explanation," for more detail on grading.

A: 92%-100%

A-: 90%-91%

B+: 88%-89%

B: 82%-87%

B-: 80-81%

C+: 78%-79%

C: 72%-77%

C-: 70%-71%

D+: 68%-69%

D: 60%-67%

F: <59%

Here's what each grade means:

A – You have tackled the assignment with creativity and thoughtfulness. You clearly understand the information presented and have applied it well. Your work would be acceptable for a professional media or technology organization.

B – You understand the information presented, but your work isn't spectacular. You're lacking something creatively or some depth of research. You have not produced the quality of work that needed to be achieved.

C – You understand a majority of the concepts presented, and you have applied them in your assignments. But your work only meets the minimum standards.

D – You have not met the minimum standards required.

F — You have not done the assignment or completely ignored the guidelines presented.

Attendance and Decorum:

We will excuse absences for illness, emergency or religious holidays. If you have more than two unexcused absences, you will have to meet with an instructor. More than three unexcused absences will be reflected in a 5-percent reduction in your final grade. Four unexcused absences equal a 10-percent reduction and so on. An absence not supported by documentation, such as a doctor's note, will be considered an unexcused absence.

Please be on time for class. If the door is closed when you get to class, you are officially late. Three late arrivals equal an unexcused absence.

Deadlines

All outside assignments and rewrites are due in Blackboard at the beginning of the class time.

Computer Lab Policies

Please bring a jump drive to class to save your work. Nothing may be saved on the lab computers. No food or drink is allowed in the computer lab.

JMC Diversity Statement

The Kent State University School of Journalism and Mass Communication recognizes the importance of a diverse faculty and student body and embraces the concept that diversity will foster the acknowledgement, empowerment and inclusion of any person.

JMC teaches the history, culture, values and notable achievement of persons who represent the world's diverse community. The mission of the School is to offer a strong curriculum, enriched by a legal and ethical foundation, which recruits, retains, promotes and hires from this diverse community.

JMC believes that the highest levels of success, knowledge and progress arise when we learn from others who are not of our own national origin, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability and social class. We welcome the many opportunities to examine challenges that may arise from differences.

Student Accessibility Statement:

University policy 3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these

through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit www.kent.edu/sas for more information on registration procedures).

Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism:

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication deals in publishable works and educates its students for various aspects of publishing and other communications professions. Within this framework, every student must be aware of the following rules and definitions while in school or on the job:

Fabrication is, in phrasing first used by the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, the cardinal sin. Faking quotations, faking “facts,” reporting things that did not happen are not only reprehensible; they could be actionable in court.

Plagiarizing, as defined by Webster, is “to steal and pass off as one’s own the ideas or words of another.” It is unethical and, in cases involving creative work, usually illegal. One of the worst sins a communications practitioner may commit is to plagiarize the work of another – to steal his/her words, thought, or outline and pass them off as his/her own.

Cheating includes the submission of work in which you have received material and substantive assistance from others, or copied the work of others, when the assignment was intended to be completed by you alone. Unless specifically designated as a group project, all assignments for this course are intended to be the result of your individual efforts. Duplicating work is defined as submitting the same work to more than one instructor (or publication) without the prior knowledge and agreement of both.

Commission of any of these offenses while in school is grounds for disciplinary action. If the complaint is upheld, a variety of punishments may be imposed, from a reprimand to a lowered or failing grade in the course to dismissal from the university.

Please refer to Kent State University’s Policy Register Section 3-01.8 regarding plagiarism -

http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel_datapageid_1976529=2037779

Copyright:

Ownership of the copyright for work submitted for this course is shared jointly by the student author(s) and the School of Journalism and Mass Communication of Kent State University. We may keep a copy of your work to show future students as an example or publish or display it as an example of student work. When you turn in work in this class, you are agreeing to allow the use of the work as stated above and agreeing to the work being used without any compensation to you. However, if you sell your work, you get the money.

Notice of our copyright and intellectual property rights. Any intellectual property displayed or distributed to students during this course (including but not limited to Power Points, notes, quizzes, examinations) by the professor/lecturer/instructor remains the intellectual property of the professor/lecturer/instructor. This means that the student may not distribute, publish or provide such intellectual property to any other person or entity for any reason, commercial or otherwise, without the express written permission of the professor/lecturer/instructor.

Schedule (subject to change)

GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PROJECT DEADLINES ARE IN ALL CAPS BELOW. SEE BLACKBOARD FOR GUIDELINES AND RUBRICS.

Week 1 (8/25 & 27): Introduction and team formation. Roles assigned. Projects proposed. Journalistic digital startups and issue-based sites studied and evaluated.

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE WED. 8/27

NO CLASS 9/1 (LABOR DAY)

Weeks 2 through 4 (9/3-9/17): Journalists learn basics of HTML, CSS, PHP, MYSQL Workbench and Atom. Programmers learn news values and ethics. Journalists get an overview of websites and browsers, as well as syntax, property attributes and themes. Programmers get overview of storytelling with data.

TEAM PROPOSALS PITCHED IN CLASS MON. 9/8

GROUP ASSIGNMENT 1 WRITTEN PROPOSALS DUE ON BLACKBOARD MON. 9/15

GROUP ASSIGNMENT 2 MILESTONE REPORT DUE MON. 9/22

Week 5 (9/22 & 9/24): Project management overview. Timelines, collaboration basics and professionalism.

ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE BY MIDNIGHT OCT 3.

Week 6 (9/29 & 10/1): Security discussed. Improving journalism on the web: a primer on data journalism and tools for making your site more interactive.

Week 7 (10/6&8): Design. Ethics.

Week 8 (10/13&15): Conferences with instructors in class. Teamwork.

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE MON. 10/13: DSCI STUDENTS TURN IN

PROTOTYPES OF SITE. JOURNALISTS TURN IN FIRST DRAFTS OF CONTENT.

Week 9 (10/20&22): Journalism students continue to collect data and produce story drafts. Programmers work to improve the site.

Weeks 10 (10/27&29): Final stories and visualizations are posted to the site. Group critique. Usability testing.

Week 11 (11/3&5): Usability, part two.

Week 12 (11/10&12): Social media and promotion.

Week 13 (11/17&19): Conferences with instructors in class.

GROUP ASSIGNMENT 3: SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN DUE MON. 11/17

Week 14 (11/24): Continued tweaking and content development.

NO CLASS 11/26 (THANKSGIVING RECESS)

Week 15 (12/1&3): Peer-assessment of sites and presentation prep.

CLASS CRITIQUE OF PROJECTS, MON. DEC. 1.

DSCI CAPSTONE REPORT DUE WED. DEC. 3

In lieu of a final exam, students will present their projects at a public launch scheduled for 1 p.m. Monday, Dec. 8.

**School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Kent State University**

Core Values and Competencies*

As a program accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, we are committed to developing a curriculum designed to meet twelve professional competencies. This course, as part of a larger program, contributes to our development of:

THOUGHTFUL, PROFICIENT COMMUNICATORS

- ◆ **write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.**

- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- ◆ **understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.**
- ◆ **apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.**

WHO ARE CREATIVE, CRITICAL THINKERS

- ◆ **think critically, creatively and independently.**

TRAINED TO UNCOVER AND EVALUATE INFORMATION

- ◆ **conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.**
- ◆ **critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.**
- ◆ **apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.**

WITHIN A LEGAL AND ETHICAL FRAMEWORK

- ◆ understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in the United States, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- ◆ **demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.**

IN A DIVERSE AND GLOBAL SOCIETY

- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation, and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of people and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

*Bolded content is addressed in this course.