



MEDIA 320 | Applied Multimedia

Fall 2020 – 3 credits – Online

Catalog Description

Provides an in-depth look at advanced web design and multimedia topics. This course will focus expansively on the design, development, implementation and evaluation of a large-scale multimedia project. Students will apply design principles in the areas of user experience design, audience analysis, mobile design, search engine optimization, and other current practices in the media industry. This course is an elective for students majoring in Media and Journalism, and can be used for the Emergent Media minor. Three hours lecture per week.

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The current version of the course syllabus will be uploaded to BOLT with the revision date included in the file name



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Office Hours

Mondays: 1-3 p.m.
Wednesdays: 10-11 a.m.
Thursdays: 1-3 p.m.

Due to all office hours being conducted virtually this semester, please register for a timeslot using the online sign-up tool. Instructions on how to register for office hours are included on BOLT under Content > Virtual Office Hours.

Textbooks

There are no required textbooks to purchase for this class. Every week there will be several online readings which supplement the video lectures, LinkedIn Learning tutorials, and assignments. I endeavor to find readings and other online resources that are **freely available and easily assessable, to reduce the financial cost of attending college**. These materials have been selected with much thought and deliberation, to give you the best educational experience.

Required Materials

The major project this semester will be the creation of a professional, live website. You will build this individually, and when the semester is over, the website is yours! **You will need to purchase web hosting and a domain name for this project**. Details will be provided in class.

Domain names typically cost \$10-12 per year, and hosting can range from \$5-10 per month. You only need hosting for the duration of the semester (the minimum you'll be able to purchase from many hosting companies is probably 3 months of hosting), though web hosting companies often give you discounts if you purchase more months of hosting. I encourage you to continue using your website after the course concludes, especially as you apply for internships and jobs.

MEDIA 220: Multimedia I is a prerequisite for taking this course. You should already have some understanding of HTML, CSS, WordPress, editing images for the web, and using social media. If it has been some time since you've designed websites, please review your notes or readings from previous semesters. I have high expectations for you this semester; I want to minimize the use of class time for concepts you should already know.

Course Objectives

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and analyze a potential audience for a website
2. Plan a website using design documents according to contemporary design standards
3. Develop a content strategy for a website
4. Implement a social media plan for attracting, building, and retaining a digital audience
5. Create written or multimedia content for a website aimed at specific audiences
6. Create, launch, and promote a website
7. Incorporate search engine optimization tactics into a content strategy and website design
8. Assess a project’s effectiveness through web analytics and other relevant measures

Class Meetings

Because this class is online, there are no set meeting times. There are, however, readings, assignments, tutorials, and lectures every week. This course requires a lot of work and it’s easy to fall behind if you take a week off. **Set aside 2-3 blocks of time each week to devote to this course.** Every Monday, I will send an email outlining what’s happening that week. **You should check your school email regularly,** as I may send grading and assignment updates throughout the week. If you develop a routine for online learning, you will be most successful.

Assignments

Your grade will be based on the following assignments.

Video Completion (3 times)	90
Discussions (3 times)	90
LinkedIn Learning (3 courses)	60
Audience Analysis	60
Design Documents	60
Custom CSS	60
Plugin Installation	60
Site Launch	200
Strategic Content Plan	60
Critiques	50
Content Package (2 times)	140
Web Analytics Reflection	70
Total:	1,000

Grading Scale

Grades are based on total points:

A	925-1,000
A-	900-924
B+	880-899
B	820-879
B-	800-819
C+	780-799
C	720-779
C-	700-719
D+	680-699
D	600-679
F	0-599

The grading scale is non-negotiable. A final grade of 879, for instance, is a B. All grades are final unless questions about grades are addressed in writing within **2 weeks** after the grade is posted. If you have concerns about your grades check with me *sooner* in the semester rather than *later*.

The reason I do not round up grades is to remain fair for all students. If I round up a grade for a student who is one point below the cut-off, what do I do for the student who is 2 points below the cut-off? Three points? Five? At some point, there has to be a cut-off to ensure fairness.

Please check the **START HERE** module on BOLT for full Grading Policies, including the late work policy.



Website Project

Throughout the semester, you create, develop, and launch your own live website! In a normal semester, this would be a group project. However, due to the challenges of coordinating group work, plus the condensed timeframe, **this will instead be an individual project this semester**. You will launch the website and associated social media accounts in Week 5, and then for two weeks add content and promote it using social media. **After the semester is over, you are highly encouraged to continue updating and using this website!**

It's up to you to decide what the website will be. This is **not** a website for a business, non-profit, government agency, club, church, interest group, or personality. **You should build a website around a topic you are interested in and familiar with so that you have plenty of ideas for adding content to the site over the years.** You will identify relevant audiences for this website, and create content targeted toward their interests and lifestyle. While you can make a website focused on yourself, such as a digital portfolio, many classes these days require students to build digital portfolios, so this may not be the best use of your time.

Once you settle on a topic, you will go through the **six stages of web development**, which we'll talk about in class and through your readings.

Assignment Descriptions

The following are brief descriptions of your assignments this semester. **More detailed directions, as well as grading rubrics, can be found on BOLT.**

Video Completion (30 points each; 90 total)

Three times a semester, you will be assessed on your completion rate of online videos. In a face-to-face class, you would have an attendance grade to incentivize you to make it to class: this is the online equivalent. To do well in this course, you need to watch the videos (i.e., attend class).

Discussions (30 points each; 90 points total)

Every other week or so, you will discuss issues related to web development among a subset of classmates. These discussions will often include an activity component, which is designed to assist you in the development of your website.

LinkedIn Learning (20 points each; 60 points total)

Throughout the semester, you will complete short courses on LinkedIn Learning related to WordPress and SEO. After completing the course, LinkedIn Learning will generate a PDF certificate. Download and submit this certificate to BOLT. Additionally, write a short reflection essay highlighting some of the techniques or practices from the course that you find useful.

Audience Analysis (60 points)

Effective communication involves knowing who your audience is. For this assignment, you will write a 4-page report identifying who the audience/s of your website will be. You will explain who this audience is, what their needs are, and how you hope to address them with your website. You will also do some comparative analysis of similar websites to identify ways that you can differentiate yourself from the competition.

Design Documents (60 points)

Before you begin serious development work on your website, you need a plan. You will construct mockups, a site map, and content outline. These documents will help you visualize what the site will look like, what information it will contain, and how the pages will be organized.

Custom CSS (60 points)

While you will be designing your website through WordPress and using pre-created themes and plugins, these themes won't do everything you want. You will learn how to write custom CSS for WordPress. For this assignment, you will submit a copy of your Custom CSS.

Plugin Installation (60 points)

The great thing about WordPress is the ability to add all sorts of features to your themes. Some of these plugins operate in the background: some affect the appearance of the page. For this assignment, you will practice installing plugins to your site.

Site Launch (200 points)

After all your prep work, it's time to launch the website! Your website will be publicly viewable and linked to a domain name. Your site launch should include some introductory content. You will also create associated social media accounts, which you will use to promote your site.

Critiques (50 points)

After the Website Project is launched, you will evaluate your classmates' websites. You will offer detailed feedback on how they can improve their website for the final submission. In the media industry, you will often be asked your opinion on content before it goes out, so knowing how to effectively evaluate another's work will help you in your career.

Strategic Content Plan (60 points)

After the website is launched, you will maintain it for two weeks (and hopefully beyond). The strategic content plan lists what new content you will add to the website after launch.

Content Packages (70 points each; 140 points total)

Each week after the website launch, you will add more content to your website and associated social media accounts. New content will help you expand your website and increase your audience.

Web Analytics Reflection (70 points)

Your final assignment will be to evaluate the success of your website. You will write a 4-page report detailing how many visitors you had to your site, which pages were post popular, and which search terms led to your website. You will also evaluate the effectiveness of your social media campaign. Web analytics is huge in the media industry, so knowing how to track the success of a website is a key skill needed in your career.

The Academic Honesty, Discussion Group, Grading, and Special Needs Policies are available on BOLT under the START HERE module. You should review these policies periodically.

Course Schedule and Checklist

How to Use: Please print off this checklist, and use it week to week to keep track of assignments, readings, and other activities. I endeavor hard to never change due dates. The due dates for all assignments are included in the following schedule, as well as on BOLT. You should consider putting these due dates into a planner or digital device.

Week Begins	Activities
<p><u>Week 1</u> Monday, Aug. 17</p>	<p>Monday, Aug. 17: CLASS BEGINS Thursday, Aug. 20: DEADLINE FOR ADD/DROP Videos (1:28:27 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Course Introduction (11:40) <input type="checkbox"/> Thriving in the Midst of COVID-19 (12:30) <input type="checkbox"/> Website Project Overview (12:21) <input type="checkbox"/> The Web Design Process (14:14) <input type="checkbox"/> The Elements of User Experience (9:16) <input type="checkbox"/> The Strategy Plane (16:44) <input type="checkbox"/> The Scope Plane (11:42) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> (START HERE module on BOLT) Course Syllabus, Academic Honesty, Discussion Group, Grading, and Special Needs Policies <input type="checkbox"/> Garrett (2011). "Meet the Elements" from <i>The Elements of User Experience</i> [pdf reading]

Week Begins	Activities
<p><u>Week 1</u> Continued</p>	<p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Phases of the Website Design and Development Process <input type="checkbox"/> Improve Your Web Design Projects with a Good Project Scope <input type="checkbox"/> The Modern Web Design Process: Defining Project Scope <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion 1, Web Development Challenges. Initial Post due to BOLT by Friday, Aug. 21 at 11:55 p.m. Replies due by Sunday, Aug. 23 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 2</u> Monday, Aug. 24</p>	<p>Videos (1:13:13 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile First Design Philosophy (16:58) <input type="checkbox"/> Creating Personae (10:25) <input type="checkbox"/> Using LinkedIn Learning (8:42) [optional, if needed] <input type="checkbox"/> Content Management Systems (19:04) <input type="checkbox"/> Choosing a Web Host (18:04) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A Hands-On Guide to Mobile-First Responsive Design <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Patterns for Mobile Navigation <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile UX Design: Key Principles <input type="checkbox"/> How to Create Marketing Personas in 4 Steps <input type="checkbox"/> How to Create User Personas for Your Website <input type="checkbox"/> Using Personas in Web Design <input type="checkbox"/> Best Content Management System – WordPress Vs Joomla Vs Drupal <input type="checkbox"/> Why WordPress is the Best Content Management System <input type="checkbox"/> How to Choose a Domain Name <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Introduction thru Chapter 3 of the course “WordPress 5 Essential Training with Morten Rand-Hendrikson” (53:04). <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion 2, Mobile First Design. Initial Post due to BOLT by Thursday, Aug. 27 at 11:55 p.m. Replies due by Sunday, Aug. 30 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Audience Analysis due to BOLT by Sunday, Aug. 30 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Video Completion 1 due to BOLT by Sunday, Aug. 30 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 3</u> Monday, Aug. 31</p>	<p>Videos (1:51:12 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Creating Mockups (14:35) <input type="checkbox"/> Creating a Content Outline and Site Map (16:00) <input type="checkbox"/> HTML Review (16:57) <input type="checkbox"/> CSS Review (17:56) <input type="checkbox"/> Reading the Source Code (15:39) <input type="checkbox"/> Custom CSS with WordPress (30:05)

Week Begins	Activities
<p><u>Week 3</u> Continued</p>	<p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Ultimate Guide to Website Wireframing □ Why You Should Build a Sitemap Before Designing Your Site □ Best Practices for Minimalist Design □ A Simple Web Developer’s Color Guide □ How to Choose a Good Color Scheme for Your Website <p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ How to Add Custom CSS □ An Intro to CSS: Finding CSS Selectors □ CSS Beginner Tutorial □ Introduction to Basic CSS □ CSS Validator <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Finish the course “WordPress 5 Essential Training with Morten Rand-Hendrikson” (1:14:28). Submit certificate and reflection to BOLT by Sunday, Sept. 6 at 11:55 p.m. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Design Documents due to BOLT by Sunday, Sept. 6 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 4</u> Monday, Sept. 7</p>	<p>Monday, Sept. 7: Labor Day: Class Still in Session</p> <p>Videos (1:27:45 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ User Experience Design: Microcopy (15:45) □ User Experience Design: Uniformity (16:49) □ User Experience Design: Personality (12:02) □ WordPress Plugins (12:16) □ Content Strategy (15:26) □ Planning Your Content (15:27) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Good Microcopy □ How to Microcopy □ 10 Tips for Writing Great Microcopy □ Microcopy 101: How to Write for Successful Products □ The Importance of Visual Consistency in UI Design □ Why Consistency is So Incredibly Important in UI Design □ How to Design for Color Blindness □ Designing UI with Color Blind Users in Mind □ Halvorson & Rach (2012). “Problem” and “Solution” from <i>Content Strategy for the Web</i> [pdf reading] <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Complete Introduction thru Chapter 2 of the course “WordPress 5 Essential Training: Site Administration with Morten Rand-Hendrikson” (1:02:41).

Week Begins	Activities
<p><u>Week 4</u> Continued</p>	<p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Custom CSS due to BOLT by Thursday, Sept. 10 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Plugin Installation due to BOLT by Sunday, Sept. 13 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 5</u> Monday, Sept. 14</p>	<p>Videos (26:17 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Refining Your Content Strategy (11:27) <input type="checkbox"/> Analytics: What to Pay Attention To? (14:50) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Beginner’s Guide to Content Marketing: Content Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Content Strategy: A Development Guide <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Hard-Won Lessons I’ve Learned about Content Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> How to Use Metrics to Make Your Content Strategy More Effective <input type="checkbox"/> McGrane (2012). “Your Content, Now Mobile” [pdf reading] <input type="checkbox"/> The Step-by-Step Guide to Creating a Content Calendar <input type="checkbox"/> How to Create a Social Media Content Calendar: Tips and Templates <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Content Calendar Examples from Awesome Brands to Inspire Your Own <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish the course “WordPress 5 Essential Training: Site Administration with Morten Rand-Hendrikson” (58:11). Submit certificate and reflection to BOLT by Sunday, Sept. 20 at 11:55 p.m. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Website Launch due to BOLT by Sunday, Sept. 20 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Content Plan due to BOLT by Sunday, Sept. 20 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Video Completion 2 due to BOLT by Sunday, Sept. 20 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 6</u> Monday, Sept. 21</p>	<p>Videos (1:0:55 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Content Alignment (11:00) <input type="checkbox"/> Content Audits (16:27) <input type="checkbox"/> Generating Buzz with Social Media (14:31) <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Your Audience (18:57) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Is Your Content Strategy Aligned with Your Brand Strategy? <input type="checkbox"/> Content Scale & Alignment: 7 Steps for Building a Better Content Program <input type="checkbox"/> The Step-by-Step Guide to Conducting a Content Audit <input type="checkbox"/> How to Promote Your Blog on Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> The Complete Guide to Social Media Marketing for Bloggers <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Effective Ways to Promote Your Blog on Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> How to Promote Your Blog: The Complete Beginner’s Guide <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Introduction thru Chapter 5 of the course “SEO Foundations with David Booth” (2:17:20).

Week Begins	Activities
<p><u>Week 6</u> Continued</p>	<p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Critiques submitted to BOLT. DUE Friday, Sept. 25 at 11:55 p.m. □ Content Package 1 completed by Sunday, Sept. 27 at 11:55 p.m. Submit summary to BOLT.
<p><u>Week 7</u> Monday, Sept. 28</p>	<p>Friday, Oct. 2: Classes End for Fall 2/Last Day to Withdraw from a Course</p> <p>Videos (1:15:03 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Social Media Fails (21:31) □ Design Flaws (18:19) □ Where Do You Go from Here? (18:10) □ Monetizing Your Site (17:03) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ 32 Things You’re Doing Wrong with Your Website Design □ 5 Most Common Web Design Mistakes to Avoid Right Now □ The Top Website Design Mistakes (and How to Fix Them) □ How to Avoid 6 Common Web Design Mistakes That Hurt SEO □ 8 Powerful Ways to Monetize a Blog That Generates Under 1,000 Visitors Per Day □ 5 Methods How to Monetize a Blog – Advice from a Blog That Actually Makes Money □ How to Make Money Blogging: The Beginner’s Guide with Tips from 33 Experts <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Finish the course “SEO Foundations with David Booth” (1:19:00). Submit certificate and reflection to BOLT by Sunday, Oct. 4 at 11:55 p.m. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussion 3, Social Media Marketing. Initial Post due to BOLT by Thursday, Oct. 1 at 11:55 p.m. Replies due by Sunday, Oct. 4 at 11:55 p.m. □ Content Package 2 completed by Sunday, Oct. 4 at 11:55 p.m. Submit summary to BOLT. □ Video Completion 3 due to BOLT by Sunday, Oct. 4 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 8</u> Monday, Oct. 5</p>	<p>October 5-6: FINALS for Fall 2 Classes</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Web Analytics Reflection due to BOLT by Tuesday, Oct. 6 at Noon.