

**Center for Talent Development  
Northwestern University  
Course Syllabus**

Fall 2010 - Gifted Learning Links  
Instructor: Brian Myers

**Course Title:** Introduction to Web Design

**Course Description:**

This course provides a comprehensive and fast-paced introduction to the design, creation, and maintenance of media-rich web pages and websites. Students learn how to critically evaluate website quality, learn how to create and maintain quality web pages, learn about web design accessibility standards and why they're important, and learn to create and manipulate various types of digital media in support of their design goals. Components of design such as color, typography, layout and composition will be discussed. The course progresses from introductory hands-on web page design through the creation of style sheets, navigation schemes, interactive elements, embedded multimedia, and a capstone project in which students design and develop a website based upon their personal interests.

**Essential Questions:**

- a) What are some of the elements of successful web design?
- b) What design schemes are most appropriate for different types of information?
- c) What are some effective usability techniques and standards for web designers to employ?
- d) What makes a web site "social?"
- e) As an information delivery platform, how do websites differ from books, magazines, television or the movies? How are they the same? Does it matter?

**Outcomes:**

*Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to:*

- a) Describe how the web environment functions.
- b) Identify and apply basic design concepts and principles for web delivery.
- c) Apply color theory, composition, and typography effectively.
- d) Demonstrate a basic understanding of the components and mechanics of a web page.
- e) Compress graphics and other imagery effectively.
- f) Understand effective layout and compositional principles of web design.
- g) Design a site map and information architecture for student web page.
- h) Acquire a domain name and web host and practice web file management.
- i) Utilize open source ftp, media editing and other site maintenance tools.

**Resources and Materials:**

McGrath, Mike. HTML in Easy Steps. (6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2009) In Easy Steps Ltd.

We will also visit and utilize a variety of web design, usability and standards-related websites.

A coursepack with handouts will be provided by the instructor.

Students will download the FileZilla ftp client to post their work to the server supplied for this course. We will cover specific open source media editing tools such as GIMP and Audacity. Links to a variety of additional open source media editing tools will be provided.

Students will be discouraged from using HTML editors in this introductory course, and will be encouraged to code by hand using Notepad or TextEdit.

**Schedule:**

Date(s)	Topic(s)	Activities	Assignments and/or Assessment
Week 1	Introduction to classmates	Pre-assessment phone conference with instructor.	Post to introduction to class discussion board  Visit and become familiar with class web site.
Week 2	Basic HTML  Document structure  Default formatting	We'll create a web page and discuss its structure: description (meta tags), <head>, <body>, and related attributes.  We'll also examine the default formatting features of basic HTML tags.	Create a web page that includes a personal biography with lists of favorite books, movies, games, etc.  Begin Chapter 1: Getting Started (pp 8-20)
Week 3	Tables  External hyperlinks  Internal links  Embedding images	We'll format our pages using tables, enhancing the style of our pages with border and color attributes.  We'll create external links to some of the listed items in our Week 2 assignment, and we'll create a simple internal navigation scheme to each section within our page.	Reformat personal web page using table(s); create hyperlinks to sites associated with the book and movie lists from Week 2's assignment.  Finish Chapter 1.  Read all of Chapter 2: Providing Page Information.
Week 4	Protocols, Domains, URLs  Server/client architecture  Root folder and directory structures  Site Navigation	We'll discuss the history of the Internet and the World Wide Web, its structure and protocols.  Returning to our personal websites, we'll begin creating additional pages and organizing a directory structure. We'll then create a simple site-wide navigation scheme.	We'll create multiple content areas organized within a hierarchy of subdirectories, and begin creating pages within each.  We'll create a simple navigation scheme linking each content area to our home page.  Read Chapter 4: Adding Style to Content
Week 5	Style Sheets	We'll discuss the richness and versatility that style sheets provide, and we'll examine how CSS is used to format text, page structure and page elements.  We'll examine how class attributes are used to diversify standard HTML tags, and we'll look at how <div> tags are used to structure and style specific page elements.	We'll reformat various elements of our existing pages by implementing style sheets.  We'll create a tabbed navigation scheme with dynamic mouseover effects.  Read Chapter 7: Embedding Objects  Optional: Read Chapter 5: Writing Lists Read Chapter 6: Making Tables
Week 6	Style Sheets (cont'd)  Embedded Media  A survey of open source video and audio capture/editing tools.	We'll continue exploring the use of style sheets to organize page content, including backgrounds and graphics.  We'll explore how to embed documents, audio and video content, including Quicktime and RealPlayer files.	Students will create page(s) that offer streaming content using embedded audio and video players;  Optional: Download CamStudio (for PC users) or iShowU (for Mac users) and create a short screen capture video for embedding.  Read Chapter 10: Building Forms
Week 7	Forms	We'll create forms to collect user input, and discuss the appropriate use of various form elements such as radio buttons, selection lists,	Students will create a form allowing users to supply responses to a survey. The form will include an upload feature that will allow survey

		<p>text areas and checkboxes. We will also create a file upload element that will allow users to post document, music or video files.</p> <p>We'll also examine how to use style sheets to define the appearance of forms and form elements.</p>	<p>respondents to upload a picture or avatar to accompany their response.</p> <p>During week 7 students will be asked to submit a final project proposal describing the web site they plan to create as their final project for this class.</p>
Week 8	Web 2.0	<p>In this class we'll discuss the impact of sites composed of user generated content, such as Facebook and Youtube, on the World Wide Web, and we'll discuss the phenomenon of blogging.</p> <p>We'll examine various hosted blogging sites, and we'll discuss how bloggers are changing the information landscape and changing the world of print and TV journalism and entertainment.</p>	Work on final project.
Week 9	Final projects	Work on final projects.	Post final projects w/documentation to class web page.

### **Instructor Biography:**

Brian Myers has a BS from Northwestern University and an MLIS from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. He directs Game Maker Academy, an out-of-school educational nonprofit program for youth and teens, and has taught teen-oriented media and game design classes at various institutions around Chicago's North Shore. He has taught at CTD for four years, offering classes in digital media and game development, dynamic web design and Java programming. He speaks and writes frequently about the importance of promoting digital design activities as a strategy for nurturing essential 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills. His Game Maker Academy program was the recipient of a 2008 American Library Association Presidential Citation.

### **Contact Information:**

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### **CTD Statement on Third-Party Web Sites**

*Instructors are required to thoroughly review any third-party web sites they intend to use in their courses for inappropriate content. However, because web content continuously changes, CTD disclaims any responsibility for any of the content contained on third-party web sites used in course materials. If you become aware of anything that may be inappropriate, please notify CTD staff immediately.*