

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**GREENLEE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION**  
**JIMC 315—Multimedia Production**

Spring Term 2010  
MW – 010B Hamilton Hall  
Meeting Time: 3:30 – 5:10 pm  
E-mail: [jgroshek@gmail.com](mailto:jgroshek@gmail.com)

Instructor: Dr. Jacob Groshek  
Office: 116 Hamilton Hall  
Office Hours: 1:30 – 3:30 pm MW

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**Text:**

This class is not very heavy on reading but there will be a number of assigned articles and handouts designed to give you a theoretical and practical basis to better evaluate and create your own multimedia.

There are two textbooks that I suggest for this course. Both have been ordered and should be available at the bookstore. While I won't always "assign" specific readings, these texts are good resources for troubleshooting with step-by-step directions. Learn to use this book as such—diagnosing and solving problems in multimedia development is the best way to learn.

Adobe Dreamweaver CS4 Classroom in a Book (2009).  
Adobe Flash CS4 Professional Classroom in a Book (2009).

Keep in mind this class isn't about teaching directly to software (i.e., CS4). You can design multimedia projects and online features without ever using Adobe at all. This class is about becoming comfortable with working in an online environment, and as such requires knowledge of things like HTML, CSS, PHP, and CMS. Software (i.e., Dreamweaver and Flash) is just there to help you along.

**Course focus and design:**

This course is designed to provide an overview of basic Web design and production. The emphasis of the course, however, is not on software or technical issues but on understanding how the Web and its components can be used to achieve communication objectives. We will learn basic HTML and CSS coding as part of this process. The course will also introduce you to a popular Web editor, Adobe Dreamweaver and its complementary counterpart, Adobe Flash. We will also have a basic introduction to Java and Action Scripts. The point of these technical exercises is to produce better and more interesting forms of online storytelling.

Please note that it is **your** responsibility to read this syllabus carefully. Feel free to approach me with any questions about course topics, goals, requirements or policies at any point during the course.

## **Course Objectives:**

1. have a basic understanding of using multimedia elements to support communication efforts;
2. be able to author and design your own basic Web site;
3. produce a comprehensive Web site for a real-world client;
4. understand the underlying concepts and principles related to interactive media.

## **Supplementary Materials:**

A student or trial edition of Adobe CS4 is recommended, but not required.

## **Prerequisites:**

The prerequisite for the class is JLMC342L or 343L or equivalent computer design proficiency. Electronic Media students who have taken JLMC306 also qualify for the class. Please notify me during the first class if you have **not** taken the prerequisite. This course relies on basic design skills and previous knowledge of how to use the Internet. You are required to have an active email account and check it regularly.

Basic understanding of file types and folder/server structure is also required. If you do not meet the prerequisite for the class or feel that you need additional computer assistance, meet with me as soon as possible. In-class assignments will be an important part of this course. Throughout the semester, you will be asked to apply the new skills you have learned by completing a computer assignment during class.

## **Assignments**

Homework will be given to reinforce material covered in class. The best way to learn Web design is by practice on your own. You will need access to the lab software to complete your homework so please plan ahead as open lab hours may vary. Each student will show their completed homework assignments to the rest of the class.

You will have to complete a 1-page Web site critique early in the semester. The Web site you will evaluate will be assigned by me and the report should be based on **more** than one visit to that site on **more** than one day.

You will build your first Web site using only HTML coding. This will be a basic site used to gauge your current skill level early in the course. From this, you will learn how to trouble-shoot, update, and maintain your own sites because this is a critical skill in Web development.

You will also be assigned a specific issue/ topic and asked to summarize it for the class, listing relevant Web sites and other resources. These presentations will also entail creating a short tutorial for the rest of the class about your particular topic.

One major project will be to develop a Web site for an organization. This can be a group project where you will work with one or more of your classmates or you can work on your own. The goal is to produce an attractive and functional Web site with multimedia components and interactivity. You will be asked to present your site during a “Show & Tell” session the last week of the semester. More details about the project will be distributed later in the class, but I have two potential clients (an independent record label and a scholarly association) for you to choose from.

Your other major project is a fully functional personal Web site that you can use now and in your future career. This site **MUST** be of a professional nature and will showcase your skills in all other areas of your training. It is **NOT** a place to put cutesy pictures of your family or friends or any other non-professional information. The goal of this class is to help you get a job and having an online portfolio is a great way to do that.

Before you begin working on your projects, you will need to submit a project proposal. The objective of the proposal is to set the groundwork for your Web site and to clearly -- and realistically -- outline what you plan to accomplish.

Additional information about each assignment will be distributed in class.

Deadlines are very important in this course so please complete your assignments on time. **MISSING CLASS WILL DESTROY YOUR GRADE AND THERE WILL BE NO EXTRA CREDIT OR “MAKE-UP” ASSIGNMENTS.** Even though there are not formal tests in the class, students are expected to have completed the assigned handouts and be familiar with the concepts and ideas introduced therein. Please make sure that you get a copy of the main book, either electronically or otherwise.

### **Attendance and participation:**

Attendance will be taken, but only until I can put names to faces. This is not to suggest that I won't notice if you are absent -- I will and your grade will suffer. Participation constitutes only 5 percent of your final grade but those who are not present are obviously unable to participate in class discussions and demonstrations, and penalty will be assessed accordingly. Previous experience teaching this class suggests that attendance is essential to your success in this course. **TO REPEAT: MISSING CLASS WILL DESTROY YOUR GRADE AND THERE WILL BE NO EXTRA CREDIT OR “MAKE-UP” ASSIGNMENTS.**

Furthermore, failure to provide homework assignment(s) on time will result in receiving NO CREDIT for the assignment(s). No exceptions will be made and make-up homework will not be accepted. To repeat—LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

I encourage discussion and interaction in this class during the session. To be clear, though, disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If I find your behavior disruptive or inappropriate to me or to your classmates I will discuss this with you. If this type of disruptive behavior continues I will ask you to leave the class.

## Course Policies:

Grading: The grading scale is found below. Grades are not curved.

<u>Course requirements</u>	<u>Possible points</u>	
Website critique	100	(10% of final grade)
Five in-class assignments	150	(15% of final grade)
Five homework assignments	150	(15% of final grade)
Topic presentation	50	( 5% of final grade)
Participation	50	( 5% of final grade)
Personal Website	250	(25% of final grade)
Final project	250	(25% of final grade)
Total	1000	(100% of final grade)

### Grading scale

93-100%	A
90-92	A-
88-89	B+
83-87	B
80-82	B-
78-79	C+
73-77	C
70-72	C-
68-69	D+
63-67	D
60-62	D-
00-59	F

Grades reflect the following:

**A** = Mastery of the content and concepts introduced in the course; original thinking in all assignments; creativity in Web design; thorough preparation for class; excellent attendance and participation; exploring Web design resources outside of class.

**B** = Strong effort in preparation; consistent attendance and participation; evidence of understanding the course content and concepts; very good performance on assignments; strong Web design and production skills.

**C** = Acceptable preparation; familiarity with course content and concepts; frequent attendance; average performance.

**D** = Lack of effort and inadequate performance; irregular attendance and little contribution to the class

## Academic Dishonesty:

In accordance with the high standards of excellence set forth by, and for, all members of the Iowa State University community, the Greenlee School finds it imperative that each student understand that the responsibilities associated with high standards of excellence include ensuring that all class work undertaken in this School is performed in an environment that promotes serious scholarship and moral rectitude.

Therefore, the School herein delineates a zero-tolerance policy for acts of academic dishonesty. All acts of suspected academic dishonesty will be thoroughly investigated in a manner that is fair, timely, and efficient and done so in a manner that protects the rights of both the faculty member and the student. Any individual that is found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty may receive a penalty, up to and including expulsion from Iowa State University.

All work presented in class must be your own. Cheating in any form will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade in this class. This applies to all online content (text, images and Web design) you turn in as your own as well as to your written work. **DO NOT COPY HTML OR CSS CODES AND SUBMIT THEM AS YOUR OWN WORK.** If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, you must ask me BEFORE you turn your work in. For more details on academic dishonesty contact the office of Student Services.

### **Conclusion:**

If you have little or no Web development experience, this class may be challenging but anyone willing to put forth the effort can pass this class. Keep in mind the goal here is NOT to teach any one specific software application because software will always change and there will always be different buttons to push. The goal is to provide you with confidence to work in multimedia production knowing that you can solve most any problem with enough effort even if the platform, the code, and the software might be new to you. Ultimately, you can then use these skills to tell better and more meaningful stories in your media careers.