



# ENGL 4368 Advanced Web Design Digital Content Management

Fall 2023

Thursday 6:00-8:50 pm (CST) | Humanities Room 308 Hybrid Synchronous  
[Blackboard](#) | Zoom Link <https://texastech.zoom.us/my/thamjason>

## Instructor Information

**Name:** Dr. Geoffrey Sauer  
**Office:** Humanities Building, Room 363-B  
**Student Hours:** Tuesday 12-3pm, or by appointment (please email to set up meetings)  
**Email:** [geoff.sauer@ttu.edu](mailto:geoff.sauer@ttu.edu)  
**Student Hours:** Wed 10:45-11:30am office/Zoom, and by appointment  
**Zoom:** <https://iastate.zoom.us/j/7507985899> (works today)  
<https://texastech.zoom.us/my/geosauer> (will eventually work, but apparently not today)

## Course Description

This course will teach strategies for developing and delivering multimodal content via digital media. Focusing on back-end web design, the course will cover principles of database design, interface development, usability testing, and collaborative content management within professional communication settings. Upon completing the course, students will understand back-end web development and be able to:

- Apply rhetorical principles (audience analysis, invention, organization, style, design) to authoring with and authoring of content management systems.
- Use usability and user experience design techniques for content development (including web multimedia which include database-driven content, streaming media, and interactivity).
- Plan and manage collaborative CMS projects; to master software genres commonly used for database-driven content development in education and industry.
- Describe content strategy methods in developing modular web content.

## Course Materials

- Miscellaneous readings, available from [the course's Blackboard](#).
- **Optional:** Adobe XD, InDesign and Photoshop ([see options here](#)).

## Assignments and Grade Distribution

Assignment	Weight	Due Date*
Database-Driven HTML5 Viewer	15%	September 15
Example WordPress Site	20%	October 6
Mid-Term Exam	20%	October 12
Analysis of an Existing CMS	15%	November 3
Presentations	10%	November 30
Final Projects	20%	December 5
Total	100%	

\*Refer to the course schedule (page 4) for details. Full assignment descriptions available starting page 6.

## Grading Scale

<b>A</b> 90-100	Professional quality work  Appropriate for workplace distribution, with minimal or no revision. Exceeds assignment requirements using a creative or challenging approach in its style, development and/or delivery. The work demonstrates superior organization, research, visual design, and editing.
<b>B</b> 80-89.99	Adequate quality work  Pending some revision, the work would be appropriate for professional distribution. Meets assignment requirements, following typical genre and style conventions. The work's research, development, organization, style, and visual design demonstrate adequate effort, but with problems in some areas.
<b>C</b> 70-79.99	Low quality work  Requires subsequent development and review before consideration for professional distribution. Most of the assignment requirements were met, yet the work demonstrates more obvious problems in the development, organization, style, visual design, and editing.

<b>D</b>  60-69.99	Poor quality work.
<b>F</b>  0-59.99	Fails to complete many of the minimum assignment requirements. The work is lacking in research and development and has serious problems with the organization, visual design, and editing. A failing grade is also reserved for plagiarized work.

### General Course Policies

- Refer to the [TTU OP 34.04 academic regulations](#) (esp. item 4) for attendance expectations.
- Let me know via email or in person in advance of class if you are going to be absent. (Doctor’s notes are expected for medical leaves.)
- Expect to participate actively in class discussions.
- If you seem distracted by—or are distracting others with—non-class related technologies or materials, I will ask you to put them away.
- Respect the views of others. Maintain and promote a civil environment for learning.
- If your behavior seems distracting/harmful toward others, I will ask you to leave the class.
- Submit your work on time (as indicated on the course schedule). Late work will be penalized. If you are unable to meet the due dates, please work with me to figure things out.

### ADA Statement

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note: instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact Student Disability Services in Weeks Hall or call 806-742-2405. Refer to [OP 34.22](#) for details.

### Academic Integrity Statement

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own class and/or course work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching, and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures grades are earned honestly. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers.

## Religious Holy Day Statement

The Texas Tech University also requires that instructors provide a statement about religious holy days. O P 34.19 states that:

1. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code §11.20.
2. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.
3. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily

See [OP 34.19](#) for details.

*Note:* Texas Tech Policies Concerning Academic Honesty, Special Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, and Student Absences for Observance of Religious Holy Days may be found on Blackboard.

## Course Schedule

Week & Theme	Day	Readings (complete before class)	Activities
Week 1 Introductions	Thur 8/24	Review this syllabus. Share course-related questions in class.	Introduce yourself in class. Set up text editor and practice in class.
Week 2 HTML	Thur 9/07		Discuss Static Web Page assignment.
Week 3 HTML	Thur 9/14		Tinker with headings, lists, links, and images using text editor in class.  Set up personal static web page with template provided.
Week 4	Mon 9/19	Duckett chapters 10 & 11	Tinker with CSS texts and colors in class.

CSS	Wed 9/21	Duckett chapters 12 & 13	Workshop Static Webpage draft in class.
Week 5	Mon 9/26	Duckett chapter 18	Static Webpage due at 11:59 pm.
CSS & CMS	Wed 9/28	Optimizely. <a href="#">The Fundamentals of Content Management</a> [video]  ThemeIsle. <a href="#">What is a CMS?</a>	Select and set up CMS in class.
Week 6	Mon 10/03	NNGroup. <a href="#">Content Management Models</a> [video]  CMI. <a href="#">Digital Assets Management</a>	Discuss Component Library assignment.  Review <a href="#">TTU style guide</a> (general).  Review Google <a href="#">Material Design Components</a> (general).
CMS & DS	Wed 10/05	Showalter. <a href="#">Design Systems, Pattern Libraries, &amp; Style Guides</a> [video]  Rangle. <a href="#">Scoping Design Systems</a>	Determine client selection and needs.  Tinker with MS PowerPoint (PPT).

Week 7	Mon 10/10	iThemes. <a href="#">A 6-Step Design Process</a>  Usability.gov. <a href="#">UCD Process Map</a>	Tinker with Adobe Photoshop.  Review <a href="#">TTU style guide</a> (visual).
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	Wed 10/12	Wikipedia. <a href="#">HCI</a>  99designs. <a href="#">How to Create a Brand Style Guide</a>	PPT and Photoshop demos.  Review <a href="#">TTU style guide</a> (voice/writing).
Week 8  DS & HCI	Mon 10/17	Tom. <a href="#">Icons Do's and Don'ts</a>  Creative Bloq. <a href="#">5 Tips for Making Your Designs Future-Proof</a>	PPT and Photoshop demos.  Review <a href="#">TTU style guide</a> (web guidelines).
	Wed 10/19	Google. <a href="#">Fonts Knowledge</a>	Workshop Component Library draft in class.
Week 9  DS & HCI	Mon 10/24	Adobe. <a href="#">Design Documentation: Why You Need It</a>  Google. <a href="#">Material Design: Introduction</a>	Component Library due at 11:59 pm.  Discuss Design Documentation assignment.
	Wed 10/26	A List Apart. <a href="#">The Psychology of Design</a>  Google. <a href="#">Material Foundation</a>	Identify examples of design documentation.  Determine major design components for documentation.
Week 10  HCI & UX	Mon 10/31	Adobe. <a href="#">What is UX Design</a>	Q&A: Design Documentation
	Wed 11/02	Growth.Design. <a href="#">The Psychology of Design</a>	Workshop Design Documentation draft in class.

Week 11  UX	Mon 11/07	Klyn. <a href="#">Explaining Information Architecture</a> [video]  Rathjens. <a href="#">The Seven Components of Clarity in Technical Writing</a>	Design Documentation due at 11:59 pm.  Discuss Information Structure Documentation assignment.
	Wed 11/09	Impact Plus. <a href="#">How to Create a Content Style Guide</a>	Determine major information structure components for documentation.
Week 12  UX & CA	Mon 11/14	Usability.gov. <a href="#">Wireframing</a>  Smashing. <a href="#">How to Speed Up the Wireframing Process</a>  Web Style Guide. <a href="#">Information Architecture</a>	Q&A: Information Structure Documentation  Discuss Final Mockup and Assessment Report assignment.
	Wed 11/16	HubSpot. <a href="#">What is a Website Mockup</a>  Google. <a href="#">Material Design: Accessibility</a>	Workshop Information Structure Documentation draft in class.
Week 13  CA	Mon 11/21	Dynomapper. <a href="#">How to Evaluate the Quality of Your Website Design</a>  Assessment rubric for final mockup (page 9 of this document)	Information Structure Documentation due at 11:59 pm.
	Wed	NO CLASS: Give Thanks	

	11/23		
Week 14	Mon 11/28	No readings; prepare for test session	Prepare testing materials and scenarios.
CA	Wed 11/30	No readings; test session with classmates	Test Final Mockup in class.
Week 15	Mon 12/05	No readings; debrief and wrap up	Final Mockup and Assessment Report due at 11:59 pm.  Complete course evaluation (Smart Eval).
CA	Wed 12/07	<b>NO CLASS: Study Day.</b> This course has no finals.	

Legend:

- HTML = Hypertext Markup Language
- CSS = Cascading Style Sheet
- CMS = Content Management System
- DS = Design Systems
- HCI = Human-Computer Interactions
- UX = User Experience
- CA = Content Assessment

## Assignment Descriptions

**Nota bene:** Please read the following assignment descriptions carefully and pay attention to due dates **in the course schedule**. You are responsible for turning in your work on time for proper evaluation. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding any assignment, please contact the instructor well before the assignment deadline. Late submissions may not receive any grade.

There are five major assignments in this course:

1. Static webpage
2. Component library



- 3.Design documentation
- 4.Information structure documentation
- 5.Final mockup and assessment report

## 1) **Static Webpage** (20%) - due September 26

Sketch and build a simple webpage to introduce yourself (personal/professional direction). Experiment with multiple elements like images, tables, lists, and other styles to further develop your HTML and CSS competencies.

- Select a plain text editor to work on this assignment. Your computer should have a basic editor you can use: Notepad (Windows), TextEdit (Mac). Otherwise, use a free editor like Atom.io.
- Download the index.html and styles.css files from the course OneDrive. Save them in a folder together on your computer.
- To view the site as you edit, open the index.html file in a web browser. Whenever changes are made and saved, you may refresh the web browser to see the updates.
- Along with the static website, compose a process memo to document your editing process, challenges met and resolved, and questions that arise.
- Submit the HTML, CSS, and process memo as a ZIP file to OneDrive.

Evaluation criteria:

- Your webpage is accessible at the time of evaluation.
- Your process memo is accessible as a PDF.
- The webpage demonstrates your understanding of static web editing/scripting.
- Your webpage includes appropriate use of visual elements.
- The process memo documents your thought process and reflections on this exercise.

## 2) **Component Library** (20%) - due October 24

A pattern/component library contains all the components required to quickly and easily build a wide range of related interfaces. Create a simple set of visual/UI (user interface) components for your selected client. The library must include the following:

- Logo and usage (logo can be original or existing; show at least two use cases)
- Page layout principles (for smartphone, desktop, and tablet screens)
- Color palette or theme
- Typography (fonts, weight, hierarchy, and spacing rules)

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Button designs (at least two kinds of button)

- Key icons (at least five key icons, including a menu icon)
- Pop-ups/popovers (one or two examples)
- Interactive/reactive features (for hyperlinks, button/icon behaviors, etc.)

This component library does not require you to provide any written guidance/instructions for using the components. You will specify those guidelines in the Design Documentation and Information Structure Documentation assignments later.

Evaluation criteria:

- Component library is presented in an accessible format on a selected CMS.
- All UI components (stated above) are addressed and presented appropriately.
- The components are deemed suitable for your selected client's business or services.
- Designs are original. If an open-access toolkit is used, credits must be included.

### **3) Design Documentation (20%) - due November 7**

A design documentation teaches others how to apply the visual/UI principles included in the component library. For this assignment, expand your component library (second assignment) by adding explicit guidelines for web designers using your library. Focus specifically on the visual aspects rather than written content style (that will be your next assignment). For each of your components, describe (wherever applicable) the following:

- Principles (two to three guiding principles; can be repeated for multiple components)
- Purpose for usage (functions of the component)
- Types of usage (ways in which the component can be used)
- Anatomy (all parts of the component)
- Constraints and/or exceptions (how the component should not be used and/or any special use cases)

Evaluation criteria:

- Documentation is accessible on the CMS that houses the component library.
- Documentation is clear, concise, and error-free.
- Documentation is appropriate for the corresponding component.
- Documentation is complete.

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**4) Information Structure Documentation (20%) - due November 21**

Expand your component library with instructions and guidelines for creating user-centered content using an information structure documentation. Include the following in your documentation:

- Tone and voice for content (to create a consistent brand identity)
- General style for writing (spelling, pronouns, controlled vocabularies, etc.)
- Content hierarchies and classifications (most to least important content; navigation)
- Sections and subsections (think menu organization; metaphors for finding/retrieving information)
- Metadata requirements (for visuals and non-textual content) • Update procedures

Constraints and/or exceptions

Evaluation criteria:

- Documentation is accessible on the CMS that houses the component library.
- Documentation is clear, concise, and error-free.
- Documentation is appropriate for the corresponding component and content elements.
- Documentation is complete.

**5) Final Mockup and Assessment Report (20%) - due December 5**

Using your component library (now a style guide), create a website mockup for your client. This mockup must consist of a homepage and a subsidiary page at minimum. You can choose to create an interactive mockup or a static mockup. An interactive mockup can be built with applications like [InVision](#), [Adobe XD](#), [Figma](#), or [Axure](#). A static mockup can be created in Adobe InDesign or MS PowerPoint. The mockup should demonstrate at least 80% of the UI components in your component library. The mockup must also include actual content (not placeholder texts) that reflects the information structure guidelines you created.

During Week 14, you will put this mockup to test. A classmate of yours will review the mockup with the following rubric. You will review another classmate’s mockup in return using the same rubric. Upon completion, you will provide an assessment report that provides your evaluation of your classmate’s mockup and recommendations for improvement on their style guide.

Assessment rubric:

Aspects	Descriptions	Your Remarks
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Clarity	The overall concept should be straightforward and easily understood by the user. The user should be able to identify what features are available and what they can do with the website.	
Navigability	The user should be able to move across the website from the homepage to subsidiary pages with minimal effort. Information should be readily searchable or findable. Categories and hierarchies are logical.	
Readability	Content is comprehensible and avoids jargon. The user should be able to use the copy or content to complete desirable tasks.	
Consistency	The overall visual and verbal presentation of the website is uniform and compatible. The user should be able to recognize a brand identity. The design of the website reflects the nature of the business/service.	

Evaluation criteria:

Your mockup is complete and ready for testing.

- Your mockup consists of 80% of the UI components in your library.
- Your mockup includes real content that represents your client’s business or services.
- Your assessment report covers all areas of the rubric and provides constructive recommendations.

**Nature of the Syllabus**

This syllabus—including the course schedule and assignment descriptions—is a plan, not a promise. I reserve the right to modify any component of this course to fit your learning needs. You will be notified of any changes.