



## Shaun Slattery

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## Course Overview & Goals

In this course, student will experience the process and practice of web development with careful attention to the relationship between a site's audience and purpose and its content and form. We will move from research to publishing, producing many of the written documents which commonly accompany the development of web information, including user personas, site maps, design mockups, and usability reports. We will learn best practices for web design, from information architecture and navigation to style sheets and page layouts. However, we will strive to understand web design as a process of rhetorical choices rather than a set of universalized rules. We will also carefully examine writing — writing online content optimized for both humans (focusing on concise, useful, usable information) and computers (focusing on search-engine optimization and web-standards). In addition to these techniques, we will learn several of the technologies that make online content possible (HTML, WYSIWYG web development software, CSS, RSS, and push-button publishing such as wikis and blogs).

## Course Materials

Jump drive ([like this one](#) 1GB should be more than sufficient)

**DePaul web account** – You've already got it, but you'll need to set it up to publish web pages. Directions at: <[http://is.depaul.edu/communication/web/personal\\_students.asp](http://is.depaul.edu/communication/web/personal_students.asp)>

**Online accounts** – you will need to create accounts with online services to produce and share work (e.g. [PB Wiki](#), [Google Analytics](#)).

## Required Texts



Krug, Steve. *Don't Make Me Think! A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability*, 2nd Ed. Berkeley, CA: New Riders Publishing, 2006.

Author's [website](#)

Purchase from DePaul's [Bookstore](#) or [Amazon](#)



Brown, Daniel. *Communicating Design: Developing Web Site Documentation for Design and Planning*. Berkeley, CA: New Riders Publishing, 2006.

Book [website](#)

Purchase from DePaul's [Bookstore](#) or [Amazon](#)

### Additional Texts (purchase if considering web design professionally)



van Duyne, Douglas K., James A. Landay, Jason I. Hong. *The Design of Sites: Patterns for Creating Winning Web Sites*, 2nd Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2006.

PDFs distributed via course wiki

Book [website](#)



Macdonald, Nico. *What Is Web Design?* RotoVision, 2003.

PDFs distributed via course wiki

[Google Books](#) [first 30 pages only!]

And access technology [e-books from DePaul's Library](#)! Select Safari Tech Books Online.

Some assigned readings and all other course materials will be available from the course wiki. Because of this, regular access to the Internet or campus computer labs is necessary.

# Assignment Overview

## Website Redesign Group Project

**(65% = Proposal Memo 15%, Analysis Report 20%, Redesign Blueprint 20%, Redesign Sample 15%)**

To learn the design process for web content, you will engage in a sustained website redesign project with 1-2 peers over the quarter, producing several deliverables. Teams will identify a website in need of improvement; thoroughly research the site's audience and purpose, genre, content, structure, and usability; propose a complete, appropriate redesign of the website; and produce a sample of redesigned content.

## Individual Work (25%)

You will be asked to produce a variety of individual homework assignments and to contribute to the course wiki. Regular, engaged participation in these activities is necessary in order to earn high marks for the class.

## Participation (10%)

Preparedness for class and contributions to class discussions are necessary for a dynamic learning environment. Your participation in class discussion of course concepts and projects is expected.

# Course Policies

My course policies are based upon professional courtesy — treating me and one another as professionals in a workplace. Remember, we are all each other's professional network.

## Attendance & Participation Policy

As a graduate class, your regular attendance, contribution to discussions, and attentive participation in in-class activities will directly contribute to the value of the course for you and your peers. Therefore, your participation and in-class activities comprise a significant portion of your final grade (10%). Perfect attendance will be rewarded with 2 bonus points added to your final grade in the class. Likewise, I understand that we are adults with multiple responsibilities and must prioritize accordingly. If you know you will miss a class, please extend me the professional courtesy of emailing me ahead of time.

## Working Online

This course will ask you to participate publicly on the Internet. For your future professional viability, please behave professionally online and protect your identity as needed. We will also be reading online materials that can sometimes contain questionable content.

## Assignment Policies

Because we will often discuss assignments you submit, make a version available to view in class to facilitate discussion on the day an assignment is due.

**Submission & File-naming:** Careful adherence to requested assignment submission formats and file-naming conventions helps me manage hundreds of documents and

simulates workplace practice. Please name all documents as follows:  
sitename\_assignment.extension (e.g. petcare\_proposal.doc).

**Grading:** Major assignments are an opportunity for you to learn or practice the concepts of the course and are a necessary part of the learning process. Assignments are graded on a letter-grade basis (A, A-, B+). Assignments not turned in will receive a grade of 0. Graded assignments will be evaluated based upon clearly-stated criteria. Minor homework and in-class assignments will be evaluated holistically on a 4-point scale (√+, √, √-, 0).

## **Academic Integrity**

DePaul's Academic Integrity Policy defines your responsibilities as a student. Of particular concern in any writing course are issues of copyright and plagiarism. We will discuss appropriate use of protected material as well as copyrights for your own work. However, documented cases of intentional plagiarism — the overt misrepresentation of another's work as your own — will be grounds for failure of the course.

## **Learning Disabilities**

Students with a documented learning disability [see DePaul's [Productive Learning Strategies \(PLuS\) Program](#)] should notify me so I may make academic accommodations.

## **Completing the Course**

This course is structured to enable successful completion of assignments in the time allotted. I will not consider issuing an “Incomplete” for this class except in the most extreme circumstances.

# Schedule

#	date	subject	due
01	4/2	<p>course overview</p> <p>intro to course project</p> <p>tech 1: course wiki &amp; push-button publishing</p> <p>tech 2: looking under the hood, good design begins at code</p>	nil
02	4/9	<p>project team formation &amp; intro of Proposal Memo</p> <p>web design, development cycle</p> <p>web genres &amp; patterns</p>	<p>activate your DePaul web account: &lt;<a href="http://is.depaul.edu/communication/web/personal_students.asp">http://is.depaul.edu/communication/web/personal_students.asp</a>&gt;</p> <p><b>HW01:</b> post (by Sunday!) and sign up for (by Wednesday!) web redesign suggestions</p> <p><b>readings</b> (.PDFs on wiki, folders, Readings):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What Is Web Design?</i> (p. 34-104)</li> <li>• <i>The Design of Sites</i>, Ch.2 Making the Most of Web Design Patterns (p.19-37)</li> <li>• <i>The Design of Sites</i>, Pt.2 Patterns, Genres (intro p.117-119); E-commerce (p.120-127); Non-profits (p.154-160); Info Sites (p.161-166)</li> </ul>
03	4/16	<p>users and usability</p> <p>in-class activity: usability testing (card-sort, scenario)</p> <p>usability test planning</p>	<p><b>Proposal Memo due</b></p> <p><b>readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Design of Sites</i>, Ch.3 "Knowing Your Customers" (p.39-67, .PDF on wiki, folders, Readings)</li> <li>• Usability reading roundup: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Intro to Usability Testing &lt;<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usability_testing">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usability_testing</a>&gt; (defines Usability Testing and gives a brief introduction/overview of concepts)</li> <li>◦ Ready, Set, Go: Usability Testing &lt;<a href="http://www.adobe.com/devnet/articles/usability_testing.html">http://www.adobe.com/devnet/articles/usability_testing.html</a>&gt; (more detailed introduction to setting up and running a usability test)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Teams will choose one of two types of usability tests to run – a paper or PowerPoint-based scenario OR a card sort.” Learn more about both by reading</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Usability Test for Success &lt;<a href="http://www.smartisans.com/articles/web_utest_success.aspx">http://www.smartisans.com/articles/web_utest_success.aspx</a>&gt;</li> <li>○ Paper-based heuristic evaluation &lt;<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paper_prototypes">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paper_prototypes</a>&gt;</li> <li>○ Card Sorting &lt;<a href="http://www.hhs.gov/usability/design/cardsort.html">http://www.hhs.gov/usability/design/cardsort.html</a>&gt;</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Don't Make Me Think!</i>, Ch.9 "Usability Testing on \$0.10 a day", Ch.10 "Usability as Common Courtesy"</li> </ul>
04	4/23	analyzing websites, communicating analysis  tech 3: visual editors	<p><b>reading:</b> <i>Communicating Design</i>, Ch.7 "Content Inventory" (p.167-171), Ch.8 "Site Maps" (p.199-218), Ch. 2 "Personas" (p.15-33, 47-48)</p> <p><b>HW02:</b> content inventory, site map, persona</p>
05	4/30	in-class revision, submission of analysis reports  site structures & intro to Redesign Blueprint assignment  tech 4: .CSS & templates	<p><b>Analysis Report due</b></p> <p><b>reading:</b> Information Architecture, Ch. 3, 4, &amp; 5 "User Needs &amp; Behaviors," "The Anatomy of an Information Architecture," "Organization Systems" (.PDF on wiki, folders, Readings)</p>
06	5/7	planning webpages, navigation, communicating design  in-class activity: designing navigation	<p><b>readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Don't Make Me Think!</i>, Ch.6 "Street Signs and Breadcrumbs"</li> <li>● <i>Communicating Design</i>, Ch.10 "Wireframes" (p.265-273), Ch.11 "Screen Designs" (p.311-317)</li> </ul>
07	5/14	in-class revision, submission of Redesign Blueprints  writing for users & machines  in-class activity: web standards, Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	<p><b>Redesign Blueprint due</b></p> <p><b>readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Morris, M.D. "The Power of Quiddity." Intercom. March 2001. (.PDF on wiki, folders, Readings)</li> <li>● <i>Don't Make Me Think!</i> Ch.2, 3, &amp; 5</li> <li>● <a href="http://www.gooddocuments.com/techniques/techniqueshome.htm">http://www.gooddocuments.com/techniques/techniqueshome.htm</a> (skim all techniques)</li> </ul>
08	5/21	in-class activity: working with images  studio time	nil
09	5/28	studio time	nil
10	6/4	studio time	nil

		last day wrap up, course evaluations	
		no exam scheduled	<b>Web Redesign Project due</b>