

DIG 6836: Design and Development of Texts and Technology

3 credit hours

Mondays, 6:00-7:15, Location TCH 116

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Office: OTC 500 room 194
Office Hours: Mondays 12:00-5:00pm
Other times and virtual office hours also available by appointment.

Overview

Fundamental to a deep understanding of new media theory and practice is knowledge about the underpinnings of digital computing (especially Web-based technologies). This course will introduce you to some digital design and development techniques to be used in the interdisciplinary scholarship of Texts and Technology. Specifically, you will learn how to use markup and coding languages to structure and format text in order to build interactive projects using the World Wide Web. As you work toward these goals, you will learn and apply foundational techniques in computation such as iteration, conditional logic, randomness, and algorithm design. We will also study how to apply programming techniques for functions such as text parsing, data analysis, repetition, and interactive design. These skills will further aid you as you consider applied digital components for your dissertation or other scholarly projects.

The bulk of your “writing” in this course will be done in digital form through interactive projects. However, you will also maintain a developer’s journal and coding log (these will be explained in class). Additionally, you will design a project proposal for your final project. You will complete this final project in several steps throughout the semester, building onto it as you learn new techniques. By the end of the course, you should have the knowledge to a) plan and design a workflow for an interactive digital project, b) select the appropriate data structures, functions, and/or objects to employ in your project, c) determine the best technical and rhetorical means by which to deploy your project to an audience, and d) document and assess your project within a scholarly context.

We will use a course website to extend our inquiry online, share work with others, and keep track of our collective work. This website will contain copies of our major assignments, example code and tutorials, and links to student projects.

M-Model Course

You will notice that our course is only scheduled to meet in person for one hour and fifteen minutes each week. This is not very much time! Our face-to-face time is shortened on purpose in order to provide you extra time each week to work through the programming materials at your own pace. You should be sure to schedule your time appropriately so that you have plenty of time to work through the programming materials and forum postings. The discussion boards will be deployed on our official Canvas web site (<https://webcourses.ucf.edu>).

Webcourses is additionally available from the “Online Course Tools” of your MyUCF panel. Students are encouraged to make use of the forum thread for any questions about assignments or course materials. You are also encouraged to share your work on the discussion board, and, of course, discuss course topics. For general help with Webcourses or logging into your account, see <http://learn.ucf.edu/>.

Late Work Policy

Late work will not be accepted unless there is a documented medical emergency. Assignments can always be submitted early.

Course Objectives

- Understand and apply media programming techniques and user-centered design to develop scholarly textual and interactive projects for the World Wide Web and your scholarly portfolios.
- Solve problems using interactive media tools and resources.
- Explore ideas and juxtapositions of critical theory and technology for use in your dissertation, your publications, or future project coursework.
- Reflect critically on the design and development process through presentations and writing in a developer's journal

Required Texts

- Online articles in PDF format – see course web site

Recommended Text

It is recommended that those students without much/any programming experience pick up a beginner's guide to programming on your preferred language. I recommend this book by Robin Nixon for beginners (*Learning PHP, MySQL & JavaScript: With jQuery, CSS & HTML5, 4th Edition*), but more advanced programmers should choose a language they are not already familiar with, such as perhaps Ruby or Python. If you already have experience with another programming language or feel comfortable with web scripting and databases, then an additional book is probably not necessary. As a class, we will also read additional selections (available as .pdf files on the website) and provide links to YouTube tutorial videos online each week. Technical tutorials using Codecademy (www.codecademy.com) are also assigned for each week.

Assignments and Grading

<u>Major Assignments</u>	<u>Percentage of Overall Grade</u>
1) Coding Log	10%
2) Developer's Journal Reflection Posts	10%
3) Project Slice 1 (Proposal in HTML/CSS)	15%
4) Project Slice 2 (Includes Interface / User Input – Look and Feel)	15%
5) Project Slice 3 (Interactivity using PHP)	20%
6) Project Slice 4 (Database-Driven using MySQL)	20%
7) Class Participation, User Testing, and Online Interaction	10%

Financial Aid Reporting Policy

All faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the first developer response activity by the end of the first week of classes, no later than August 26. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid. Our "documented" activity will be the first forum posting available through Webcourses on our official course Web site.

Technology Policy

Outside class, students are required to have access to word processing software and a Mac or PC computer with access to the Internet. During class, students may find use in working with technology to take notes, experiment (during appropriate class discussions), show examples, etc. It is expected that these technologies will not be used during class for purposes outside the scope of discussion, including instant messaging classmates, texting, e-mail, Facebooking, video games (outside of their use as examples to support particular arguments). Please feel free to use any device that makes your participation in class discussions easier. Please do not leave your cell phones on

audible ring, and barring emergencies, do not take or make phone calls during class. In other words, be courteous to your instructors and your peers.

Other Course Policies

- I am always happy to meet with you about the course or your larger T&T program of study. If you are unable to attend office hours, I can certainly schedule alternative times to meet in person or virtually.
- I will mostly follow the syllabus and schedule, but they are subject to minor changes, about which I will apprise you ASAP during normal class meetings or by email.
- In order for the class to be a success, you must be well prepared for and actively engaged in all class meetings.
- Because this is a discussion-oriented class, attendance and punctuality are crucial. Beyond affecting your participation grade, missing more than one class will result in your overall course grade being lowered. Missing more than two classes will likely cause you to fail the course.
- All UCF students are responsible for upholding standards of academic integrity as explained by The Golden Rule (<http://www.ucf.edu/goldenrule>). When it amounts to academic dishonesty, plagiarism can have dire consequences such as failing a paper or the entire course.
- Students with disabilities will be accommodated in this course. Please let me know at the beginning of the term about any such needs, and I will make adjustments and help you locate resources to aid your performance in the course.