



# WEBD 4400 COURSE REVISIONS

(by Dan Labecki)

Revisions	Rationale
<p>◆ <u>Weeks 1-3, 5-14</u> ◆</p> <p><b>Added five new Essential Employability Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.</li><li>❖ Apply a systematic approach to solve problems.</li><li>❖ Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.</li><li>❖ Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems,</li></ul>	<p><b>LEARNING THEORIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Gestalt theory:</b> The learner will be encouraged to discover the underlying nature of a topic or problem. Gaps, incongruities, or disturbances will be an important stimulus for learning. Instruction will be based upon the laws of organization (side note: we also study importance of proximity, similarity and simplicity when covering design theory... so I understand the importance of it, albeit in a different context)</li><li>○ <b>Information Pickup theory:</b> being a website design and development course, all you often need to create an 'authentic work environment' is access to a computer, software, and an Internet connection. Whether students are locating, selecting, organizing, and documenting information from online sources for pure research or problem solving, they are unabated it their approach (I don't limit what they can or cannot access)</li><li>○ <b>Situated Learning theory:</b> Knowledge is presented in authentic context (tech enhanced labs with all the necessary hardware and software requirements). Learning also takes advantage of social interaction and collaboration.</li></ul>

and contributions of others.

- ❖ Interact with others in groups or teams in a manner that contributes to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.

## 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILLS

- **Creativity and Innovation (Think Creatively):** This applies to the outcomes that were already present within the outline. Even though students don't create a website from the ground up in this course (it's for Photography students), they are still required to be creative in their decision-making and their application of design principles.
- **Creativity and Innovation (Work Creatively With Others):** With the addition of group work (the first time I have really emphasized this in any of my courses – I know, about time, right 😊) students will be expected to produce artifacts together.
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (Make Judgments and Decisions):** There will be an emphasis on critical thinking and problem-based learning. In the past I may have 'spoon fed' a lot of students... or been accepting on those that just stuck to my tutorial steps without venturing out on their own. I will have a section in each rubric for work that is similar to my examples, but different enough to have required more sophisticated process (in terms of research, trial and error, creativity, etc.) on their end.
- **Communication:** They will need to communicate clearly in their presentations, in their groups in class, in online forums, and also by way of the designs they create (do they make sense to the end-user?).
- **Collaboration:** Students will need to work with their peers, respect their differences (of opinion, race, religion, gender, etc.), and be flexible enough to make compromises for the greater good of the team. Also must assume shared responsibility for team work (include creation of artifacts, presentations of artifacts, and posting the artifact on the wiki).

## MEANINGFUL TECHNOLOGY USE

- **Supports learning:** Internet supports learning through research techniques, online discussion boards, posted reflections and replies, and reading, watching or interacting with multimodal content (videos, graphic novels, WBLTs, websites, etc.).
- **Relevant:** All tech (hardware/software) used is relevant to an individual looking to design, develop and/or maintain a web presence.
- **Challenging:** Activities are not meant to give all the answers. They will be challenging by way of having student work with technologies that they may not be familiar with. More

so, to use said technologies to create content, not just consume it. Also challenging by way of using tech to record reflections, for example, or to collaborate with peers.

- **Reflective:** There is one reflective exercise. Another area is the use of surveys to determine students' skillsets, and their views on the course content and delivery. This prompts them to reflect on previous and present learning experiences.
- **Collaborative:** Using Facebook and wiki's for purposes that require student collaboration to be successful.

### ◆ Weeks 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 13 ◆

#### Added Collaborative Group Work, Presentations, and Posting of Artifacts To Course Wiki

- ❖ **Students** are divided into groups of approx. 4-6
- ❖ **W1:** Each student (without collaboration) posts reflection on how Photoshop and Dreamweaver can help them this semester
- ❖ **W2:** Each group researches layout genre conventions for websites; presents findings to class; and then posts to wiki.
- ❖ **W5:** Each group works together to create an involved background using texture techniques; presents their background to class; takes Q&A, and then posts to wiki.

#### LEARNING THEORIES

- **Constructivist theory:** Instruction is concerned with creating experiences and context that make student willing and able to learn. Structured to be easily grasped. Designed to fill in the gap.
- **Conversation theory:** Students converse on subject matter, which make knowledge explicit. There is a 'teachback' method, where one group will teach another what they have learned.
- **Gestalt theory:** Students will often – not always - be encouraged to discover the underlying nature of a topic or problem. Gaps, incongruities, or disturbances will be an important stimulus for learning. Instruction will be based upon the laws of organization. They will then present their findings, and post the wiki, which may create further conditions for PBL upon facing more gaps, incongruities, etc.
- **Situated Learning theory:** Knowledge is presented in authentic context (tech enhanced labs with all the necessary hardware and software requirements). Learning also takes advantage of social interaction and collaboration.

#### 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILLS

- Same as the opening '21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills' section.

- ❖ **W8:** Each group researches a certain aspect of WordPress (history, function, sample sites); presents findings to class, takes Q&A, and then posts to wiki.
- ❖ **W10:** Each group enters into a friendly competition to determine who can create the cleanest DIV layout in Dreamweaver; presents layout to class; teacher picks 'best in class'.
- ❖ **W13:** Groups from DIV layout exercise get back together – this time to show their improved talents in HTML/CSS. Same as above, except with more advanced HTML/CSS artifact.

### MEANINGFUL TECHNOLOGY USE

- Same as the opening 'Meaningful Technology Use' section.

### ◆ Weeks 3-6, 9-13 ◆

**Updated from merely providing video tutorials, to working them in as part of a Flipped Classroom model of teaching and learning**

- ❖ **I provide** custom made – precisely tailored to course content – videos to view from home.
- ❖ **Students** view the videos

### LEARNING THEORIES

- **Functional context:** Each video I create uses industry standard software and hardware. It also draws open current design and development practices (including the theory, new trends and innovations, etc.) I also believe literacy is improved by providing these asynchronous resources, since it allows learners to learn at their own pace, and from anywhere with Internet connection.
- **Modes of learning:** Flipped classroom approach fits in with differentiated instruction. Allows for reflection, visual and print based learning, auidial learning, etc. Also allows students' to work independently or as a group. Practice activities affect the refinement of skills.

asynchronously. They are given the ability (and encouragement) to correspond with each other through four 'theme specific' Facebook groups.

- ❖ **Back in class**, we have an hour to workshop any issues. Breakout groups based on level of understanding and completion are formed. Peers who are ahead turn into helpers. Teacher becomes facilitator.

## 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILLS

- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (Make Judgments and Decisions):**  
The videos will be structured to provide a repeat or overview of the most important principles of design and development. Within each, though, there will be plenty of room for interpretation, and lots of reminders and prompts on the value of making the work unique to the individual. This will require the student to think for themselves, to venture out on their own, and to trouble-shoot problems as they work towards their vision.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability (Be Flexible):** Some videos are optional... some are not. The approach you take can be quite varied, as well as the tools of the trade you use to compete the job.

## MEANINGFUL TECHNOLOGY USE

- **Supports learning:** Anywhere, anytime learning. Increased engagement with class, also, as you leave the passing of knowledge to asynch activities, and free up time for more collaborative work periods during the synchronous sessions.
- **Relevant:** Not only is the content customized to their learning, but the tools they are using are relevant, as well.
- **Challenging:** Watching the videos is not that challenging, but taking advantage of all the other resources available online should be sufficient to keep even the most ardent learners engaged.
- **Reflective:** At the end of their portfolio development, I will place the students in teams (like in this class), and have them each complete an analysis and synthesis of each other's websites. This will help provide valuable group sourced feedback, thus adding a valuable layer of polish to the site, as it gets ready for potential employers. It also allows the students to reflect on their past learning.

## ◆ Weeks 1, 5, 10, 14 ◆

I incorporated the use of online surveys for the following purposes:

- ❖ **W1:** First to gauge student web knowledge and expectations
- ❖ **W5:** To better determine how they feel the collaborative group work, presentations, and wiki work contribute to their learning
- ❖ **W10:** To better determine how the asynchronous videos contribute to their learning
- ❖ **W14:** To ask them pointed questions about the course (what they liked, what they didn't, suggestions, etc.)

## LEARNING THEORIES

- **Drive Reduction Theory:** Through the use of surveys, students are given a format to voice their opinion on the courses as it happens. Making customizations. This better ensures that the learning is relevant to each student, which increases engagement and attentiveness.

## 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILLS

- **Flexibility and Adaptability (Be Flexible):** gives students outlet to communicate issues (and successes) with course content and delivery. Ability to affect change in a way that they didn't previously possess (in real time).
- **Apply Technology Effectively:** By filling out the survey, students evaluate and communicate information.
- **Think Creatively:** They are given opportunities to pass on creative ideas any and every aspect of their learning experience.
- **Reason Effectively:** Similar to above in that they have to state their case for potential change, and to do so in a convincing manner.
- **Communicate Clearly:** Obvious one – can communicate for range of purposes (to motivate, instruct, inform, persuade). Good grammar and spelling is a plus, etc.

## MEANINGFUL TECHNOLOGY USE

- **Supports learning:** Always for a customizable experience. Respect opinions of others. Helps to create open and positive work environment ideal for learning.
- **Relevant:** Feedback is to be entirely focused on the classroom environment being surveyed.
- **Reflective:** Can definitely be reflective in nature, as students respond to each question they obviously rely on past experiences to inform their present state of mind (and current interpretation of events, etc.).

## HOW WE LEARN

- **Removes Preconceptions:** This is one of the main benefits of doing a survey, especially at the beginning of the course. It can give an educator a better idea of where students are at skillset wise. Also with course expectations and their impressions of the industries they hope to enter upon graduation, etc.

### ◆ Weeks 7, 14 ◆

I removed theoretical examinations that rewarded rote-memorization (only practical examinations remain)

- ❖ **Midterm:** focuses on completion of webpage design. All hands on - learning authentic to real world processes
- ❖ **Final:** focuses on completion of webpage development. All hands on - learning authentic to real world processes

### LEARNING THEORIES

- **Elaboration theory:** Instruction no longer is focused on memorization of content (no more teaching for the test – in terms of theory). It is organized in increasing order of complexity of optimal learning. Touches on each of the seven major strategy components (review of curriculum doc or video should make this obvious)
- **Experiential learning theory:** By removing theory from exams and placing the focus on authentic activities. More so, I am very flexible in my delivery, in that I often let the student choose between a variety of website design and development models. This is less threatening to the student, since I'm not forcing to use one singular approach (of course, he/she still had to do it correctly.... but there are multiple ways to get there). I also let them choose any person, place or thing when deciding on the subject of their website designs or development. This makes the learning more significant to the student.
- **Situated Learning theory:** Knowledge is presented in authentic context (in this case, completing authentic projects instead of emphasizing unnatural activities like answering true or false questions.

### 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILLS

- **Analyze Media:** As they navigate the Internet, they are constantly having to analyze media to determine it's potential use in a project (IE: Is this content accurate? Legal? Is this tool useful? Safe? Is this software free? Expensive? Worth it? Etc. etc.)
- **Creativity and Innovation (Think Creatively):** A greater focus is placed on creativity and innovation as students work towards the creation of a digital artifact (web design or

web page).

- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (Make Judgments and Decisions):** The one setting where they are not able to communicate with their peers, but they can use the Internet. I am not there to assist – except for the odd question or two if they drift too far off course – and they are expect to figure things out on their own (again, for the most part).
- **Flexibility and Adaptability (Be Flexible):** They have the flexibility of using any number of existing approaches to any given task... so long as the end result is on par with my learning expectations for the activity.
- **Apply Technology Effectively:** many ways to skin a cat, but not every way produces ideal results. Students are faced with hardware/software decisions every class, from the appropriate tool to get the job done, to the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of content.

#### MEANINGFUL TECHNOLOGY USE

- **Supports learning:** Authentic process supporting authentic projects.
- **Relevant:** Same software/hardware used for exam as is used in class... and as is used in the Industry.
- **Challenging:** Takes can be especially challenging cause their guide on the side (me or their peers – or generally unavailable for assistance. They do always have the content on their laptops and access to the Internet.
- **Reflective:** The can reflect on their previous work to inform decision-making in the present.

↓ References Below ↓



## References

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