

**COMM 3305 – Web Design Principles  
Communication Program  
Texas A&M-San Antonio, College of Arts & Sciences**

**Instructor:** Jose Gonzales

**Semester:** Fall 2024

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**Office:** Central Academic Building 232

**Course Format:** Hybrid, In-Person

**Location:** CAB 321

**Day/Time:** Wednesdays 9:30am – 10:45pm

**Office Hours:** Email for an appointment

**PREREQUISITES:** Junior or Senior standing

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This hands-on roll-up-your-sleeves course covers CSS, JavaScript, and PHP needed in an online newsroom. The course covers fundamental design principles such as grid-based Web design, color, typography, and data visualization tools. Each student in the course will work their way up to creating a personal portfolio site in WordPress. Critical thinking will be encouraged through class interactions, projects, and online postings. Prerequisite(s): Junior or senior standing.

**OBJECTIVES:**

As a result of this course, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of a CMS (content management system), different types of WordPress accounts and page types.
- Build a portfolio website using WordPress
- Demonstrate an appropriate vocabulary to discuss portfolio pieces in a professional supportive manner.
- Learn skills in working within a cooperative team to move everyone towards a common goal no matter what position one is in.

**REQUIRED READING:**

There is no required book. I will share URLs as resources.

**RESTRICTIONS:**

Enrollment limited to students with a semester level of Junior or Senior. Graduate level students may not enroll.

**EVALUATION:**

You will be evaluated on a 100 point grading system.

<b>Attendance:</b>	25% -> In-Person
<b>Assignments and Homework</b>	35% -> Weekly
<b>Portfolio</b>	40% -> Final

**Reading and web page list:**

*No textbook is required for this course however it is recommended to grow your knowledge, research and inspiration. Here are some suggested resources:*

**Highly recommended –**

- subscription to a trade magazine: Communication Arts, Print, HOW, CMYK, Graphis.
- Flaunt: Designing effective, compelling and memorable portfolios of creative work, Bryony Gomez-Palacio, and Armin Vit
- Winning Portfolios for Graphic Designers, Cath Williams

**URLs:**

- <https://wordpress.com/go/tutorials/how-to-create-an-online-portfolio-complete-guide/>
- <https://www.w3schools.com/>
- <https://www.w3.org/>
- <https://www.icdsoft.com/en/education>
- <https://sitechecker.pro/web-hosting/hosting-for-students/>
- <https://themeisle.com/blog/web-hosting-for-students/>
- <https://campuspress.com/the-10-best-web-hosting-providers-for-students-and-educators/>

## Weekly Class/Date Agenda

<i>This is a tentative schedule. Assignments and activities may change. Check with your instructor for future adjustments to the agenda.</i>		
<b>Week #1</b>	<b>Aug. 28<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB</b> <b>321</b>	<b>Objectives:</b> Course Orientation <b>Class Activities:</b> Review Syllabus, review class expectations, & discuss domain names for your site.
	<i>Online Due</i> <i>Sept. 3rd</i>	<b>Assignments:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete online introductions.</li> <li>2. Research what type of job you'd like and then what will your portfolio need to look like to get the job.</li> <li>3. Look at portfolio sites that are in the area you'd like to work in when you graduate.</li> <li>4. List the types of content you're going to want on your site based on your research.</li> <li>5. Think of two domain names for your site.</li> </ol>
<b>Week #2</b>	<b>Sep. 4<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB</b> <b>321</b>	<b>Objectives:</b> Explore what is a communication portfolio website, what's the purpose of the site and how to make it successful. <b>Class Activities:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss other portfolio sites.</li> <li>2. What pages and types of content do they have?</li> <li>3. Discuss final your chosen domain name.</li> </ol>
	<i>Online Due</i> <i>Sept. 10th</i>	<b>Assignments:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What types of content and how is the content organized on other communication portfolio websites? Why is a site interesting, successful, or not?</li> <li>2. What content that you've already created would you want on your site?</li> <li>3. Identify the purpose for your site, is it to get a job or start a career - The Audience is an important consideration!</li> <li>4. Comment on the below online articles.</li> </ol>

		<p><b>Research/Reading:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.mastersincommunications.com/features/guide-to-creating-a-digital-portfolio">https://www.mastersincommunications.com/features/guide-to-creating-a-digital-portfolio</a></li> <li><a href="https://olc.sfu.ca/blog/6-things-communication-students-caninclude-their-portfolio">https://olc.sfu.ca/blog/6-things-communication-students-caninclude-their-portfolio</a></li> </ol>
<b>Week #3</b>	<b>Sep. 11<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> What is an Intranet, a website, and a URL</p> <p><b>Class Activities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domain names</li> <li>Hosting options</li> </ol>
	<i>Online Due Sept. 17<sup>th</sup></i>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Think of the different web pages you'll create and what content will go on those pages.</li> <li>Think of several domain names and then research if they're available and what they'd cost.</li> </ol> <p><b>Research/Reading:</b> Read several About Me statements and think of the direction you'd like to take.</p>
<b>Week #4</b>	<b>Sep. 18<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> Creating and organizing your website</p> <p><b>Class Activities:</b> Bring in content, and be prepared to discuss why the individual pieces are important for your website.</p>
	<i>Online Due Sept. 24<sup>th</sup></i>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a head and shoulder shot or a fitting professional image of yourself.</li> <li>Write an About Me statement. 250 to 300 words.</li> <li>Summarize Promotional content: resume, email signature, and other material.</li> </ol>
<b>Week #5</b>	<b>Sep. 25<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> Building your WordPress portfolio website</p> <p><b>Class Activities:</b> Diving into WordPress</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Themes</li> <li>Pages</li> </ol>

		<p><b>3. Blocks</b> <b>4. Menu</b></p>
	<p><i>Online Due Oct. 1st</i></p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Create individual web pages in WordPress for your content. <b>Research/Reading:</b> UI and UX and IA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are they?</li> <li>• Why are they important for communication professionals?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week #6</b></p>	<p><b>Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> CAB 321</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> Roughing up your website <b>Class Activities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Less is more.</li> <li>2. Page content, page titles, and organizing content on the web page.</li> </ol>
	<p><i>Online Due Oct. 8th</i></p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Create blocks for your specific content and put placeholder text in the blocks describing what will eventually go in the block. <b>Research/Reading:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preparing content for the web</li> <li>2. Writing for the Web</li> </ol>
<p><b>Week #7</b></p>	<p><b>Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> CAB 321</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> Preparing content for the web <b>Class Activities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scanning documents</li> <li>2. Metadata, SEO, and Accessibility</li> </ol>
	<p><i>Online Due Oct. 15th</i></p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Upload images to your WordPress site, including metadata. <b>Research/Reading:</b> Accessibility and SEO</p>
<p><b>Week #8</b></p>	<p><b>Oct. 16<sup>th</sup> CAB 321</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> Accessibility and SEO <b>Class Activities:</b> Testing a website for accessibility</p>
	<p><i>Online Due Oct. 22nd</i></p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Continue adding content to your website</p>

		<p><b>Research/Reading:</b> HTML - I'll provide URLs</p>
<p><b>Week #9</b></p>	<p><b>Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> Diving into HTML, CSS and Javascript <b>Class Activities:</b> Discuss the building blocks of a web page and how they can create a complex web page.</p>
	<p><i>Online Due Oct. 29<sup>th</sup></i></p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Have the landing page with navigation complete for next week <b>Research/Reading:</b> Critical analysis and peer input, how to talk about your work and others in a constructive, healthy manner.</p>
<p><b>Week #10</b></p>	<p><b>Oct. 30<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> Guest speaker (tba &amp; subject to change) <b>Class Activities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We'll talk about the rules of engagement for group critiques while in class and as part of a professional creative team.</li> <li>2. Share with the class your websites. We'll talk about what works and what doesn't.</li> </ol>
	<p><i>Online Due Nov. 5<sup>th</sup></i></p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Continue working on your site. <b>Research/Reading:</b></p>
<p><b>Week #11</b></p>	<p><b>Nov. 6<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> Talking about our sites <b>Class Activities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Share with the class your websites. We'll talk about what works and what doesn't.</li> </ol>
	<p><i>Online Due Nov. 12<sup>th</sup></i></p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b> Continue working on your site. <b>Research/Reading:</b></p>
<p><b>Week #12</b></p>	<p><b>Nov. 13<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives: Class Activities:</b> Guest speaker (tba &amp; subject to change)</p>
	<p><i>Online Due Nov 19<sup>th</sup></i></p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b> What do you want to do and how are you going to get there. <b>Research/Reading:</b></p>

<b>Week #13</b>	<b>Nov. 20<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b>	<b>Objectives:</b> Working on critiquing skills <b>Class Activities:</b> Looking at our sites
	<i>Online Due Nov. 26th</i>	<b>Assignments:</b> Continue working on site <b>Research/Reading:</b> Professional publications: print or electronic.
<b>Week #14</b>	<b>Nov. 27<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b>	<b>Discuss Websites</b> Half the class
<b>Week #15</b>	<b>Dec 4<sup>th</sup></b> <b>CAB 321</b>	<b>Discuss Websites</b> Half the class  <b>***THIS IS OUR LAST CLASS DAY***</b>
<b>Week #16</b>	<b>Dec 11<sup>th</sup></b>	Last day to turn in website

**Important Dates:**

- August 28                      First day of class
- September 11                 Census Date
- September 12                 Drop for non-payment
- October 7-18                 Midterm grading period
- November 11                 Last day to drop with an automatic grade of "W"
- Dec 5                             Last day of classes
- Dec 6                             Study Day – No classes
- Dec 7-13                        Final exams

The complete academic calendar is available online: <https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/academic-calendar/index.html>

## IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Support Services in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210, or at (210) 784-1335 or visit <https://www.tamusa.edu/index.html> or email us at [dss@tamusa.edu](mailto:dss@tamusa.edu). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing [tutoring@tamusa.edu](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu), calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services.

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2'). For more information and self-help resources, please visit [www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](http://www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling)

Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-operations-plan.pdf> and <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-action-plan.pdf>

Download the SafeZone App for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds



based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://bit.ly/WLDCCenter>.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots’ Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e.,

courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu), 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant students that would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition and that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an

excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu); 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

#### *Students' Rights*

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

#### *Students' Responsibilities*

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, [Student Code of Conduct](#), on our website, University Catalog and to comply with them, as well as federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

#### No Use of Generative AI Permitted

Course #3305 assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

NOTE: Guidance for how to cite AI-generators, like ChatGPT, can be found here: <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>