

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

Instructor: Jose Gonzales

Semester: Spring 2025

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Office: Central Academic Building 232

Course Format: Hybrid, In-Person

Location: CAB 321

Day/Time: Wednesdays 11:00am – 12:15pm

Office Hours: Email for an appointment

PREREQUISITES: Junior or Senior standing

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a hands-on, roll-up-your-sleeves course which will cover a variety of Web design concepts. Each student in the course will work their way up to creating a personal portfolio website in WordPress. Critical thinking will be encouraged through class interactions, and weekly assignments, and final online project.

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).
- Learn different types of WordPress features related to building web pages & building an entire website.
- Build a completed fully functional website using WordPress CMS.
- Learn skills in professional collaboration & utilize knowledge sharing skills with your peers.
- Learn a variety of website concepts and web design best practices.
- Learn how to constructively & objectively critique a website.
- Gain career & professional advice.
- Learn about accessibility & SEO.

REQUIRED READING:

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

RESTRICTIONS:

Enrollment is 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.

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

Late Work:

- *communicate reasons for not been able to meet deadlines*
- *points will be deducted for late work at the discretion of the Professor*

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

This is a tentative schedule. Assignments and activities may change. Check with your instructor for future adjustments to the agenda.

Week #1	Jan. 22nd CAB 321	<p>Objectives: Course Orientation</p> <p>Class Activities: Review Syllabus, review class expectations, & discuss domain names for your site.</p>
	<i>Online Due Jan. 28th</i>	<p>Assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete online introductions. 2. Research what type of job you'd like and then what will your portfolio need to look like to get the job. 3. Look at portfolio sites that are in the area you'd like to work in when you graduate. 4. List the types of content you're going to want on your site based on your research. 5. Think of two domain names for your site.
Week #2	Jan. 29th CAB 321	<p>Objectives: Discuss what is a communication portfolio website, what are considerations, what makes a site successful or not.</p> <p>Class Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss possible portfolio site topics. 2. Discuss creating portfolio site and concepts. 3. What pages and types of content do they have?
	<i>Online Due Feb. 4th</i>	<p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review 3 online portfolio websites? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In your opinion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why is a site interesting, successful, or not? • Read and comment on the below online article. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://www.mastersincommunications.com/features/guide-to-creating-a-digital-portfolio • Identify and comment on the purpose for your site, is it to get a job or start a career, just needed to complete the course: (The Audience is an important consideration!) • Email me final domain name: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ jgonzales@tamusa.edu

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email once you have successfully logged into your site.
Week #3	Feb. 5 th CAB 321	<p>Objectives: What is an portfolio planning stage, intranets, a website, and a URL</p> <p>Class Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss different types of content. Discuss content gathering & creation. Considerations of resources for building website.
	Online Due Feb. 11th	<p>Assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review 3 sites from previous semesters. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the list of questions. Brainstorm & think of what different web pages you will have on your portfolio site and list them. <p>Research/Reading: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-critique-design-portfolios-thomas-lockwood/</p>
Week #4	Feb. 12 th CAB 321	<p>Objectives: Choosing content for your site.</p> <p>Class Activities: Discuss reviewing sites, discuss wireframes, review domain name creation and any obstacles encountered so far.</p>
	Online Due Feb. 18th	<p>Assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Create a wireframe/sketch of your ideas for how you want your website layout to look. Create a head and shoulder shot or a fitting professional image of yourself. Write an About Me statement. 250 to 300 words.
Week #5	Feb. 19 th CAB 321	<p>Objectives: Building your WordPress portfolio website, creating a solid foundation, discussing the “About Me” page.</p> <p>Class Activities: Diving into WordPress</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Setting up your environment. Tour of dashboard Themes Pages

		<p>5. Menu</p> <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selecting the appropriate theme. • Adding the “About Me” page in word press and merging text from week before. <p>Research/Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/promotional-model-resume • https://moosend.com/blog/professional-email-signature/
	<p><i>Online Due Feb. 25th</i></p>	
Week #6	<p>Feb. 26th CAB 321</p>	<p>Objectives: Setting up your environment & building your portfolio incrementally.</p> <p>Class Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploring themes. 2. Adding pages. 3. Adding content. 4. Publishing pages. 5. Exploring features of word press.
	<p><i>Online Due Mar. 4th</i></p>	<p>Assignments: Navigate through the dashboard, adding image to your about me page, adding images to media library, creating a new page & creating a test page and add blocks to test.</p>
Week #7	<p>Mar. 5th CAB 321</p>	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring & reviewing the progress of your sites • discuss challenges & obstacles. • discuss & review word press environment. <p>Class Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss image sizes. 2. Discuss accessibility. 3. Discuss SEO
	<p><i>Online Due Mar. 11th</i></p>	<p>Assignments:</p> <p>Research/Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://accessibility.uncg.edu/for-all/why-important/

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesagencycouncil/2023/02/07/seo-what-it-is-and-why-its-important/ ○ Comment on the progress/challenges of your site ○ Continue to add more bricks to your site.
Week #8	Mar. 12th CAB 321	<p>Objectives: Continue to discuss images, accessibility & SEO</p> <p>Class Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review site progress. ● Discuss site challenges. ● Explore image tools.
	<i>Online</i> <i>Due Mar. 18th</i>	<p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resize images to match image recommended criteria. ● Locate resources to review your site. ● Review articles below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://www.mtu.edu/umc/services/websites/seo/ ○ https://blog.hubspot.com/website/web-accessibility-testing-tools
Week #9	Mar. 19th CAB 321	<p>Objectives: Diving into Wordpress & discussing incremental progress.</p> <p>Class Activities: Discuss the building blocks of a web page and how they can create a complex web page.</p>
	<i>Online</i> <i>Due Mar. 25th</i>	<p>Assignments: Have the landing page with navigation complete for next week</p> <p>Research/Reading: Critical analysis and peer input, how to talk about your work and others in a constructive, healthy manner.</p>
Week #10	Mar. 26th CAB 321	<p>Objectives: Guest speaker (tba & subject to change)</p> <p>Class Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We'll talk about the rules of engagement for group critiques while in class and as part of a professional creative team. 2. Share with the class your websites. We'll talk about what works and what doesn't.

	<i>Online Due Apr. 1st</i>	Assignments: Continue working on your site. Research/Reading:
Week #11	Apr. 2nd CAB 321	Objectives: Talking about our sites Class Activities: 3. Share with the class your websites. We'll talk about what works and what doesn't.
	<i>Online Due Apr. 8th</i>	Assignments: Continue working on your site. Research/Reading:
Week #12	Apr. 9th CAB 321	Objectives: Class Activities: Guest speaker (tba & subject to change) & working through obstacles with website development.
	<i>Online Due Apr 15th</i>	Assignments: What do you want to do and how are you going to get there. Research/Reading: (tba)
Week #13	Apr. 16th CAB 321	Objectives: Working on critiquing skills Class Activities: Looking at our sites
	<i>Online Due Apr. 22nd</i>	Assignments: Continue working on site
Week #14	Apr. 23rd CAB 321	Discuss Websites Half the class
Week #15	Apr 30th CAB 321	Discuss Websites Half the class
Week #16	May 7th	Final Projects are due.

Important Dates:

Spring 2025 Regular 16-Week Session

October 21	Monday	Registration opens
December 23-January 1	Monday-Wednesday	Winter Break
January 14	Tuesday	Tuition & fee payment deadline
January 16	Thursday	Drop for non-payment
January 17	Friday	Last day for students withdrawing to receive 100% refund (0% responsibility) for tuition
January 20	Monday	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - No classes
January 21	Tuesday	First class day
January 28	Tuesday	Last day to register
February 5	Wednesday	Census Date
February 6	Thursday	Drop for non-payment
February 24-March 7	Monday-Friday	Midterm grading period
March 10-March 15	Monday-Saturday	Spring Break
April 18	Friday	Study day - No classes
April 21	Monday	Last day to drop with an automatic grade of "W"
April 28	Monday	Last day to withdraw from the university
May 5	Monday	Last day of scheduled classes for weekday classes
May 6	Tuesday	Study day - No classes
May 7-May 13	Wednesday-Tuesday	Final examinations
May 13	Tuesday	End of term
May 16	Friday	All grades due by noon
May 19	Monday	Grades available in JagWire
May 20	Tuesday	Commencement

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. 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, 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

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, 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; 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>