

Web Design & Digital Portfolios

VART 2400

Mondays 11:30–2:15 pm

Lincoln Center: SL24A

(login: Student | Designsl24a)

[Class Website](#)

Patricia Belen (she/her)

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Office Hours in SL24S

Mondays 2:30–3:30pm, please make an appointment, other days / times available. Allow one day for email responses.

Course Overview

This course is an introduction to web design from a visual and technical perspective, emphasizing coding as an artistic medium—a way of making handcrafted, creative websites. Through project-based assignments and readings, students will explore and challenge what a website is, and experiment with various tools and techniques to produce an interactive design portfolio of visual projects. Coursework focuses on the basic languages of front-end web development: HTML, CSS, and Javascript in conjunction with the principles of graphic design, typography, and user experience. No prior coding experience is required.

Learning Objectives

- Have a working knowledge of HTML, CSS, basic Javascript and web design principles.
- Have a basic understanding of web publishing.
- Have an understanding of the history and present context of the web.
- Commit to ‘code as a practice’: programming is a craft that is learned through experimentation and making.
- Use best practices of UI/UX to create aesthetically pleasing, interactive websites.
- Gain perspectives to designing artistic and interactive websites that engage with the public.

Course Learning Mode

Classes will be conducted in-person on the scheduled day/time. Class time will be used for lectures, presentations, tutorials, discussions, critiques, practice exercises, independent work and one-on-one meetings to check your progress. All assignments and files will be stored on your class website in GitHub. You are responsible for organizing and maintaining your files there. Be prepared to work outside of class time in the lab.

Work

- Exercises: Short HTML, CSS and JS exercises both in class and outside of the class.
- Web Projects: You will be producing (3) design projects in which concept, process, creativity and craftsmanship will be taken into consideration. Projects may be messy and imperfect but that’s ok! The quality of your work depends on original and inventive formal thinking as it does on thoroughly satisfying the project requirements.
- Critiques & Discussions: Participation in discussions, presentations and critiques of other students’ work is required.

Requirements

- 30% Engagement & Participation: Attendance, participating in discussions, thoughtful critique of others’ work. Be present for every class, on time. If you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what you missed from your classmates. Be actively engaged at all times. See the Fordham [attendance policy](#). 2+ unexcused absences may affect your grade.
- 20% Exercises: Exercises are a chance to practice and experiment, they are not graded but they will affect your final grade if not completed on time.
- 50% Web Projects: Project grades are based upon on-time completion, following instructions, concept, execution and organization. Every project will be presented and critiqued by the entire class. Late projects will be accepted but will drop a grade for every week it is late (A → B).

Grading Scale

- A: Extra effort, outstanding performance and engagement, enthusiastic class participation, consistently shows progress and listens to recommendations, completes all work on-time.
- B: Exceeds basic expectations, strong performance, active class participation, good effort on projects.
- C: Mediocre effort, average performance, multiple missed deadlines / classes, inadequate class participation.
- D: Less than satisfactory performance in all areas, incomplete projects.
- F: No performance, plagiarized content.
- (plus / minus grades fall in between)

Supplies

- No textbook; Optional sketchbook / notebook.
- Google Drive / USB drive: for transporting or backing up your files. "I lost my files" is not a reasonable excuse.
- [GitHub](#) (developer platform, free)
- [Visual Studio Code](#) (code editor, free)

University Statement on Academic Integrity

A University, by its nature, strives to foster and recognize originality of thought. Originality can only be recognized, however, when people acknowledge the sources of ideas or works that are not their own. Therefore, students must maintain the highest standards with regards to honesty, effort and performance. As a Jesuit, Catholic University, Fordham is committed to ensuring that all members of the academic community strive not only for excellence in scholarship but also for integrity of character. In the pursuit of knowledge and personal development, it is imperative that students present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique and eventual reformulation. As part of this process, each student must acknowledge the intellectual contribution of others.... Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, falsification, unapproved collaboration, and destruction of library materials.

Equal Educational Access for All Students

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) helps to ensure equal educational access and opportunity for all members of our community. Members of the ODS staff work with each student individually in order to develop an effective and comprehensive accommodation plan in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990). Students seeking accommodations should complete the [online ODS application](#) and upload documentation, then email disabilityservices@fordham.edu to set up an intake appointment (in person or virtual).

Code of Conduct and Class Norms

As a class, we will follow a group agreement that addresses respect and etiquette in the classroom. Students will be responsible for maintaining this standard. Contact me if you will not be able to adhere to this or if you want to add to this list.

- Avoid using your phone, texting, or working on other classwork during our class.
- Respect everyone's background and culture, recognize privilege, actively seek equity and allyship.
- Address everyone by their chosen name and pronoun if requested (let me know if you have a chosen name or pronoun).
- Have patience with each others' abilities and also any technical difficulties we might experience.
- Wear masks during class if you need to; do not judge those who choose to wear masks.
- Take time to acquaint yourself with each other and gather contact information.
- Communicate with me if you are having difficulties in class. Also, [reach out to CPS for emotional health and well-being](#).

Note on Appropriation

Writing code almost always involves the appropriation and adaptation of other people's work. In this class we are participating in communities of shared practices. However, any

work you borrow and/or modify must be labeled as such. If you find sample code and integrate it into your work, this must be clearly and obviously indicated as such by using inline comments in your code - this includes generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT). Failure to do so will be considered the same as any other breach of academic integrity. Do not plagiarize code as a quick solution - your projects can incorporate the ideas of others but should reflect your original, creative approach.

Calendar

Subject to change; see the [class website](#) for the latest.