

# TCOM 420 Advanced Web Design, Winter 2022

Instructor: Dr. Huatong Sun (“Dr. Sun”)

E-mail (preferred contact method): [htsun@uw.edu](mailto:htsun@uw.edu)

Instruction Time: T 10:10-12:10 p

Zoom Office Hours: R 10-10:30 a or by appointment

Link: <https://washington.zoom.us/my/huatongs>

Website: <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1523940>

## Course Description

This course introduces you to advanced concepts, practices, and techniques to develop and maintain interactive websites with an open-source content management system (CMS) WordPress. We will examine the topics of interaction design, information architecture, and content management related to the creation and maintenance of medium websites, and explore ways of studying users and their activities in contexts to create websites that will serve their needs and empower them. To achieve this goal, we will follow a critical design methodology and employ *design thinking* for design innovation.

You must take TCOM 320 Principles of Web Design or equivalent before enrolling in this course. Built upon your skills gained from TCOM 320, this course will lead you further exploring the theory and practice of web design.

This course is counted as a breadth course for the [Minor of Innovation and Design](#).

This course uses the Canvas Learning Management System for course material, assignment submission, communication between faculty and students, and grades posting. The Canvas Course Site can be accessed through MyUW at <http://my.uw.edu> or the UW Canvas home page at <https://canvas.uw.edu/>.

You’re highly recommended to browse course content from a computer. Browsing from a mobile phone swiftly might result in missing content during scrolling.

## Course Objectives

- Develop skills to evaluate, design, revise, and maintain medium websites influenced by *design thinking*
- Understand advanced principles of web usability, interaction design, and content management related to medium websites
- Gain proficiency to configure the open-source content management system WordPress for drafting, revising, managing, and organizing online content
- Collaborate in a team to develop, document, and evaluate design decisions
- Demonstrate the awareness of critical & mindful design and its impact in web design with a design goal of empowering local users and their communities
- Develop professionalism in communicating with community partners/clients, users, stakeholders, team members, and everyone involved in the “community of practice”

Particularly these objectives support the following IAS learning objectives and those for the Communication major:

- IAS
  - Develop proficiency in skills such as writing and critical thinking
  - Achieve knowledge of the theories, concepts and methods of cross-cultural analysis
- Communication
  - Be able to conduct thorough and critical research for both media theory and skills assignments
  - Understand the power of the visual image and the written word
  - Develop the skills to write, edit, and produce print products
  - Be prepared for a variety of jobs in mass media

### Required Texts

- Stephen Burge (2020). *WordPress Explained*.
- A variety of WordPress text and video tutorial e-books and additional articles will be available on Canvas course site.

### Class Structure and What to Expect

- *Workload and time.* This is a hybrid course that meets once a week for two hours with the remaining coursework to be completed online. According to UW policy, you should expect to spend 3 hours of work per credit, therefore this class is a 15 hour a week commitment.
- *In class meetings.* During our in-person meetings each week, you will be expected to come to class prepared to share your work in class. This class is a seminar, not a lecture course. Full participation is expected. You will be required to engage in class activities, peer review, small and large group discussion for credit.
- *Online.* Your online work will consist of reading, writing, designing, and homework. Full participation is expected. All assignments and activities will be on Canvas with deadlines indicated.

This class is tightly structured and each assignment and class session builds on the previous week. Because of that, I will not open online learning modules in advance.

- *Late work.* Getting behind on assignments will prevent you from being successful both in the class and in your reflection and subsequent portfolio. Therefore, late work will not be accepted. If there are extenuating circumstances, such as an illness or emergency, please contact the instructor before the assignment is due. Although I don't usually penalize for emergencies, your project will be **reduced by an entire letter grade** for each day the assignment is late in most circumstances.

### UWT's Response to Covid-19

The pandemic will unfortunately continue to be present during this quarter, uniquely affecting all of us in a variety of ways. We in this class, and on the UWT campus, are a community. Following recommended practices and demonstrating concern for yourself and others are the best strategies for us (and those we love) to all stay healthy this term.

- Please read the Student Affairs website (<https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/uwt/student-affairs>) for links to up-to-date information about being on campus during the pandemic, health guidelines, and the protocol if you feel sick.
- If you think you have COVID-19 or have come in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19:
  - o Stay home. Do not go to school or work. Avoid public places.
  - o Inform your instructor so that they are aware.
  - o Call your health provider and follow their advice. Students can also use [CHI Virtual Urgent Care](#).
  - o Email Dr. Bernard Anderson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Life, at [bander48@uw.edu](mailto:bander48@uw.edu), to learn of available support services and academic accommodation procedures.
- Visit <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/uwt/chancellor/covid-19> for the latest updates, resources, and more.
- Please consider activating “WA Notify” on your phones if you haven’t already. This will make it much easier for the university to reach out to you if you have been a close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid. You can learn about the program and how to activate it here: <https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/wanotify/>

I am happy to work with you should your life and circumstances be complicated by the pandemic or other factors. Please do not hesitate to contact me right away if you have any questions or concerns! Similarly, I ask for your patience and flexibility as unexpected changes inevitably come our way.

## Learning Protocols During a Pandemic

### What should I expect in class?

Based on UW policies, we will all be vaccinated or wearing masks. If you have a medical exemption for either, you need to work with Disability Services and provide documentation to me. The following links provide more information about these policies:

- [UW Covid Information](#)
- [Vaccination policy](#)
- [Face covering policy](#)

### Do I have to come to class?

Yes, you do. This class is an in-person class on Tuesdays. You are expected to come to class and participate fully to benefit from course activities and meet the course’s learning objectives. You should only register for this class if you are able to attend in-person. However, if you are sick, please stay home.

### What should I do if I am feeling sick?

For the safety and security of all of us, please do not come to class if you are feeling sick for any reason. Staying home when you are sick is an act of care for yourself and our community. If I am feeling sick, I will not come to class. You will not be penalized for staying home. We will make a plan for you to get caught up on your work if you become

sick. Reach out to me if you need to miss a class or have missed a class within 48 hours and we will make a plan.

- If you think you have COVID-19, please get tested - [Pierce County testing sites](#).
- If you test positive for COVID-19, please report this information to Dr. Bernard Anderson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Life, at [bander48@uw.edu](mailto:bander48@uw.edu).

**What if someone misses class due to being sick?**

If you cannot be in class due to illness or quarantine, please keep up with the course work as much as you can. I plan to record class sessions and post those recordings to Canvas after class for you to review. However, the class is more hands-on than lecture. All assignments and activities will be posted to Canvas. If I cannot be in class due to illness, I will notify the class by 8am on the day of class with an update and a plan.

**What are the rules around masks in class?**

You must wear a mask at all times in class and the mask must be worn correctly (covering your mouth and nose). **Your mask is your ticket to class.** If you don't have one, you can't come in. If you forget your mask, I may have an extra for you to borrow. But, that is not a guarantee. It is your responsibility to bring a mask and wear it in every class.

**What if someone in class isn't wearing a mask or isn't wearing it correctly?**

Students who aren't wearing a mask will not be permitted to enter class. If a student is not wearing a mask correctly, I will say "Mask Check" and expect everyone to check that their mask is worn correctly. If a student repeatedly needs correction, I will call them out by name. For students who have a medical exemption from mask wearing, I will not call them out by name. If you see a student unmasked and I don't correct them, you can assume they have a medical exemption.

**What if someone in class refuses to wear a mask or repeatedly wears it incorrectly?**

If we can not create a safe classroom environment, I will dismiss class and we will shift to online work. If a student repeatedly pushes back on mask wearing, it then becomes a disciplinary issue and the student will be reported via a [Student Conduct incident](#).

**Where should I sit?**

For the first day of class, you can sit wherever you would like but this will become your permanent seat for the first four weeks of the quarter. You need to return to the same seat so we can create a seating chart in case we need it for contact tracing. After the first four weeks, we will shift seating to put students in smaller groups for the rest of the quarter.

**Can I eat or drink in class?**

Usually, I'm all for snacking in class, but due to COVID-19 we cannot permit food in class. If you need to eat for medical reasons while in class, you are welcome to step outside of the building. We will also take a 10 minute break at the midpoint of each class. You are welcome to drink if you have a straw. Please keep your mask on when drinking.

### Communication Protocols

Should any questions arise throughout the term, please first refer to your syllabus and the “FAQ” discussion board posted in the Orientation Module. If you are unable to find a suitable answer, or you wish to communicate with me regarding specific course content or personal matters, please email me at [htsun@uw.edu](mailto:htsun@uw.edu) or schedule a Zoom meeting appointment. I will respond to your email within 24 hours during weekdays, and you'll find that I usually respond much faster. However, I might not check email over the weekend.

- **Please write to me through UW email!** Canvas email is not convenient to respond or archive.
- When emailing, include the course name or number in the subject line, and be sure to include your name! Failure to do so may result in a delay or non-response to your query as I might miss your message.
- If you do not hear from me after 24 hours during weekdays, please don't hesitate to email me again. I get busy, lose emails from time to time, or forget to respond.
- Do not expect a response about an extension or other problem five minutes before the assignment is due.
- UW Tacoma employees and students are issued a University of Washington NetID and email account. University email communications will only be sent to their University of Washington email address. Faculty and staff are not obligated to respond to students using non-UW email accounts. Those who choose to forward their emails to a non-UW email address do so at their own risk. The University is not responsible for any difficulties that may occur in the proper or timely transmission or access of email forwarded to any email address, and any such problems will not absolve employees and students of their responsibility to know and comply with the content of electronic university communications sent to UW email addresses.
- **Please turn on your camera when you can to make our virtual meetings more productive.** Read this for the rationale: <https://www.fastcompany.com/90580282/this-one-remote-work-hack-will-make-your-virtual-meetings-more-productive>
- To book an appointment on Canvas, please check this page: <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Student-Guide/How-do-I-sign-up-for-a-Scheduler-appointment-in-the-Calendar/ta-p/536>

### A Note on Technical Difficulties

- When access to the course is not available for an extended period of time due to UWT issues (greater than one entire evening - 6pm till 11pm) you can reasonably expect that the due date for assignments will be changed to the next day (assignment still due by 11:59pm).
- If you experience outages resulted by your service provider, an extension will be granted.
- If you experience problems with Canvas, visit <https://itconnect.uw.edu/learn/tools/canvas/canvas-help-for-students/>

### Assignments and Weight

- **Service-learning group project** 35%

- **Wordville project** 20%
- **Critical design reflection** 20%
- Plugin review slide report 5%
- Lab exercises & homework 10%
- Professionalism & participation 10%

*Notes:*

1. You must finish all the major assignments (the first three items) in time to get the passing grade in this course.
2. There is no make-up for quizzes, in-class exercises, or homework if you miss one.
3. Class participation is expected and required for this skills-based course, which is 10% of your overall grade. If you cannot participate in our live zoom meetings or in-person sessions, you need to catch up by watching the recorded sessions. *Canvas (i.e., Panopto Recordings feature) provides detailed statistics on how many minutes of a video are viewed by each student.*

### Grading Scale

- **IMPORTANT!!!** I use the gradebook function of Canvas primarily for communication purpose. Please be aware that Canvas lacks a smart formula to calculate the weight of each assignment into an accurate final score, and your total score could be different from what you see from Canvas, but the grade for individual assignment should be the same with my records.
- For a skills-based course as TCOM 420, both the efforts and progress you have made in the class are valued and considered for grading.
- Grades are based on the University of Washington grading scale:  
<https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/registrar/grading-policy#permalink-16985>
- See below for the grading conversion table for this class:

Points	Letter grade	Numerical grade
97-100	A+	4.0
93-96	A	3.9
90-92	A-	3.8 – 3.5
87-89	B+	3.4 – 3.2
83-86	B	3.1 – 2.9
80-82	B-	2.8 – 2.5
77-79	C+	2.4 – 2.2
73-76	C	2.1 – 1.9
70-72	C-	1.8 – 1.5
67-69	D+	1.4 – 1.2
63-66	D	1.1 – 0.9
60-62	D-	0.8 – 0.7
0-59	F	0.0

### Late Work

All assignments are due on their designated due time. I do not accept late assignments. If you know there will be a time conflict in your schedule in advance, e-mail or talk to me, and we can negotiate an appropriate due date for the assignment. Although I don't usually penalize for emergencies, your project will be **reduced by an entire letter grade** for each day the assignment is late in most circumstances.

### Student Conduct in Remote Learning Contexts

- The Student Conduct Code remains in place for all students whether a course is offered in person, online, or remotely.
- The instructor's intellectual property rights and the privacy of all course participants must not be violated by students at UW Tacoma. Students may not share course materials with non-class members without explicit written permission from the course instructor.
- Harassment or bullying of instructors and students, including via electronic media, the internet, social networks, blogs, cell phones, and text messages, will not be tolerated. Students found responsible for such infractions are subject to disciplinary sanctions.
- Students may not record any part of a class session without the express consent of the instructor, unless approved as a disability accommodation. Individual course instructors may record course sessions but only for use by registered class members for instructional purposes. All recordings will be housed on secure platforms authorized by UW.
- Civility is a requirement – use common sense. For example, no name calling of other students. Also, consider that we all come from different places in the world and have different experiences, your experience is just that YOUR experience and it is not representative of something as a whole (that's called universalism), on the other hand, it is important to bring those things up, especially if it is in opposition of what is being presented as "common" or "normal."
- Students learn more when participating actively in the learning process. The ability to function professionally and to communicate in an appropriate manner is critical to success in any career field. College learning environment is actually a professional environment, similar in many ways to a professional work environment. Remember you are an emerging professional who represents UWT, and professionalism indeed begins from classrooms.

An incidence of displaying negative attitude toward others and being disrespectful will result in a one-point deduction from your participation grade.

### Technology Expectations

In this class you will be completing projects with advanced software. However, the class is focused on teaching you strategies for design, not on teaching you software, so while we will complete tutorials in related programs and discuss a number of their features in class, we will not devote class time to instruction on using these programs—*UWT is not a community college or a technical college*. **It is your responsibility to learn the software and gain familiarity with those platforms.** I will certainly be available during office hours to help with technological problems you encounter with the assignments, but **I expect that you will have completed the tutorial and made an effort to solve the problem yourself before you see me.**

You have the following computer-related responsibilities in this class:

- You are expected to store primary and backup copies of your work, including drafts, e-mail, and notes, on your home directory and on backup disks. Be prepared in the event that one of these backups fails!
- You are expected to check the class web page and your e-mail regularly for updates to the schedule, new assignments, and messages.
- You are responsible for spending time outside of class to get up to speed on computer technologies and applications that are unfamiliar to you.

- You will also need a positive attitude towards learning technologies with which you may be unfamiliar. In most cases, you will not need to be extremely experienced in the specific program or procedure you will be asked to do. Rather, you have to be patient and curious enough to keep trying until you learn the best way to work.

Think of the network environment in this class as your workplace. Adapting to new computer systems, platforms, and software will be increasingly important as you progress in your professional development.

### **Religious Accommodations**

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Faculty Syllabus Guidelines and Resources. Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form available at <https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>.

### **Safe Campus**

Preventing violence is a shared responsibility in which everyone at the UW plays a part. The SafeCampus website ([washington.edu/safecampus](https://www.washington.edu/safecampus)) provides information on counseling and safety resources, University policies, and violence reporting requirements help us maintain a safe personal, work and learning environment.

### **Academic Honesty**

The faculty at UW Tacoma takes academic honesty very seriously. Behaving with integrity is part of our responsibility to our shared learning community. If you're uncertain about if something is academic misconduct, ask me. I am willing to discuss questions you might have.

Acts of academic misconduct may include but are not limited to:

- Cheating (working collaboratively on quizzes/exams and discussion submissions, sharing answers and previewing quizzes/exams)
- Plagiarism (representing the work of others as your own without giving appropriate credit to the original author(s))
- Unauthorized collaboration (working with each other on assignments)

Concerns about these or other behaviors prohibited by the Student Conduct Code will be referred for investigation and adjudication. Students found to have engaged in academic misconduct may receive a zero on the assignment (or other possible outcome).

It is your responsibility to be familiar with the student code; for more information, refer to this website: <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/registrar/academic-policies#permalink-16076>

### **Counseling Center & CARE Resources**

The Counseling & Psychological Services offers short-term, problem-focused counseling to UW Tacoma students who may feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities of college, work, family, and relationships. Counselors are available to help students cope with stresses and personal issues that may interfere with their ability to perform in school. The service is provided confidentially and without additional charge to currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students. To schedule an appointment, please call 253-692-4522, email [uwtcaps@uw.edu](mailto:uwtcaps@uw.edu), or stop by the Counseling &



Psychological Services, located in MAT 354. Additional information can also be found by visiting: <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/uwt/caps>.

For a variety of student support, please check out the page of CARE Team Resources: <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/student-life/care>

### Disability Support Services

The University of Washington Tacoma is committed to making physical facilities and instructional programs accessible to students with disabilities. Disability Support Services (DSS) functions as the focal point for coordination of services for students with disabilities. In compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any enrolled student at UW Tacoma who has an appropriately documented physical, emotional, or mental disability that "substantially limits one or more major life activities [including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working]," is eligible for services from DSS. If you are wondering if you may be eligible for accommodations on our campus, please contact the DSS reception desk at 692-4522, or visit <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/drs>

### Teaching and Learning Center

The Teaching and Learning Center offers free academic support for students at all levels. They offer one-on-one consultations and group workshops in writing, math, statistics, science, and Spanish. They also work with students on questions about English grammar & vocabulary, reading, and learning strategies. Located in Snoqualmie 260 and online, their schedules for appointments and drop-in visits are posted on the website at [tacoma.uw.edu/tlc](http://tacoma.uw.edu/tlc). For special needs or subject tutoring requests, please email [uwtteach@uw.edu](mailto:uwtteach@uw.edu) or call 253-692-4417.

### Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather please note the following steps for determining whether the campus is open and whether our class will be held as scheduled or not:

1. Call (253) 383-INFO. This number will inform you whether the campus has been closed. The class will be cancelled when the school is closed. You are recommended to subscribe a text alert for school closing at <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/fa/safety/uw-alert>
2. Check your course website for the latest class announcement. Our class might be either cancelled or conducted online when inclement weather situation makes commuting unsafe even though the university is not closed. Please stay current with your course website during those situations. If that happens, I will post an announcement to the website AND send an email message to the class listserv **by 7:30 am of that day or earlier**.

### Tentative Schedule

Week	Date	Topics	Reading Due	Project Due
1	1/4	Course Intro; WordPress (WP) tutorial: WP 10 tasks		
	online	Intro to Wordville project; WordPress tutorial	WP 1-5	Self-intro; syllabus quiz

2	1/11	Nine pillars & design process; Content strategy		
	online	Video: Design thinking & discursive affordances; WP workshop	WP 6-9; T. Brown, "Design thinking"	Design thinking response
3	1/18	Intro to service-learning group project; Culturally sustaining design	WP10-12	Group preference
	online	Intro to plugin review project; WP workshop	WP 13-14	Plugin choice
4	1/25	Group forming	"Team charter & trouble shooting"	Wordville project; *Team charter (Wednesday)
	online	Prep for client interview	Hart-Davidson et al.	*Client interview questions; Reading response
5	2/1	Client interview		
	online	Conceptual model workshop	D. Brown, "deliverable basics" "design briefs"; "Towards mindfulness"	Writing strategies discussion
6	2/8	CMS Storyboarding; web systems		Plugin review demo
	online	Group workshop		2nd WP website with Elementor plugin
7	2/15	Design brief workshop; Project implementation & prototype		*Conceptual model & Storyboard
	online	Group workshop: Quick prototyping		
8	2/22	Design brief demo; Intro to critical reflection project		*Design brief slide report

	online	Workshop & consultation; Aging design case discussion		*Design brief final report (extra credit)
9	3/1	Workshop & consultation: testing, professional delivery; final checklist		<i>Proposal of critical reflection</i>
	online	Workshop & consultation		<i>*Beta version of group design</i>
10	3/8	Professional delivery and handoff; workshop & consultation		<i>*Beta of group presentation deliverable; usability debriefing results</i>
	online	Workshop & consultation		
Final	3/15	Live prototype demo		*Final group design
	3/18			Critical design reflection

\* denotes group project.