

### Lab 3      Making a Website

For this lab you will make a website where you will showcase your work, and so that fellow students can critique your work. As maps are an interface to spatial information, your website is an interface to your work in this class.

You can use whichever web creation software you would like. I am fairly proficient with iWeb (Mac software). The lab has both Dreamweaver (ick) and Komposer available (there are nice tutorials for Komposer on YouTube). Last time I taught this course, 15 students used 8 different web design software packages.

There are other free packages that are quite easy to use (e.g., wordpress, weebly, etc.). You should explore your options, ask fellow classmates with web experience which software they use, and then select a software package that works for you.

#### **Here are the things I consider when critiquing your website:**

- Is the main page a useful interface to the rest of the site? (does the text make sense, the buttons make sense, does the page have a pleasing design, are graphics complimentary?)
- Do all links work?
- Is the web page easy to navigate? (are there navigation buttons within each page, do the buttons make sense to the user?)
- Do all images load onto one page, or does the user have to scroll around?
- Are users provided with multiple size maps for viewing?
- Are users provided supporting information about the course, about each lab, etc.?

#### **Some Do's and Don'ts of Web Design**

##### DO: Keep your page structured

Only focus on what is important and provide a logical order to your website. Organize your website's content to make your page easier for visitors to use.

##### DON'T: Just put content everywhere

Excessive content can make your website look cluttered, unprofessional, and untrustworthy. Everything on your website needs to have a reason for being there. It is important that each piece of content creates a good impression on users arriving at your website, as it may be your only chance to make a conversion.

##### DO: Establish direction through your site

Make your page easy to navigate with clear direction throughout each page of your website. Utilize noticeable calls/direction to action to help users find what they are looking for, and move from page to page effortlessly.

##### DON'T: Make your users search to find something

Get the viewer engaged with website with as little hassle as possible! If a user is stuck having to search for content on your website they can easily become frustrated and leave your site,

creating a negative experience.

DO: Make your page easily scanable

Users do not spend a lot of time reading a web page. They want to quickly find what they're looking for, scan it briefly for keywords that correlate to what they need, and get out.

DON'T: Fill your pages with excessive pictures, text, and content

Excessive amounts of pictures, text, and content on your website can make your page cluttered and difficult to use. Make sure each element to your website is adding value. When in doubt, less is more.

DO: Choose the right color scheme

Look at webpages and find the ones that appeal to you. They appeal because chances are they are the colors are effective. Use these ideas for color selection in your website.

DON'T: Overdo it with too many colors

There can definitely be too much of a good thing. Don't overwhelm your visitors with a flood of colors that can be seen as unattractive and overwhelming.

**DO: Keep it simple**

From content to design, keep your website simple! Use effective layout and design to make your points clear in as few words as possible. Basic navigation and design will improve usability of your website.

DON'T: Go on and on and on....and on...

If your website is filled with paragraphs of information it is a safe bet to assume nobody is reading it. Don't overload your website with keywords.

The image below would constitute the minimum for a website (equivalent to a "C" grade).

|                                                                                         |                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| This is my page for GEOG *481L, Map Design and Geovisualization<br>Scott M. Freundschuh |                                                                                                           |
| Lab1                                                                                    | Insert something meaningful here...an image relevant to this class and<br>to who you are is always good 😊 |
| Lab 2                                                                                   |                                                                                                           |
| Lab 3                                                                                   |                                                                                                           |
| Lab 4                                                                                   |                                                                                                           |
| Lab 5                                                                                   |                                                                                                           |
| Lab 6                                                                                   |                                                                                                           |
| Lab 7                                                                                   |                                                                                                           |