

**Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Department of Urban Studies and Planning**



**11.204: Planning, Communication & Digital Media
Fall 2004**

**Project 1:
Web-based Planning Portfolio**

**Assigned: Week 1, Lec. 1
Due: Week 9, Lec. 8 at 5PM**

I. Scenario

With the advent of the World Wide Web, data and their analyses are made more accessible, leaving the public (it is claimed) better informed. However, without adequate care in the design and organization of web delivered media such claims remain frustrated. Some sites are often so poorly constructed that a significant part of their content remains inaccessible or unintelligible.

This project asks you to design and build a web-based container for your academic work--an online portfolio of sorts. Your site should address the design concerns above, particularly as it will host 11.204 work viewed and judged from outside. It will also host projects completed in other courses during your MCP tenure, including your thesis. The site will be critiqued at mid-semester and end of term. We expect you to improve it continually.

II. Directions

1. Look at the examples from the last year. Find one example of a web site which you find particularly good and another you find bad. What makes them so? Which problems had the designer successfully (or not) solved, and how? You need not submit answers.
 2. Give thought as to how the bad site might be improved and how the good site might inform your own portal design.
 3. Brainstorm by yourself and sketch (use paper and pencil) the **look** and **structure** of your entire site. **You must discuss the sketch with your TA before commencing work.** You do not need to submit the sketch(es).
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III. Things to ponder

Think about these questions while sketching:

Look:

- a. How do you integrate the three key elements (title, navigation, and contents) in a page?
- b. Do you use different design schemes for the portal (home) page and subsequent pages? Or, are the schemes the same?
- c. What navigation tools will you use? (Text? Images? Buttons? Rollover images?)
- d. Which fonts will you use?
- e. How will color and composition be used? (the [Artist's Toolkit](#) is a helpful resource)

Structure:

- a. What are the main, secondary, tertiary topics?
- b. How are these made clear to visitors to the site?
- c. How will you accommodate course work outside 11.204, or even professional work?
- d. Would you include a biographical statement? If so, where would it be placed?
- e. How much of this is answered in the portal page and how much elsewhere?
- f. What other outside resources would make for appropriate links?

You need not submit answers. (sketch examples: [look](#) and [structure](#))

4. Based on your sketches, create a web site using Dreamweaver, Photoshop, and other useful software packages (such as Adobe Acrobat).

IV. Materials to submit

You are to submit an email message with the URL of your portal .
Please address the email message to your TA with '11.204: Project 1' appearing in the subject line.

V. Grading criteria

- Function: The entire site is accessible from your portal, all links and buttons work, all images appear = 40%
- Organization/Navigation: Portal page effectively orients viewer; subsequent pages allow viewer to return to portal = 20%
- Quality: Each page has an appropriate title; text and images are appropriate and effective = 20%
- Audience/Message: Text and image selection is professional; site is appropriate for review by a potential employer = 10%
- Identity: Student's concerns, interests, and activities are obvious to the viewer = 10%

Created by Duncan Kincaid. Updated July 2004 by Masa Matsuura. Modified July 2004 by Lorlene Hoyt.
