

Website Development: Week 6

Multimedia Studies Certificate Program
Kansas City Art Institute
Spring 2005

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Worksession Day

Continue work on your website
One-on-one time to help each of you with your individual design

Brief Lecture on CSS

I'll talk about Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), why they are useful and differences between traditional CSS and xHTML/CSS.

Homework Assignment

- Read Chapter 11: Rollovers (pages 396 - 431) from Macromedia Dreamweaver MX 2004 - Hands-On Training book

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)

What is a CSS?

A cascading style sheet is a method of controlling visual elements of an HTML page including fonts, colors, text sizes, hyperlink feedback behavior and even object positioning.

Why is CSS useful?

By controlling page elements with a CSS you can make a change to an element once and have it affect every page in your site.

Imagine you decide to change the color of a link from red to blue. Instead of changing it in every HTML tag

```
<a href="index.html" color="#FF0000">
```

across every page of your site, you can change it in the CSS by controlling the existing HTML tag:

```
a:link { font-family: Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; color: #0000FF}
```

then link to the CSS file from the <head> of the HTML page like this:

```
<link rel="stylesheet" href="styles.css" type="text/css">
```

You can also use "inline" styles in each specific HTML page. These styles are written the same way, but inserted into the head of the HTML page instead of in a separate .css file.

Additionally, you can use styles for a specific section of an HTML page by writing the style immediately before the portion of the page you want to control (like a specific table).

Note that styles work hierarchically, so an inline style will override a global style referenced in a .css file, and a style inserted in the body of the page will override a style inserted in the head at the top of the page.

Issues with CSS

The farther back you go with browsers, the worse the support for CSS becomes. To stay compatible, keep your CSS controls to fonts. However, if you are confident your audience is using current browsers such as IE 6, Netscape 7.x, Mozilla, Safari 1.x you can begin using CSS to control positioning of everything on the page in addition to fonts. This use of CSS is beyond the scope of this class, but is slowly becoming the new standard for building websites.

You can find CSS browser compatibility charts on the web to understand how various browsers will handle CSS properties:
<http://www.corecss.com/properties/full-chart.php>

You can validate your CSS against the W3C standards:
<http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>

And all things CSS at W3C:
<http://www.w3.org/Style/CSS/>