

# **Syllabus**

## **Open Source Content Management Systems**

### **1. Title**

Open Source Content Management Systems  
MSIT606.Sp08 (graduate) – 3 credits

### **2. Description**

Open source content management systems (OS-CMS) offer a flexible and powerful way to get websites online. They allow easy addition of Web 2.0 functionalities, easy editing of web pages by non-technical users, and centralized control of templates and extensions. Online communities are evolving and growing all over the Internet, and many are under control of some type of open source content management system. This course examines the mechanics of getting an OS-CMS on the web and how to build a community within it.

### **3. Intended Audience and Rationale**

Students who may not have the technical level of a programmer, but have solid HTML and CSS skills and understand how a web application functions at a high level. These students will be able to post fairly sophisticated websites without the assistance of an engineer, and configure them for a client. This is also for students who want to learn the fundamentals of online communities from a technical as well as a sociological viewpoint.

### **4. Goals**

This course aims to provide students with insight to the workings of Joomla, an open-source content management system, and content management systems in general. Students will also learn about building online communities, including how to recruit and reward active members, moderate comments and spam, and keep a website going.

### **5. Learning Objectives**

The student will be able to:

- Establish their own domain name and web hosting
- Install Joomla
- Configure Joomla templates and populate the site with content and extensions
- Establish an online community and identify the principles that make a successful community
- Assess a range of CMS tools and extensions for those tools

### **6. \*Topical Outline**

#### **Session 1**

Strategy, Scope, Structure, Skeleton, Surface review  
Compare and contrast OS-CMS options.  
Defining a successful online community

<b>Session 2</b> Setting up a Joomla site: sections, categories, content, menu; wireframing Discussion: Comparing OS-CMS options
<b>Session 3</b> Joomla templates, part 1 Discussion: Evaluating Joomla extensions for community functionality and technical features
<b>Session 4</b> Joomla templates, part 2 Discussion: Driving traffic to your online community
<b>Session 5</b> Installing and configuring Joomla extensions Discussion: Forming, Storming, Norming, Conforming: What happens when controversy hits your community?
<b>Session 6</b> Open lab: your Joomla questions Discussion: advanced topics, student questions
<b>Session 7</b> Final presentations

**\* Topic order is subject to change!**

## **7. Format**

This course is offered in two formats. One has a face-to-face component and an online component. The other is 100% online. You are expected to attend and participate in class discussions in both. Podcasts will be available at <http://gradcenter.marlboro.edu/academics/MSITaudio.html>. Online video, tutorials, instructions, etc. will be available in Moodle and at the course website.

## **8. Instructional Procedures**

Class time will be split between teaching Joomla and teaching about social networking tools – how they're used, why they're used, and how to exploit them on the site you're building.

We will use the Marlboro College Graduate Center online environment to facilitate discussions during the 2-weeks between face-to-face class sessions. Plan to log in at least once every 48 hours. Each conference will be open for approximately two weeks, until the next class meeting. You are expected to write at least two substantive posts and two substantive replies each week for a minimum of eight posts per 2-week session. You should feel free to initiate discussions as well.

There will be a minimum of one movie per 2 week session dealing with the mechanics of Joomla and setting up a Joomla powered website.

**9. Evaluation Procedures**

**For hybrid attendees:**

Class Attendance and Participation	20%	
Online Participation		20%
Community Archaeology	10%	
Joomla site	50%	

**For online only attendees:**

Online Participation		40%
Community Archaeology	10%	
Joomla site	50%	

## 10. Prerequisites

Significant background in (X)HTML and CSS, perhaps via Designing With Web Standards. High-level understanding of how a web application works, what MySQL and PHP are. Understanding the code-level of PHP/MySQL are not required.

## 11. Instructional Resources

### Required Texts

"Design for Community" by Derek Powazek.

<http://www.peachpit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0735710759>

"Designing for the Social Web" by Joshua Porter. To be published April 26, according to Amazon.com

<http://www.amazon.com/Designing-Social-Voices-That-Matter/dp/0321534921/>

"Joomla! A User's Guide: Building a Successful Joomla! Powered Website" by Barrie North.

<http://www.amazon.com/Joomla-Users-Guide-Building-Successful/dp/0136135609>

## 12. Competence Statements

*Jen Kramer McKibben*

For nearly nine years, Jen Kramer McKibben has been educating clients, colleagues, friends and graduate students about the meaning of a "quality website." Jen develops sites that are functional, usable, accessible, and supportive of business and marketing goals. She is a senior faculty member at the Marlboro College Graduate Center, teaching courses and workshops in web site design and management. She is the Program Director for the Master's of Science in Internet Technologies program (MSIT), advising students and overseeing courses and faculty pertaining to the degree. She has also previously taught at Champlain College and the Community College of Vermont. Jen earned a BS in biology at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an MS in Internet Strategy Management at the Graduate Center of Marlboro College. She is most recently an Adobe Dreamweaver 8 Certified Developer.

Jen Kramer  
(802) 257-2657 cell  
jen@focusedconsulting.com