

# Week 1

**Everything is due on Sunday  
May 28 at 11:59pm on Canvas.**

## **Intro and Visual/Design**

The University of Mary Washington's Digital Knowledge Center provides peer tutoring to all University students on digital projects and assignments. Students can schedule 50 minute, one-one-one tutorials with a trained peer tutor on any DS106 related projects. Click [Here to set up an appointment](#).

Please note that most of the assignments/tasks listed below are due no later than Sunday night at midnight, though I can't tell you enough that if you wait until Sunday to do them you will be screwed. **Also, the Daily Create assignments need to be completed and published on the day they come out (hence the daily!)** and I am mandating you do one **Wednesday** by midnight to get in the swing of things.

Please note that this class moves at a lightening fast pace, and if you don't stop to look around once and a while it will pass you by.

You can find the syllabus here: [Syllabus Summer 2017](#).

## **Part I Bootcamp**

The first thing you should do this week (and every week) is watch the video (above). In it, I will lay out the plan for

the week. These videos are a vital resource for you and you should never skip them! I cannot emphasize this enough. If you try to rely on just the list below of what you need to complete, there is a good chance you will get confused or miss out on important tips and information!

Below is a detailed list of what's to be completed this week.

### **1. Review the Syllabus**

You need to spend some time [reading and familiarizing yourself with the syllabus](#) for this class. As we said in our welcome email last week, this course is likely like no other you've ever taken. The syllabus is your roadmap for understanding the work of the class and what your activities will entail.

### **2. Get a Domain and Webhosting**

After review the syllabus, first thing you need to do is choose a domain name for yourself. A domain name is a just a fancy name for a URL or Web address. For this class, you will register a domain name (free through UMW's Domain of One's Own project) of your own. [Check out some advice about choosing a domain name.](#) Once you choose your domain name, you need to register it and set up web hosting through [Domain of One's Own](#) (login with your UMW netid/password). Detailed instructions. If you already have a domain through Domain of One's Own, then you are one step ahead For more details on how to navigate your web hosting account, i.e. cPanel (your control panel), creating subdomains, using Installatron, etc., we have extensive documentation here: <http://docs.umwdtlt.org/> . Shortly after you sign up for your domain and Web hosting, you will receive an email requiring you to verify your domain. This is a legitimate email, and you must follow the instructions in it! If you do not, in two weeks, your domain will go into a state of "limbo" making your site basically unavailable.

### 3. **Install WordPress**

[This tutorial](#) will take you through installing the publishing platform WordPress. Keep in mind if you already have WordPress installed on your UMW Domains, you can use your existing site (and just tag or categorize your ds106 work accordingly) or choose to create a new WordPress site in a separate subdomain, such as ds106.myawesomedomains.com. Find out [what a subdomain is](#) and [how to set up a subdomain](#) on our documentation site. You will be using WordPress A LOT in this class. If you're not already familiar with it, please [keep this set of WordPress resources handy](#).

### 4. **Register Your Blog at the Main ds106 Web Site**

Once your blog is available on the web (it should be almost immediate) [register yourself and your new blog on the DS106 site](#). You MUST do this in order for everyone to see the posts you'll be writing for the class. NOTE: In order to register your site, you will need to give us a Twitter userid. You may want to skip ahead to the Twitter portion of #5 if you don't already have a Twitter account.

### 5. **Get an Avatar**

You will need to select an "avatar" for yourself. This is an icon or image that can represent you online (it need not be your face). This should preferably be a square image. Create a "gravatar" for yourself at <http://gravatar.com> using the email address you most likely will use for course work (and keep in mind you can associate your gravatar with several email accounts). Many sites (such as our class site) will automatically use this image as your avatar.

### 6. **Set up Your Social Media**

Create accounts and fill out profiles for yourself (if any of these let you set an avatar, use the same icon as you set up on Gravatar) on:

- **Flickr**(photo sharing) <http://flickr.com>

If you are new to Flickr or have no images in your account, you MUST post at least 5 images to your flickr account right away (they can be whatever you want); Flickr may not verify and make your account public until there are 5 images there. When you upload your photos, tag them with ds106. Get in the habit of doing this!

- **Soundcloud**(audio publishing) <http://soundcloud.com/>  
Set up an account if you don't already have one.
- **Google** / **Youtube** (video sharing) <http://www.google.com/accounts/>  
If you have a Gmail account, you are already set with this. If not create a Google account. This is what will allow you to join any synchronous video discussions we have (in Google Hangout) and gives you access to [YouTube](#).
- **Vimeo** (video sharing) <http://vimeo.com>  
Alternatively, if you don't want to (or can't) get a YouTube account, feel free to use Vimeo for your videos.
- **Twitter** <http://twitter.com>  
Twitter will be one of the main channels for communication in ds106. If you already have an account for personal purposes, you are welcome to use it or create a new account for communication related to this class. Make sure you customize your profile! Send your first message of greeting and be sure to use #ds106 hashtag in your tweets. Learn how to [search on the #ds106 hashtag](#).
- **Make some Multimodal Introductions**  
Now that you have all your accounts, it's time to use them to introduce yourself to the class. Use Twitter, SoundCloud, YouTube, and Flickr to introduce yourself to the community, be creative. Once you've done that you need to embed them all into a WordPress blog post. Here are [some tips for embedding media in WordPress](#).

# Part II Customizing Your Blog and Building Participation

**1. Customize Your Blog:** This week, I want you to also spend some time customizing and personalizing your blog. Here are some things you should work on:

- 1. About Page:** You need to **create an about page** on your blog and let folks know who you are. This is one of your virtual homes on the web, time to decorate and nest. You do *not* need to share very personal information about yourself, if you're not comfortable doing so, and, generally, we don't recommend that you post your email, your phone number, or your street address. You're welcome to only use your first name or a nickname, if that makes you more comfortable, too.
- 2. Exploring Themes:** Here's a tutorial on [how to work with Themes in WordPress](#). You should try out some different themes until you find one you really like.
- 3. Exploring Plugins:** Plugins are extensions to WordPress that change or enhance the way it works. Here is a quick run through on [installing plugins](#). In addition, on the Video page of this site, you can find a section full of WordPress help videos. There is one specifically about installing plugins.
  - To start, everyone needs to install [Akismet](#) – a plugin that blocks spam comments (which you will all be getting very soon). If you start having issues with spam and you haven't installed Akismet, we will cry crocodile tears. [NB: You don't have to pay a cent for Akismet, just move the slider to \$0 when signing up.]
  - We also recommend you install [Jetpack](#), which is like 40 plugins in one. Many of them are extremely useful (check out the Publicize component of JetPack which let's you share on Twitter every

time you write a blog post).

- These are the list that [DTLT recommend](#).

4. **Moderating Comments:** There is nothing more annoying than when you take the time to comment on someone's blog, and it never shows up because it is stuck in moderation. You will receive an email whenever someone leaves a comment on your blog and it goes into moderation, and you need to approve it. It is your job to moderate all comments, although feel free to delete anything you find untoward or inappropriate. You can moderate comments in the Comments section of your WordPress site. (The WordPress help videos on the Video page of this site includes one on Managing Comments.)
5. **Blog Titles:** **No site shall** be called "My blog" or "DS106" by the week's end. If there is one—we will sacrifice you to the sun and ocean. A lot of them. You change this in the Settings area of the WordPress Dashboard. [For a more in-depth overview of WordPress check out the documentation we have provided at wordpress website.](#)

**2. Build Your Participation:** Participation is not only a component of your grade in this class, it's also an essential element of building our online community. If you're doing the work but not actively engaging with everyone else in ds106, then you need to step up your game. Here are three important ways you can build up your participation in ds106:

1. **Commenting:** Commenting is the life's blood of this class, and it is a large part of your overall work in this course. Read your fellow students' blogs widely and comment freely. Commenting builds community. If you want to be sure we see the comments you left, you should consider linking to them in your Weekly Summary post.
2. **Twitter:** Twitter will be a vital space for the work we're doing all semester. If you're not there, you're missing the conversation, and that can't help but affect

your work. (You may also miss important information, advice, or announcements!) Follow the hashtags [#ds106](#). Also, I recommend using [Tweetdeck](#) (a Twitter application you can install on your computer) for tracking specific hashtags.

3. **Responding on Your Own Blog:** This is a more advanced form of participation, and it's indicative of a student who truly understands the meaning of building community in ds106. If you find yourself leaving a very long comment, you have significant thoughts or reactions to a classmate's work, or someone else's work inspires you to create something yourself, write up a post on your own blog and *be sure to link back to the post that inspired you*. It can be incredibly satisfying to discover that something you said or created didn't just prompt a comment, but inspired someone to write or create something of their own, on their own blog. (You can also use this technique to write about something someone said with which you disagree, but you must always do this in a polite and constructive way!)

## Part III Photography

*Getting into the visual storytelling. This section deals with how we use visual elements to capture meaning and tell stories. We'll be doing some work with photography and I'll ask you to review some resources about improving your photography (and being more thoughtful about what you take pictures of). Additionally, I'll be asking you to continue organizing your blog.*

### 1. **How to Be a Better Photographer**

The suggestions are borrowed from [TEN: Ten Ways to Improve Your Craft. None of Them Involve Buying](#)

[Gear](#) a \$5 ebook by David duChemin. You don't need to buy the book, we've lifted some key points.

- **Get Pickier:** Instead of using your camera like a rapid fire machine gun, spend more time pre-composing in your mind. As you get more practice, you can be more selective, and more deliberate.
- **Better Contrast Makes Better Stories** Contrast can be in terms of colors and lighting, but also elements in your photos- look for things that maybe not belong together. Look for near and far perspective.
- **Change My Perspective By Changing Yours:** Find different and unique points of view. Look down, up, lay down on the ground. Seek perspectives of lines.
- **Create Depth:** Look for ways to add dimension of visual depth in your 2 dimensional images- play with foreground, lines, use of wide angle lenses, use of dark backgrounds
- **Get Balanced.** The rule of thirds is not only about placement on a grid; duChemin describes visual mass, elements that draw more attention in a photo and how to balance that effectively. "Becoming more intentional about creating and playing with balance in your images will help you create images that are more intentionally express what you have to say."
- **Pay Attention to the Moment:** Sometimes it means slowing down, but also being more aware of the action in a scene, trying to anticipate the moment of something interesting before it happens e.g. watching a family at the table preparing for when



baby might spill the glass of milk? at sporting events trying to be ready for the kick that scores the goal?

- **Look to the light.** Probably the most key lesson- be aware of light that works and what does not. Knowing about shadows, directions, aiming for directions where light is strong (or not). Good light makes every photo. Learn how to sense when light is good (and when not, and you can skip lousy shots).
- **Use the Best Lens** If your camera uses different lenses, understand better what a wide angle does versus a telephoto not only in terms of what it can fit in a photo, but what effect it has on photos (squashing or expanding space). If your lens is fixed, understand what its limits are (how close you can get, what happens at severe angles).
- **Expose for Aesthetics** Learn how to use aperture, shutter speed, iso to control the image- what the effects of these all play on depth of field, motion freeze vs blurring. For fixed lens camera/mobile, at least understand what the level of light means for your photos (why those low light photos are blurry?)
- **Put a Great Foreground in Front of a Great Background** Pay attention to the near and far. A landscape scene is dull without something in foreground to give depth and scale. Learn to avoid clutter and distracting elements.

These are of course, very general guides. You get better as you look at your own and others photos. You get better when you think more before you press the shutter. You get better when you try new

approaches. You get better when you break the rules.

Review the following materials about photography and using visual elements to create stories.

- [Becoming a Better Photographer](#) (section from the ds106 Handbook)
- [What is Visual Literacy?](#)
- [The Story Behind. . . Migrant Mother](#), Maria Popova

**Write a blog post towards the end of the week that summarizes the tips you tried. Include:**

- Link and credit for the tip
- Embed an example of a photo where you tried the technique
- Describe how you thought about this, or what approach (or variation) you tried.
- Take your photo that you are most proud of in terms of learning a new photo technique, and write a summary blogpost and make sure you write a portion based on reflection of the material read/watched/listen to.

2. **Complete a Photo Safari:** Below are a list of subjects I ask you to convey in photos– but you must try and capture **within a 15 minute window of time**. It's a photographic scavenger hunt. Pick a place that is likely to have a good variety of subjects (your basement, a shopping mall, a busy city block). Be inventive in trying to interpret the list of subjects, in a location you choose (many of my previous university students completed this in their dorm room). Carve out a time and place to try the photo scavenger hunt; **write a blog post** that includes a gallery of your images, and some thoughts on the experience. There are no prizes for who gets the most done. Just try to

think of interesting ways to capture the items or convey the ideas in a photo. Here is what to seek in your photoblitz!

1. Your first photo is of something that shows the current time! Document when you started the blitz.
2. In the next 15 minutes, try to capture as many of the following photos as you can
  - Take a photo dominated by a single color.
  - Take a photo of an interesting shadow.
  - Take a photo of something futuristic.
  - Take a photo at an unusual angle, e.g. looking looking up at something or looking down at something, or from the view of an ant.
  - Take a photo into bright light.
  - Take a photo of someone else's shoe or foot.
  - Make an inanimate object look alive.
  - Make a photo that uses converging lines to draw us into the photo
  - Take a photo of two things that do not belong together.
  - Take a photo that shows a repeating pattern.
  - Take a photo where you move the camera as you take the photo, so it gives the subject a suggestion of motion.
  - Take a photo that is looking through a frame or opening to something else.
  - Take a photo that represents joy.
  - Make a photo that is abstract, that would make someone ask, "Is that a photograph?"
  - Take a photo that represents a metaphor for complexity.

3. Take another photo of a timepiece that shows the time you stopped. It should be fifteen minutes since step 1, right?
  4. Upload your images to your blog, and create a WordPress Gallery for them.
  5. **Write a blog post** about your experience. Describe the place you chose to do this, and why you chose it. What was the experience like? What photos worked for you best? What do you think was the most inventive?
3. **Do three Daily Creates:** Complete three Daily Creates this week. The website is <http://daily.ds106.us/> Here's how to get started:
1. [Follow @ds106dc](#) on Twitter. New assignments are posted each day at 5AM EST. The assignments will vary in mode— photography, drawing, audio, video, writing, and maybe an oddball one now and then.
  2. Once you've completed your assignment, follow the instructions on the Daily Create to reply via twitter. For your response to show up here you must include @ds106dc in your tweet as well as the tag specific for that day, e.g. `>#tdcl666`.
  3. That's it! It may take up to an hour for your response to show up here. Make sure in your weekly summary you give the links to each of your daily creates.
4. **Complete Visual Assignments:** This week, you'll be doing at least **4 different assignments totally 10 or more stars** of visual assignments from [Visual Assignment DS106 Assignment Bank](#). Additionally, you will be required to do the [You Very Own Spubble](#) assignment (2 stars) (this counts toward your 10 point total) Make sure you're tagging your assignments correctly (the required assignment

tags are VisualAssignments and VisualAssignments190, and review the advice about [writing up assignments](#). [The following is the rubric for these assignments](#)

5. **Organize Your Blog:** As you start to write more and more posts for the different genres of assignments we're doing, your site is going to have a lot of content. Set up categories for your posts so that you (and others) can easily filter and find your work. Here is a recommended category structure you can use (feel free to modify/expand as you like:
  - Assignments
  - Daily Create
  - Thoughts and Ideas
  - Weekly Summaries
  - Best Work
  - Final Project

Now create these additional sub-categories and set the Parent to be Assignments:

- Visual
- Design
- Audio
- Video

*Note: if you're using your blog for other things besides this class, you may wish to add an overarching category for all of these of "ds106."*

Check out the Videos under "WordPress Help."

## Part IV Weekly Summary

Every week, you will be required to submit a summary post by the weekly deadline (generally due on Sundays at midnight).

These posts should include **links** to or **embedded media** from all the work you have done for the week: **storytelling assignments**, **daily creates**, **reflections** etc. In addition, you should use this post to **reflect upon your activity of the week**:

- How well do you feel you completed the requirements of the week's assignments?
- What gave you trouble? What did you enjoy most? What did you learn?
- What would you do differently? What questions do you have?
- What are some of the larger issues surrounding your work? Cultural/Societal implications?

**These weekly summaries are what we will use to find all of your weekly work as we determine your grade for that week.** In addition, they are an opportunity for you to tell us how you feel you are doing and what's giving you trouble, overall, in the course. If you forget to include something in a weekly post, we may not realize you've completed it. **If you fail to submit a weekly summary, you will get no grade for that week!** [The follow is the rubric I use for assignments.](#)

This week you should write minimally about the following. By the way proper English and good writing are required!

1. Commentary on Setting Up your Domain and Social media
2. A link to a multimodal introduction blog post
3. Commentary of Customizing your blog
4. A link to a reflection about all the material you viewed/read about visuals of storytelling
5. A link to your Photo Safari
6. A link to your Photoreflexion
7. A link to your reflection on the photo safari
8. Links to Three Daily Creates
9. Links to 4 different visual assignment blog post
10. Reflection on how you felt about the Visual Storytelling.

These posts are REALLY important. We use them to grade you every week, so you need to link to other posts you've written, embed media you've created, and narrate the process of learning that you went through this week. What did you learn? What was harder than you thought it would be? What was easier? What drove you crazy? Why? What did you really enjoy? Why?Final **Note: You MUST submit the link to this weekly post in Canvas by midnight on Sunday.** NO EXCEPTIONS. NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED.