

SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
COLLEGE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION  
COURSE OUTLINE

**SECTION II**

**SUBJECT AREA AND COURSE NUMBER**

COMM 682

**COURSE TITLE**

CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS II

**TYPE COURSE**

NON-FEE

VOCATIONAL

**CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides students with the skills needed to customize Content Management System (CMS) websites by creating and employing child themes. Students learn to employ recommended best practices to safely modify CMS themes while maintaining the design and code by using a child theme that inherits the functionality and styling of the parent theme. Topics include customizing Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) and Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP) files and working with template files to create child themes. (FT)

**LECTURE/LABORATORY HOURS**

120

**ADVISORIES**

Completion of COMM 681 Content Management Systems I

**RECOMMENDED SKILL LEVEL**

Possess a 10th grade reading level; ability to communicate effectively in the English language.

## INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Social Responsibility  
SDCCE students demonstrate interpersonal skills by learning and working cooperatively in a diverse environment.
2. Effective Communication  
SDCCE students demonstrate effective communication skills.
3. Critical Thinking  
SDCCE students critically process information, make decisions, and solve problems independently or cooperatively.
4. Personal and Professional Development  
SDCCE students pursue short term and life-long learning goals, mastering necessary skills and using resource management and self-advocacy skills to cope with changing situations in their lives.
5. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Anti-racism and Access  
SDCCE students critically and ethically engage with local and global issues using principles of equity, civility, and compassion as they apply their knowledge and skills: exhibiting awareness, appreciation, respect, and advocacy for diverse individuals, groups, and cultures.

## COURSE GOALS

1. Understand how a child theme can enhance and add functionality to a parent theme.
2. Learn how to modify a WordPress website by using custom CSS and modifying the website's functions.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the benefits of using a child theme to customize and modify an existing theme.
2. Describe and outline the steps needed to customize the look and feel as well as alter the functionality of a WordPress theme by utilizing a child theme.
3. Make changes to the main theme (and thereby the look and presentation of the web-based content) by using a child theme's custom CSS.
4. Understand how to hook into existing parent theme functions and how to use child theme functions to overwrite and modify the original functions.
5. Demonstrate how to use PHP to create a custom global field by altering the template.
6. Add a new menu to a WordPress website and thereby alter the default functionality of the parent theme.

## SECTION II

### COURSE CONTENT AND SCOPE

1. Child Theme Introduction
  - 1.1. Working with the WordPress theme framework
  - 1.2. What is a child theme?

- 1.3. How does a child theme work?
- 1.4. When you should use a child theme
- 1.5. Benefits of using a child theme
- 1.6. Choosing a parent theme

## COURSE CONTENT AND SCOPE (CONTINUED)

- 2. Creating a Child Theme
  - 2.1. Setting up your child theme
    - 2.1.1. Creating necessary files and folders
  - 2.2. Activating a child theme
  - 2.3. Including stylesheets
  - 2.4. Best practices for including stylesheets
  - 2.5. Organizing your child theme
    - 2.5.1. Adding an image
    - 2.5.2. Adding a description
- 3. Child Themes and CSS
  - 3.1. Using what you have / the laziness principle
  - 3.2. Pulling styles from the parent theme
  - 3.3. Designing in the browser
  - 3.4. Modifying existing styles
  - 3.5. Overwriting styles
  - 3.6. Adding new styles
- 4. Modifying Functions
  - 4.1. Introduction to functions.php
  - 4.2. Understanding the function.php file
  - 4.3. Modify the functions.php file using PHP
    - 4.3.1. Introduction to PHP
    - 4.3.2. PHP for use with a CMS
    - 4.3.3. PHP functions pertaining to a CMS
  - 4.4. Locating functions
    - 4.4.1. Locating functions within the parent theme
    - 4.4.2. Locating functions within plugins
  - 4.5. Hooks, filters and actions
    - 4.5.1. What is a hook
    - 4.5.2. What is a filter function
    - 4.5.3. How to hook a function
    - 4.5.4. Making changes to the website via functions
- 5. Working with Template Files
  - 5.1. Template hierarchy
  - 5.2. Changing existing templates
  - 5.3. Adding new templates
  - 5.4. Ensuring backwards compatibility
  - 5.5. Customizing pages via functions
- 6. Adding New Functionality
  - 6.1. Locating existing functionality
  - 6.2. Adding a feature

- 6.3. Modifying the feature with output properties
- 6.4. Styling the new feature with CSS
- 6.5. Creating conditional content
- 7. Migrating Changes to the Live Site
  - 7.1. Testing
  - 7.2. Implementing

#### APPROPRIATE READINGS

Reading assignments may include, but are not limited to, assignments from the textbook, supplemental reading assignments, industry-related periodicals or magazines, manuals, online help pages, articles posted on the Internet, and information from Web sites, online libraries, and databases. Topics should be related to CMS systems, installing, and managing databases and may include information related to the differences between static websites versus dynamic content management systems.

#### WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Writing assignments may include, but are not limited to, completing assigned reports, providing written answers to assigned questions, performing internet research and reporting on that research. An example would include a research report / comparison on the use of various plugins to solve a specific issue within a CMS.

#### OUTSIDE ASSIGNMENTS

Outside assignments may include, but are not limited to appropriate internet research, reading, preparing reports and studying as needed to perform successfully in class. An outside assignment would include a student researching a topic covered within an in-class lecture, such as customizing a theme using PHP hooks, and preparing a report to share with the class on that topic.

#### APPROPRIATE ASSIGNMENTS THAT DEMONSTRATE CRITICAL THINKING

Assignments which demonstrate critical thinking may include but are not limited to selecting and installing an appropriate theme for a specific business and customization of that theme by utilizing editors, plugins, and code-based customizations.

#### EVALUATION

Evaluation methods may include but are not limited to performance in a variety of activities and assignments, such as creating specified deliverables, a website that meets current web standards and demonstrates a student's understanding of languages and technologies such as HTML and CSS. Students will need to show they understand how to create a child theme and modify an existing theme using this technique. Students will be able to get further into customization of themes by modifying CSS and PHP files using the child theme procedures. Additional methods of evaluation may include quizzes, class participation, written and practical tests, attendance, and punctuality.

Upon successful completion of all courses in the program a Certificate of Program Completion

will be issued.

### METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Methods of instruction may include, but are not limited to, lectures, in-class and online discussions, hands-on demonstrations, computer-assisted instruction, field trips, and laboratory assignments.

This course, or sections of this course, may be offered through distance education.

### TEXTS AND SUPPLIES

*WordPress: The Missing Manual: The Book That Should Have Been in the Box*, Matthew MacDonald, O'Reilly Media, current edition

Online Video Training:

<https://www.linkedin.com/learning/>

Supplies:

- Optional: Pen, journal (composition book), notebook paper and a soft 3-ring binder, or a one-subject 110 sheet college ruled notebook; and
- Optional: Appropriate storage media such as a USB Drive, external hard drive, or cloud-based storage; and
- Required: Access to a web hosting platform that supports the installation of a CMS and database.

PREPARED BY Emily Kay DATE May 3, 2023

REVISED BY \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Instructors must meet all requirements stated in Policy 5500 (Student Rights, Responsibilities and Administrative Due Process), and the Attendance Policy set forth in the Continuing Education Catalog.

REFERENCES:

San Diego Community College District Policy 5500  
California Community Colleges, Title 5, Section 55002  
College of Continuing Education Catalog