

IT111 Podcast Week 1

Hello, I'm Jean Kent your instructor for IT 111, The Internet and Web Authoring Using XHTML. Welcome to the Week 1 IT 111 podcast.

In this podcast I want to tell you more about the podcasts I'll be producing this quarter, make a few announcements, and discuss the Chapter 1 Assignment that's due this Sunday, April 12. I also want to talk about some of the tips I learned about at a recent presentation I attended on the brain and learning.

I've been creating short weekly podcasts for this class since 2006. My podcasts are audio programs that are saved as mp3 files so you can listen to them on a computer, an iPod, a mp3 player, or even a cell phone. I always include a written transcript in case you prefer reading rather than listening.

My podcasts generally include course updates, assignment tips, references to interesting web sites and resources, and reminders about important dates. Since we don't meet face-to-face, I hope the podcasts add a human touch and provide additional ways for students to get course content. When I first started teaching online in 1997, everything was flat text on a screen but slowly I've been finding other ways to provide course content. Part of my motivation is that I prefer seeing and hearing when it comes to my own learning.

As you may have noticed, I'm using a blog for delivering the podcasts. With a blog, I can add images and show notes so you see in advance what the podcast covers. It also makes it easy to subscribe to the podcasts so you automatically get the new episodes added to your iPod or MP3 player. Another reason I'm using a blog is you can add your comments to an episode and this is another way to create community in an online class.

I hope you'll listen to and enjoy my podcasts this quarter. And, please feel free to add your comments, too.

Here are some course announcements. The online orientation is the best way for me to let students know what's involved in the class and how this online class works. I think it's better than attending an orientation because it means I won't forget to mention important information or class features. And, you can view it when you have time and anywhere you have access to the Web.

The information session on Wednesday, April 8th is an opportunity for us to meet each other and for you to ask any questions you have about the class. If your schedule doesn't allow you to make it, don't worry. The critical information for succeeding in the class is contained in the online orientation and the web site. Still, I hope to see many of you at the session. I like meeting my students.

This quarter we'll be using a new - to me - virtual classroom called Angel Learning. I spent a lot of time over the quarter break moving the quizzes, discussions, and other resources from the old classroom to Angel and I suspect you might find a glitch or two. Please let me know if do so I can fix it.

I'm asking students to complete a student survey which will help me learn about your goals and background. It won't take long to complete and it's due by Friday, April 10th at 11:59pm. Several students have already submitted their survey. Thanks!

I like using a variety of communication tools in this class because regular and reliable communication is so important in online classes. This quarter I'm using email, instant messaging with Meebo, Twitter, and a web-based meeting tool called Elluminate for weekly, real time meetings. I also offer virtual office hours with Skype or a regular phone for students who want to discuss assignments or coding problems.

Chapter 1 provides a good overview of the early development of the Internet, the beginning and evolution of the web, and some semi technical information about how the Internet works. I think it's important to have a basic understanding of the rules for exchanging information online, the parts of a URL, and the organizations that guide the development of the Internet. The first assignment covers Chapter 1 and the course web site. In Chapter 2 you'll begin coding your first web pages.

Finally, some tips about the brain and learning. Tip #1 - Exercise boosts brain power. Even 20 minutes of walking two or three times per week is helpful. Tip #2 - You must repeat something in order to remember it. If you don't repeat something within 30 seconds, you'll forget it. Tip #3: Spaced repetition cycles are key to remembering. Tip #4 - Sleep well, think well. Tip #5 - Multisensory learning means better remembering.

There are several more rules but I think these are a good start. And, you can visit the web site (www.brainrules.net) that supports the book whose author gave the presentation I attended, to view short videos that explain the rules. They're great and I probably could have skipped the presentation if I had known about them in advance.

Well, that's it for this podcast. I'll close with a warm welcome to everyone in the class. I'm really looking forward to teaching this quarter and getting to know each of you.