project 3:
group usability testing (40%)

Understanding how users **use** websites is critical to your ability to **design** your own websites. Because a project as extensive as (re)designing a website is rarely done alone (in the "real world" workforce), this assignment requires you to work as a consulting team of 2–3 to make usability and accessibility decisions about a professional website.

Your team will evaluate the website of a real client, the Department of Writing at UCA (http://uca.edu/writing/). There is a ton of useful content on this website that is in desperate need of re-organization. Your job as a team will be to inspect the website for usability and accessibility issues, conduct usability testing, and write a recommendation report for changes to the website.

deliverables.

1. Inspection Report (10%). As a team, you will collectively construct a website inspection report that will be used to preliminarily evaluate the website. Each member of the team will then evaluate the website individually.

It is important for your team to have a shared understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the site before users test it. You absolutely should adapt the content from your protocols for this report. Reports need to be comprehensive enough that they cover most of the pages of the website and address serious issues regarding usability and accessibility best practices.

http://thevisualcommunicationguy.com/2014/08/27/how-to-evaluate-a-website/

2. Usability Testing (15%). Next, your team will develop a usability test adapted to the purposes of this website. You need to conduct the test at least five times (using at least five different participants). Please note, though, that you do not need to conduct the tests together, at the same time.

Like the inspection report, your usability test questions should be grounded in the readings we've done about usability. Your test should include the following:

1. **Background questions.** This section asks specific questions about the user: what types of website they frequent, if they have used the current website before, their occupation, interests. etc. These questions are meant to help you better understand users' experiences and choices.

2. **Welcome.** Introduce users to the purpose of the test. Remind them to think aloud and that they can ask questions but may not get an immediate response. Ask for permission to record or take notes.

3. **Reactions to Homepage.** Ask the user about first impressions, if they understand the purpose of the site and who runs the site, where their eyes are directed, and what they would likely click first (and why).

4. **Testing Tasks.** Develop 3–5 tasks for the user to complete. They should be concrete tasks but flexible tasks that give users room to make choices.

5. **Summary Notes.** Leave space at the end of the test to jot down overall impressions and reactions immediately after the test is conducted.

3. Recommendation Report (15%). Once the inspection reports and usability tests have been completed, your team will collect the data, synthesize your findings, and write a recommendation report for the Department of Writing. Your report should include the following main sections:

1. **Introduction.** State your purpose and preview the recommendations.

2. **Methods.** Describe the process for inspecting the website and conducting usability testing.

3. **Recommendations.** Your recommendations should be listed in order of importance (and can be bulleted or numbered). Your recommendations should be grounded in the following:
   a. Adherence to web standards, best practices, design conventions
   b. Inspection & usability results

4. **Wireframe.** Create a 1-page mockup visualization (wireframe) of the homepage with an explanation of why the wireframe is an improvement.

At the end of the recommendation report, you will include two appendices: 1) website inspection reports and 2) usability test questions and responses. Submit one report per team to Google Classroom. Project #3 is due Friday, 3/18 by 5pm.