

INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF JAPAN
Public Management and Policy Analysis Program
Graduate School of International Relations

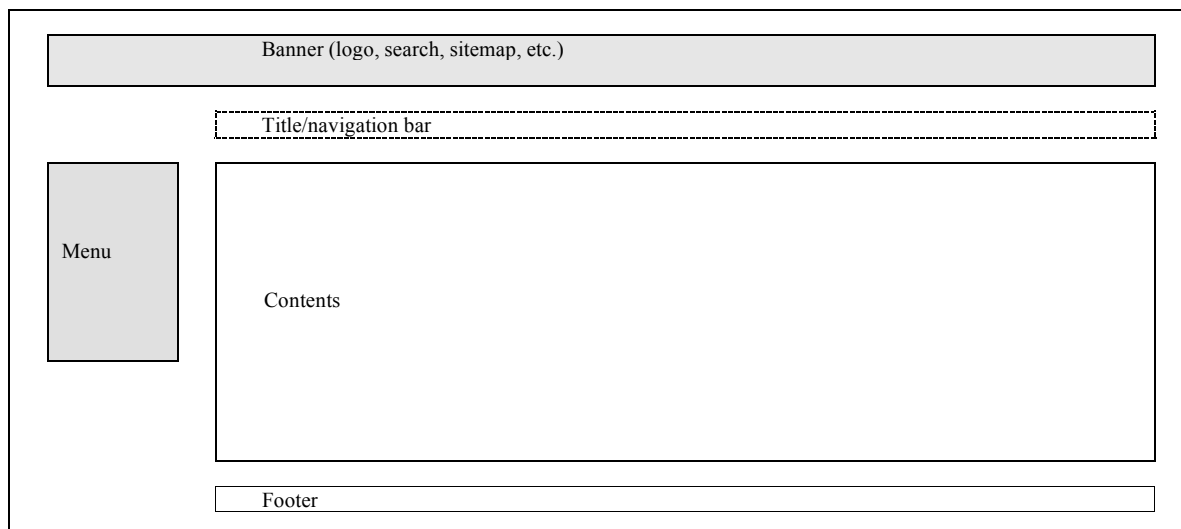
ADC5030401 (2 Credits)
Introduction to Electronic Government
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This document summarizes how to design Web page layout using the position and its related properties. Visit <http://www.w3.org/TR/CSS2/visuren.html> for the technical details about visual formatting.

1. Designing the Layout of Your Web Document

Once you determine the contents of a Web document, think about its layout first. Don't start writing XHTML code without the layout in your mind. Try to sketch the layout by your hand and determine the most efficient and professional one.

A commonly used layout has banner (header) at the top, menu on the left, content in the middle and the right, and footer. The contents section includes the title of the contents, navigation bar (hyperlinks to bookmarkers), and actual contents. Look at the following layout.



You may try other layouts that have only one column without menu, more than two columns (e.g., three columns with first and third columns for menus, and the second column for contents), and the menu section on the right. Determine the layout that you think is best to convey your contents.

2. <table> or <div>

Do not use <table> for layout. <table> consists of many related tags for structuring (e.g., <tbody>, <th>, <tr>, and <td>); it is heavier, slower, less flexible and controllable, more likely to make the Web document complicated and to lead human errors. Never, ever use <table> for layout! <div> is the best choice for you to design the layout of your Web document.

<http://www.sonsoo.org/>

3. Position Property

You can choose a proper positioning scheme using the positioning property. This property has absolute, relative, fixed, static (default), and inherit values among which the first three values are frequently used.

3.1 *Absolute position* places the element box to the location provided regardless of location other existing elements. You may use absolute positioning to position important information such as spotlight contents and navigation bars. The following example defines an element box 100px long and 30px tall, which begins from 20px from the top and 10px from the left.

```
{position:absolute; top:20px; left:10px; width:100px; height:30px;}
```

3.2 *Relative position* situates an element box in relation to where it normally would be. For instance, if you are relatively positioning an element box by 10 pixels to the left and 20 pixels from the top, a Web browser places it 10 pixels to the right and 20 pixels from the top of where it would be had it not been positioned at all. The element box is not removed from the normal flow but simply offset from its normal position.

```
div_box {position:relative; top:20px; left:10px;}
```

3.3 *Fixed position* removes the element box from the normal flow of the Web document and situates it in relation to the top of the Web browser window. The element is fixed to its particular location in the window. Accordingly, even if the user scrolls down the page, the element box stays fixed in its defined location. This method is used for positioning images and navigation bar (menus) that are always visible no matter where users are looking on the Web page. However, old MSIE (V6) cannot interpret it correctly.

```
{position:fixed; top:100px; right:10px; width:100px; height:200px;}
```

3.4 Once you defined the style of an element box, you can apply it as follows (you may use in-line CSS as well).

```
<div class="div_box">  
...  
</div>
```

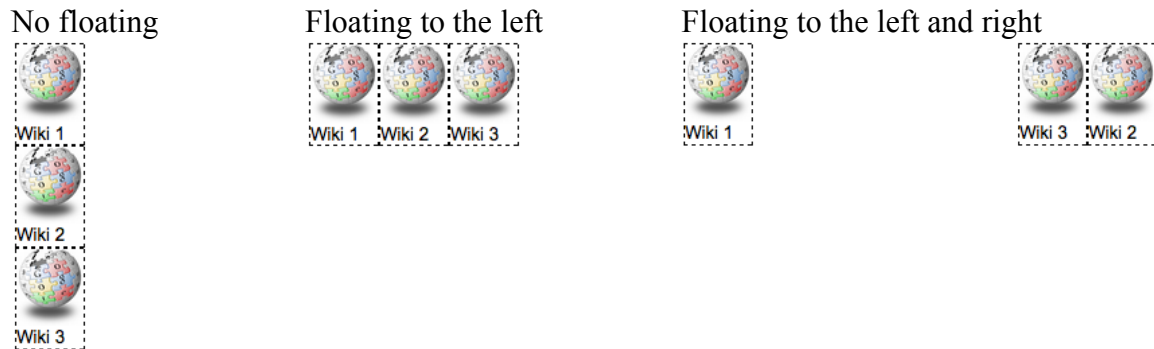
4. Float Property

4.1 The other important property is float that controls float of the positioning to the left or right. If your layout has more than one column, you must use this property. This property works in relative positioning.

4.2 This float property has left, right, none, and inherit. The value `left` leads the group to float to the left (see the second example below).

4.3 Suppose you have three columns and define three groups using `<div>`. If you do not use the float property, second group (section) is added to the bottom of the first group and the third group to the second group. The result is not three columns but one column (see the first example below).

- 4.4 Then add `float:left;` to the `<div>` so that three groups function as if they are words in a sentence. See the second example below. If the width of the parent `<div>` is shorter than the sum of these three groups' widths, the last group will be shifted downward. Therefore, be careful when calculating the width of each group.
- 4.5 When you add `float:right;`, the group will be aligned to the right. If you add `float:none;`, the group will not float any more.



The following xhtml script results in the third example above.

```
<div style="position:relative; top:10px; left:0px; clear:left;">
<div style="position:relative; top:0px; width:50px; border:1px dashed; float:left;">
Wiki 1
</div>
<div style="position:relative; top:0px; width:50px; border:1px dashed; float:right; ">
Wiki 2
</div>
<div style="position:relative; top:0px; width:50px; border:1px dashed; float:right;">
Wiki 3
</div>
</div>
```

5. Clear Property

This property prohibits floating or stops floating contents and move forward to the next line. This property has five values: left, right, both, inherit, none. The following example prohibits floating of text next to the image floating to the left.


The following xhtml script illustrates how `clear:left` and `clear:right` works.

```
<h3>Position with float:left</h3>
<div style="position:relative; top:10px; width:50px; float:left; border:1px dashed;">


</div>
<div style="position:relative; left:0px; border:1px solid;">
<p>Transformation generally means a fundamental, rapid, and wide-ranging change and, accordingly, sounds rather evolutionary than revolutionary. But "transformational e-government" is rarely defined clearly in e-government stage models. A final stage of e-government "would transform governments themselves, would fundamentally transform relations between governments and the governed, and ultimately, would produce electronic democracy" (Norris and Reddick 2013: 165).
</p>
</div>
```

<http://www.sonsoo.org/>

Position with float:left

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Transformation generally means a fundamental, rapid, and wide-ranging change and, accordingly, sounds rather evolutionary than revolutionary. But "transformational e-government" is rarely defined clearly in e-government stage models. A final stage of e-government "would transform governments themselves, would fundamentally transform relations between governments and the governed, and ultimately, would produce electronic democracy" (Norris and Reddick 2013: 165).</p> |
|---|---|

Position with float:right

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Transformation generally means a fundamental, rapid, and wide-ranging change and, accordingly, sounds rather evolutionary than revolutionary. But "transformational e-government" is rarely defined clearly in e-government stage models. A final stage of e-government "would transform governments themselves, would fundamentally transform relations between governments and the governed, and ultimately, would produce electronic democracy" (Norris and Reddick 2013: 165).</p> |  |
|---|---|

If the previous block of contents ends with different length (depending on individual column or object), `clear:both` is recommended to avoid awkward alignment of divisions of contents. The second layout below starts the contents of three columns at the same position (after the longest contents of the previous block). Compare to the first layout with `clear:left`.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Transformation generally means a fundamental, rapid, and wide-ranging change and, accordingly, sounds rather evolutionary than revolutionary.</p> | <p>But "transformational e-government" is rarely defined clearly in e-government stage models.</p> | <p>A final stage of e-government "would transform governments themselves, would fundamentally transform relations between governments and the governed, and ultimately, would produce electronic democracy" (Norris and Reddick 2013: 165).</p> |
| Layout (Three columns with fixed frame and clear:left) | | |
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| Layout (Three columns with fixed frame and clear: both) | | |
| <p>Transformation generally means a fundamental, rapid, and wide-ranging change and, accordingly, sounds rather evolutionary than revolutionary.</p> | <p>But "transformational e-government" is rarely defined clearly in e-government stage models.</p> | <p>A final stage of e-government "would transform governments themselves, would fundamentally transform relations between governments and the governed, and ultimately, would produce electronic democracy" (Norris and Reddick 2013: 165).</p> |


6. Example

The following is an example of a layout using position and its related properties.

```
<div style="position:relative; ... clear:both;">
    <div style="position:relative; ... float:left;">
        <!-- Logo -->
    </div>
    <div style="position:relative; ... float:left;">
        <!--Banner, search, etc. -->
    </div>
    <div style="position:relative; ... float:left; clear:both;">
        <!-- Menu -->
    </div>
```

```

<div style="position:relative; ... float:left;">
    <!--Contents (column 1) -->
</div>
<div style="position:relative; ... float:left;">
    <!-- Contents (column 2) -->
</div>
<div style="position:relative; ... clear:both;">
    <!-- Footer -->
</div>
</div><!-- End of layout -->
    
```

| | | |
|--|---|---|
|  | <h2 style="text-align: center;">Transformational E-government???</h2> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> menu 1 menu 2 menu 3 menu 4 menu 5 menu 6 menu 7 menu 8 | <p>Transformation generally means a fundamental, rapid, and wide-ranging change and, accordingly, sounds rather evolutionary than revolutionary. But "transformational e-government" is rarely defined clearly in e-government stage models. A final stage of e-government "would transform governments themselves, would fundamentally transform relations between governments and the governed, and ultimately, would produce electronic democracy" (Norris and Reddick 2013: 165). This transformational thesis includes not only transformation (Baum and Di Maio 2000), participation (Hiller and Belanger 2001), and democracy (West 2005), but also even integrated (joined-up) or one stop services (Hiller and Belanger 2001; Layne and Lee 2001; Ronaghan 2002; West 2005).</p> | <p>This transformation or participation cannot, however, be conceptually juxtaposed with static information, interaction, transaction, and integration stages along the same continuum in that the former, unlike the latter, does not say anything about a learning pathway, degree of integration, or technological sophistication. This transformation thesis appears to simply reflect aspiration for or hype of e-government, and/or technological transformation (as opposed to organizational or political transformation) without any logical explanation for why. From a historical perspective of information systems maturity modeling, DeBri and Bannister (2015) argue that the last stage is aspirational and has not been observed empirically (p.2225). It is implicitly assumed that new and more sophisticated technologies are always better and preferred (Course and Norris 2008).</p> |
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End of this document.