



FROM CONCEPT TO CREATION:

Exploring Student Perspectives on Figma's Prototyping Tools

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INTRODUCTION

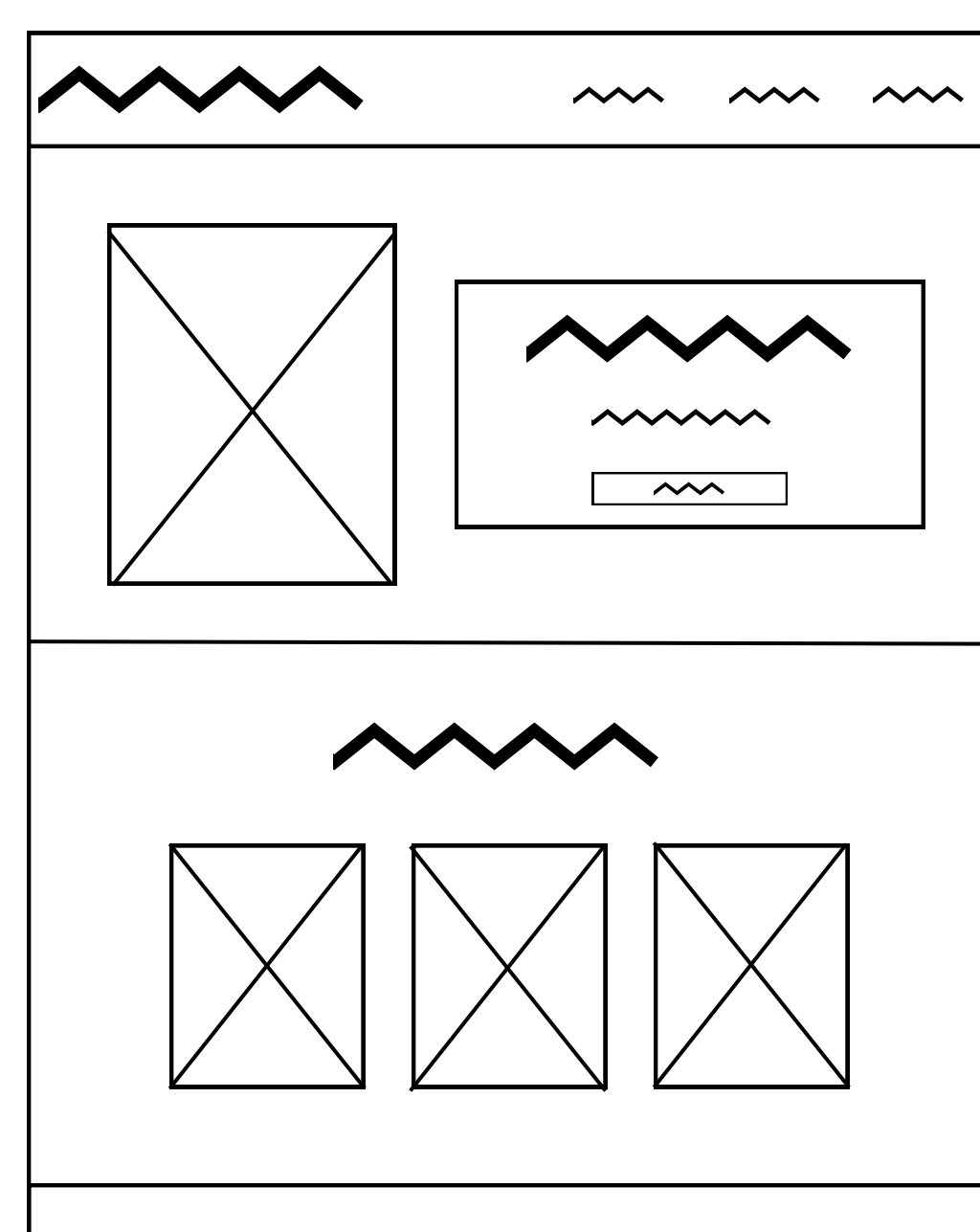
- Communicating through online channels, especially on **websites**, is an **essential skill** for agricultural communicators (Irlbeck & Akers, 2009; Leal et al., 2020).
- **User centered design** is becoming the industry standard for making website designs more effective (Liedtka & Chin, 2018).
- **Prototyping** is an “**obvious and unquestionable**” necessity in **planning** and testing in web design (Lim et al., 2008, p. 2) and gives designers an opportunity to identify **user priorities** (Andrews et al., 2012).
- **Figma** is a popular program for creating prototypes for websites (Clark, 2024; Figma Learn, n.d.).

HOW IT WORKS

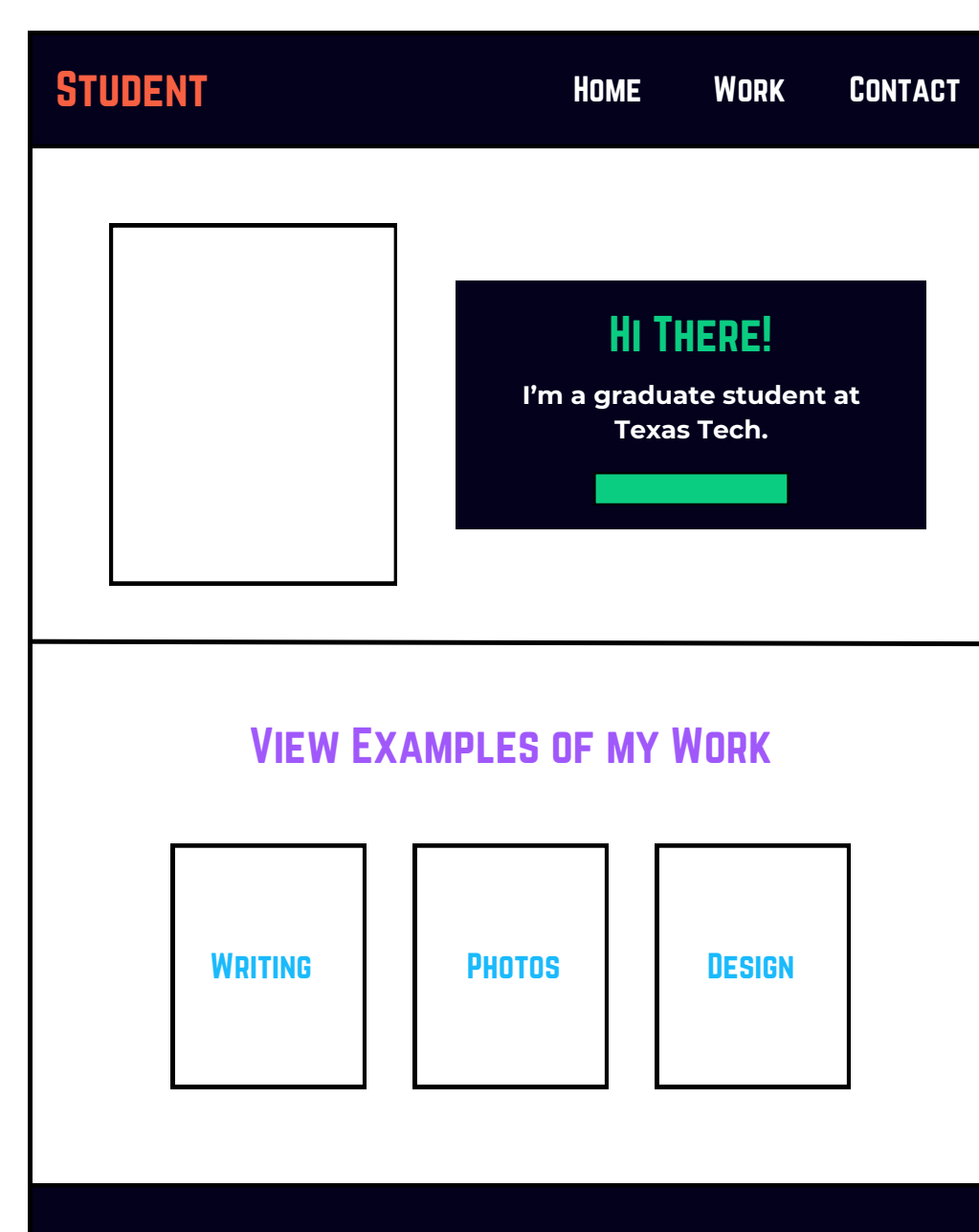
Through a **class assignment**, students created a prototype of their portfolio site **to understand the planning required of successfully implementing user centered design.**

Prototyping had three steps:

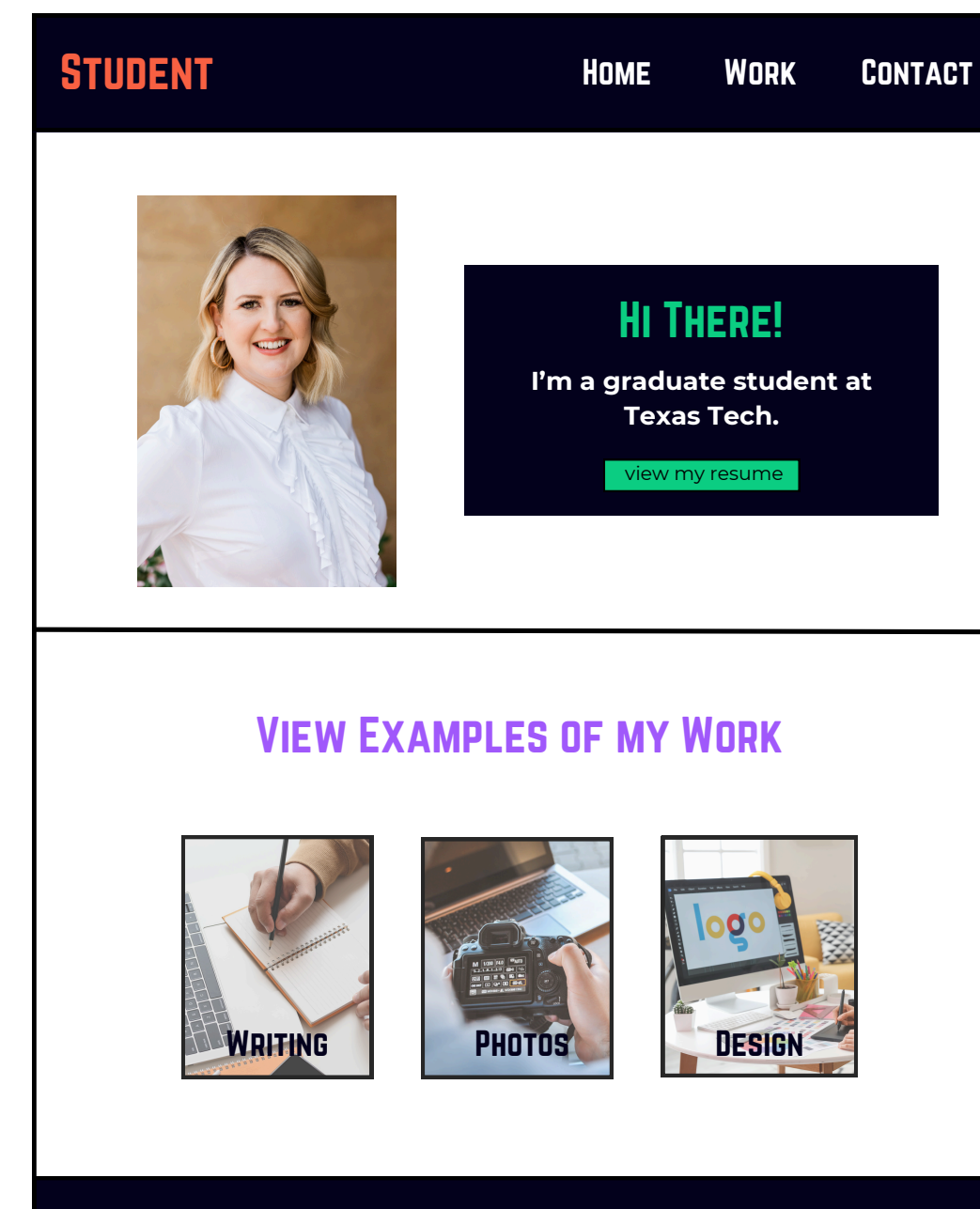
1 Wireframe



2 Mockup



3 Prototype



After the assignment, students were asked five reflection questions.

RESULTS TO DATE

Realized the importance of planning

“It began to make sense why web designers break the process down into so many steps rather than just starting in Wix and making their site.”

“Having a plan for the website allows the designer and the client to clearly understand what the site should look like before it goes live.”

Helped focus on user-centered design

“Designing with this perspective helped guide my design when it came to layout, visuals, and general flow. Potential employers may have a hard time seeing smaller print, so I avoided the hard-to-read type to ensure that it is legible.”

Desired more time in Figma

“Figma is very helpful, I just think it would take many projects for me to get familiar with it to the point where I recommend it.”

ADVICE TO OTHERS

- Utilize **prototyping tools** in web design courses.
- **Emphasize planning** steps before the prototype (i.e., outlines, copy, style guides).
- **Break prototyping into steps** (i.e., wireframe, mockup, prototype).
- **Allow time for troubleshooting.**
- **Add peer reviews** after the activity.

COST/RESOURCES

- Figma “**professional team**” accounts are free for education.
- **Laptops and internet access** are essential.
- Instructors need **time to build knowledge** of Figma.
- **In-class instructional time** is needed to teach students this new program.



SCAN
for full abstract, references,
and additional materials.

