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ARTS 444: Interaction 2

Course Description:

This class serves as an introduction to creating interactive experiences that utilize programming-based computing technologies.

Course Content:

We'll be using the Adobe Flash application to create primarily screen-based interactive artworks. Our goal will be to experience a range of interactive scenarios from the process of design/prototyping through to implementation and critique. If time permits, we will also explore hardware integration through physical computing experiments.

Course Method:

We'll move through at least four or five design projects created to facilitate learning in the technical, formal, and contextual aspects of creating code-based interactive experiences. Design assignments will focus on learning Actionscript in specific, Object-Oriented Programming in general, and on the problems of translating a prototyped experience into realized material/digital form. The majority of the projects will be structured so as to facilitate exploration of content from your own interests. Tuesdays will largely be used for tutorials, lectures and discussions. Thursdays will usually be lab days.

Expectations of Instructor:

The instructor will provide a structured experience for learning about the technical, methodological, and contextual aspects of creating code-based interactive experiences in the Adobe Flash environment. Through in-class tutorials, the instructor will acquaint students with the minimal techniques required to achieve each design project. The instructor will be present during work-sessions for one-on-one aid in understanding and applying the required tech in the context of design processes. The instructor is not a Flash/Actionscript expert, and may need to point students to outside sources from time-to-time. Lastly, the instructor will provide a mid-term grade assessment and a final grade assessment. Any additional grade inquiries should be directed to the instructor independently. The instructor will help students who are having a hard time with class material, but will not repeat tutorials for absent students.

Expectations of Students:

Students will be expected to attend all class sessions, and to complete all assignments. Outside research will be a likely necessity in order to solve some coding problems. Work will be evaluated on the basis of adherence to design project parameters, and the creation of economical, thoughtful projects. As long as students are able to demonstrate mastery of basic technical requirements for each project, they are welcome attempt to attempt inclusion of additional technical features. Students will be on their own for instruction in these features, however, and may in fact wander into territory outside the instructor's realm of knowledge. When they do so they are still responsible for turning in a completed, successful project, and on time. More than three absences will result in a full grade drop. Students who miss technical tutorials will be expected to catch up with a colleague about missed material.

Facilities and Materials

This class comes with a lab fee of \$95 that allows you access to the computer labs and checkout window in Art and Design. You'll need a large flashdrive or other external storage device during every class. You are also highly encouraged to bring a notebook and paper to class for taking notes and sketching designs. A textbook is required for the class and is available from the Illini Union bookstore and all usual outlets. You'll also likely make use of online help forums and the O'Reilly press books, many of which are available to you online through the University Library's subscription to Safari.

Prerequisites

This course expects that you already are familiar with the following:

- the Macintosh OS X operating system
- basic digital file management skills
- operation of a digital camera and scanner
- manipulation of digital images in Photoshop
- rudimentary digital video shooting and editing
- methods of prototyping interactive art and design
- familiarity with precedent and history of interactive art experiences

This course also assumes that you have some familiarity and experience with creative processes - completing and finishing a drawing, painting, or musical composition, for example.

Schedule

1/19 - Introduction to Course. Introductory Flash tutorial

1/21 - Work time for Project One

1/26 - Project One due. View in class. 4pm - technoscience talk

1/28 - Introductory Actionscript tutorial. Assign Project Two design homework

2/2 - Project Two (demos and tutorial)

2/4 - Project Two work time

2/9 - work time / 4pm - technoscience talk

2/11 - Project Two due. View in class. Intro Project Three

2/16 - Project Three tutorials

2/18 - Project Three work time

2/23 - work time / 4pm - technoscience talk

2/25 - Project Three due. View in class. Intro Project Four

3/2 - Project Four tutorials

3/4 - Project Four work time

3/9 - work time / 4pm - technoscience talk

3/11 - Project Four work time

3/16 - Project Four due. view in class. Intro Project Five

3/18 - time for work on prototypes for Project Five

3/30 - present prototypes in class for Project 5 / 4pm - technoscience talk

4/1 - Tutorials for Project Five

4/6 - work time for Project Five

4/8 - work time for Project Five

4/13 - Project Five due. view in class. Intro Final Project

4/15 - prototype time for Project Five

4/20 - tech tutorials for Project Five

4/22 - work time

4/27 - work time

4/29 - work time

5/4 - Final Project due