

MACS 323 Studies in Film and Media Production

Section A, Fall 2011: Online Media Production: User-Generated Content and Community.

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Office: Art and Design room 131

(office hours by appointment, with some to be announced specifically for this course)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduces basic technologies, compositional skills, and critical language of producing multimedia for online display and exchange. Covers contextual histories of design for communication in still and moving imagery. Assignments involve the design and construction of online multimedia through such tools as Aviary, Youtube, Slideshare, the Google application suite, Xtranormal, Prezi, Yahoo Pipes and others. Emphasizes careful communication and attention to reception over pre-professional preparation, while also examining critiques of the "new amateur." No prior media production experience necessary. Students will need to provide their own camera (in-phone cameras acceptable).

COURSE METHOD

For this course, we will tour the following digital media forms: digital imaging, typography, information graphics, slideshows, and video. We will explore the **technical**, **perceptual** and **contextual** aspects of production and consumption within each form:

technical : Of what material is the medium composed? What technical frameworks and processes persist across platforms?

perceptual : How can we apply knowledge of human perception, psychology and cognition to anticipate and plan for viewer/user reception in each form?

contextual : What cultural locations can one occupy through particular applications of technical and perceptual knowledge? How does attention to the designer's hand come in and out of view, and to what social, political and economic ends?

For each form, the instructor will introduce the *technical* and *perceptual* subjects through a lecture and accompanying quiz. We will apply the *perceptual* together through some initial, hands-on analyses of existing examples. Students will then apply both *technical* and *perceptual* knowledge through an exploration of hands-on design problems in digital form. Each unit will then conclude with opportunities for individual and collective reflection on the *contextual* implications of individual design solutions.

The content of Design Projects will also be designed to provoke discussion about the online social spaces in which contemporary users and laborers are expected to participate. We will compose all media projects with an assumed destination of digital presentation as embedded media objects on existing online platforms (Facebook, Tumblr, Wordpress, Google+, etc).

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

One small textbook is required for this course: [Everyone is a Designer in the Age of Social Media](#) (Gerritzen & Lovink). We will discuss it on October 20th. Students should procure it from the Illini Union Bookstore and

read the whole book for discussion at our second meeting.

Students will be expected to complete all assigned design projects according to specified parameters, and submitted by specified deadlines. Late projects will be accepted, but will receive a single grade drop for each day delayed. Design projects will be graded according to demonstration of effort, creativity in content, and adherence to design parameters. Expect to spend as much as six hours a week or more on design projects.

No prior experience with digital media tools is necessary for this course. In fact, if you already know a good bit about such tools as the Adobe Suite, Final Cut Pro, or other professional/prosumer software packages, you may feel held back by the assignments in this course. Students are expected to complete design assignments using the specified tools. Some technical tutorials will be provided through in-class demonstration, screencasts, or third-party content. At other times, students will be expected to do some basic self-instruction, especially in learning about their own personal hardware.

Attendance is required: missing even one class session in this very hands-on course will set one well behind. More than one absence will result in a final grade drop, with each subsequent absence adding another final grade drop.

Final grades will be determined by scores on design projects (70%), quizzes (15%), feedback and reflection writing (5%), and a final exam (10%).

All quizzes will be administered outside of class via the course's Compass website. The final exam will be administered during the last class meeting. (No exam during the official exam period.)

You will not be required to post anything to the public web in this course under your own name. Aliases and pseudonyms are not only allowed but encouraged in the posting of items, as long as you inform the instructor as to the location of your posted objects. (These will, in turn, be shared with the rest of your colleagues in class discussions, so do not submit work under an online identity you do not wish to be known to your classmates.)

You are responsible for checking the Compass website for updates on course content.

Finally, you should have a camera to use in this course, something simple that you know how to use. In addition, if you have a laptop please bring it to class meetings for use in demos and exercises. If you don't have access to a computer of your own, you will need to use someone else's computer to complete design projects. Any computer with a web-browser will work, though some of our applications will not run on iPads or other non-Flash-compliant tablet computers.

SCHEDULE

Unit One : Visual Organization

10/18:

Lecture & discussion: Course introduction

Lecture: *Visual Perception and Composition*

Exercise: Image mark-up

Homework: read Everyone is a Designer for discussion 10/20

10/20:

Discuss reading: [Everyone is a Designer](#)
Lecture/demo: *Technical aspects of the Digital Image*
Assign **Design Project 01: Crop Collections**

Unit Two : Image Compositing

10/25

Due: Quiz 01 due completed before class.
Design Project 01 due posted online before class.
Review solutions to Design Project 01.
Lecture: *The Digital Composite*
Assign **Design Project 02: Seamless and Seamful**
Assign reflection writing on Project 01

10/27:

no class, instructor away (available for individual meetings for help Monday 10/31: email to make an appointment)

Unit Three: Text

11/01

Quiz 02, Reflection 01 due completed before class.
Design Project 02 due posted online before class.
Review solutions to Design Project 02.
Lecture: *Text and Communication*
Exercise: Page mark-up
Assign reflection writing on Project 02

11/03

Lecture/demo on the technics of Typography
Assign **Design Project 03: Tour Book**

Unit Four: Sequence

11/08

Quiz 03, Reflection 02 due completed before class.
Design Project 03 due posted online before class.
Review solutions to Design Project 03.
Lecture on: *Image and Text*
Exercise: Image/Text Mashups

11/10

Lecture /demo on Sequence and Temporality
Assign **Design Project 04: How-to PPT**

Unit Five: Information

11/15

Quiz 04, Reflection 03 due completed before class.
Design Project 04 due posted online before class.
Review solutions to Design Project 04.
Assign reflection writing on Project 04.
Lecture: *Infographics and Visualization*
Exercise: Identifying data vectors

11/17

Lecture/demo on Datamoshing and Graph Tech
Assign **Design Project 05: Week-o-Graph**

Unit Six: Time

11/29

Quiz 05, Reflection 04 due completed before class.
Design Project 05 due posted online before class.
Review solutions to Design Project 05.
Assign reflection writing on Project 04.
Lecture: *Perception of Time and Space in Video*
Exercise: Pop-up-video

12/01

Lecture/demo on video and audio tech
Assign **Design Project 06: Youtube Meta-Vid**

12/06

Quiz 06, Reflection 05 due completed before class.
Final exam on all quiz material
Work-in-progress review of Design Project 06 ****final due posted online by 12/16 at noon****