Course Syllabus

COURSE NUMBER: ART 340

COURSE TITLE: Concepts in Time-based Media

CREDITS: 3:2:3

PREREQUISITES: ART 240/241

FOR WHOM PLANNED: ART 340 is open to Art majors.

Instructor: Christopher Cassidy

Office: Gatewood 228

Office hours: Tues/Thur 2PM – 3PM

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Email: cmcassid@uncg.edu

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

Intermediate-level study of design fundamentals in time-based applications, with emphasis on cross-application work and content.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course a student will be able to:

1. design original time-based works that take advantage of the unique properties of the specific media covered.
2. combine static imagery, created traditionally or with digital tools, with text and flat graphics to dynamically communicate content.
3. combine drawing with a full range of digital tools to construct effective animations.
4. adapt found and student-acquired video footage in a coherent work that investigates the formal properties of video editing.
5. critically analyze their own time-based work, as well as examples from the larger media culture, with a particular focus on how formal organization drives viewer response to content.

TEACHING METHODS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

This studio course will be organized around four design projects, each with a duration of roughly four weeks. Each assignment will be introduced with a lecture introducing the specific aesthetic concepts and media tools students will be employing in the creation of the assigned work. Pertinent examples from historic and current art, film and media will provide concrete illustrations of the successful combination of content and form.

Technical demonstrations will occur throughout the course of each assignment, both as general introduction to the required software tools and to specifically address issues occurring in students’ developing work.
There are two recommended texts for the course, both technical guides to particular software packages. During the course, these texts serve primarily as self-study tools, providing a resource, both within the classroom and outside, for students to solve technical issues and extend their comprehension of the software’s capabilities.

As prospective professionals in digital media arts, you need to become proficient at teaching yourselves new software. Although I will demo a great deal, and am always willing to answer questions, you should avail yourselves of all available resources to aid in your understanding of the technical aspects of the course. Don’t forget the application’s Help system. Our textbooks are also very useful, and our Lynda.com stations in the labs have access to complete tutorials for After Effects and Premiere.

**NOTE:** Our digital lab has moved to Adobe Creative Cloud. If you want to have access for your own computer to the software we'll be using in class, the latest versions are available through a recurring subscription via Creative Cloud.

Both in process and at the completion of each assignment, all student works will be screened and critiqued. Here, students are encouraged to develop their analytical and verbal skills, as the class discusses the successful and unsuccessful elements within each work. The focus is strongly on constructive criticism, using the group’s combined resources to suggest ways that the work might better fulfill the creator’s intent.

Three short writing assignments will be assigned over the course of the semester. Students will be asked to analyze the formal properties of time-based media samples from the larger culture (e.g. film title sequence, TV news broadcast.) The focus in these writings is not on synopsis or critique of content, but on a careful examination of the formal organization of the subject, discussing the character and effectiveness of, for instance, editing, text, color, motion and sound in a film title sequence.

**EVALUATION AND GRADING**

Each project grade is based on one or more of the following factors:

- How well does the completed assignment answer the posed problem or illustrate the design principle?
- Did you thoroughly explore a number of different solutions before deciding on this as the best one? Many assignments will require a specific number of sketches or alternate approaches. Keep these as a discussion aid during critique of your final project.
- How far did you push the idea? The first and simplest answer is rarely the best, and is often a cliché. Really working at a problem from multiple angles often yields unexpected and original results.

There are four major assignments, which contribute to your final grade as follows:

- Assignment 1 – 15%
- Assignment 2 – 25%
- Assignment 3 – 25%
- Assignment 4 – 25%

The remaining 10% is determined by the completion and quality of three brief written assignments scheduled periodically over the semester.

On days when major assignments are due, we will discuss each student's final project in a class critique. This is an opportunity for students to get feedback from peers about how well a design works. Critiques are like exams, if you miss them without an approved excuse (see Attendance below) the grade for your assignment will be dropped by one full letter grade. This is true even if the project is in class, as we won’t critique it without the designer present. For each additional class period a project is late, a further letter grade deduction will apply (e.g. due on Thursday, turned in following Thursday, a B project receives a D.)
There is no discrete grade given for classroom participation in discussions and critiques (although critique attendance is mandatory.) Rather, the goal of critiques is to hone your ability to talk and think about your own work, to begin to be able to analyze and judge your work as it develops.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

*Adobe After Effects CC Classroom In a Book (2014 Release)*

*Adobe Premiere Pro CC Classroom In a Book (2014 Release)*

Both of these titles are available free and online through the UNCG library, at: [http://proquest.safaribooksonline.com.libproxy.uncg.edu](http://proquest.safaribooksonline.com.libproxy.uncg.edu) If prompted to sign in, use your UNCG username and password, and then search for either "After Effects Classroom" or "Premiere Classroom" in the site's search field.

**TOPICAL OUTLINE**

**Assignment 1 – Text and Motion**

Part A: Choose a single word and bring both its definition and its etymology to class. After our brainstorming session, create three distinctly different sketches (in traditional media) for brief motion graphics that communicate something about the word (this might be based on the word's meaning, its history, its sound when spoken, its appearance as a graphic shape, or any combination thereof.) Work only with the letterforms themselves (don’t introduce any extra elements like drawings or photos) and fully employ formal elements (color, shape, composition, pacing, type of movement, etc.) to communicate your concept in a visually compelling manner. Remember to think about movement, and to design for the entire screen space (work to a 9:5 aspect ratio). Be sure to consider audio as well.

Remember, you’re designing animations, not logos.

Part B: Finalize **ALL THREE** concepts as full HD animations (1920 x 1080 pixels) in After Effects. Render the compositions out as Quicktime Movies, using the H.264 compression type.

**Assignment 2 – Narrative Motion Graphics**

Part A: Choose a short poem, essay, quote or song lyric (approx. 200 - 300 words in length). Create a set of storyboards (illustrate at least three frames of your proposal) laying out the design of a motion graphic that delivers all of the text of the poem. You may include flat graphics and original photographic imagery or video as secondary elements within the composition, but the typography itself must play the dominant role in the design. Plan your storyboards using a 9:5 aspect ratio.

Part B: Using Quicktime, make a recording of someone reading the complete text. Make sure the volume is audible (SPEAK UP, but don’t shout unless you mean to, and make sure the narrator speaks at a measured pace, rather than racing through the text.)

**You may not use copyrighted recordings for audio.**

Part C: Build a motion graphic that realizes your design for your chosen text, and that relates to the timing of the recorded audio. Pay close attention to the rhythm and pacing of the spoken word, and break down your text into appropriate units (phrases, words, syllables) to fit that pacing. Remember to design for the entire screen space (1920 x 1080 pixels), and pay particular attention to the transitions from screen to screen. Your soundtrack will include the recorded narration, as well as any sound effects or original music that may be appropriate. Render the composition out as a Quicktime Movie, using the H.264 compression type.

**Assignment 3 – Montage**

Part A: Find a short story, poem, article or essay that can serve as an initial inspiration for your creative efforts. Using copyright-free, archival footage or stills (www.archive.org, www.nypl.org/digital/index.htm) create a short (3 - 5 minutes) video based on or
inspired by your source text.

Part B: Develop a rough sequence for your footage, striving to maximize narrative/emotional clarity for the viewer. If your work will have a soundtrack or voiceover, work on that along with the visuals. By the end of this process you should have a coherent storyboard of the work, and a script, if needed.

Part C: Working from your storyboard (and departing from it when necessary), assemble your clips in Premiere to create a video which uses the formal elements of time (pace, rhythm, repetition, motion), along with sound, to communicate the content of your work. Pay close attention to the soundtrack, and how music, dialog and sound effects might assist in communicating your content to the audience. For this assignment, you may use copyrighted audio recordings if you feel it necessary (though this may limit your ability to show/distribute the work outside of class.) Remember: you are aiming for a maximum running time of 5 minutes.

Part D: Use After Effects to create a title sequence and credits (either at beginning or end) for your video, and assemble in Premiere.

Assignment 4 – Place/the expanded field

Part A: Pick a place of special interest to you and document it in at least these four ways: sound recording, video recording, your own writing and/or found text and maps, diagrams or drawings. Your goal should be to represent this place, and its meaning to you in a way that is both original and compelling. All video and audio must be your own work. No copyrighted material permitted.

Part B: Create a set of at least 6 storyboards outlining your compositional and editing approach, which might be narrative, encyclopedic, atmospheric, or something else entirely. These storyboards will obviously reflect the footage that you have already captured, but they might also prompt your getting new footage from your site.

Part C: Using Premiere and/or After Effects, create a complete work that introduces the viewer to the space and in some way presents the information you have collected about it. The final video should combine video, audio and some form of motion graphics or animation. Maximum running time of 5 minutes.

Part D: Render the final out as a 1920 x 1080px QT movie with H.264 compression.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Students are expected to abide by the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy for this class. (All out of class assignments are to be completed individually by the student unless otherwise directed by the instructor.)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

I take attendance at the start of each class. It helps me remember everyone's name. It also contributes to your grade. You will be permitted two unexcused absences for any reason (including religious holidays), after which your grade will be reduced one step (e.g. B- to C+) for each additional absence. Absences will be considered excused if accompanied by a note from a doctor or health service, or a note on school letterhead from a coach, professor or administrator. Keep in mind that a steady stream of unexcused or excused absences may affect the quality of your work, and so can have a negative impact on your final grade. Finally, three unexcused latenesses will equal one absence.

UNCG seeks to comply fully with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA.) Students requesting accommodations based on disability must be registered with the Office of Disability Service located at 208 Elliot University Center. 336-334-5440 v/tty.

https://uncg.instructure.com/courses/18989/assignments/syllabus
CLEAN-UP AND LAB CARE

On the days when we are working in class, it is your responsibility to clean up your work area and leave the classroom as you found it. Remember that no food or drink will be allowed near the computer workstations.

You will also have to keep your digital desktops neat, which means saving any working files to external drive or a UNCG storage service such as Box @ uncg (http://its.uncg.edu/box/) or Google Drive (both of these provide unlimited storage). We will be working throughout the course with HD digital video, which produces massive files. If you are interested in continuing in digital video in the future, you’ll want to invest in an external hard drive. LaCie and GForce make a variety of excellent models. If you’re purchasing a new drive, make sure it has a Firewire (or Thunderbolt if you are using your own newer Mac with that technology) port and at least a 7200rpm disk speed, and then buy as much storage as you can afford. An external drive can have the added advantage of greatly reducing file management headaches as you move from one machine to another – a big deal in video editing.

CALENDAR

1/11 Intro/Syllabus.  
Introduce Motion Graphics.  
Demo of After Effects – Interface/keyframing.  
Introduce Assignment 1. Read Lakoff & Johnson.

1/13 Discussion of metaphor/brainstorming session.  
Demo of After Effects –text tools/strokes/masks.  
Assignment 1 sketches.  
Writing Assign. 1

1/18 MLK Holiday

1/20 Review Assignment 1 sketches.  
Demo parenting/trackmattes.  
Work on Assignment 1 in class.

1/25 Writing Assignment 1 due.  
Work on Assignment 1 in class.  
Demo audio.

1/27 Work on Assignment 1 in class.

2/1 Work on Assignment 1 in class.

2/3 Norman McLaren presentation  
Work on Assignment 1 in class.

2/8 Work on Assignment 1 in class.

2/10 Critique Assignment 1.

2/15 Review Assignment 2 storyboards.  
Demo Quicktime audio recording.

2/17 Demo 3D in After Effects.  
Work on Assignment 2 in class.

2/22 Demo 3D in After Effects.  
Work on Assignment 2 in class.
2/24  Continue Assignment 2.
     Writing Assignment 2.

2/29  Continue Assignment 2.

3/2   Continue Assignment 2.

3/7 & 9  Spring Break

3/14  Continue Assignment 2.
     Writing Assignment 2 due.

3/16  Critique Assignment 2.

3/21  Intro Assignment 3.
     Discussion of classic editing and demo of editing in Premiere.

3/23  Screen Dziga Vertov, The Man With the Movie Camera
     Work on Assignment 3.

3/28  Work on Assignment 3.

3/30  Work on Assignment 3.

4/4   Work on Assignment 3.

4/6   View and critique Assignment 3.
     Introduce Assignment 4.

4/11  Writing Assignment 3.

4/13  Introduce Assignment 4.

4/18  Review Storyboards.
     Work on Assignment 4.

4/20  Work on Assignment 4.
     Writing Assignment 3 due.


5/4   3:30-6:30  Assignment 4 final screening.

Course Summary:

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