

Arts 652
Digital Media
Todd Jokl
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Wesleyan University
Graduate Liberal Studies Program

Instructor Information

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Office Hours: One hour prior to class by appointment.

Course Description

ARTS 652 Digital Media acts as an introduction to Digital Imaging, Flash Animation, Digital Audio, and Website Design basics. Overall, this course has three goals.

The first is to provide students with an understanding of the historical, sociological, and theoretical context of digital media, in particular digital art. We will do this through looking at work, critical readings and discussion.

Second, is to provide students with technical knowledge. This means enabling them to use a wide variety of materials and techniques, not only the most obvious, but also alternative methods that may be overlooked. In the case of new media, it is extremely important to understand the hardware and software technologies that underlie common tools, so that we can find our own ways to implement them. The goal is to teach students to use tools thoughtfully, and to experiment with how these tools can be used to the students' own ends, rather than just to create the "cookie cutter" effects that they tend to encourage. We will do three types of hands-on work in this class: in class exercises to familiarize students with the tools, open ended creative assignments (to be done primarily outside of class) using and perhaps subverting these same technologies, and an interactive final project of the students devising.

Last but not least, my hope is to help students to form appropriate and compelling conceptual goals. Art making is largely a matter of critical thinking; thinking about one's work, the world in which it exists, and what one hopes to achieve with it. As the catalog description says, "Digital technologies offer artists new tools for artistic expression and provide new spaces in which to experience them." But all great work is driven by ideas. To quote conceptual artist, Sol Le Witt, "The idea becomes a machine that makes the art." Without good ideas there is no good art.

Student Commitments: Self-motivation and a sense of inquisitiveness are truly necessary. Although there is lab time in class, students will be required to spend a number of hours of study/research/practice outside of class. I will be available to meet before class if necessary (please email to set up an appointment).

Attendance: It is very important that class start on time because we have a lot of material to cover- - and not a lot of time! I will take attendance at the beginning of class. Because this course meets only once a week, each class is critical. Therefore, I expect you to attend each class. If you know that you will be missing a class period (or part of one) please talk to me ahead of time.

Grading: Grading is based on attendance and participation in class (during lectures, demonstrations, discussions and critiques . . .) (40%), on completing the assignments on time and putting forth effort, creativity and craftsmanship into the assignment (60%). Assignments that are turned in late will automatically have their grades reduced by a full letter grade for each class they are turned in late. Please participate in critiques and class (this only helps your grade!) and stay on top

of your assignments.

Course Outline

(Tentative)

1/28 Introduction Still Image Photoshop	Overview of "Digital Art" What we will be covering in class. Who I am Student Introductions Introduction to Digital Manipulation In Class Project: Panorama
2/4	Introduction to the Bitmap Image and Photoshop The tools of Photoshop Using Layers LAB: Working with Layers- Creating the Panorama Reading for 2/11: <i>The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction.</i> Walter Benjamin, 1936 <i>Blithe Tomato</i> , (Excerpt), Mike Madison, 2006 Assignment: Photography and Photoshop: The Narrative
2/11 Still Image Photoshop	Discussion: The Digital Image and Truth Using Text and Photoshop LAB: The Narrative Assignment
2/18 Still Image Photoshop	In Class Project: Photographing to Filter Working with Filters LAB: Filtering the image Critique Reading for 2/25: "About Looking" (Excerpt) John Berger, 1992 <i>Into the Light</i> , (Excerpt) Chrissie Iles, 2001 <i>The Brain Is the Screen: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Cinema</i> , (Excerpt), Greg Flaxman, 2000 Assignment for 2/25: Find an example of motion (likely a video) from something you create (video of a spinning wagon wheel), something you find online (you tube) or an existing movie, show, etc (TV, DVD, video tape, etc).
2/25 Animation Flash	Video Screenings Discussion: The Moving Image The basics of animation, persistence of vision Introduction to Flash: Tools, Timeline, Canvas . . .

3/4 Animation Flash	<p>Animating in Flash: "One frame leads to another." Creating the simulation of Movement LAB: Flash Problem Solving</p> <p>Reading for 3/25: <i>What is Animation and Who Needs to Know?</i> Phil Denslow, 1998 <i>Video Art</i>, (Excerpt), Michael Rush, 2003</p> <p>Assignment for 3/25: Flash Project</p>
3/11	No Class
3/18	No Class
3/25 Animation Flash	<p>Discussion: Reading LAB: Flash Assignment</p>
4/1 Animation Flash Sound Intro	<p>Critique Flash Projects Interactivity and Flash</p> <p>Introduction to Audacity (Time Permitting)</p> <p>Assignment for 4/8 and 4/15: Collect sounds (CDs, original recordings, internet).</p>
4/8 Sound Audacity	<p>Introduction to Sound as an arts medium Audio Examples Listening excercises: Sound as a communicator.</p> <p>Reading for 4/15: <i>The Art of Noises</i>, Luigi Russollo, 1913 <i>Janet Cardiff</i>, (Excerpt), Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, 2001</p>
4/15 Sound Audacity	<p>Hearing vs. Seeing: Passive/Active Art and Auditory Culture in the Digital Media Arts Sound Recording and Sound Editing (Audacity)</p>
4/22 Sound Audacity HTML	<p>LAB: Creating the Audio Montage Critique: Audio Projects Audio Formats and Exporting in Audacity</p> <p>The basics of HTML and web design</p> <p>Reading for 4/29: <i>Designing the Moment: web interface design concepts in action</i>. (Excerpt) Robert Hoekman Jr., 2008</p>
4/29	<p>Creating a simple site and uploading to the Internet</p>