W22-IDEA185Z: Form & Code

Course Description and Format
This introductory survey explores practices in design and digital media through a sequence of fast paced exercises, workshops, and creative projects focused on strengthening students’ capacity for visual thinking, composition, and communication. Participants will encounter introductory workshops in creative software including Adobe Creative Suite, Processing, Rhino 3D, all the while developing a portfolio of original work engaged in conceptual and formal problem solving. While primarily concerned with graphic experimentation and expression, this course also exposes students to critical topics in digital media and culture through readings, seminars and student presentations.

Topics and techniques surveyed in this course include: digital graphics (bitmaps and vectors), procedural and parametric design, interaction design, and creative coding.

Learning Objectives
▸ Students will conceive, plan, and execute self-directed projects
▸ Students will learn to identify, research, and solve problems in design and digital media
▸ Students will expand their knowledge of coding and computational thinking
▸ Students will learn to communicate ideas using digital media
▸ Students will learn to test and assess the efficacy of a design

Student Background
There are no prerequisites for this course. That said, basic computer skills, a desire to make things, and a curious mind are. While the instructor and makerspace coordinator will support student learning throughout the session, students must be prepared to seek answers independently and should be comfortable collaborating with peers and learning by doing as they acquire new skills, solve problems, and develop creative work.

Instructor
Christopher Chenier, cchenier@wesleyan.edu
Office: Hall-Atwater, 203-A
Office Hours: M-F 12PM-1PM or by appointment.

Schedule
MTWRF 10am-12pm, 1pm-3pm
We will meet in the IDEAS Lab (Exley Ground Floor, Rm 40) or (computer lab TBD). Final project evaluation and documentation will be delivered following a final design review meeting time.

Course Materials
Textbook: There is no required textbook for this course. Readings will be made available via Moodle.

Software and Technical Support: Students will be required to use a range of software throughout the term. This may include software listed here.
• Processing
• Rhinoceros 3D + Grasshopper
• Adobe Photoshop
• Adobe Illustrator
• Adobe InDesign

Additional software that may be useful throughout the term may include: Solidworks, Cinema 4D, Blender, MadMapper, Mudbox, Maya, and Arduino. Many of the programs listed here are available in the campus computer labs. A range of software can also be accessed via the MyApps Citrix Workspace/Receiver. If students require access to a specific program, technical assistance with a personal computer, or have questions about computer lab access, please contact ITS. The instructor, TA, and IDEAS lab coordinator are not responsible for supporting individual software licenses or students’ personal devices.

Grading
For students electing to use the Wesleyan University Credit/Unsatisfactory grading scheme. A minimum overall score of 70% must be acquired to earn Credit for the course. All coursework will be graded using one, or a combination of, the following methods:

1. Credit/no credit grading: the student will receive full credit for task completion or zero credit for lack of task completion. Partial credit may be assigned for late submissions, incomplete work, or other circumstances.

2. Expectations-based grading: the quality of the work will be assessed qualitatively and quantitatively at the following levels:
   - not present (0%)
   - far below expectations (50% or less at instructor’s discretion)
   - below expectations (65%)
   - meets expectations (75%)
   - above expectations (85%)
   - far above expectations (100%).

For assignments with expectations based grading (e.g.: design reviews, final project evaluation, etc.) students will participate in their own grading through written reflection assignments.

Final grades for this course will be weighted as follows:

- 30% Homework and Exercises (includes short projects and student presentations)
- 30% Design Projects
- 20% Design Reviews and Reflections
- 15% Attendance and Participation
- 5% Portfolio Entry
Assignment Descriptions and Grading Policies
Details of individual required tasks, including specific expectations and deadlines, will be provided via Moodle at the dates of their assignment. General descriptions of the types of assignments that will be required and how they will be graded are as follows:

**Design Projects:** Projects will be graded for completeness, correctness,* and performance using expectations based grading.

*Projects are a major focus of our work this semester. Each project assigned will require students to respond to a technical or conceptual prompt. These assignments will often require independent technical learning, library research, and other skills. While project briefs will provide clues to a general solution, they will not prescribe a specific outcome. Rather, these assignments are intended to spur creative work and catalyze your own process of research, ideation, and prototyping.

**Design Portfolio Entry:** As in other IDEAS courses, students will submit an individual portfolio entry outlining their project design and design process. A basic template will be provided. The portfolio entry will be due on the final exam day of Winter Session. Design portfolio entries will be graded for completeness and correctness using expectations based grading.

**Reviews:** The class will meet in pairs, small groups, or all together to discuss project progress, direction, and goals periodically throughout the semester. Feedback during a final project review will also take place during finals week at the university scheduled final exam period. Design reviews will be graded for preparedness, project progress, and discussion participation using expectations based grading.

**Homework and Readings:** Homework assignments throughout the semester will require a variety of activities such as reading, writing, independent learning and research, blog posts, and library visits. Homework assignment grades will vary by assignment between credit/no credit grading and expectations based grading schemes. Late submissions will be accepted but receive grades reduced by 30% if an extension is not requested and approved in advance.

**Attendance and Participation:** IDEAS studio classes are intended to emphasize learning by doing, and as such, it is vital that students attend class regularly, arrive to class on time, and actively participate in classroom activities. Many in-class activities will be graded for completion and counted towards your attendance/participation. It is also important for you to communicate absences with the instructor. More than three unexcused absences will result in an Unsatisfactory grade for the course. That said, health and safety is the top priority, so absences can always be excused as long as you communicate about missing class in a timely manner (i.e.: before the missed class whenever possible).

**A Note About Time:** Keeping projects on schedule is one of the biggest challenges in design. There will be in-class time to work on projects, but most of your work will occur outside of class. It may also be necessary to complete training in the IDEAS lab or elsewhere outside of class, study with peers, conduct research, etc…Plan ahead! Success in this course will require at least 8 hours of your time outside of regular class meetings each week.
IDEAS LAB during the COVID Pandemic
Students are expected to adhere to IDEAS Lab guidelines for COVID pandemic safety. These guidelines may change throughout the semester, and students will be notified of changes through Moodle and email. **For the first two weeks of class, all students will be required to wear a face mask at all times in the IDEAS Lab.** After this time, we will evaluate the prevalence of COVID on campus and the comfort of the IDEAS Lab community to move forward with mask-optional policies in the lab. **It is likely mandatory masking will be reinstituted after the Thanksgiving holiday break through the end of the semester.** Always avoid coming to the lab when sick. To protect the health and safety of you and those around you, all students should understand and adhere to the [University’s Covid-19 Code of Conduct](#).

IDEAS Lab Safety Policy
Safety is the first priority in this course. Adherence to best practices for COVID safety in the IDEAS Lab will be monitored. Additionally, in order to keep you safe and to ensure we can make the tools and equipment available to future students, we have to avoid injuries. There are many ways to be injured from tool use in this studio, especially the electrically-powered tools. There are a two major rules for tool safety that must be adhered to in the IDEAS Lab Design Studio (ESC40):

- *Before using any of the electrically-powered tools in the IDEAS Lab Design Studio workspace, you need permission from an instructor and proper training.*
- *Following good laboratory practice, two or more persons are required to be present in the IDEAS Lab Design Studio at all times when any electrically-powered tools are in use.*

Additional Safety and Laboratory Behavior Expectations
- Observe COVID-19 pandemic guidelines as described in class, written on Moodle, and posted on signage in the lab. These restrictions may change as the semester progresses, and will be provided by the IDEAS Lab faculty and staff.
- Avoid coming to the IDEAS Lab when sick! The health of you and those around you are more important than anything happening in class. If you do have minor symptoms of illness and a negative COVID test, but feel well enough to work in the lab without compromising the health and safety of yourself and others, please wear a mask until your symptoms have subsided.
- Be careful. Think about what injuries might occur and how to avoid them. Read the safety instructions. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear (no open-toed shoes). Wear safety glasses.
- Be respectful! Treat your workspace better than you treat your home or car. A messy workspace can obscure safety issues. Others also need to work in the space, and they shouldn’t have to work around your mess.
- When you leave the lab, regardless of whether or not you made use of the equipment, confirm that the space is left clean and orderly and that equipment is turned off.
- Strange things happen in the late hours. If you unintentionally damage equipment, be respectful and accept the responsibility for the mistake – communicate the issue immediately and gain attention with signs/warnings on the equipment. Everyone makes mistakes, and the lab directors will be as understanding as possible. If you exacerbate mistakes by hiding a problem or “trying to power through it since you need to finish” such occurrences indicate your selfishness and can result in a major safety hazard or unrecoverable equipment damage. Lab directors are much less forgiving of selfish students.
Rotating equipment is dangerous! Loose jewelry, loose clothing, lanyards, long hair, etc., can be drawn into the rotating spindle and cause severe injury. Take extra precaution for these tools.

There are four additional resources for fabrication around campus that we may use. The professional and student metal shop in Exley Science Tower, the Digital Design Studio (DDS) in the Davidson Art Center, the workshop in the basement of Hewitt 8, and the woodshop at 105 Art Studio South. Contact the appropriate personnel at these facilities prior to any independent work you intend to accomplish there. Conduct yourselves in a professional manner and clean up after yourself when using these facilities, otherwise our access may be limited.
Academic Conduct
Wesleyan University has established an Honor Code to ensure the highest standard of conduct in academic affairs. By enrolling at Wesleyan University, you have agreed to the Honor Code, which can be found in the student handbook.

It is a violation of the honor code to present the work of someone else as if it is your own work. In design work, it is sometimes challenging to clarify the difference between your own work and the work of others. In some sense all designs are inspired by other designs. The details of ownership of design work are a critical piece of intellectual property law, often involving ownership of patents, copyright, and trademarks. You should work to obtain the necessary permissions and give appropriate credit to those whose ideas you use in your designs. Sometimes this is as simple as indicating that you borrowed an idea for your design from another student in the class. In your evaluations of your team project, you will clearly indicate what each student contributed.

Students with Disabilities
Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a disability as defined by the ADA. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible. If you have a disability, or think that you might have a disability, please contact Accessibility Services in order to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Accessibility Services is located in North College, rooms 021 or can be reached by email (accessibility@wesleyan.edu) or phone (860-685-2332).

If you are having difficulties with the accommodations process, please reach out to your class dean or faculty advisor. Please inform Prof. Chenier if you have concerns about accessibility in the IDEAS Lab and/or the course.

Religious/Spiritual Observance Resources
If you anticipate that your religious/spiritual observance may conflict with academic obligations such as attending class, taking examinations, or submitting assignments, you can work directly with your professor to make reasonable arrangements. Should you require additional support or guidance, please feel free to reach out to Rabbi David Teva, Director of the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at dleipziger@wesleyan.edu or any of the chaplains in the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at https://www.wesleyan.edu/orsl/index.html. For a list of a religious holidays celebrated by members of the Wesleyan community, go to Wesleyan’s Multifaith calendar which can be found at: https://www.wesleyan.edu/orsl/multifaith-calendar.html.

Title IX Resources
If trauma inhibits your ability to fully participate in class, please contact Debbie Colucci, Title IX Coordinator, at dcolucci@wesleyan.edu, or your class dean. Additionally, and if you are comfortable, you can work directly with your professor to make reasonable arrangements.