

**Syllabus** Media Literacy COM155L111 and 112, Spring 2007

L111 M 9:30-10:45a, and TH 9:30-10:45a – LT209

L112 M 11:00-12:15p, and W 9:30-10:45a – LT209

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Office Hours: M 1-2p; W 11a-5p; TH 11a-12p

**Overview:** Media Literacy is an introduction to the study of media, encompassing film, television, radio, the Web--if you can name it, we will look at it not just as consumers but as producers. Topics include visual and aural "literacy," digital media boot camp, the social functions of the image, and the role of media in the cultural process.

**Learning Objectives:**

- > Develop a language for media technology and signification;
- > Understand relationships between technical and meaning-creating practices;
- > Gain familiarity with tools used in media production;
- > Distinguish between media;
- > Understand how media influences identity.

Achievement of these outcomes will be evaluated through attendance and participation, blog entries, weekly exercises and two oral presentations.

Required:

**Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture (Paperback)** by Marita Sturken, Lisa Cartwright; Oxford University Press, USA; (2001); **ISBN:** 0198742711

Flash Drive, USB 2.0 (min. 512 MG)

**Schedule**

Week One: Course Introduction.

Theory: Read "Your Divided Attention" to be distributed in class.

Practice: Start a Blog, write a paragraph a day, resulting in five paragraphs, on media not seen, now seen (any piece of media you had not seen before, from a credit card newsletter to a billboard, that you now see and why you think you had missed it before).

Starting Week Two, maintain blog with weekly entries on what you are picking up in class and applying it to what you are seeing/reading out on the street, acting on media, etc. so that by the end of the semester you have at least 20 individual blog entries (excluding exercises and projects) of 3-5 sentences each with examples (image, video, etc.) attached/inserted as needed.

Week Two: Power of Images

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Introduction and Chapter One

Practice: Blogging and blogorrhea; finding resources, how does Google work

Week Three: Making Meaning

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Two

Practice: Photoshop, RGB color, bit-depth, pixels, resolution

Week Four: Looking, Perspective and the Gaze

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Three

Practice: Photoshop protocol

Week Five: Reproduction and Visual Technologies

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Four

Practice: Photoshop continued, making selections, resizing, color correction.

Week Six: Reproduction and Visual Technologies, continued

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Four

Practice: Page layout, incorporating images and text.

Week Seven: Mass Media

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Five

Practice: SecondLife

Week Eight: Midterm Presentations TBD

Week Nine: Television Culture and Technology

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Five

Practice: Introduction to Flash, animation. Vector versus bitmap graphics

Week Ten: Consumer Culture and the Manufacturing of Desire

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Six

Practice: More Flash

Week Eleven: Consumer Culture and the Manufacturing of Desire, continued

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Six

Practice: Sound, sampling, bit depth, editing

Week Twelve: Postmodernism and Popular Culture

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Seven

Practice: More Flash, adding sound

Week Thirteen: Postmodernism and Popular Culture, continued

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Seven

Practice: Review organizing content, project management

Week Fourteen: The Global Flow of Visual Culture

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Eight

Practice: Final Project workshop

Week: Fifteen The Global Flow of Visual Culture, continued

Theory: **Practices of Looking**, Chapter Nine

Practice: Final Project workshop

**Final Presentations**

## **Assessment**

### **1. Attendance, Participation and Blog (20%)**

A. Outcome: The student will elaborate on their exploration of multimedia using a blog format as a journal/sketchbook of experiences with different media.

B. Assessment: By end of semester, student will have amassed a min. 20 entries in their blog (excluding exercises and projects) on ideas relating to media of their choice. The blog will include observations on the nature of its intended message, use and audiences; the blog will allow the student to reflect on the aesthetic, functional and/or intellectual value of their work.

C. Connections with goals: This assignment is designed to encourage students to develop critical evaluation skills and to have the experience of articulating their views not just for themselves but for the Web audience. The exercise is particularly useful towards industry, and relates to the college goals of cultivation of a free and enlightened mind through the discipline of scholarly study and dialogue, and exploring ways in which academic excellence may be enhanced by state-of-the-art information and communications technology. This assignment also addresses the communication program goals requiring students to be able to speak and write effectively.

D. Connection with expected learning outcomes: This work relates to the stated learning outcomes of competency in the Critique and evaluation of new media content.

### **2. Individual weekly projects (30%)**

A. Outcome: Students will use digital tools to amass a portfolio of digital-based work.

B. Assessment: Students will be graded on the following criteria: a) Technical quality of the projects; b) Content, Is the overall treatment relevant, is the content timely, grounded to a specific audience, and does it motivate the user in the right direction.

C. Relationship to Goals: This item emphasizes individual mastery of basic skills introduced in the classroom. The student will be evaluated on his or her ability to use the knowledge and skills gained in class to create actual projects. This relates to the College-wide goal of application of theory to hands-on practice. It also relates to the program mission specifying that investigation centers on the ways in which human beings purposefully utilize symbols in interaction to create or modify a socially meaningful world.

D. Connection with expected learning outcomes: This assignment relates to the stated learning outcomes of competency in:

- Critique and evaluation of new media content
- Creation of raw media content
- Manipulation of pre-shaped media content
- Digital photorealistic manipulation and editing
- Digital Animation and Editing
- Digital Audio creation, capture, manipulation and Editing

### **3. Mid-term Oral presentation (20%)**

A. Outcome: The student will elaborate on aspects of multimedia, emphasizing salient points and critiquing content and design on the portfolio amassed up to mid-term.

B. Assessment: Oral presentation in class on a multimedia projects of the student's choice. The presentation should last ~5-7 minutes, during which time student will cover: a) The nature of the multimedia projects, its intended message, use and audiences; b) A critique of the content of the project in terms of its aesthetic value, intellectual value, and relevance to its intended audience; c) A critique of the design of the projects in terms of usefulness, ease of use, and structural or conceptual design metaphors. Student will also be graded on the overall effectiveness in exploring the points above.

C. Connections with goals: This assignment is designed to encourage students to develop critical evaluation skills and to have the experience of articulating their views to an audience. The exercise is particularly useful towards industry, and relates to the college goals of cultivation of a free and enlightened mind through the discipline of scholarly study and dialogue, and exploring ways in which academic excellence may be enhanced by state-of-the-art information and communications technology. This assignment also addresses the communication program goals requiring students to be able to speak and write effectively.

D. Connection with expected learning outcomes: This work relates to the stated learning outcomes of competency in the Critique and evaluation of new media content.

#### **4. Final oral presentation (30%)**

A. Outcome: Student will present their final project, administered in the final exam time slot, covering all aspects of the final project. The presentation should last ~5-7 minutes, during which time student will cover: a) The nature of the multimedia project, its intended message, use and audiences; b) A critique of the content of the project in terms of its aesthetic value, intellectual value, and relevance to its intended audience; c) A critique of the design of the project in terms of usefulness, ease of use, and structural or conceptual design metaphors. Student will also be graded on the overall effectiveness in exploring the points above.

B. Assessment: Oral presentation on final multimedia project. The presentation will cover: a) The nature of the multimedia project, its intended message, use and audiences; b) A critique of the content in the project in terms of its aesthetic/functional/intellectual value, and relevance to its intended audience; c) A critique of the design of the projects in terms of usefulness, ease of use, and structural or conceptual design metaphors. Student will also be graded on the overall effectiveness in exploring the points above.

C. Connection with Goals: This item will test recall of course material. It relates to the College-wide goal of cultivation of a free and enlightened mind through the discipline of scholarly study and dialogue. This assignment is designed to encourage students to develop critical evaluation skills and to have the experience of articulating their views to an audience. The exercise is particularly useful towards industry, and relates to the college goals of cultivation of a free and enlightened mind through the discipline of scholarly study and dialogue, and exploring ways in which academic excellence may be enhanced by state-of-the-art information and communications technology. This assignment also addresses the communication program goals requiring students to be able to speak and write effectively.

D. Connection with expected learning outcomes: This work relates to the stated learning outcomes of competency in the Critique and evaluation of new media content.

#### **Attendance**

Students will be expected to attend all sessions and hand in all assignments on time. Absence or failure to hand in assignments will be excused only with acceptable documentation from a Marist College official. There will be no re-sits of the mid-term or final presentations except for medical or college-validated absences with documentation. If you have to miss class, you will need to spend time with a classmate to catch up. If you miss 4 classes, you will not receive an "A".

#### **Content and Copyright**

Wherever possible, students are urged to develop original content. This includes artwork, photography, video and music. Under no circumstances will the instructor condone republishing of copyright material on the web or elsewhere, unless intention is clearly articulated through other theory and purpose. Students choosing to appropriate multimedia content from any other source must obtain written permission from the relevant copyright owner.

## **Grading**

These are guidelines which I will be using to determine grades:

**A** Student explored, researched, experimented, learned and was fully involved in the class and with all aspects of his/her work. He/she produced excellent work that was some of the best in class.

**B** Student satisfied assignments, but lacked full involvement and inspiration. Work was good, but not among the best in class.

**C** Student satisfied assignments with some effort, but with problems in understanding of ideas, satisfactory manipulation of the material, lacked involvement. Work was adequate.

**D** Student turned in incomplete or poorly executed assignments. If completed, work was not as good as most students in the class.

**F** Student failed to turn in work or if it was turned in it was incomplete or very poorly executed. If completed, work was inadequate.