

**Syllabus** Digital Multimedia1 (COM 355L111) FALL 2006

Course Meets: Tuesdays 11-1:45p

Instructor: Brett Phares

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Office hours: check eLearning shell for latest information

**Course overview:** Each student will develop digital multimedia projects in mass communication from among their specialties in advertising, journalism, public relations, radio and television. Students will use their narrating, design, photography and audio/video skills to develop a concept, create digital elements and assemble them to complete their project. Whether on CD-ROM, DVD or World Wide Web, each will include text, graphics, photos, sound and video resulting in a new experience for the student as well as the end-user.

**Learning Outcomes:** In this course, we will examine the process, forms, outcomes and effects of communication in digital form, and master the use of multiple digital media to manipulate symbols in creation of meaning. Additionally, students will strengthen their skills in software tools developed for the creation of digital media, including audio, animation, video, and their deployment to the Web. At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Critique and evaluate new media content
- Create new media content
- Digitally manipulate and edit still imagery
- Digitally capture/create, manipulate and edit video
- Digitally capture/create, manipulate and edit audio
- Gain knowledge on the appropriate digital tool and technique for a desired result
- Gain knowledge on project design and management

Achievement of these outcomes will be evaluated in blog entries, weekly exercises and project-based work.

Required Textbook:

**Multimedia: From Wagner to Virtual Reality.** Expanded Edition by Randall Packer (Ed.), Ken Jordan (Ed.); Paperback. Slav. Norton & Company; (2002); **ISBN:** 0393323757

Recommended Textbook:

**The Laws of Simplicity (Simplicity: Design, Technology, Business, Life) (Hardcover)** by [John Maeda](#); The MIT Press (August 21, 2006); **ISBN:** 0262134721

Other materials:

1 or more CD/CDR, DVD disks to record digital assets, or USB EXT. Hard drive  
Access to a digital or analog camera/camcorder

## **Schedule:**

### **Module 1 - Multimedia, Still Images and Type**

Read: "Your Divided Attention" by Brett Phares, <http://mrphares.com/YDA>  
Packer & Jordan pp. 1-43; 121-159; WEB STYLE GUIDE, By Patrick Lynch and Sarah Horton,  
<http://www.webstyleguide.com/index.html?/interface.html>

Discuss syllabus, objectives. Survey skills and individual goals; Lab rules and expectations.

- Examples of Digital Multimedia
- Evaluating multimedia content and design
- Hardware peripherals. Software, plus exploration
- Typography, Graphics and Graphics File Formats
- Intro to Photoshop; Internet history; Topics in HTML - Dreamweaver, FTP, Javascript

Start personal blog, noting 5 things/objects/media "unseen, now seen"; continue blog entries throughout rest of semester, to build on minimum of 20 entries/paragraphs; Weekly exercises

### **Module 2 - Animation, Sound and Video**

Read: Packer & Jordan pp. 303-398.

Graphic animation, vector vs. bitmap, concepts and tools  
Sound Design/sound for the web - embedding vs. streaming  
Intro to Video  
Video Capture Digital Editing  
Video for the web - embedding vs. streaming  
Weekly animation/video projects

### **Mid-term oral presentation of project work to date, ~10 minutes**

### **Module 3 - Authoring**

Read: Packer & Jordan pp. 198-207, 225-235; 239-300  
<http://www.webmonkey.com/>

Multimedia in Flash.  
Content, rights, DRM tools, etc.  
Discuss group/individual projects. Assign project work and start on topic proposal  
Sample Creative Brief for topic proposal  
Topic proposals due.  
Negotiation and decision of final project subject matter

### **Module 4 - Production**

Final production process, user testing  
Final exam oral presentation of project, ~10 minutes

### **End of Semester**

## **Assessment**

### **1) Student Blog (10%)**

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

B. Assessment: By end of semester, student will have amassed a min. 20 entries in their blog on ideas relating to multimedia of their choice. The blog will include observations on the nature of the multimedia project being worked on, its intended message, use and audiences; b) 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 (20%)**

A. Outcome: Students will use digital tools to amass a portfolio of digitally-based work, comprised of weekly assignments.

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
- Creation of shaped media content
- Digital Photorealistic Manipulation and Editing
- Digital Video Manipulation 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 ~10 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. Group project (20%)**

This project relates to the stated learning outcomes of competency in:

- Broad knowledge of techniques and tools of new media
- Team multimedia project proposal and project report.

A. Outcome: Each student will function as part of a team, to design, produce and launch a digital product that will have content and utility value to a target audience. This project will be conducted in the context of small self-managed workgroups. The groups will be required to engage in all the steps usually required in professional media production, from conceptualization and storyboarding, to budgeting and distribution. A project report will be required at the end of the production.

B. Assessment: Working as part of their respective groups, students will develop a multimedia project for deployment on the Web or DVD, to be run on a personal computer. The topic and focus of the project will be chosen by the group in consultation with the instructor. Note that web projects are not to be published on the web without the instructor's review and permission.

You will be graded on: a) A proposal document in which you will conceptualize, plan, and time-budget the project. Include scripts, scoreboards, sketches, or other pre-production drafts;

b) Technical quality of the final product; c) Content (is the production meaningful and substantive; d) Originality and impact.

C. Connection with Goals: This main project is pounded in the college-wide mission of career preparation and for entry into the world of work. The project relates to the Communication and the Arts program mission to focus on application of theory to hands-on practice.

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

- Creation of new media content
- HTML design including use of manuscripts and Flash elements.
- Digital imagery Manipulation and Editing
- Digital video manipulation and editing
- Digital Audio creation, capture, manipulation and Editing
- Broad knowledge of techniques and tools of new media Project design and management

#### **5. 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 ~10 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 students 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**

There will be no re-sits of the mid-term or final presentations except for medical or college-validated absences with documentation. Both the mid-term and final presentations require your physical presence. 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 medical practitioner, Marist College official, or other legitimate authority.

### **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**

In accordance with college guidelines, the fulfillment of all basic requirements in a course or project results in the grade of C, above average performance results in the grade of B and exceptional work results in the grade of A.