

Computer Graphics/Animation

introduction

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<http://www.whatifmedia.com/marietta/>

The intent of this course is to provide a robust introduction into using Macromedia Flash to create effective rich media containing animation, sound, and video.

Topics to be covered include creating and editing vector graphics, creating simple and more advanced animation, using imported media, incorporating sound and video, and how to deliver cross-platform, low-bandwidth Flash movies.

Projects in the course will be based upon real-world scenarios, thereby providing students with portfolio-quality work. The course will offer the opportunity to use many aspects of your creative talents as well as help you explore new ones.

materials

Suggested text:

Macromedia Flash MX Hands-On-Training

Publisher: Peachpit Press; Bk&CD-Rom edition (September 24, 2002)

ISBN: 0321112725

CD-R/RWs and/or pin drives – to save your work on. Save your work frequently and periodically archive backups onto a second storage medium. CD-Rs will be used to turn in projects if a class network folder is unavailable.

Sadly, storage devices can and do get corrupted. You are responsible for work lost because backups were not made (i.e., if your file gets corrupted while you are working). Completed work must be turned in, even if it means starting over.

fees

No fees will be assessed for this course.

lab policies

The graphics lab is to be used by students taking classes in the Art Department who require computer facility use. You must sign in with the lab monitor in order to enter the computer lab. **No food or drink is permitted in the computer labs.** Watch for signs posting each semester's lab hours. The lab is available during the day when no classes are in session in the lab. Please be courteous and honor lab hours.

If you need assistance with computers in the lab – such as if the computer bombs or if you have trouble printing – see the lab monitor. **The job of the lab monitor does not include helping you complete your assignment. If you have questions regarding your assignments, schedule an appointment to see me outside of class for extra assistance.**

academic honesty

All work submitted in this class is expected to be your own. **Tracing artwork or duplicating layouts may violate the owner's copyright and is prohibited in this class.** You will receive a failing grade in the class if you represent the work of others – professionals or students – as your own.

All work submitted in this class is expected to be completed during this semester, for this class. Completed projects produced for other classes, jobs or internships will not be accepted as any part of an assignment.

Using copyrighted photographs, clip art, audio, video, or other materials as part of your assignments is also prohibited. This includes images obtained online for which you have not obtained permission to use. Such material may only be used if permission is provided **in writing** prior to the due date of the assignment. You must submit this permission notice along with your assignment when it is turned in.

attendance

Attendance is required and roll will be taken at each class. If you must miss class for a legitimate reason, you need to notify me adequately in advance. You are responsible for any material you miss during your absence. **Two unexcused absences will lower your final grade one letter; three will result in automatic failure of the course.**

Legitimate reasons include family death; personal illness, with a note from your doctor or the student health center; family illness; job/internship interview; and college-sanctioned activities.

assignments

Please keep in mind that aesthetic value is of the utmost importance in these projects. You will have multi-stage assignments and exercises for this class. These deadlines, like any other in real-world situations, are absolute. Late assignments will automatically receive a failing grade unless an extension is requested in advance and granted. Each of your assignments must be ready to be turned in at the beginning of class on the assigned due date.

You will receive a grade and a critique for each assignment to assist you in improving your work for future assignments. To improve your grade on individual assignments, you may resubmit a revised version along with a copy of the original. Your grade for the assignment will be the average of the grades for the original and the revised assignments. You are required to turn in all of the assignments as a final portfolio for the class.

factors for success

Working in advance of deadlines.

Ask questions and seek feedback both in and out of class.

Take advantage of open lab time to work.

Sketch out ideas and **research** different approaches before executing assignments.

Use your resources creatively.

Avoid missing class; pay close attention during class.

following directions

Follow the instructions provided for each class assignment and exercise. Failure to do so will result in a deduction in the grade for each assignment. If you are unclear about the instructions for an assignment, please address the issue in class or contact me in a timely manner so that I can make sure that you understand the assignment.

students with special needs

Any student needing accommodations due to a documented disability should notify the instructor and the Academic Resource Center (Andrews Hall, Third Floor, 376-4700) at the beginning of the semester for further instructions.

grading

This is a professional skills class. As such, the expectations are high and your work will be graded according to professional standards. Expect the standards to rise with each assignment. You are responsible for all material discussed in class as well as prerequisites for this class. Each grade for your class assignments will be evaluated on its technical execution, creative approach, communication value, and information packaging. These are described as the following:

assignments and exams

Technical

Your skill in using traditional media and/or computer software to produce the assignment.

Creative

Your ability to present the project in a unique and visually interesting manner.

Communication

Your ability to verbally articulate the reasons behind your work during critique; and the communicative value of your approach for each assignment.

The final grade will be calculated using the following percentages:

Assignments 60%

Exams 20%

Professionalism 20%

Professionalism

Includes your attitude toward your class work, critiques, and revisions; class attendance; attention and participation in class; and meeting assignment deadlines. Poor performance in any of these areas will result in point deductions in this area.

Grades will be assigned according to the grading percentage scale published in the College Catalog.

The following are assignments scheduled for this class. Due dates for each assignment will be announced when the assignment is given. Dates are subject to change based on class progress.

EXAMS

Exam 1 – Week 5

Exam 2 – Week 10

Final Exam

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment 1: Outline ideas for future assignments. Find extensive Flash resources.

Assignment 2: Create a full vector portrait of yourself / use text to offer some personal information. Document trials and errors and your technique in creating your vector art.

Assignment 3: Create keyframes in your portrait / separate areas to be animated onto layers / Start creating two extensive vector scenes for Assignment 5. Document trials and errors and your technique in creating your vector art.

Assignment 4: Create portrait animation. Format the animation into symbols. Create an organized Flash Library of the symbols. Continue Assignment 3 vector scenes.

Assignment 5: Create advanced animations in vector scenes. Format the animation into symbols. Create an organized Flash Library of the symbols.

Assignment 6: Gather related images, QuickTime video clips, and MP3 audio clips.

Assignment 7: Import images, QuickTime video clips, and MP3 audio clips.

Assignment 8: Swap Assignments 2, 5, and 7 with another graduate classmate. Optimize each Assignment's workflow and efficiency. Document the changes you make and areas you saw no room for improvement.

Assignment 9: Sketch ideas for a small navigation system and large interactive application. Create an interactivity diagram for each. Research your subject. Create an organized briefing of your research, sketches, and ideas for each one.

Assignment 10: Create simple ActionScript elements, button events, and MovieClip events. Plan media needs for navigation system. Create brief Flash samples of your project ideas. Document your trials, errors, and any changes made to initial ideas.

Assignment 11: Create your small navigation system. Document your trials, errors, and any changes made to initial ideas.

Assignment 12: Make simple ActionScript elements more robust. Create a simple object with ActionScript animation.

Assignment 13: Create large interactive application. Document your trials, errors, and any changes made to initial ideas.

Assignment 14: Continue with large interactive application. Document your trials, errors, and any changes made to initial ideas.

Assignment 15: Swap Assignments 11 and 13 with another graduate classmate. Optimize each Assignment's workflow and efficiency. Document the changes you make and areas you saw no room for improvement.

topics to be covered

The following is a working list of topics for each week during the semester. These topics may fluctuate, depending upon the class's progress.

Week 1: Introduction to Flash MX / Flash basics

Week 2: Creating vector graphics / Text

Week 3: Layers and Keyframes / Transformations

Week 4: Simple Animation / Animation Features

Week 5: Advanced Animation

Week 6: Symbols and Instances

Week 7: Importing Images, Sound, and Video

Week 8: Project Management / Advanced Testing and Publishing

Week 9: Interactivity

Week 10: ActionScript / Buttons / Events

Week 11: Navigation Systems

Week 12: Advanced ActionScript

Week 13: Advanced Navigation Systems

Week 14: Advanced Project Management

Week 15: Creative Problem Solving

Week 16: Flash Applications