

170A: Fundamentals of Digital Media Production

Summer 2019, Session 1
Soc Sci 1 135
Tuesday & Thursday, 1:00pm-4:30pm

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Office Hours Location: College 9 and 10 dining hall
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday by appointment

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I. Description

From the Course Catalog

“Introduction to the conceptual and technical fundamentals of making digital media. Covers principles of digital image manipulation, basic web authoring, and interface design through projects that introduce production techniques and methods.”

From Me

In the modern age, digital media exists in an ecosystem. Learning one tool or program is useless if you can't integrate it with all of the other components of the digital media ecosystem. To this end, this course is designed to teach four different core methods of digital media production, and to show how these different methods can be used to supplement and enhance each other.

By the end of this course, students will be able to use image editing software, sound editing software, creative coding software, and hypertext/webpage creation software. They will also have an understanding of how these different individual pieces all participate in the overall digital media ecosystem. Because this is also an arts production course, students will develop their skills in giving and receiving constructive critique.

II. Format and Procedures

Attendance

Attendance is extremely crucial to succeeding in this course. As a result, three unexcused late arrivals will result in a loss of one letter grade, and three unexcused absences will result in immediate failure from the course.

Computer Use

Because this is a digital media production class, computer use is permitted during lecture. In fact, it is encouraged, especially if we are following along a tutorial. You may also bring your personal computers to class if you are more comfortable working on them than the ones in our

classroom. I will ask however that computer use be strictly restricted to things relevant to the course.

Readings

While this is primarily a production course, there will be a selection of readings that will further contextualize the work we're doing in class to the world at large, alongside a set of tutorials to further help practice the tools that are introduced in class. All readings will be available online, or on Canvas. They are mandatory, and will help enrich your experience in the class.

Software

All the software we will use in the class will be available on the computers in the classroom for you to use. In addition, I have made sure that all of the software we are using is free and cross-platform, meaning you are able to download and install it on any computer if you want to work on your own laptops or on another computer. You can find links to the programs below:

GIMP: <https://www.gimp.org/>

Audacity: <https://www.audacityteam.org/>

Processing: <https://processing.org/>

Twine: <https://twinery.org/>

Note that the computers in the classroom will be wiped regularly, so you should save your work by uploading it to your UCSC Google Drive, located here: <https://www.google.com/drive/>

III. Grading

The structure of the course will be smaller, weekly assignments that will practice using the various technologies we are engaging with, culminating in a larger final project. The grade breakdown is as follows:

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Four Weekly Assignments: 10% each

Final Project: 40%

IV. Assignment Descriptions

For each weekly project, the project files will be turned in to a shared google drive, under the folder that corresponds to your name. Each weekly project must also be accompanied with a <1 page reflection on the process of production. These should be produced after the project is completed, and reflect on what the creation process was like, what you learned in the process of creation, what you would have done differently, and what you can imagine doing next.

Weekly projects not including a reflection paper will not receive full credit.

On each Tuesday that a weekly project is due, we will have a limited critique in class. Every student must participate in one of these critiques over the course of the class. For each critique, I will also select a respondent, who will be the first to offer critique after the work is shown.

Weekly Project 1: Image, Due July 2nd

For this assignment, you will explore digital image editing. Using GIMP, create a digital image out of components sourced from other images. Your final piece must have at least 5 layers, one of which should be masked, 3 elements from other images, and some use of the clone brush.

In content, it can be anything that fits the constraints: a scene, a meme, a poster, etc.

Turn in the image exported as a .png, the .xcf file used to create it, the original images the elements were sourced from, and your reflection to the class Google drive.

Weekly Project 2: Sound, Due July 9th

For this assignment, you will explore sound recording and editing. Using Audacity, create a sound art piece out of sounds that you record yourself. Your final piece must be no longer than 2 minutes, include at least 4 tracks, each of which having some editing/effect, and at least two of which are human voices.

In content, it can be anything that fits these constraints: an interview, a song, a poem, etc.

Turn in the piece exported as a .mp3, the .aup file used to create it, the original recorded sounds the tracks were made from, and your reflection to the class Google drive.

Weekly Project 3: Code, Due July 16th

For this project, you will explore artistic coding. Using Processing, create a small app/program. Your final piece must incorporate some of the following elements: drawing to the screen, using `for` or `while` loops, creating and using variables, and responding to mouse or keyboard presses.

For inspiration, consider trying to replicate one of artist Sol Lewitt's famous instruction paintings seen here: <https://massmoca.org/sol-lewitt/>. If you go another route with the content, it should be around this level of complexity.

Turn in the project folder for the piece, making sure to include all the associated .pde files, as well as your reflection, to the class Google drive.

Weekly Project 4: Hypertext, Due July 23rd

For this assignment, you will explore hypertext webpage creation. Using Twine, create a hypertext experience on a topic of your choosing. Your final piece must include at least 3 branching paths, and at least 12 nodes total. The final piece must also have some HTML editing, which can change any elements of your choosing including font size, font color, background color, etc.

In content, it can be anything that fits these constraints: a game, a story, an essay, etc.

Turn in the published story .html file, the Twine archive .html file (from the home page, hit the archive button), and your reflection to the class Google drive.

Final Project, Due July 29th

For the final project, we are going to embrace the idea of a digital media ecosystem and combine two or more of the technologies we've worked with so far to create a hybrid final product. In other words, create a final project using two or more of the pieces of digital media software we've used so far in the class. For example, this project could be a piece of Processing code that relies on audio you produced in Audacity, or a Twine game that uses images produced using GIMP.

The final project should be substantial, and reflect a significant amount of work. During week 5, we will spend most of class time helping to critique and develop final project ideas and prototypes.

For this project, you will be turning in a more substantial piece of writing as well. In addition to the reflection as usual, you will also produce a 2 page artists' statement that details the themes and ideas you are exploring in the piece and your reasons for producing it the way that you did.

Turn in the final piece in whatever form you have chosen, the source files used to create it, your artist's statement and reflection to the class Google drive.

IV. Academic Integrity

Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty. Acts of academic misconduct during the course, including plagiarism, can and usually do result in failure of the course, at the sole discretion of the instructor of record. Your case will be reported to the College Provost as per the Academic Integrity guidelines found on the web at: https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct

Information on subject specific research guidelines is available at: <http://guides.library.ucsc.edu/>

V. Accommodations for Students

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. At this time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to please contact the DRC office, located in Hahn 125 by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

VI. Difficult Material Statement

In Film and Digital Media courses you will often be assigned films or other material that could contain difficult ideas, uncomfortable language, or graphic depictions of sex or violence. You will be asked to treat these portrayals critically, to consider what is being expressed by the maker, or to examine the potential social impact, and to evaluate the works in a given context. Instructors are always happy to speak with you about your work, and might direct you to CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) at 831-459-2628 or the Disability Resource Center

(drc@ucsc.edu or 831-459-2089) should you need additional support in order to do your best work.

VII. Inclusivity Statement

As an instructor at UC Santa Cruz, I value equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic/cultural diversity. Be assured that I will promote a safe and conducive environment for learning. In accordance with University policy, I will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual or gender orientation, disability, or status as a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era. In addition to the University's policy, and within the bounds of the course, I do not discriminate on the basis of political or religious beliefs, and I also make every effort to avoid discrimination on the basis of class or income. This means that you do not have to agree with me or the assigned readings in order to do well in this course. You are, however, obligated to demonstrate an understanding of the course material. If there is something I can do to make the class more hospitable, please let me know.

VIII. Title IX

The university cherishes the free and open exchange of ideas and enlargement of knowledge. To maintain this freedom and openness requires objectivity, mutual trust, and confidence; it requires the absence of coercion, intimidation, or exploitation. The principal responsibility for maintaining these conditions must rest upon those members of the university community who exercise most authority and leadership: faculty, managers, and supervisors.

The university has therefore instituted a number of measures designed to protect its community from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other related prohibited conduct. Information about the Title IX Office, the online reporting link, applicable campus resources, reporting responsibilities, the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment and the UC Santa Cruz Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment can be found at titleix.ucsc.edu.

The Title IX/Sexual Harassment Office is located at 105 Kerr Hall. In addition to the online reporting option, you can contact the Title IX Office by calling 831-459-2462.

IX. Summer Session 2019 Important Dates

Session 1:

Drop: Monday, July 1

Request for "W": Friday, July 12

Session 2:

Drop: Monday, August 5

Request for "W": Friday, August 16

8-Week:

Drop: Monday, July 8

Request for "W": Friday, July 26

10-Week:

Drop: Monday, July 8
Request for "W": Friday, July 26

Neither Summer Session nor instructors drop students for non-attendance or non-payment. Students must drop themselves. Dropping results in full tuition reversal/refund. Withdraw posts a W for the grade and full tuition is charged (no refund).

For all dates and deadlines, including 'change of grade option' (P/NP) and grades due, here is the summer academic calendar: <https://summer.ucsc.edu/studentlife/index.html>

For questions about dropping, requesting a W grade for a course, or withdrawing from the summer quarter, email summer@ucsc.edu.

IX. Course Schedule

Week 1 - Tuesday, June 25th

Course Introduction & Image Editing Part One

Agenda: Who am I?/What is this class?/How does it work?/Intro to image editing/Basics of images editing/Layer based editing/Digital painting/Individual exploration time

Resources:

- GIMP: <https://www.gimp.org/>
- GIMP docs: <https://docs.gimp.org/2.10/en/>
- GIMP tutorials: <https://www.gimp.org/tutorials/>
- Snowball the Monster Cat:
http://hoaxes.org/photo_database/image/snowball_the_monster_cat
- Helicopter Shark: http://hoaxes.org/photo_database/image/helicopter_shark
- T.G. Hamilton & Ectoplasm:
<http://umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/digital/hamilton/index.html>
- The Vanishing Commissar:
http://hoaxes.org/photo_database/image/the_commissar_vanishes

Homework: Read Hito Steyerl's "In Defense of the Poor Image" (<https://www.e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image/>) and follow along GIMP's Layer Mask Tutorial (https://www.gimp.org/tutorials/Layer_Masks/)

Week 1 - Thursday, June 27th

Image Editing Part Two

Agenda: Discussion on Steyerl/More on Layer Masks/Selections/Clone Brush/Plugins/Start Weekly Project 1

Resources:

- Martín De Pasquale Photoshop Art:
<https://www.demilked.com/digital-art-photoshop-martin-de-pasquale/>

- Old Worth1000 Photoshop Contests: <https://www.designcrowd.com/community/?type=photoshop+design>
- More Photo Manipulation Examples: <https://www.jotform.com/blog/45-brilliant-examples-of-photo-manipulation-art/>

Homework: Do Weekly Project 1 and read Jonathan Sterne's *MP3: The Meaning of a Format* Introduction, "Format Theory" pages 1-10 (on Canvas)

Week 2 - Tuesday, July 2nd (bring headphones!)

Sound Editing

Agenda: Weekly Project 1 Critique/Discuss Sterne/What is sound editing?/Sound art/Live audio recording example/Transcription/The waveform/Editing mistakes/Multitracking and synchronization/Effects/Individual exploration time

Resources:

- Audacity: <https://www.audacityteam.org/>
- Audacity docs: <https://manual.audacityteam.org/index.html>
- Audacity tutorials: <https://manual.audacityteam.org/man/tutorials.html>
- Soundscapes: *Sounding Gdansk* by John Grzinich (<https://vimeo.com/99319309>) and *Lagos Soundscapes* by Emeka Ogboh (<https://theculturetrip.com/africa/nigeria/articles/lagos-soundscapes-an-interview-with-sound-artist-emeka-ogboh/>)
- Sharon Daniel's work: <http://www.sharondaniel.net/> including *Public Secrets* (<http://vectors.usc.edu/issues/4/publicsecrets/index.php>)

Homework: Do Weekly Project 2, read (or watch) Allison Parrish's talk "Programming is Forgetting: Toward a New Hacker Ethic" (<http://opentranscripts.org/transcript/programming-forgetting-new-hacker-ethic/>) and follow along Audacity's Editing and Mixing Tutorials (https://manual.audacityteam.org/man/tutorial_editing_an_existing_file.html) and (https://manual.audacityteam.org/man/tutorial_mixing_a_narration_with_background_music.html). Note that most Audacity tutorials assume you will be recording directly into Audacity, but you can record sound with any device and then import it into Audacity later.

Week 2 - Thursday, July 4th (no class)

Week 3 - Tuesday, July 9th

Creative Code Part One

Agenda: Weekly Project 2 Critique/Discuss Parrish/Intro to programming/Programming for the arts/The basics: shapes, colors, movement/Variables/if statements/Loops/Individual exploration time

Resources:

- Processing: <https://processing.org/>

- Processing docs: <https://processing.org/reference/>
- Processing examples: <https://processing.org/examples/>
- Processing tutorials: <https://processing.org/tutorials/>
- Hello Processing video with Processing project examples: <https://vimeo.com/320513063>
- Even more project examples made with Processing: Miles Hiroo Peyton's *Keyfleas* (<https://vimeo.com/151334392>), LIA's *Filament Sculptures* (<http://www.liaworks.com/theprojects/filament-sculptures/>), Till Nagel and Christopher Pietsch's *cf. city flows* (<https://uclab.fh-potsdam.de/cf/>), and much more here: <https://processing.org/exhibition/>

Homework: Read Chapter 1 "On Sourcery and Source Code" from Wendy Chun's *Programmed Visions: Software and Memory* (on Canvas) and then you have two options: if you feel like you need review, go through Processing's hour of code tutorials (<https://hello.processing.org/>). If you feel like you want to see something new, instead read through the Processing Objects tutorial (<https://processing.org/tutorials/objects/>)

Week 3 - Thursday, July 11th

Creative Code Part Two

Agenda: Discuss Chun/Catch-up for last class/Arrays/Images/Sound (and Libraries)/Objects/Start Weekly Project 3

Resources:

- Processing libraries: <https://processing.org/reference/libraries/>
- Sol Lewitt wall drawings: <https://massmoca.org/sol-lewitt/>
- More (open source) Processing projects: <https://www.openprocessing.org/browse/>
- p5.js (Processing for the Internet): <http://p5js.org/>

Homework: Weekly Project 3, Read Chapter 1, "The Problem With Video Games" from Anna Anthropy's *Rise of the Videogame Zinesters: How Freaks, Normals, Amateurs, Artists, Dreamers, Dropouts, Queers, Housewives, and People Like You Are Taking Back an Artform* (on Canvas)

Week 4 - Tuesday, July 16th

Hypertext Part One

Agenda: Weekly Project 3 Critique/Discuss Anthropy/Intro to Twine & HTML/Hypertext examples/Passages/Links/Variables

Resources:

- Twine 2: <https://twinery.org/>
- Twine 2 references/tutorials: <https://twinery.org/wiki/>
- Twine 2 Harlowe specific manual: <https://twine2.neocities.org/>
- Twine 2 Sugarcube (alternative story format) manual: <http://www.motoslave.net/sugarcube/2/docs/>
- Even more Twine 2 documentation: <https://twinery.org/cookbook/>

- Free Twine game examples: <https://itch.io/c/314317/twine-examples>
- *Rat Chaos* by Winter Lake: <https://debacle.us/ratchaos/>
- *Horse Master* by Tom McHenry: <https://tommchenry.itch.io/horse-master>
- *Depression Quest* by Zoe Quinn: <http://www.depressionquest.com/dqfinal.html>
- *Even Cowgirls Bleed* by Christine Love: <http://scoutshonour.com/cowgirl/>

Homework: Read “Feral Hypertext: When Hypertext Literature Escapes Control” by Jill Walker Rettberg (on Canvas) and read through Allison Parrish’s “Quick Twine Tutorial” (<http://catn.decontextualize.com/twine/>)

Week 4 - Thursday, July 18th

Hypertext Part Two

Agenda: Discuss Rettberg/Proto-Twine Hypertexts/HTML/Images/Sound/Start Weekly Project 4

Resources:

- W3Schools HTML basics: <https://www.w3schools.com/html/>
- CSS and Twine:
https://twinery.org/wiki/twine2:change_the_font_colors_or_appearance
- Older-than-Twine Hypertext examples: *The Unknown* by Scott Rettberg, William Gillespie, Dirk Stratton and Frank Marquardt (<http://unknownhypertext.com/>), *24 hours with someone you know* by Philippa J Burne (<http://www.glasswings.com.au/modern/24hours/>), *my body - a Wunderkammer* by Shelley Jackson (http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/jackson_my_body_a_wunderkammer.html)

Homework: Weekly Project 4 and start working on the Final Project- try to have something, even if it’s small, to talk about on Tuesday

Week 5 - Tuesday, July 23rd

Final Project Critique Part One

Agenda: Weekly Project 4 Critique/Final Project Critique/Work on Final Projects

Resources:

- Images in Processing Tutorial: <https://processing.org/tutorials/pixels/>
- Minim, an easy-to-use Processing Sound Library:
<http://code.compartmental.net/tools/minim/>
- Adding Images or Audio to Twine 2:
https://twinery.org/wiki/twine2:add_an_image_movie_sound_effect_or_music

Homework: Continue working on final project

Week 5 - Thursday, July 25th

Final Project Critique Part Two

Homework: Finish that final project!!!