George Mason University
Department of Art and Visual Technology
Course Syllabus

Syllabus and Policies   Motion Design: AVT411-001 & AVT599-003

Instructor   Greg Eckler
Office Hours: By Appointment Tuesday/Thursday
Class meeting days adn time: T/Th 7;20–10:00 p.m.

Location   Art and Design Building 1023

Prerequisite   AVT215 & 311 — or permission of instructor
Admission to Graphic Design MA graduate program
or permission of instructor

Course Description   AVT411 Motion Design is an introductory course to motion graphics for upper-level undergraduate and graduate graphic design majors who have a strong foundation in typography and print design. This course introduces the theories, techniques, and practices of motion graphics and the integration of design, photo imaging, sound, video, and animation.

Although technical proficiency is a goal, the primary emphasis of the course is the successful creation of imagery, sound, video, and animation for use in motion graphic projects. As in traditional studio art courses, the problems we will address will deal with visual organization and communication, creative brainstorming skills, and experimentation with techniques and a variety of media. Research, critical analysis, and concept development will be emphasized.

Objectives   Upon completing this course students will develop:

• An understanding of the storyboard planning process

• An understanding of animatic planning

• An understanding of the role of art direction

• An understanding of motion graphics and its relationship to broadcast design.

• An understanding of the role of motion in communication

• An understanding of the technical requirements of moving images.

• A working knowledge of software appropriate to the introductory concepts in time-based media.

• The ability to integrate the use of design, typography, sound, space, timing, and animation within motion pieces.

• The ability to design and complete professional broadcast quality motion-based projects.

• The ability to present, discuss, and articulate concepts through analysis, research, and idea development in relation to motion design.

Content   Through projects, lectures, discussions, and demonstrations, you will get a comprehensive understanding of the conceptual, technical, and aesthetic issues of motion design (including planning, production, and postproduction).

Technology   Students must have good working knowledge of Photoshop and Illustrator before taking this class.

Course Expectations

Students will leave this course with an understanding of storyboarding, basic software skills, basic sound design, and overall conceptual growth. Students will also leave with an arsenal of motion design terms and knowledge that will complement the student's growth within the graphic design curriculum. Motion design is a time consuming process, so achieving our objectives will take time, initiative, and an independence and self-initiation in learning.

Required Materials

Textbook (Optional)
Motion Graphic Design: Applied History and Aesthetics, by Jon Krasner (ISBN 978-0-240-80989-2)

Art Materials
• A personal notebook or sketchbook for notes and ideas
• Assorted BLACK felt tip pens and markers (both wide and fine lined)
• Pencils and a good art eraser
• Post-it notes
• Mounting supplies (ruler, X-Acto knife, spray mount, self-healing cutting mat, and black Letramax mounting board).

Computer Materials
• External hard drive
• 5-10 DVDs for burning
• Headphones

Performance Requirements, Critiques, and Class Participation

Due to the dynamics of the course your attendance, participation and punctuality are critical to your successful completion of the class. You must be on time—and prepared—with no exceptions. Not being properly prepared with required assignments is considered an absence from the class. Final projects are due at the beginning of class. Projects turned after the start of class are automatically reduced 1/2 letter grade. Late projects will be docked 1 letter grade per day. If compelled to miss a class, you must email/ask me with an acceptable explanation within 12 hours to be excused. If absent, you are responsible for materials covered in class. Please "buddy-up" with a classmate for this information. Two un-excused absences will gravely effect successful completion of the course. Excessive tardiness will also affect your final grade (3 unexcused late arrivals equals an unexcused absence). Personal communication devices must be turned to "silent mode" and put away.

Final critiques may last one or two class periods. Be prepared to participate in the entire final critique. Individual and group critiques will be held at each stage of a project. Students who fail to have adequate work to present will lose a valuable opportunity to learn, which will also directly affect their grades. Students must be prepared for class to be counted as present, i.e. having all necessary supplies and computer files, and sketchbook with you. Please participate in discussions, offer considered criticism, and challenge my opinion.

Evaluation

Project requirements will differ. Grading on each project will be out of 100. These are the criteria that you might be graded upon:

• Deadlines

• Process & Sketches

• Class Participation/Critique

• Specs

• Concept

• Execution

The final semester grade is determined by:

• Projects (70%)

• Software mastery (10%)

• Class participation (10%)

• Attendance and professionalism (5%)

• Final DVD (5%)

A non-returnable DVD(s) of all final projects must be turned in at the final class. Creative presentation of the DVD (i.e., case, labeling, layout & design) and menu screen will be part of the grade.

All projects should be labeled with the following naming convention. First Initial Last Name - AVT411 - Project#. (i.e. FLastname-AVT411-Project1).

Grading Scale (Overview of Grading Stadards)

A. Superior execution; maximum originality; excellent concentration and initiative; cooperative with peers; excellent judgment; superior attitude and dedication; highly imaginative, original, and experimental; very consistent in work ethic; significant improvement. "A" work is not merely competent, but daring!

B. Strong execution and originality; adequate concentration and initiative; cooperative with peers; good attitude, dedication, and judgment; imaginative and experimental; consistent in work ethic; noticeable improvement.

C. Average execution, concentration, organization, and attitude; some imagination and originality; lacks some consistency in work ethic; some improvement.

D. Poor execution and improvement; limited originality; little concentration and organization; poor judgment; evades responsibility and cooperation; lacks work ethic, concentration, organization

F. Fails to execute to minimum standards, insignificant improvement; no originality; minimum concentration and organization; evades responsibility and cooperation; no work ethic.

Project Outline

Project 1: Storyboarding
(10-12 photos or drawings/sec.)
Undergrad students: :10–:15 seconds
Graduate students: :15–:20 seconds

Project 2: Text Sequence and Narrative (Kinetic Typography)
Undergrad students: :30–1:00 minutes
Graduate students: :45–1:20 minutes

Project 3: Movie Title Sequence
Undergrad students: 1:00–2:00 minutes
Graduate students: 2:00–3:00 minutes

Project 4: TBD

Project 5: How to (aka Tutorial)
Undergrad students: 1:30–2:00 minutes
Graduate students: 2:00–3:00 minutes

University and
School of Art Policies

In accordance with George Mason University policy, turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Commitment to Diversity

This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design

As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours

SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

ArtBus

The dates for Fall 2012 ArtsBus trips are Sept 22, Oct 20, and Nov 17

If you need ArtsBus credit for this semester as part of your class assignment or AVT degree requirement, you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment. If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips this semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please go to the ArtsBus website: http://artsbus.gmu.edu "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy. Non-AVT majors do not need Artsbus credit BUT may need to go on the Artsbus for a class assignment. You can sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus at the Center of the Arts.

Visual Voices Lecture Series

Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater.

August 30th		(Syllabus Review)
September 13th	Sue Spaid	"Navigating the Terrain beyond Mashups, Recitals and Splicing"
September 27th	Hasan Elahi	"Hiding in Plain Sight"
October 11th	Elaine King	"The Artists and Art in An Era of Interconnected Globalization"
October 25th	Richard Franklin	"You Have Everything You Need"

Important Deadlines

Last Day to Add	Sept 4
Last Day to Drop (No Tuition Penalty)	Sept 4
Selective Withdrawal Period	Oct 1—26
Incomplete work from Spring 2012 due to instructor	Oct 26

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the SOA office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed) , LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences

If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

Official Communications via GMU email

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

HONOR CODE

Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously.

No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, A Writer's Reference.) The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, "When in doubt, cite."

Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

WRITING CENTER

Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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