IML Honors 444: Thesis Production II

Time: Fridays 11 pm to 1:50 pm
Location: IML Green Lab (EGG B)
Professor: Andreas Kratky
Units: 4
Office Hours: by appointment
Contact: akratky@cinema.usc.edu

Course Description

The 440/444 Sequence is designed to help you complete your thesis project, working from your proposal through to a viable scholarly multimedia project.

This class is primarily lab-based; most classes will convene in the IML lab, with occasional meetings held in the conference room. Class time will be split between software tutorials and construction, and class presentations of your works in progress. It is understood that the research for the content of your project is conducted by you as "homework" for the class, since there are no common course readings. You will draw upon the new media theory encountered in your foundational IML coursework and make use of its tenets, either explicitly or implicitly. Throughout the 440/444 sequence you will be workshopping your project (presenting your work in progress and getting feedback) and providing thoughtful input on your peer’s projects. Both of these acts help to hone your mastery of multimodal scholarly work. We will improvise and retool as necessary to help you create the best thesis project possible. There are hard dates for drafts of interface layout, for instance, and departmental advisor approval, which must be met so please keep those in mind as you plan and carry out your work.

Course objectives

- Help you move from the proposal into production
- Help you work through your project so that you will have a working prototype or “fine cut” by the end of the semester, leaving the spring semester to be devoted to documentation and reflection, as well as preparation for the presentation. The final project showing will begin on May 7, 2011 and remain up for one week (see attached schedule).
- Help you hone your ability to articulate your project’s controlling idea and its relationship to the media you’ve chosen
- Help you see your work within a context larger than the IML; the work you produce is part of a much broader international movement.
Grading structure
- Participation: 15%
- Peer review of colleagues' work: 15%
- In class exercises: 20%
- Action steps toward thesis project: 50%

Fair Use and Citation Guidelines:
We assert that all of our course work is covered under Fair Use, since it's educational in nature. All projects will need to include academically-appropriate citations in the form of a Works Cited section which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The Works Cited is either included in the project or as a separate document, as appropriate to your project. The style we use is APA 5th edition and you may refer to these guidelines http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/*See sample works cited below.

Academic Integrity:
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/. The University’s rules for academic integrity apply to this class: creating multimedia projects does not make plagiarism any less important. You also cannot have someone else create the projects for you. If you need specialized help or have any doubts or concerns about plagiarism, please see me.

Statement for Students with Disabilities
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Emergency Plan
In the event that classes cannot convene at the university, all IML courses will continue via distance education. Specifically, the IML portal and course wikis will be deployed to enable faculty-student interaction (asynchronously and also via virtual office hours), complete syllabi, course readings and assignments, software tutorials, project assets, parameters and upload instructions, peer review processes and open source alternatives to professional-level software used in the IML curriculum. Further details are available on the course wiki.
Course Schedule:

1. Week  
   - Jan 13, 2012: Introduction  
     Project review, workshop

2. Week  
   - Jan 20, 2012: In class workshop/advising

3. Week  
   - Jan 27, 2012: In class workshop/advising

4. Week  
   - Feb 3, 2012: In class workshop/advising

5. Week  
   - Feb 10, 2012: Concept presentations for project show-case

6. Week  
   - Feb 17, 2012: Intermediate project presentation and peer review

7. Week  
   - Feb 24, 2012: Abstracts for thesis project due  
     Intermediate project presentation and peer review

8. Week  
   - Mar 2, 2012: Final thesis parameter sheet and works cited assignment  
     Space allocation for thesis show

9. Week  
   - Mar 9, 2012: In class workshop/advising  
     Briefing for project documentation

10. Week  
    - Mar 16, 2012: Spring Break

11. Week  
    - Mar 23, 2012: Project documentation clip

12. Week  
    - Mar 30, 2012: Project documentation clip due  
     In class workshop/advising

13. Week  
    - Apr 6, 2012: Thesis parameter sheet and works cited due (via email or class wiki).

14. Week  
    - Apr 13, 2012: Final projects due  
     Test-run of final project installation as they will be shown in the showcase

15. Week  
    - Apr 20, 2012: Last fixes and perfection
16. Week
   · Apr 27, 2012: Class round-up and evaluation

Exams Week
   · May 3, 2012 Final installations due installed and working for IML Showcase
   · May 4, 2012 IML Showcase 4:30 to 6:30 pm

* Sample Citation

Works Cited


As you know, the certificate of honors in Multimedia Scholarship carries with it a mandatory thesis project that demonstrates the facility you have gained over your time in the program. Although you have (or will have) guidance and approval from both your IML and subject area advisor, the parameters for a passing thesis project are important for you to consider while you are creating it. Although there is no direct correlation between a written paper and a multimedia thesis, your project should cover the sort of scope that is roughly equivalent to a 50-page research paper.

The whole of your senior class sequence at the IML is devoted to carrying out this project, which must include the following considerations:

**Conceptual Core:**
- The project’s controlling idea must be apparent.
- The project must be productively aligned with one or more multimedia genres.
- The project must effectively engage with the primary issue/s of the subject area into which it is intervening.

**Research Component:**
- The project must display evidence of substantive research and thoughtful engagement with its subject matter.
- The project must use a variety of credible sources and cite them appropriately.
- The project ought to deploy more than one approach to an issue.

**Form & Content:**
- The project’s structural or formal elements must serve the conceptual core.
- The project’s design decisions must be deliberate, controlled, and defensible.
- The project’s efficacy must be unencumbered by technical problems.

**Creative Realization:**
- The project must approach the subject in a creative or innovative manner.
- The project must use media and design principles effectively.
- The project must achieve significant goals that could not be realized on paper.