

IML 602: Practice of Media Arts

Time: Thursday 6:00 pm to 8:50 pm
Location: SCI L 114
Professor: Andreas Kratky
Units: 4
Prerequisites: none
Office Hours: Thursday 12:30 to 2:00 pm. SCI 201Q or by appointment
Contact: akratky@cinema.usc.edu

Course Description

The class IML 602 is a general introduction to the field of practical research and development in the media arts at the doctoral level. It introduces the notion of open and hybrid research methodologies spanning the arts, sciences and humanities and provides an overview over examples of applied methodologies in various fields of the arts. The class further introduces technical skills and tools in a series of individual workshops and peer review sessions.

Course Structure

This course focuses on the development of research methodologies and practical skills in media authoring. It is conceived on the notion of a tight integration of theoretical and practical research and development and introduces a broad spectrum of different approaches and techniques in the field of media arts. An introduction to the technological aspects of media creation is offered in conjunction with a rigorous consideration of the historical embedding and development of these practices. The class will examine interdisciplinary cross-overs between the arts, the humanities and the sciences. In the course of these discussions students will formulate a research profile and methodology specific to their individual interests that balances theoretical and practical creative work. Students will consider how their work relates to other disciplines and their established discourses, methodologies and prior art. The field of media arts is broad and fast moving and we are interested in methodological diversity. An important part of the class is dedicated to providing guidance in the practical implementation of projects and technological questions. We will follow an iterative approach based on peer review using the group as peer critics.

Students are required to take the class at least once. The class is repeatable to give the opportunity to use the workshop and feedback structure to further pursue the development of practical research methodologies and project work. The class can be used as a scaffolding towards the development of a dissertation project.

Course objectives

- Develop a deep understanding of form finding
- Develop a personal methodology to conduct research and development
- Critically reflect your work within the larger cultural and historic context
- Get acquainted with existing and successful role models
- Provide constructive criticism and support for your fellow students.

Description of Assignments

Over the course of the semester students will develop one practical creative project that embodies their research and artistic approach. This project will go through several iterations and review sessions. At the end of the semester it has to be in a finished presentable form. The project and its theoretical background will be reflected in a semester paper, which is intended to be in a publishable state at the end of the semester. Besides the project and paper every student is expected to prepare the assigned readings and participate actively in their discussion. In peer review sessions students are expected to provide constructive criticism for their fellow students. The assignments are evaluated according to the grading structure specified below.

Grading Structure

CNTV 602 criteria for grading are as follows:

- Class participation: 5%
- Semester project: 50%
- Semester paper: 30%
- Critical feedback and peer review: 15%

Mid-term Conferences

These conferences allow you to get a sense of your overall progress, areas for improvement and an estimated grade at mid-point in the semester. If you are in danger of failing, you will be alerted in writing and in a conference; we will outline together what steps must be taken in order for you to pass. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of USC's add/drop and withdrawal deadlines.

Course Outline:

1. Week

- Aug 24, 2017: Introduction
Overview over course structure

2. Week

- Aug 31, 2017: Discussion: Research and methodologies
overview over different research approaches and designs
Student introduction presentations of prior work
Reading: Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method*, excerpt

3. Week

- Sept 7, 2017: Cross-overs: Humanities
Reading: N. Katherine Hayles, *How we read*.
In: N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Think*
Individual project workshop

4. Week

- Sept 14, 2017: Cross-overs: Sciences
Reading: Gaston Bachelard, *Non-Cartesian Epistemology*.
In: Gaston Bachelard, *The New Scientific Spirit*.
Individual project workshop

5. Week

- Sept 21, 2017: Presentation of student research interests and semester projects

6. Week

- Sept 28, 2017: Cross-overs: Critical Making
Reading: Matt Ratto, *Critical Making: Conceptual and Material Studies in Technology and Social Life*
Individual project workshop

7. Week

- Oct 5, 2017: Artist methodologies
Reading: Andrew Hugill, *Pataphysics*
Individual project workshop

8. Week

- Oct 12, 2017: Making the world perceivable: Translation
Reading: Hankins/Silverman, *Science since Babel*.
Individual project workshop

9. Week

- Oct 19, 2017: Data, Knowledge, and Memory
Reading: Diana Taylor, "Memory as Cultural Practice," in D. Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*.
Individual project workshop

10. Week

- Oct 26, 2017: Project as process
Reading: Sheringham, *Configuring the Everyday*
Presentation and discussion of paper concepts

11. Week

- Nov 2, 2017: Art as activism
Reading: Rita Raley, *Speculative Capital*, excerpt.
In: Rita Raley, *Tactical Media*
Individual project workshop

12. Week

- Nov 9, 2017: Individual project workshop and peer review
Paper drafts due

13. Week

- Nov 16, 2017: Individual project workshop and peer review

14. Week

- Nov 23, 2017: Thanksgiving

15. Week

- Nov 30, 2017: Presentation of final projects
Final papers due
Discussion and peer review
Class round-up

Missing an Exam, Incompletes:

The grading of this course is based mainly on the projects completed and presented throughout the class (see the grading section). There are no particular mid-term or final exams but the presentation of the projects on the scheduled dates plays the same role and is mandatory along with peer reviews. The only acceptable excuses for missing a presentation or taking an incomplete in the course are personal illnesses or a family emergency. Incompletes may only be given after the twelfth week of classes. Students must inform the professor before the project presentation and present verifiable evidence in order for a make-up to be scheduled. Students who wish to take incompletes must also present documentation of the problem to the instructor before final grades are due.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>

PLEASE NOTE:

FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX