Workshop in Multimedia Authoring
The Web, Digital Media, and Creative Culture

Fall Semester 2010
Location: Taper Hall B4
Time: Tuesdays, 4:00 pm – 5:50 pm
Open to all undergraduate students
Class Portal: http://iml.usc.edu/index.php/iml-portal

Professor: Evan Hughes
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Office: EGG / IML 207

This syllabus is a draft and will be revised for the Fall 2010 semester. Projects and due dates will remain the same.

Course Description

Journalists and cultural theorists are calling young adults today "The New Creative Class", in part because The Web has become a tool for both professional development and a platform to express our personal identities. What does this mean to students starting their academic careers and preparing to enter the work force? How does growing up in an environment immersed in media, technology, and web-based social networks make you different from college grads before you? What do you need to know to use the “Creative Class” moniker to your advantage? The purpose of this course is twofold: the first is to participate in a scholarly discussion about the Web’s role in our culture, and second: to use the web to produce and showcase our points of view. This class will give students hands-on experience with a wide range of multimedia authoring tools of and provide a framework to critically engage with the web as both a technology and cultural product.
REQUIRED READING

• All readings are either provided as a URL or posted on the course Wiki

RECOMMENDED READING


GRADING BREAKDOWN

Assignment 1: Video Portrait 15%
Assignment 2: “Prezimercial” 15%
Final Project (part 1): Remix Video 15%
Final Project (part 2): Digital Portfolio 15%
Final Project (part 3): Blog Assignments 10%
Attendance & Participation 10%
End of Semester Synthesis Questions 10%

SOFTWARE PROFICIENCY

In order to participate fully in lab activities, students are expected to develop sufficient skills for working in the software assigned to the course, and it is vital that students keep up with the exercises and skills as the semester advances. While technical skills will be developed and honed during workshop time, students are encouraged to continue their learning and practice with the software outside the workshop as much as possible.

Note that the software proficiency expectations point to the minimum skills that are required to complete the assigned exercises and projects. The lab assistants, however, are equipped to provide help with multimedia resources above and beyond these minimum requirements, and students are free to take advantage of this expertise if they are interested in learning more advanced features or programs.
WORKSHOP SECTIONS

The workshop sections are designed to give students hands-on skills in multimedia authorship for effective audio-visual expression and presentation. The workshop will focus on developing skills in these specific core media literacies:

DIGITAL LITERACY, which refers to a proficiency with basic tools of digital authoring and an understanding of storage, backup, compression, file types, naming conventions, etc.

NETWORK LITERACY, which refers to the ability to use network-based software for sophisticated participation in online communities.

DESIGN LITERACY, which refers to the ability to use appropriate design principles in service of critical goals, as well as the ability to control and articulate the relationship between form and content.

ARGUMENTATION, which refers to the ability to use multimedia to develop and express a persuasive thesis and the effective use of evidence and complex thinking in constructing an argument.

RESEARCH LITERACY, which refers to the ability to perform effective, critical online research; knowledge of academically appropriate protocols for selection, citation and attribution of electronic source materials; and knowledge of fair use and copyright issues.

The weekly workshop sessions are designed to supplement several courses in anthropology by exploring the scholarly affordances of multimedia within the inquiry of material cultures. The goals of this workshop are for students to integrate the literacies noted above with foundational anthropologic principles.

The various assignments for this class will provide students with the experience of authoring multimedia. Students will create multimedia projects, analyzing the formal components of media, contextualizing media within cultural and historical frameworks, and authoring media in a collaborative learning environment. Students will develop a variety of technical skills and competencies within this context.

Throughout the semester, students will use social software and networked communication technologies as collaborative tools for the collective generation and dissemination of teaching materials and resources. The class will create a wiki to which content will be posted throughout the semester.
CLASS PROJECTS

ASSIGNMENT #1: CHARACTER STUDY VIDEO
Each student will produce a short 2-3 minute video that documents the life of another person. The goal of this assignment is to think through the issues and complexities of representation in a non-fiction context. Better videos will express the subjectivity of the protagonist and at the same time express the point of view of its producer in terms of aesthetic choices and stylistic considerations.

ASSIGNMENT 2: PREZIMERCIAL
Each student will produce a “commercial” for a concept discussed in class using Prezi, a Flash-based presentation application. The presentation will be well-designed, clear and well-argued, and have a creative approach. Topics for the Prezimercial will be decided by students and are expected to be well-researched and use the design principles discussed in class. The presentations will ultimately be converted into Quicktime videos and incorporated into the digital portfolios.

ASSIGNMENT 3: REMIX VIDEO
Each student will produce a “remix” or “mash-up” video using found material from the web or other sources to construct his/her point of view about a specific topic or text. Remix videos must have a clear narrative and use methods discussed in class to construct cogent visual argument through editing.

ASSIGNMENT 4: DIGITAL PORTFOLIO
Each student will produce a web-based digital portfolio to house the projects created in this course. Although this class will not teach web-authoring code, we will explore ways to customize template-based web-tools through the “back end” to create a unique expression of your vision.

HOMEWORK: BLOG POSTS
Throughout the class students will be expected to post to the course Wiki and Blog, textually, graphically, and using video. The instructor will post general questions about the readings and students must post answers before each class session to receive credit for the final course grade.
EVALUATION

Each IML-140 assignment will contain project evaluation guidelines clearly indicating what is expected for the assignment and how each component of the assignment will be evaluated. In general, you will be graded on these elements:

CONCEPTUAL CORE

- Is the project’s thesis clearly articulated?
- Is the project productively aligned with one or more of the multimedia genres outlined in lab?
- Does the project effectively engage with the primary issues presented in the assignment?

RESEARCH COMPETENCE

- Does the project display evidence of substantial research and thoughtful engagement with its subject?
- Does the project use a variety of types of sources (i.e., not just websites)?
- Does the project deploy more than one approach to its topic?

FORM AND CONTENT

- Do structural and formal elements of the project reinforce the conceptual core in a productive way?
- Are design decisions deliberate and controlled?
- Is the effectiveness of the project uncompromised by technical problems?

CREATIVE REALIZATION

- Does the project approach its subject in creative or innovative ways?
- Does the project use media and design principles effectively?
- Does this project achieve significant goals that could not have been realized on paper?
POLICIES

FAIR USE AND CITATION GUIDELINES
We assert that all IML course work is covered under Fair Use, since it’s educational in nature. All projects must 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 within the project or as a separate document, as appropriate to your assignment. The style we use is APA 5th edition and you may refer to these guidelines:
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

ACADEMIC HONESTY
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/.

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 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.
WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

Discussion:
Course overview

Read:
"Web Literacy", first paragraph, pg 409

WEEK 2: THE WEB AS A PERSONAL AND SCHOLARLY TOOL

Discussion:
What is media literacy?
Presenting with media (examples)
The web as a scholarly tool (USC journals)
Who is the “YouTube Generation”?

Production:
Portal Registration
Video blog
Equipment checkout and camera
Editing I

Assignment: Video Portrait (due week 5)

WEEK 3: THE WEB AND IDENTITY POLITICS

Discussion:
Web-based autobiography (screening examples)
Design and thinking visually

Production:
Video production on a PC: Adobe CS4 (narrative, camera, editing)

WEEK 4: FILM GRAMMAR: INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES & CAMERA TECHNIQUE
IML 140 – WORKSHOP IN MULTIMEDIA AUTHORING

Discussion:

Screen Interview examples
Pre-production and the "pitch"; equipment basics; understanding film form

Production:

Camera check out

WEEK 5: REMIX: USING FOUND MATERIAL TO CONSTRUCT AN ARGUMENT

Discussion:

Screen video portraits
Slash Fiction; remix and mash-up examples
Meaning through juxtaposition and the "remix" video, Copyright and Fair Use

Production:

Online Tools for Media Production

Assignment 2: remix video (due week 7)

WEEK 6: SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE WEB

Discussion:

Screen video portraits
The web and our networked culture (web 2.0)
Social media for research: de.li.cious, Zotero, Pool

Production:

Media resources from the web (downloading video, audio, screen grabs, etc.)

WEEK 7: REGULATING DIGITAL CONTENT AND MEDIA PRODUCTION ON THE WEB

Discussion:

Copyright and Fair Use
IML 140 – WORKSHOP IN MULTIMEDIA AUTHORING

How to incorporate found material into your argument

Production:

Prezi: Flash-based presentation application

Assignment 3: “Prezi-mercial” (due week 9)

WEEK 8: POWERPOINT ALTERNATIVES: PREZI, VUVOX

Discussion:

Presentation and design strategies

Screen Adobe After Effects Commercials (using text and graphics in dynamic ways)

Production:

Turning Prezi presentations into Quicktime videos

Recording Narration

WEEK 9: SUBVERTING SOFTWARE

Discussion:

Screen Prezimercials

The logic of software subversion: getting what you want out of an application

Production:

Intro to Weebly and template driven Web editor applications

WEEK 10: BREAKING TEMPLATE DRIVEN WEB DESIGN

Discussion:

Guest Speaker, subverting the template in Weebly (HTML & CSS)

Production:

Weebly’s “back end”

Assignment 4: digital portfolio (due week 15)

WEEK 11: STORYBOARDING THE DIGITAL PORTFOLIO

Discussion:

VuVox for digital portfolio
IML 140 – WORKSHOP IN MULTIMEDIA AUTHORING

Production:

VuVox design and image editing lab

WEEK 12: MEDIA CONVERGENCE AND MOBILE DEVICES

Discussion:

Screen VuVox Collage

Production:

Digital portfolio production time

WEEK 13: DIGITAL PORTFOLIO

Discussion:

Portfolio work in progress

Feedback and production time

WEEK 14

THANKSGIVING WEEK – NO CLASS

WEEK 15: DIGITAL PORTFOLIO PRESENTATIONS

Final portfolio presentations

End of semester synthesis questions

FINALS WEEK: NO CLASS