ITP-211: Power-Tools for Visual Communication

Course   **Power-Tools for Visual Communication**
http://blackboard.usc.edu

2 Units

Lecture/Lab   Monday: 3:30 PM - 4:50 PM in **OHE-542**
Wednesday: 3:30 PM - 4:50 PM in **OHE-542**

Instructor   **Larry Jordan**
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Teaching Asst.   **Annabelle Lau**
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Office Hours   **Monday** and **Wednesday**, from 2 PM to 3:15 PM
            Location: OHE-330C

Open Labs   OHE-540 and OHE-542
            Fridays - times to be posted after semester starts.

Summary   In a world where videos move millions and a picture is more powerful - and popular - than the written word, a key survival skill in college and into future careers is how well you communicate visually.

The leaders of tomorrow need to know the power tools of visual communication today and how to use them to influence and persuade others.

From creating images to posting videos on YouTube, your ability to effectively communicate your ideas depends, in large part, on your ability to master visual communication.

In this course, you will learn how to use software in three key areas of visual communication to create and communicate your ideas:

- Still images
- Motion Graphics
- Audio and Video Editing

Not all of us can be artists, but all of us *can* improve our visual communication skills.

Objective The purpose of this course is to learn the creative, technical and communication skills necessary to produce compelling messages, images and videos.

This is not a theory class. This is a "get your hands dirty" class. It is not enough to "create." We need to create, communicate, suggest, persuade and convince - using still and moving images – all while meeting deadlines. These skills are necessary during college and *critical* later in business after graduation.

This course explores the use of professional-grade software to create 2D images, 2D graphics, motion graphics, visual effects and video. As well, students will learn how to properly compress video for high-quality web distribution.

During the course, students will create posters, motion graphics, and video projects centered around a theme of the student's own choosing.

Content Goals 1. To learn how to use professional tools of visual communication to create persuasive presentations and the importance of the call to action.

2. To learn the fundamentals of story-telling, structure and workflow and the importance of the call to action.

3. To actually see, not just look at, what you are creating. To create work according to directions, not just what you think the directions should be.

Grading Grading is based on class participation, lab completion, assignments and tests.

Here's the breakdown of assignments and points:

	Qty	Pts Each	Total Pts	% of Grade
Labs	14	25	350	54%
Assignments	3	50	150	23%
Mid-Term Exam	1	50	50	8%
Final Exam	1	100	100	15%
Total points			*650*	*100%*

Final course marks are determined by standard formulas:

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	88-89%
B	82-87%
B-	80-81%
C+	78-79%
C	72-77%
C-	70-71%
D+	68-69%
D	62-67%
D-	60-61%
F	59% or below

Secrets to Success
1. Read the instructions *before* doing the work!
2. Do the labs at the end of class, don't wait to do them later.
3. Practice seeing what's *actually* on the screen, not what you *expect* to see! (Proof-read and review your work.)

Class Policies

Students are expected to:
- Attend and participate in class discussions and labs; asking questions is encouraged!
- Complete weekly labs and assignments on time
- Complete all tests
- Complete assignments and projects on time

Assignments

It is the responsibility of the student to make sure projects and assignments are turned in on time. Make sure you follow the procedures outlined in each assignment or project. All assignments will be uploaded by students through Blackboard. Some assignments will be turned in on paper.

There is an **automatic 10% deduction** of the total possible points for any lab or assignment posted after the deadline, unless prior arrangements have been made.

IMPORTANT!

All labs and assignments must be submitted via Blackboard in order to be graded. Emailed labs, assignments or projects will not count.

ITP Labs

Before logging onto an ITP computer, students must ensure that they have emailed or saved projects created during the class or lab session. Any work not saved will be erased after restarting the computer. ITP is not responsible for any work lost.

	ITP offers Open Lab use for all students enrolled in ITP classes. These open labs are held beginning the second week of classes through the last week of classes. Please contact your instructor for specific times and days for the current semester.
Academic Integrity	The use of unauthorized material, communication with fellow students during an examination, attempting to benefit from the work of another student, and similar behavior that defeats the intent of an examination or other class work is unacceptable to the University. It is often difficult to distinguish between a culpable act and inadvertent behavior resulting from the nervous tension accompanying examinations. When the professor determines that a violation has occurred, appropriate action, as determined by the instructor, will be taken.
	Although working together is encouraged, all work claimed as yours must, in fact, be your own effort. Students who plagiarize the work of other students will receive zero points and possibly be referred to Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (SJACS).
	All students should read, understand, and abide by the University Student Conduct Code available at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/nonacademicreview.html.
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 as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU301 and is open 8:30 AM – 5 PM, Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.
Required Texts	While there are no required texts, because the span of software we are covering is too broad, the suggested readings below can be an aid in understanding the material covered in this course.

Suggested Readings

Relevant training on Lynda.com

Relevant training on LarryJordan.com

In The Blink of an Eye (2 Revised Edition)
Walter Murch
Silman-James - 2001

The ITP department will provide all students with a USB flash drive on the second day of class that will contain media used throughout the course. Students will be required to bring a Flash memory drive or a portable hard drive to **all classes**.

Labs

Weekly labs focus on understanding technology and reinforce the material covered in that week's class. All labs are due one week after they are assigned.

However, it is *strongly* urged that students complete each week's lab in the lab time at the end of each class, so that they can practice the material while the lesson is still fresh.

All labs are critiqued by the professor, so that students can learn from their mistakes and improve during the course of the class.

Assignments

Unlike labs, assignments focus on creativity. There are three assignments during the course:

- Poster with an image
- Motion Graphics video
- Video commercial

Students select the topic and the content. All assignments are personally critiqued by the professor to allow students to improve their work during the course of the semester.

Exams

There are two exams during the course: a mid-term and final. Exams consist of short-answer questions, completed in class.

Visual Communication Power-Tools
ITP-211 (2 units)

The purpose of a lab is to reinforce subjects taught in that day's lecture. Labs are designed to be completed at the end of a class. Assignments are designed to be completed outside of class, with an emphasis on creativity. There are two lectures each week.

COURSE OUTLINE

Lecture 1   Aug. 20   INTRODUCTION TO THIS COURSE
Course introduction – what we are doing this semester
Discuss goals and theme for semester
Discuss syllabus and assignments
Digital Media fundamentals and key terms
Workflow for creative digital projects
> *Non-graded quiz: "Help Me Get To Know You"*
> *Lab #1: Due at the start of Lecture 3*
> *Topic: Set goals for semester projects*

Lecture 2   Aug. 22   ADOBE PHOTOSHOP - INTRODUCTION
Issues of copyright and altering image
Introduction to Photoshop Interface
File Management
Basic photo and image manipulation techniques
Adjust Levels and Color
> *Thumb drives presented to students*
> *Prep for Lab #2*

Lecture 3   Aug. 27   ADOBE PHOTOSHOP - DESIGN, COLOR, TEXT, SHAPES
Basic design rules
Framing, balance, and composition techniques
The Color Wheel and gray-scale values
Use the power of fonts to convey emotion
Add and modify text and shadows
Work with shapes, paths and curves
> *Lab #2: Due at the start of Lecture 4*
> > *Topic: Images, text and shapes*

Lecture 4   Aug. 29   ADOBE PHOTOSHOP - LAYERS, SELECTIONS & MASKS
Layers, selections and masks in compositing
Understand layers
Use selection tools to create selections
Use selections to create masks
> *Lab #3: Due at the start of Lecture 5*
> > *Topic: Layers, selections and masks*

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LABOR DAY
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Lecture 5   Sept. 5   ADOBE PHOTOSHOP - BLEND MODES AND FILTERS
Explain and illustrate blend modes
Apply filters to images and/or selections
Explore the Filter Gallery
Automate image processing with Actions
> *Lab #4: Due at the start of Lecture 6*
>> *Topic: Filters and blend modes*

Lecture 6   Sept. 10   ADOBE PHOTOSHOP - IMAGE REPAIR & COOL TOOLS
Repair damaged images
Patch, content-aware fill and move
Puppet warp
Perspective warp
> *Lab #5: Due at the start of Lecture 8*
>> *Topic: Image repair*

Lecture 7   Sept. 12   ADOBE PHOTOSHOP - REVIEW AND WORKSHOP
Review key Photoshop terms and concepts
> *Work on any incomplete labs*
> *Work on Assignment #1*

Lecture 8   Sept. 17   PRE-PRODUCTION AND AUDIENCE CONTROL
Define story and story-telling
How to plan
Balancing technology with story.
Storyboarding
Control where the eye looks
The Importance of the Call to Action
> ***Assignment #1: Poster due 9/17***
> *Lab #6: Due at the end of class*
>> *Topic: Storyboard a dramatic scene*

Lecture 9   Sept. 19   VIDEO PRODUCTION
The importance of emotion, reactions, and breathing
Basics of camera angles, placement, and framing
Discuss composition and framing
Basics of lighting
Basics of production audio
> *No Lab*

Lecture 10   Sept. 24   VIDEO COMPRESSION - APPLE COMPRESSOR
Fundamentals of video compression
Optimum settings for video compression
Compressing video for the web
Prep for Lab #7
Topic: Create a compressed video file

Lecture 11   Sept. 26   VIDEO COMPRESSION - ADOBE MEDIA ENCODER
Fundamentals of video compression
Optimum settings for video compression
Compressing video for the web
Lab #7: Due at the start of Lecture 12
Topic: Create a compressed video file

Lecture 12   Oct. 1   APPLE MOTION - Introduction to Motion Graphics
Key terms and definitions
Explore the Motion interface
Make objects move
Add, style and animate text
MID-TERM - 10/1 - Covering Lectures 1 - 11

Lecture 13   Oct. 3   APPLE MOTION - Deeper in Motion
The Inspector
Compositing - add and adjust filters
Drawing tools
Lab #8: Due at the start of Lecture 14
Topic: Create a simple motion graphic

Lecture 14   *Oct. 8*   APPLE MOTION - Media, Paths and Masks
Import audio and video media
Video Behaviors and Filters
Animate using keyframes
Create Paths and Masks

Lecture 15   Oct. 10   APPLE MOTION - Particles, Replicators and Parameters
Create and modify a particle system
Create and modify a replication system
Animate using Parameter Behaviors
Lab #9: Due at the start of Lecture 16
Topic: Create a promo using audio & video

Lecture 16   Oct. 15   APPLE MOTION - Explore 3D Space
Move and position elements in 3D space
Add and modify lights, cameras
Set design and moving cameras between sets

Lecture 17 Oct. 17 APPLE MOTION - Review
            Particle systems
            Replicator systems
            Working with filters and blend modes
            Compositing techniques
            Creating an effect for Final Cut Pro X
            Export and compression
               Lab #10: Due at the start of Lecture 18
                  Topic: Animate stills, video and audio

Lecture 18 Oct. 22 APPLE FINAL CUT PRO X - INTRODUCTION
            Introduction to video editing
            A 12-step workflow to make you more efficient
            Media management and organization
            Media import and clip preview
            Favorite, Keywords and viewing clips
               Assignment 2: Motion Graphics project due 10/22

Lecture 19 Oct. 24 APPLE FINAL CUT PRO X - EDIT and TRIM
            Reviewing clips
            Edit and trim a basic story
               Lab #11: Due at the start of Lecture 20
                  Topic: Edit a documentary scene

Lecture 20 Oct. 29 APPLE FINAL CUT PRO X - AUDIO
            Audio, sample rates, and human hearing
            How to add, edit, and mix audio
            Working with sound effects and music
            Adding transitions

Lecture 21 Oct. 31 APPLE FINAL CUT PRO X - STORY-TELLING
            Improve story-telling through trimming
            The story of "John and Martha"
            The importance of reaction shots
            A closer look at lighting
               Lab #12: Due at the start of Lecture 22
                  Topic: Edit a dramatic scene with audio

Lecture 22 Nov. 5 APPLE FINAL CUT PRO X - EFFECTS
            Text and Generator effects
            Inspector effects
            Effects Browser effects
               Lab #13: Due at the start of Lecture 24
                  Topic: Edit an effects scene

Lecture 23   Nov. 7   APPLE FINAL CUT PRO X - COLOR CORRECTION
                            Explain color in video
                            How to use video scopes
                            How to fix color problems
                            How to create dramatic color "looks"
                                  No lab

Lecture 24   Nov. 12   ADOBE AUDITION CC: AUDIO EDITING
                            The role of audio and audio sweetening
                            Audition workflow and interface
                            Audio editing

Lecture 25   Nov. 14   ADOBE AUDITION CC: AUDIO MIXING
                            How to add, edit, and mix dialog, music & effects
                            Editing and mixing a short documentary
                                  Lab #14: Audio mixing lab due by Lecture 26
                                        Topic: Audio mix a documentary scene

Lecture 26   Nov. 19   OPEN LAB DAY
                            Work on anything you need to work on.

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THANKSGIVING BREAK
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Lecture 27   Nov. 26   Open Lab

Lecture 28   Nov. 28   HOW TO FIND AND GET A JOB
                            Larry's philosophy of how to market yourself,
                            find a job, master the interview and land a good job.
                            Assignment 3: 30-second video commercial due 11/28

                Nov. 30   **Any unsubmitted class materials due by 5 p.m.**

                [TBA]   **FINAL EXAM** - 2 - 4 PM
                                  Covers Lectures 11 - 25
                                  Short-answer questions

                            IN-CLASS SHARING OF ALL STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS
                            Students present and discuss their assignments in class
                            Presentations are not graded, but are critiqued.