Communication 356 (Section 1):

Motion Graphics

Spring 2017
Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00-10:50am in CAC 301 (computer lab)
Course website: D2L
Instructor: Alex Ingersoll - alex.ingersoll@uwsp.edu
Office Hours: (CAC 309) Mon & Wed 9:15-10:15am

Course Objectives[i]

"Good design is a lot like clear thinking made visual."
        -Edward Tufte

This media production course introduces students to the intersection of graphic and interaction design by focusing on a range of design principles and software skills. We will refine our techniques for vector animation, digital compositing, and basic interactivity by focusing on a range of applications including motion title graphics, information design and visualization, and dynamic animation. As a result, we will cover the basics of motion perception, depth and scale perception, and the principles of strong graphic design. Projects throughout the semester will require students to craft a nuanced approach to the production process including concept research, sketches, storyboards, and final presentations and critiques. Through this course, students will utilize industry-standard applications such as Adobe After Effects, Photoshop, and Illustrator to create technical visual effects in broadcast design, film titles, infographics, and other forms of motion graphic design. This workshop will enable students to research, analyze, interpret, and question motion graphics methodologies through the process of creative problem solving and visual communication.

Required Materials
- *After Effects CC Essential Training (2015),* Lynda.com
- Other course readings available on D2L.
- An <u>external hard drive</u> (NOT a flash drive) and a camera memory card.

Communication
Due to the collaborative nature of media production and the limited time available to complete each project, effective communication among all classmates and the instructor is CRITICAL. I will often send emails to the class through your UWSP account or D2L. You will need to have and regularly check an active UWSP email account. Much of the work in the course is geared toward group coordination and therefore necessitates a willingness to cooperate. This course requires each student to commit to the success of every other student's project at each step of the production process.

Lab & Equipment
You are responsible for knowing and adhering to all Lab Policies and you are responsible for all equipment you check out. Failure to abide by the rules of the equipment check-out room, besides being inconsiderate to your fellow classmates or staff, may affect your borrowing privileges. A final grade for this course will not be issued until any and all equipment you have checked out or have made complete

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[i] This syllabus is subject to change as my opinions change and evolve, especially with your help and guidance.

arrangements for replacement restitution. <u>Please remember to always be respectful and courteous to the staff members.</u>

If you are still enrolled in this course on the ninth day of the semester, a $25 rental fee will be charged to your student account. Paying this fee allows you to access production equipment (cameras, tripods, light kits, etc.) available for checkout through the IT Help Desk.

Evaluation

Your final grade in this course is a composite of the different projects listed below. Detailed explanations of each assignment will be given in class at the appropriate times. <u>Late work will not be accepted past the assigned due date</u>. All work will be collected at the beginning of class unless stated otherwise. All projects turned in on flash drives or online filesharing (in Quicktime .mov format) must be clearly labeled with your name, the project number, and the title of the project (if applicable) with the file name itself.

Category	Total	Due
(1) Photoshop/Illustrator Project	10%	2/16
(2) Broadcast Graphics Project	10%	3/9
(3) Titles/Credits Project	10%	3/16
(4) Green Screen Compositing Project	15%	4/11
(5) Motion Infographics Project	15%	4/27
(6) Final Motion Graphics Project	25%	5/11
Participation/Write-ups/Idea Labs	15%	

Grade Breakdown

A (100-93.5%)   A- (93.4-89.5%) B+ (89.4-86.5%) B (86.4-83.5%)   B- (83.4-79.5%) C+ (79.4-76.5%)
C (76.4-73.5%)   C- (73.4-69.5%) D+ (69.4-66.5%) D (66.4-59.5%)   F (<59.4%)

Evaluation Cont.

Since the success of this class depends upon your presence in class, it is expected that you will come to <u>every class on time and ready to engage in the day's materials</u>. Students who attend every single meeting will see their diligence reflected both in their participation grade, and most likely, in the quality of their work. For an absence to be considered excused, you <u>must</u> present University-approved documentation. Your second and third unexcused absences will result in <u>1 full letter grade</u> deduction from your participation grade. Your fourth will result in 1 full letter grade deducted from your <u>overall</u> grade. <u>Lateness of more than ten minutes will count as 1/2 of an absence.</u> (Repeated lateness of less than ten minutes will also add up to an absence, at my discretion). **If you have five unexcused absences, you will fail the course**. If you do miss a class, please be sure to check with me and/or your classmates for what you missed and make sure you receive any assignments, handouts, etc.

Some production work will happen during class time using lab equipment. When working outside of class *be sure to make arrangements that includes full participation by your group members*. You will be responsible for extra lab work that must occur outside of class, whether in CAC or the library. When working on lab projects, you will be expected to pull your weight and participate in each aspect of the production process. At the conclusion of the production cycle we will hold a brief in-lab "critique" in which groups will share and respond constructively to each other's work.

Again, this course focuses on media production as a collaborative process. Creating an environment of mutual respect is *paramount* to successful work. While difference of opinions and vigorous debate are

highly encouraged, you will be expected to refrain from using disparaging remarks (e.g., sexist, racist, homophobic language) in class, lab, or written work. **Finally, classes often include screenings of short films or clips from longer works. This material may challenge you as an audience member (or potentially offend) and I expect you to approach these materials in the spirit of the wider educational environment. The selection of these materials are intended to spark a healthy discussion and I expect mature and respectful interactions.**

Communicating with Me

The best way to talk to me is during my office hours. I am available over email but it may take me a day to respond. This means that you will need to ask questions about assignments more than 24 hours before they are due. If you are having problems completing the assignments, you need to communicate the issues with me at least 24 hours before the assignment is due so we may lay out alternative courses of action.

Computers, Procrastination & Murphy's Law[ii]

Late assignments will <u>not be accepted</u>. Please don't come to class without homework due to technical difficulties. (My computer crashed, printer ran out of ink, not enough batteries, etc.) Don't wait until the last minute to carry out your work. If you do, you will be rushed, your work will suffer and you won't have time to deal with the inevitable computer issues. Expect equipment to malfunction, batteries to run down, and hard drives to crash. ALWAYS make a redundant copy of your work. Save your media into a master directory on your external drive. REMEMBER to set the Final Cut Pro directory to your external drive <u>every time you launch it</u>.

Plagiarism and Copyright

If you plagiarize the work of others, you will fail the course. Please be aware of what plagiarism entails (http://www.plagiarism.org). Proper citation is REQUIRED for ALL sources, including information you use from Internet publications and sites. Also, remember that you CANNOT legally use someone else's music or art work UNLESS you get written permission from the copyright holder, or unless you purchase a license allowing you to use specific music or images. The only exception is if the work in question is in the public domain or explicitly states that you may use it free of charge. Everything and everyone MUST be cited in end credits. Any student caught plagiarizing will receive a grade of "F" for the class.

Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

UW-Stevens Point values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to success, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. Read more here: http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. Don't do it! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here: http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RIghtsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf

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[ii] The 4th law of thermodynamics: "Anything that can go wrong will go wrong."

Assistive Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, check here: http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/

Advice From Students in Previous Versions of the Course

At the end of every semester I ask my students to reflect on what they learned in the course and to give advice to students who will take this course in the future. Here is a small sample of the most common replies:

"STORYBOARDING WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE! Have fun, do work, and be as creative as possible."

"Start working early. Never underestimate how long something will take. Challenge yourself with your ideas."

"Motion graphics takes a lot more time than you would think, prepare accordingly!"

"Plan for things to go wrong. Remember Murphy's Law!"

"Allow for ample time for projects to render!"

Course Schedule

Week 1 - Introduction & Overview

Tue. 1/24	Introduction and course overview Review Advanced Lab (CAC 321)	
Thur. 1/26	Motion Design Basics	Read: Taylor Ch. 2 - Planning (D2L)

Week 2 - Photoshop, Motion Design, & Animation

Tue. 1/31	Motion Design Basics	Read: Taylor Ch. 3 - Composition (D2L)
Thur. 2/2	Adobe Photoshop in Motion Basics	Read: Taylor Ch. 4 - Animation (D2L) Assign: (1) Photoshop/ Illustrator Project

Week 3 - Illustrator & After Effects

Tue. 2/7	Introduce Illustrator	Read: Taylor Ch. 5 - Type (D2L)
Thur. 2/9	Introduce After Effects	Watch: Lynda Intro & Ch. 1

Week 4 - After Effects & Broadcast Graphics

Tue. 2/14	After Effects	Watch: Lynda Ch. 2 & 3
Thur. 2/16	After Effects Screen: (1) Photoshop Animation Projects	Watch: Lynda Ch. 4, 5, 7 Assign: (2) Broadcast Graphics Project DUE: (1) Photoshop Animation Project

Week 5 - Idea Lab A

Tue. 2/21	Idea Lab A.1	
Thur. 2/23	Idea Lab A.2	

Week 6 - Titles & Credits

Tue. 2/28	After Effects	Watch: Lynda Ch. 6, 8
Thur. 3/2	After Effects	Watch: Lynda Ch. 10, 15, 13 (optional) Assign: (3) Titles/Credits Project

Week 7 - Idea Lab B

Tue. 3/7	Idea Lab B.1	
Thur. 3/9	Idea Lab B.2 Screen: (2) Broadcast Graphics Projects	DUE: (2) Broadcast Graphics Project

Week 8 - Lab & Titles/Credits

Tue. 3/14	In-class editing	
Thur. 3/16	Screen: (3) Titles/Credits Projects	DUE: (3) Titles/Credits Project

Week 9 - Green Screen Compositing & Final Project

Tue. 3/28	Studio Green Screen	Watch: Lynda Ch. 11, 12, 14 Assign: (4) Green Screen Compositing Project
Thur. 3/30	In Class Discussion	Assign: (6) Final Motion Graphics Project

Week 10 - Idea Lab C

Tue. 4/4	Idea Lab C.1	
Thur. 4/6	Idea Lab C.2	

Week 11 - Green Screen Compositing & Motion Infographics

Tue. 4/11	Screen: (4) Green Screen Compositing Project	DUE: (4) Green Screen Compositing Project
Thur. 4/13	Infographics Discussion	Read: TBD Assign: (5) Motion Infographics Project

Week 12 - Idea Lab D

Tue. 4/18	Idea Lab D.1	DUE: Final Project Preproduction Materials
Thur. 4/20	Idea Lab D.2	

Week 13 - Works-in-Progress

Tue. 4/25	Present Final Project Works-in-Progress	DUE: Final Project Works-in-Progress
Thur. 4/27	Screen: (5) Motion Infographics Project	DUE: (5) Motion Infographics Project

Week 14 - Final Editing

Tue. 5/2	In-class editing	
Thur. 5/4	In-class editing	

Week 15 - Final Editing

Tue. 5/9	In-class editing	
Thur. 5/11	In-class editing	DUE: (6) Final Motion Graphics Project

Final Projects

Mon. 5/15 8:00am	Screen & Celebrate Final Projects!	