

VIST 305 : Visual Studies Studio II Spring 2016

Class Time: T,R 2:20pm - 4:50pm
Classroom: Langford Architecture Center, Building C, Room ARCC 306, 307
Instructors: Sherman Finch, Associate Professor

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Catalog Description (1-5). Credit 3.

Theory and practice of visual communication employing digital and conventional media; development of artistic concepts, proposal development and related implementation techniques.

Prerequisites: VIST 206; upper level classification in visualization.

Introduction to Vertical Studio

This is an open studio where students will be able to pitch their own projects. Students will choose one of the following tracks: Animation, Interactive Design, Graphic Design, and Visual Effects. After choosing a track students will pitch their projects to each other and form groups within their track. Each group will define individual and universal goals and deliverables with the professors and define them in a formal contract. All projects will be evaluated at predefined milestones, the content of which will be defined by the agreed upon contract.

Vertical Studio: Graphic, Interactivity and UX Design Track Description

This track allows students to explore multimodal storytelling through the lens of interactivity through a semester-long project. Beyond just telling a story, storytelling is a concept at the core of design in many areas, be it graphic design, product design, architectural design, etc. Students will have to carry out a substantive project that combines visual design, multimodality, interactivity and storytelling.

Recommended Texts

VIST305 Course-specific recommended texts

- Miller, C. H. (2004). *Digital storytelling: A creator's guide to interactive entertainment*. Taylor & Francis.

- Block, B. (2008) *The Visual Story*. Focal Press.
- Meadows, M (2015) *Pause & Effect: The Art of Interactive Narrative*
- Cooper, A (2014) *About Face: The Essentials of Interaction Design*
- Preece, J., Sharp, H., & Rogers, Y. (2015). *Interaction Design-beyond human-computer interaction*. John Wiley & Sons.

Vertical Studio general recommended texts

- Wheeler, A. (2015) *Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide, 4th Edition*.
- Bundelman, K. (2012) *Essential Elements for Brand Identity*. Rockport Press.
- William, L. (2003) *Universal principles of Design*. Rockport Press.
- Williams, R. (2012) *The Animator's Survival Kit*.

Course Objectives

- APPLICATION. Demonstrate knowledge of integrated design systems.
- APPLICATION. Apply time management skills during project development.
- ANALYSIS. Examine a variety of visual problem solving methods from thumbnails, sketching in personal journal, etc...
- ANALYSIS. Explore the development of projects, from initial concept through design development to the finished piece.
- SYNTHESIS. Appreciate the interconnection between materials; form, space; and movement.
- SYNTHESIS. Research and present a topic of interest related to the major project.
- APPLICATION. Demonstrate a professional, personal demeanor and work ethic.
- Produce a body of work that is strategically appropriate, effective, conceptually unique, creative and relative to your chosen field of study.
- Develop the ability to select and apply formal constructs of visual thinking which inform and communicate three-dimensional design.
- EVALUATION. Analyze, evaluate and apply the critique process as a means to strengthen personal work and work of peers.

Course Structures

This course will consist of both formal lecture and studio time. All studio time will be in Building C, Room ARCC 306, lectures will be in ARCC 307.

In this open studio students are free to choose their own projects within Graphic Design, Motion Graphics/VFX, and Interactive UX approaches, while learning the fundamentals of Digital Media Production. During the course students will create multiple projects within their chosen direction and work as teams to solve production challenges. Completing each exercise will greatly enhance the ability to successfully complete each project.

Computing

As required by the policies of the College of Architecture each student must possess a laptop with the minimum recommended performance specifications.

<http://archone.tamu.edu/College/Academics/Admissions/computing.html>

Your laptop will be your primary tool for completing your course work for this course.

Efficient use of your computing resources will require that you police the amount of data stored and that you perform regular backups of important material. Computing failures do happen and they tend to happen at the worst possible times. Protect yourself and your work.

Though you are working on a laptop and laptops are by their nature portable it is highly recommended that you work in the studio both during and between class hours. Your classmates are the greatest sources of both critical feedback and technical support. Be respectful, but also take advantage of the studio environment.

Grading Policy

Assessment criteria for group projects will include individual technical and artistic contributions, participation, peer assessment, and overall project success. Assessment criteria for individual projects will be based upon technical and artistic merit relative to the given criteria.

The instructor's qualitative judgment of the student's exercises, projects, and research will include such factors as preparation, conceptualization, technical application, documentation, and aesthetic effectiveness. The instructor's qualitative judgment of the student's in-class participation will include such factors as attendance, preparation, engagement, professional demeanor, and informed contribution to discussions and critique sessions.

Exercises: There will be eight exercises that students will be assigned throughout the semester that will collectively make up 30% of the final grade. Each exercise will have an accompanying defined grading policy.

Grading Breakdown

- Attendance - 10%
- Participation - 10%
- Exercises - 30%
- Projects - 50%

A's B's C's D's & F's Defined: Each project has three components that contribute to its success: aesthetic allure, technical accomplishment, and presentation. During in-class reviews a number grade from 0-100 will be assigned to the project based upon the level of achievement attained for each of the three components. A combined score of 90 and above indicates that the project excels in all three areas. A score of 80-89 indicates that the project excels in at least one area and meets the expectations of the other two components. A score of 70-79 indicates that the project meets expectations in at least two of the three components. A score of 60-69 indicates that a project has managed to meet expectations in only one area. A score of below 60 indicates that the project did not meet expectations in any area. A score of zero will be given when projects are not presented on time.

Late Work

Milestone presentations and exercises must be ready at the beginning of class.

Presentations will be handled on a case by case basis. Exercises are accepted late, but will be penalized. If turned in on the same day, the penalty is 5%. If turned in after the class period on the day due and by the beginning of the next class meeting the penalty is 10%. Each class period thereafter will result in another 10% penalty up to a maximum penalty of 30%, until the deadline for final grades at the end of the semester. Exercises that are not turned in by the final grade deadline will be given no credit.

Class Participation Grading Practice

As an aide to understanding the method by which your class participation is evaluated, read the following carefully. The actual grading criteria will be related to these categories but will be more specific to the given topic. The scores noted below are relative to a 100 point total.

- **F: 60 and below:** The student is consistently absent or significantly late to class; is rarely prepared for class; is rarely a willing participant or responsive to questions; consistently exhibits unprofessional and/or disruptive behavior; offers virtually no considered opinions, researched information, or constructive criticism.
- **D: 60 - 69:** The student is frequently absent or significantly late to class; is only occasionally prepared for class; is only occasionally a willing participant or responsive to questions; frequently exhibits unprofessional and/or disruptive behavior; only infrequently offers considered opinions, researched information, and constructive criticism.
- **C: 70 – 79:** The student is occasionally absent or significantly late to class; is inconsistently prepared for class; is sometimes a willing participant and responsive to questions; infrequently exhibits unprofessional and/or disruptive behavior; inconsistently offers considered opinions, researched information, and constructive criticism.
- **B: 80 – 89:** The student is rarely absent or significantly late to class; is consistently prepared for class; is frequently a willing participant and responsive to questions; almost never exhibits unprofessional and/or disruptive behavior; usually offers considered opinions, researched information, and constructive criticism.
- **A: 90 – 100:** The student is never absent without excuse or significantly late to class; is always very well prepared for class; is always a willing participant and responsive to questions; never exhibits unprofessional and/or disruptive behavior; always offers considered opinions, researched information, and constructive criticism.

Assignment Grading

As an aide to understanding the method by which your assignments are evaluated, read the following carefully. The actual grading criteria will be related to these categories but will be more specific to the given assignment. The scores noted below are relative to a 100 point assignment.

- **F: 60 and below:** The student work is unresolved; the intentions are unclear and major criteria or goals lack resolution; Presentation is incomplete and/or of poor quality; There is a complete lack of problem solving intent, artistic content and/or visual merit.
- **D: 60 - 69:** The work has problems in two or more major areas; Skill and problem development is marginal or incomplete; The project lacks imagination and/or design/artistic potential.

- **C: 70 – 79:** The student has completed the basic assignment, but the work lacks depth of understanding; Some aspects are not completely satisfied and the work contains little promise even though most issues have been addressed.
- **B: 80 – 89:** The student work shows imagination and potential; Presentation and visual content is good; The assignment requirements are fulfilled but in need of more refinement or development; There are no major issues that would require a total redesign of the project.
- **A: 90 – 100:** The student work has imagination and the response to the assignment show understanding and thought; The work is highly developed and well presented; The entire project shows depth and breadth and is well coordinated; The project potential has been achieved.

Projects

Student/Group will be assessed and graded at every **milestone**. There are 4 milestones and each milestone represents a different point in the Student/Group projects development. Each contract must achieve certain goals and outcomes that are set during milestones. With each contract there are universal and individual goals. All goals must be reached in the timeframe that they are indicated. If a goal is not met it will result in the student/group losing points on their grade and or other penalties. These goals can only be altered at milestones or with professors consent.

****Each team will have one website that outlines project and follows the progress of each team member. This Website will be counted against your Individual participation grade.**

Universal Goals: Are goals set by the professors based on the semester and apply to tracks and or all classes.

Individual Goals & Leaders: Are goals that are specific to each project and can be set by team leaders and professors. If any team has a senior, they will be the designated leader. If a team does not have a senior, then a junior will be the designated leader. Please make sure to check with your professor if you are unsure of any goal.

First Milestone (20% of Projects Grade):

- **Prototype:** 45%
- **Meeting group-defined goals:** 15%
- **Progress Presentation:** 15%
- **Milestone Demo:** 5%
- **Website:** 10%
- **Peer Evaluation:** 10%

Second Milestone (20% of Projects Grade):

- **Prototype:** 45%
- **Meeting group-defined goals:** 15%
- **Progress Presentation:** 15%

- **Milestone Demo:** 5%
- **Website:** 10%
- **Peer Evaluation:** 10%

Third Milestone (20% of Projects Grade):

- **Prototype:** 45%
- **Meeting group-defined goals:** 15%
- **Progress Presentation:** 15%
- **Milestone Demo:** 5%
- **Website:** 10%
- **Peer Evaluation:** 10%

Fourth Milestone, Final Project (40% of Projects Grade):

- **Final Prototype:** 45%
- **Meeting group-defined goals:** 15%
- **Final Progress Presentation:** 15%
- **Final Milestone Demo:** 5%
- **Website:** 10%
- **Peer Evaluation:** 10%

Sub Contracts:

These are small contracts that are created by a professor and can only be requested by team leaders. Sub contracts are created in case a team leader needs a skill that is not present in the existing group and is essential to the development of their project. Students from other teams may be subject to subcontracts if their contributions within their group are too narrow and or if they have a skill which is in great demand. Sub contracts are also in the case of VFX focus students, which serve as main contracts to their chosen projects.

Plagiarism

The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By "handouts," I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to the course notes, syllabi, exams, problems, in-class materials, review sheets, additional problem sets, and the contents of the class World Wide Web site. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission. For the contents of class World Wide Web sites, you have permission to make printouts strictly for your use in this class.

In this course, we want to encourage collaboration and the free interchange of ideas among students and in particular the discussion of homework assignments, approaches to solving them, etc. However, we do not allow plagiarism, which, as commonly defined, consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated.

If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the latest issue of the Texas A&M University Student Rules, under the section on Academic Misconduct.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Office of Support Services for Students with Disabilities in Room 126 of the Student Services Building. The phone number is 845-1637.

Academic Integrity Statements

AGGIE HONOR CODE “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.”

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work.

Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System.

For additional information please visit: www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/

Course Topics, Calendar of Activities, Major Assignment Dates

(Please Note: This schedule is subject to change depending on class, student contracts, tracks, etc..)

Week	Date	Deliverables	Class Activities	Exercises	Lectures	Groups
Week 1	1/19/2016		Course overview, meet & greet		Lecture 1 - Storytelling & Interactivity Lecture 2 - Track Breakdowns	All
	1/21/2016		Brainstorming exercises	Exercise 1 - Write abstract of ideas/concepts	Lecture 3 - UX overview and process	All
Week 2	1/26/2016	Individual Pitches	Develop pitches		Lecture 4 - Pitches Lecture 5 - Asset Management	All
	1/28/2016		Draft pitches Rehearsal for pitches	Exercise 2 - Break idea into parts (assets) and assign individual responsibilities		

				Exercise 3 - Create a timeline/schedule			
Week 3	2/2/2016	Milestone 1 - Completed pitch	Pitch to class	Set up website to help pitch and to track progress			
	2/4/2016		Form tracks & teams / Draft contracts				
Week 4	2/9/2016		Re assess project scope / project planning		Workshop: Foundations in front end and back end web	Soph, Junior	
	2/11/2016	Contracts	Work on project	Exercise 4 - Composition	Lecture 8 - Composition	Soph	
Week 5	2/16/2016			Changes to website based on team and scope			
	2/18/2016		Work on project	Exercise 5 - Color theory	Lecture 9 - Color	Soph	
Week 6	2/23/2016			Exercise 7 - Typography	Lecture 7 - Typography	Soph, Junior	
	2/25/2016		Work on project	Exercise 8 - Usability & user experience	Lecture 11 - Interaction design concepts I	All	
Week 7	3/2/2016			Exercise 9 - Affordances & metaphors	Lecture 12 - Interaction design concepts II	All	
	3/4/2016	Milestone 2 - Project first draft					
Week 8	3/8/2016	Spring Break					
	3/10/2016						
Week 9	3/15/2016			Exercise 10 - Animated type	Lecture 13 - Motion Graphics	All	
	3/17/2016		Work on project				
Week 10	3/22/2016			Exercise 11 - Designing an evaluation	Lecture 14 - User evaluation	All	

	3/24/2016		Work on project			
Week 11	3/29/2016		Production progress updates			
	3/31/2016	Milestone 3 - Production progress report				
Week 12	4/5/2016					
	4/7/2016		Work on project			
Week 13	4/12/2016		Work on project			
	4/14/2016		Work on project			
Week 14	4/19/2016	Milestone 4 - Final project presentation	Project presentation			
	4/21/2016				Wrap Up	