Digital Arts Communication 201
Designing Digital Images and Hypertext

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Course Mandate and Objectives:

Digital Arts Communication 201 teaches students to analyze and critique, design and produce, interactive interfaces using images, text, and hypertext. Specifically, students will learn an advanced design grammar while mastering key design principles. As part of their DAC Digital Portfolio, students will design and build a HTML5-based instructional module that will teach fellow student designers an important design concept of their choice. (Sample modules will be posted on LEARN).

To create your module, you will use a software program called Articulate Studio 13 Pro (and especially, two components, Presenter and Engage). The good news: this program requires no coding. You can download a free, fully functional trial version from


The bad news: the trial is only good for 30 days, so you need to plan your work accordingly (for example, you may not want to lose access in the final days of finishing your project).

Finally, Presenter and Engage works on any Windows platform. Mac and Linux users will need to find access to a Windows machine (or a dual-boot Mac) during the term or use one of the computers (to be announced) during operation hours (to be announced).

Adam Glover is your technical point person for all questions related to Engage. He can be reached at adamg@connect.uwaterloo.ca or at 33883 (or in his office in ECH 2102).

Course Organization:

This course consists of a series of lectures/discussions, tutorials and workshops, in-class exercises and in-class exams, covering the theory and practices of multimedia interface design. Below are definitions of the kinds of classes, their format and expectations:

1. Question-based Tutorials. As a prerequisite to attending these classes, you will be required to post a question or questions to UW LEARN (by Tuesday midnight before the Thursday class; this allows me to prepare answers in advance) based on the assigned readings. Your questions will be discussed during class, both by the instructor and by other students in attendance. Tutorials are designed to prepare you for the course exams and your final paper. Lurking (showing up without questions) is actively discouraged. The instructor may levy a 1% penalty from your final grade.
for doing so). For this reason, these classes (part of the class) are recommended rather than mandatory.

2. Lecture/Workshops. During workshops, you will learn either about 1. basic design grammar and principles or 2. how to work with personas, design with Presenter and Engage, or prepare for your module testing feedback sessions. These classes are highly recommended.

3. Module Feedback Session. On this day, you will be required to bring your module and test it with other students in class. Conversely, you will provide feedback to students so that they can improve their modules. Note: in your final essay, you will be required to explain what you learned from this feedback about your module, and what changes you made before submission. For this reason, the Module Feedback Session is mandatory.

4. Exams. During these days, you will write examinations based on your mastery of course concepts as applied to a target text (supplied in advance by the instructors). The exams are cumulative (material from past exams can show up on the current one) and therefore become longer in duration (see below). Exams are mandatory. Only a physician's note will permit you to postpone writing an exam to a later date.

Course Texts: Resources posted on LEARN.

Course Assignments:

1. 20% Exam 1 (2 hours)
2. 25% Exam 2 (3 hours)
3. 25% Instructional Module (Built in Presenter/Engage)
4. 15% Instructional Module Preparation materials (topic description module, module type, use scenario, and annotated bibliography; a module PowerPoint mockup)
5. 15% brief written analysis of your module

Main Assignment Descriptions:

Exams:
• Exam 1 will be held for 2 hours during class and will test your grasp of key concepts drawn from the Organizational Metafunction and key design principles.
• Exam 2 will be held for 3.0 hours during class and will test your grasp of key concepts and principles drawn from the Organizational, Orientation, and representational Metafunctions.
• For more information about the exams see course site

Assignments:
• The instructional module assignment involves the design and production of multimedia, interactive interface (using Presenter/Engage) that teaches a core design principle
• The Instructional Module Preparation Material includes the topic description, module type, use scenario, and annotated bibliography; plus the Powerpoint mockup of your module
• A short essay analyzing your work using the course concepts to elucidate and defend key design choices.
Marking of Final Assignments (Instructional Module, Module Preparation Materials, and Short Final Essay Assignments):

Assignments handed in on or before midnight of April 8th will receive comments and a grade. Assignments handed in after April 8th but on or before April 15th will receive a grade only. After April 15th assignments may not be graded and a 0 submitted in lieu of the outstanding assignments.

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

Other sources of information for students:
Academic Integrity website (Arts) Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo)