

DEI 613

Digital Media Design Solutions 1: Design Principles and Practice

Unofficial Syllabus – final copy to be distributed first day of class

Course Meetings: Tuesdays, 4:00 – 6:50 p.m., UW Stratford Campus

Professor: Marcel O'Gorman, Director, Critical Media Lab

Media Lab Instructor/Technician: Stephanie Koerne

Office: Hagey Hall 258, UW Main Campus

Critical Media Lab: 158 King Street West, Kitchener, Ontario

Prof's phone: 519.888.4567 x32946

e-mail: marcel@uwaterloo.ca

CML Web Site: <http://criticalmedia.uwaterloo.ca>

Office Hours: Fridays, 2:00-4:00 and by appointment

Required Texts:

White, Alexander W., *The Elements of Graphic Design: Space, Unity, Page Architecture, and Type*.

Additional readings will be provided in class and on the UW LEARN site.

Course Description

Some of the most innovative leaders in digital design are not working for IT companies or design agencies – they are digital artists, unhindered by the motives of profit and commercialization that drive the industry. This term, students will develop both their design skills and their creative abilities by approaching digital design not as tech entrepreneurs, but as digital artists and media philosophers. Students will complete key readings in media theory and cyberculture studies, and will embody what they have learned in creative digital designs. Working both individually and in groups, students will design projects that will have little commercialization potential, but which serve instead as evocative “objects-to-think-with.” The course will include readings in media theory and philosophy alongside studies of artworks that involve digital imaging, Flash animation, dynamic data visualization, human/computer performance, sensor-based interaction, digital/architectural projection, geolocation, critical digital gaming, and bioart. Students will receive in-class, hands-on instruction from Stephanie Koerne, Media Lab Instructor. The course will culminate in an exhibition at a Stratford gallery and/or the Critical Media Lab.

Official course description from the UW calendar:

In this course, you will explore the principles of digital designs in terms of their visual design components (space, line and shape, tone, colour, movement, and rhythm) and the functions they perform in various forms of digital content production (images, video and film, sound, and animation). You will receive hands-on training in digital image, video, and sound production by engaging in a complete production cycle from conceptualization, through to production and post-production. To situate their practices within the wider social, cultural, and economic contexts of digital design, you will also learn an explicit theoretical vocabulary for exploring, explaining, critiquing, and evaluating their design practices.

Assessment

- PowerPoint Slam (20%)
- Group Design Project with Individual Essay (40% + 20%)
- Blog/Artist's book (10%)
- Participation (10%)

PowerPoint Slam (20%)

Each student will prepare a powerpoint performance in the style of pecha-kucha, based on one of the course readings. Pecha-kucha involves 20 slides x 20 seconds each, usually with a live narrated voiceover. This exercise will be completed in lieu of a seminar-style presentation, which is usually expected of grad students. Students will submit their slideshow and a script of the voiceover as part of this assignment.

Group Design Project with Individual Essay (40% + 20%)

Students will work in groups of 3 or 4 to complete a design project that incorporates course readings with digital design strategies exemplified by the digital artwork studied in class. In essence, each group will create an “object-to-think-with” that embodies philosophical concepts about technology. These “objects” might range from a live data visualization app to a sensor-based, interactive performance. Additional details will be provided in class.

In addition to the group work, students will complete INDIVIDUAL essays, for which they will be graded INDIVIDUALLY. The essay, which should be written for a general audience and not “for the professor,” will serve as a lucid explanation of the project. In preparation for writing the essay, students should ask themselves the following questions: How was the project created? What are the technical specifications of the project? How was it received by the audience? How does the project reflect and/or embody course readings? The evaluation will be based on the technical precision of the writing, the quality of documentation, and the application of course readings.

Blog / Artist's Book (10%)

Each group of students will keep a blog of their activities both as individuals and as a group. The blog should be used to comment on course readings and document projects. But it should also serve as an “artist’s book” where students sketch out ideas, discuss interesting projects or technologies that are relevant to their work, and comment on the work of other students. While the blog is a group activity, each student will be graded INDIVIDUALLY based on the quantity and quality of posts.

Participation (10%)

Students are expected and arrive on time, attend all classes, and actively engage their colleagues in seminar discussions. In addition, students will be expected to complete in-class workshops, which also count toward the participation grade. Finally, students will be graded on their participation in group work, as assessed by their peers.

General UW Course Policies

Cross-listed course:

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity:

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, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>.

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, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>.

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, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>.

Academic Integrity website (Arts):

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

If you are using Turnitin in your course:

Turnitin.com: Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course.

Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. See: <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/Turnitin/index.html> for more information.