Experimental 3D Animation|Spring 2013| ASTU 3460

Professor: Morehshin Allahyari
Email: ma0349@unt.edu
Class Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 AM - 2 PM
Class Location: Curry Hall, Room #306
Office Hours: (email me for an appointment)
Office Location: Oak Street Hall, #223
Class Website: http://www.morehshin.com/spring13x3danimation/

Course Overview

This course introduces 3D animation with a focus on conceptual and creative methods using Maya software as the main tool. One of the major components of this course is to learn about important contemporary works of 3D animation while understanding and practicing a critical and historical approach to both the medium and its relevant software. The students in this class are expected to break from the commercial and dominant industry-entertainment practice of 3D animation and push toward a more creative and experimental approach to 3D animation, redefining and discovering the possibilities of the medium. Prerequisite(s) : ART 1200, 1440, 1450, 1500, 1510, ASTU 2450, 2460, 3450, or consent of instructor.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course students will:

• Think critically about 3D animation as well as Maya software.

• Acquire technical skills to use Maya.

• Have a knowledge of the works of some of the most important 3D animation artists/ projects.

• Complete 3 original projects exploring the visual and conceptual language of 3D animation.

Required Materials

<u>Books + Articles:</u> All the reading material will be availble on the class website in pdf format. Students will not need to purchase any books for this class.

<u>External Hard-Drive:</u> Students will need to purchase a hard-drive for this class. The hard drive must be 500 GB or bigger. Recommended brands are Lacie, Seagate, and G-Tech.

***Make sure you save and make a copy of your projects on your hard-drive. **Do Not** leave your projects on the lab computers without having a copy with you, as the files might get erased on the lab computers.

<u>Other Materials:</u> I suggest purchasing a sketchbook, headphones, and a flash/thumb drive if you don't already have them. Also, If you are going to use your laptop to work on your Maya projects, have a mouse to use with it (I don't recommend using your laptop's mousepad/touchpad).

Policies

<u>Projects:</u>
- There are three main individual projects for this course (in addition to smaller assignments).
- On studio workshop days (see the course outline chart for the dates), students **MUST** come to class with their in progress projects and hard-drives ready to work. If you come to class without the necessary tools to work, you will be considered **absent** for that session. If you have your own laptop and prefer to use that for your projects, bring it to class with you for the workshop days. You can not work from home on the studio workshop days and must be available in class during the whole 3 hours of our work days. Students must **meet the deadlines** for their projects. No late projects will be accepted. On Idea + concept days (see the course outline chart for the dates) students should bring notes, sketches, charts, and material that they have used to do research on the specific topic and concept that you are interested in for their project.

<u>Participation:</u>

- Participation in class discussions for readings, material that we watch in class, giving feedback to your peers on their work is **mandatory**. Remember that 30% of your grade is based on your participation in class and you are expected to actively participate in such discourses as they are some of the most important sections of our class.

- Sleeping in class, texting, and looking at your Facebook or any other activity unrelated to class will also have impact on your participation grade. You are responsible for the missing material if you fall asleep in class.

- On critique/presentation days you must be able to explain and give a clear presentation of your work, research, and concepts. If you have a hard time talking in front of a crowd or remembering your points, use a notebook, powerpoint, sketches or bullet points for your presentations.

- For certain readings that I will be assigning in this course you are required to post one paragraph response or a video with 4-5 sentences to our class blog. Those who simply summarize what they have read will not receive any points for their responses. You are asked to think critically and post something that questions, criticizes, endorses, and/or adds to the reading. I consider these small assignments as part of your class participation. <u>See the course outline chart for deadlines for these responses.</u>

<u>Attendance Policy:</u>
Students are expected to attend all class meetings on time. Lateness by more than **15 minutes** constitutes an absence. No more than three (3) absences are allowed to receive credit for the course. More than three absences will result in a grade of F. Any absence will result in the loss of 2 points from student's grade -1 for Attendance and -1 for Participation. **It is your responsibility to make up missed class material (don't ask me to repeat classes via email).**

Grading

Students will be evaluated on the basis of completed projects (70%), attendance and participation (30%). Projects will be graded on their timely completion (33%), originality in visual and conceptual approach (33%) and evidence of skill development, attention to detail and research (33%).

Point totals are as follows:
First Project: 15
Second Experiment: 15
Third Project: 15
Small Assignments: 15
Presentation: 10
Attendance + Participation: 30
Total= 100 points possible. Scale: A=90, B=80, C=70, D=60, F=59.

Plagiarism

Projects that you submit in the class should be your own work. You will receive a grade of F if your work is discovered to be plagiarism. A report will be send to the dean of the students for further actions.

*** I have a serious problem with abusing the "creative common" or the "remix manifesto" rules. I want to warn you that you will need to understand the difference between adopting and stealing an idea. I will put a grade of F for any project that falls in the "stealing" category. If you are too lazy to think critically, creatively, and to push for originality, this is not a right class for you.

Course Outline

Week 1	
T- Jan 15	Course Introduction /Overview of Syllabus
	Introductions (Instructor-Students)
	Definition of experimental and 3D
	Online Research/StoryBoard/Tutorials/3D animation Resources
	Blog Registration
R- Jan 17	Watching Work Presented by Students
	Due: Student acknowledgment + Release Form + Creating YouTube or Vimeo accounts + Installing Maya
Week 2	
T- Jan 22	Introduction to Maya (Basics - Modeling)- Learning Maya "Essential Skills"
	Class exercise: Movie Tutorials in Help ---> Learning Movies + Digital Tutors
	Due: Discuss Assembling Reality by Lev Manovich---> Post Reading Response on Class Blog
	Screen: Matthew Ritchie art 21
R- Jan 24	
	Introduction to lighting
	Screen works (modeling/lighting related)

Week 3 T- Jan 29 R- Jan 31	**First Assignment Due (modeling)** Introduction to rendering + texture + 2D vs. 3D **Due:** Digital Tutor Lighting **Due:** Discuss Theory: Under Fire: 3D Animation Pedagogy and Industry Complicity in New Media Education **Idea and Concept Day** **Due:** Ideas + Concepts for the first project (each student must come to class with sketches/storyboard/research notes/and concepts they are interested in) **Due:** Discuss Critical Response Process by Liz Lerman
Week 4 T- Feb 5 R- Feb 7	Screen Inspiration Videos Studio Workshop Day (Maya Problem Solving) Studio Workshop Day (Maya Problem Solving)
Week 5 T- Feb 12 R- Feb 14	**First Project Due** Critique Day ---> Student Presentation of first project Critique Day ---> Student Presentation of first project <Morehshin will be out of town for CAA>

Week 6 T- Feb 19	Keyframe Animation ; Timeline ; Graph Editor ; Playblast; Batch Rendering Class Exercise Screen: Related Videos Due: Discuss Time – India by Brian Smith: http://science.jrank.org/pages/8120/Time–India.html ---> Post Reading Response on Class Blog
R- Feb 21	**Second Assignment Due** **Due:** Animating Assignment **Due:** Digital Tutorials: Texturing + Animation Timeline + Animation Graph Editor Screen Inspiration Videos
Week 7 T- Feb 26	Show and Tell : Different Maya Components (Student Presentations) <Skill: Variable>
R- Feb 28	Show and Tell : Different Maya Components (Student Presentations) <Skill: Variable>
Week 8 T- Mar 5	**Idea and Concept Day** **Due:** Ideas + Concepts for the first project (each student must come to class with sketches/storyboard/research notes/and concepts they are interested in) **Due:** Discuss Theory: The Aesthetics of the Fake ---> Post Reading Response on Class Blog
R- Mar 7	Studio Workshop Day
Week 9 T- Mar 12 R- Mar 14	No Class---->Spring Break

Week 10 T- Mar 19 R- Mar 21	Studio Workshop Day **Due:** Discuss Lev Manovich: Image Future Studio Workshop Day
Week 11 T- Mar 26 R-Mar 28	**Second Project Due** Critique Day ---> Student Presentation Critique Day ---> Student Presentation
Week 12 T- Apr 2 R- Apr 4	 Guest Speaker-TBA Maya + Screen Inspiration Videos **Due** Ideas + Concepts for the final project (each student must come to class with sketches/Storyboard/research notes/and concepts they are interested in)
Week 13 T- Apr 9 R- Apr 11	 Maya (other components) + Final Tutorials Studio Workshop Week For Final Project
Week 14 T- Apr 16 R- Apr 18	 Studio Workshop Week For Final Project (Final Maya Problem Solving)
Week 15 T- Apr 23 R- Apr 25	 Rendering Week + Studio Work Week For Final Projects

Week 16	Final Project Due
T- Apr 30	Critique Day ---> Student Presentation of their Final Projects
R- May 2	Critique Day ---> Student Presentation of their Final Projects

Student Acknowledgement + Release form

I _____(print) acknowledge that I have read the course syllabus. I understand the course structure, grading and attendance policies as well as the risk factor rating. I hereby agree to the syllabus and its provisions.

_____

Course number and section   Risk Rating

_____

Student phone #, e-mail address (print)   Signature Date

_____

Faculty Name   Signature Date