

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT – DIGITAL MEDIA & DESIGN DEPARTMENT

DMD1000: Digital Foundation

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an intensive experience in designing for the digital arts. Students engage in a wide range of real-world projects in order to better understand the media and methodologies that form their foundation. Creating digital work is not so much about learning software, as it is about exploring new ways to share and communicate information. It is also as much about thinking and imagination as about doing. As creative producers of content students need to understand the effective uses of communication media and the ways in which information can be visualized and perceived by an audience. The objective of this course is to stimulate students to critically explore and comment upon the digital world they are immersed in, and to empower them to develop their own facility, perspective and interests of a rapidly growing industry.

II. COURSE RATIONALE

This is an introductory course in Digital Media. It will cover topics relative to the ever changing environment of Digital Media. The course will prepare students to use critical thinking and problem solving to accomplish goals as an individual as well as a member of a team. Concepts learned will form the core for students to build on when moving through an academic career in Digital Media.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES & GOALS

1. Students will present elementary knowledge of digital media concepts and fundamentals, including;
 - a. Digital Media technology
 - b. Images
 - c. Moving images
 - d. Storytelling
 - e. Web Design
 - f. Social Media
2. Students will collaborate in teams to design a video project in response to a real-world problem.
3. Students will work independently to produce original ideas in order to solve real-world problems.
4. Students will use Photoshop to create original works of art.
5. Students will use Wordpress to create a Web site (Online Portfolio).
6. Students will create a video using Adobe Premier (or other professional editing software).
7. Students will prepare a short presentation to pitch an idea for a video project.
8. Students will evaluate ideas and explain decisions made as part of a weekly progress report.
9. Students will judge the progress made by their peers and formulate suggestions to improve their work.
10. Students will reflect on their learning during the semester to produce a Failure Resume.

IV. POLICIES

Participation is required. This course is experiential and participation is evaluated each day; there is no practical way to recapture material covered in class. Students are responsible for turning all assignments in on time and for getting missed course material from peers.

V. GRADING

Creativity is the key to doing well in this class and in getting the most out of it. The work involves great patience and perseverance at times. By being creative in what you do, by finding answers in yourself, you will continue to find the energy to persevere without trouble, and you will easily work your way towards a good grade.

The purpose of grading is to clearly and accurately pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of your progress. You will receive a score on each assignment and a progress report at midterm. This report will evaluate progress, note strengths and areas for improvement. Your overall grade will be based on your understanding of the information and ideas discussed, and your formal, technical, and conceptual progress as demonstrated in projects and exercises, and professionalism during the course.

Students will be evaluated through exercises, class participation, presentations, and technical proficiency with various project and media applications. Students will be evaluated on their creativity and diligence in applying the course tools to produce cogent and polished shorts. Our goals are to go beyond simply achieving technical proficiency, but focus on the learning principles in preparation for both artistic and commercial endeavors.

Grades are calculated on a total of points earned from participation, projects, and a final challenge. For example, if the class has a maximum of 148 points, and you earn 90 as a participation grade, 10 for class projects and 30 on your final challenge your total is 130 points from an available 148.

130 divided into 148 = 0.88 or 88%. This would be an overall B+ based on the values below.

99-95 = A	94-89 = A-	88-83 = B+	82-76 = B	75-70=B-	69-64 = C+
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Assessment	Percent of Final Grade
Participation	40%
Projects	15%
Challenge Project	30%
Failure Resume	15%
	100%

VI. TEXTS & MATERIALS

Required Text:
None

Please note: Readings, essays, films, and/or media clips will be periodically given throughout the course. Access to a computer outside of class is required.

VII. Assignments

Assignments must be uploaded to a Web site you will produce in class and a link must be sent to the instructor via email. Please include a short description of the submission in the heading.

VIII. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Students are strongly encouraged to purchase an external hard drive and are responsible for having their work available for viewing in class during weekly class critiques. You do not need to submit your work to the instructor on any kind of disk or storage device as long as it can be viewed in class. Note: hardware problems are no excuse for late or missing work. The hard drives of the computers are notoriously unreliable, and constantly get erased! Make backup copies and save your work on media besides the schools hard drives! Files can become corrupted.

IX. Flipped Classroom

Much of the content in Digital Foundations is delivered as part of a 'Flipped Classroom'. A Flipped Classroom is a blended-learning model in which students engage with, what is usually, class content in their free time. Scheduled classes are reserved for weekly assignments, projects, and face-to-face discussions that take place with support from

the instructor. As part of this model students will be required to access specific video tutorials, class lectures, quizzes and presentations prior to each lesson.

X. SCHEDULE

Week 1 – What is Digital Media?

- Marsh Mellow Challenge
- Review Syllabi
- What is Digital Media?
- Essential skills in Digital Media

Week 2 – Creative Problem Solving

- Brainstorming
- Creative Problem Solving

Week 3 – Introduction to World Wide Web

- History of the Internet
- History of the World Wide Web (WWW)
- Digital Identity
- Copyright and Fair Use

Week 4 – Introduction to Web Design

- Wordpress
- Portfolio

Project: Produce a Web site using Wordpress

Week 5 – Photoshop 101

- Copyright and Fair Use
- Photoshop Introduction
- Construction of an image (DPI)
- R.B.G
- Export Settings
- Spot Healing Brush
- Content Aware Fill
- Content Aware Move
- Quick Selection and Magic Wand Tools
- Communication Skills

Project: Produce a before and after image using Photoshop

Week 6 – Photoshop 102

- Lasso Tools
- Cut and paste
- Resize image

- Crop Tool
- Pinch Tool (and other distortion tools)
- Layers
- Photo bombing
- Export. JPG, PNG, GIF

Project: Produce a Poster using Photoshop

Week 7 – Storytelling

- Review and Critique Photoshop Challenge
- Story Design
- Story in messages
- Storyboard

Project: Produce a storyboard

Week 8 – Sound and Images

- Image Composition
- Audio Technique
- Camera Shots
- Rule of Thirds
- Introduction to Premier
- How music and sound can influence a message

Project: Produce a video that uses music and still images to communicate a story

Week 9 – Moving images and critique

- Showcase your finished films that include your soundtrack
- Each film receives 5-10 minutes of feedback. Students will be graded on feedback given
- Midterm exam (pitch Challenge Project)

Midterm: Present an idea for the Challenge Project

Week 10 – Introduction to Challenge Project

- Review and critique each idea (Identify the assisters and resisters)
- Formation of project teams
- Sharing a project using Social Media

Week 11 – Challenge Project

- Project time
- Progress Report

Week 12 – Challenge Project

- Project time
- Progress Report

Week 13 – Challenge Project

- Project time
- Progress Report

Week 14 – Final Project

- Project time
- Progress reports due

Week 15 – Final Project

- Class Surveys
- Project time
- Progress reports due

Week 16 – Final Project

- Final Presentations

Project: Submit updated Portfolio (with all class projects)

Project: Submit failure resume

FINAL: Team interview with instructor