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UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Class Meeting Times

Class will meet twice per week, virtually, at the following times. The Zoom link for your class period is posted on HuskyCT.

Section 001: Tues &Thurs 9:30AM – 11:00AM
Section 002: Tues &Thurs 11:00AM – 12:30PM
Section 003: Tues &Thurs 2:00PM – 3:00PM

Course and Instructor Information

Professor: Heather Cassano (she/her)
Email: heather.cassano@uconn.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30PM – 5:00PM via WebEx
Office hours are a great opportunity to ask for extra help, feedback on a project, or to chat with me about digital media and film. To make an office hours appointment, visit Calendly.

Teaching Assistant: Lexy Vecchio (she/her)
Email: lexy.vecchio@uconn.edu

Catalog Description:
3 credits. Prerequisites: DMD 1001, open to Digital Media and Design majors, others by instructor consent.
Introduction to the fundamentals of storytelling through the use of a variety of practical digital media applications

Course Description:
This course introduces the fundamentals of storytelling through multimedia. Students will work both individually and collaboratively to identify and produce digital media products that communicate stories to a predetermined audience. Students will explore different tools and approaches necessary to produce engaging stories through various digital methods. Students will be given the opportunity to become familiar with narrative and non-narrative structures, storyboarding, project management, video, audio, sound, and distribution platforms.

Course Rationale:
Storytelling is the basis of all forms of media. We are all storytellers. We share stories to entertain, educate, and as a strategy for persuasion. It is critical that as creators, distributors, and consumers of media we learn to harness the approaches needed to be effective storytellers.

Learning Outcomes:
During this course students will explore how stories can be successfully communicated through different mediums by participating in the following outcomes:
- Students will produce a short video for a website.
- Students will choose three animation principles to tell a story of a bouncing ball
- Students will design a short story and communicate it verbally, visually, and through the written word
- Students will design a storyboard to communicate to convey content and ideas.

Course Materials

**Course materials should be obtained before the first day of class.
Required textbook & equipment is available for purchase through the UConn Bookstore (or use the Purchase Textbooks tool in HuskyCT). Textbooks can be shipped (fees apply).

Required Materials:
TEXTBOOK: Costello, Vic (2021). *Multimedia Foundations: Core Concepts for Digital Design.* Susan A. Youngblood & Normal E. Youngblood (Eds.) Boston, MA: Focal Press.

EQUIPMENT: DMD FYP Mobile Video Production Kit ($209.98 through Uconn bookstore).
You may purchase this equipment for less from outside vendors like Amazon or B&H by following this equipment guide. (~$150)

COMPUTER: All students are required to have a personal computer and access to the Adobe Creative Cloud Suite. You can obtain a student subscription to the Adobe Creative Cloud here.

Additional course readings and media are available within HuskyCT, through either an Internet link or Library Resources

Online Resources:
- HuskyCT.uconn.edu – This is the hub of our course. Syllabus, readings, assignments, journals, and all grades will be posted here. Remember to check HuskyCT regularly for updates.
- Microsoft Teams – A place to communicate with your classmates and provide feedback to your creative group. Further information will be distributed in class.

Assignments & Grading

You are expected to regularly produce creative work. This is based on the principle that the more you practice, the better you become. Use **every** assignment to communicate what is important to you and **take risks**.

Grading:
- Creative Groups & Participation 15%
- Quizzes   30%
- Production Assignments   30%
- Portfolio Website   5%
- Semester Project Pitch   5%
- Semester Project Presentation   10%
- Final Critique   5%

Further information on all assignments will be distributed in class.

Creative Groups & Participation (15%)
At the beginning of the semester, you will be assigned a "Creative Group." Your group will be your go-to: you will work together in class, initiate critique of each other's work, and become a support system. You will also have your own private channel in Microsoft Teams to get feedback and ask questions of each other. Your participation in this group counts towards your overall participation grade.

Your participation is required in this class. I expect you to 1) read and view all assignments in advance, 2) be actively involved in discussion, and 3) provide useful feedback and critique to your peers.

Quizzes (30%)

There will be 3 online questions. Each quiz consists of multiple choice and short answer questions. If you have been diligent about reading the assigned chapters, each quiz can be completed in 30 minutes or less. However, you will have the entire day to take the exam. Make sure to have everything ready to complete the test during the assigned time as there will be NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES. Open book and notes are welcomed and expected.

Production Assignments (30%)
- Story Through Photos (5%)
- Story through Audio (5%)
- Video Interview (10%)
- Animated Component (10%)

Portfolio Website (5%)
You will create a website which will host your entire multimedia portfolio. In this class you will not be expected to code or create a website from scratch. You can use Adobe Portfolio, Wix, Squarespace, or other design service.

Semester Project (20%)
Your semester project will consist of developing a multimedia project for a local restaurant, artist, store, non-profit, or any other local "client" or subject. You will develop this campaign throughout the semester and will present your advances to the class to receive feedback.
- **Pitch (5%)** – Choose your subject and develop a 3-minute presentation to pitch your project.
- **Final Project Presentation (10%)** – This is your final presentation of your semester project work. You will present your work (5 mins, with Q&A). At this point you have taken into consideration all the feedback that you received from your peers and instructors.
- **Final Critique (5%)** – A comprehensive evaluation of a peer's final semester project.

NOTE: Submit all projects (including presentations, video, audio, and animations) via the assigned Google Drive.
Assignments must be uploaded **by the beginning of class**.
Failure to do so will affect your grade.

Presentations consists of 3-5 slides. It's a good idea to spend 1 minute per slide. It is easy to notice the difference between a well-thought, practiced presentation and a last-minute one. Aim for the former.

Grading Criteria:
- ***Content – The intellectual or material substance of a multimedia project.***
  This item attempts to answer the question "What's the point?" Projects should be substantively meaningful to a definable audience. Content should be well researched, logically structured, and professionally presented. Narratives should be well written in a professional style with special attention given to grammatical excellence and industry-standard scripting formats. This dimension examines questions such as: Is the subject matter and/or topic interesting to a broad audience? Was the subject well researched? Is information clearly and accurately presented? Are subjects well-suited to the topic or were they chosen merely for convenience (roommate, friend, etc.).
- ***Design – The degree to which a project adheres to professional principles of design.***
  This dimension examines questions such as: Were images or graphics properly composed? Was audio balanced and well-mixed? Was editing haphazard or thoughtfully motivated by the content and story to achieve a purposeful outcome? This category applies both for your videos, presentations, and written deliverables.
- ***Complexity – the project's overall level of challenge.***
  This dimension examines questions like: Did you think outside of the box? Did you work within a simple form or content structure or did you try a more creative or inventive approach? Did you put sufficient thought, time, and effort into each phase of the project?

PLEASE NOTE: Mid-semester grades will be issued using the Student Admin system and will be primarily based on your participation in the course thus far. You are encouraged to set up a time to meet with me if you receive below a

B grade for your mid-semester, as this is an indication that improvements must be made in order for you to pass the course successfully.

Grading Scale:

A	100-94	B-	83-80	D	69-60
A-	93-90	C+	79-77	F	< 60 points
B+	89-87	C	76-74	I	Incomplete
B	86-84	C-	73-70		

The instructor and TA will make every effort to provide feedback and grades within two weeks of submission. To keep track of your performance in this course, refer to My Grades in HuskyCT.

Due Dates & Late Policy

All course due dates are identified in the class schedule below. Deadlines are based on Eastern Time unless otherwise specified. The instructor reserves the right to change dates accordingly as the semester progresses. All changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.

- **Late assignments will incur a 1-point deduction for each day overdue.**
- **Assignments will not be accepted more than 5 days after the due date.**
- Assignments turned in after 5 days overdue will earn a zero.

Participation & Inclusion

Our class will meet remotely twice per week. Attendance at all class periods is required. You must contact me beforehand if you are unable to make a class session. Excused absences include sickness, family emergencies, etc. but must be approved **prior to your absence.** Unless I have given explicit permission, your absence will be considered unexcused and will negatively affect your participation grade.

You are expected to arrive on time to class and be willing to participate. Be attentive, take notes, engage in discussions and you will do well in this class. We are a small group and the class relies on everyone's participation to be successful. All thoughts and questions are welcome. We will be analyzing work by you and your classmates, as well as professionals. These discussions will only be effective with an open dialogue.

We live in politically turbulent times and there will be moments when emotionally charged topics (like race, gender, class, religion, etc.) come up in class, whether it be in the media we consume or in the art that you create. The work that you make and study does not exist in a social vacuum, so it is important that these topics are a conscious part of our practice and analysis. Everyone (including myself) should be willing to discuss these issues thoughtfully and openly and be prepared to have their views challenged. Good participation means actively contributing to a classroom atmosphere of welcoming, compassion, enthusiasm, and respect.

I will personally work to make sure that every student in this class will be honored and respected as an individual with distinct experiences, talents, and backgrounds. Regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, socio-economic statues, or national identity, every student will be treated fairly. I will make every effort to ensure that an inclusive environment exists for all students.

If you have any concerns or suggestions for improving the classroom climate, please do not hesitate to speak with me directly or contact the Office of Diversity & Inclusion at diversity@uconn.edu.

Technology Policy

Technology is the backbone of modern digital media and design, and we will spend a large amount of time working with high-tech devices. However, you are expected to pay attention during lecture periods. I ask you to please refrain from use your cellphone during our classes.

Accommodations

The University of Connecticut and I are committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020 or http://csd.uconn.edu/.

Other Policies

This course will follow all other University of Connecticut policies, as described here: https://provost.uconn.edu/faculty-and-staff-resources/syllabi-references/

Covid-19 & Resources

Illness or Extended Absences:
If illness prevents you from attending class, it is your responsibility to notify your me as soon as possible. You do not need to disclose the nature of your illness, however, you will need to work with me to determine how you will complete coursework during your absence.
If life circumstances are affecting your ability to focus on courses and your UConn experience, students can email the Dean of Students at dos@uconn.edu to request support. Regional campus students should email the Student Services staff at their home campus to request support and faculty notification.

COVID-19 Specific Information: People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Additional information including what to do if you test positive or you are informed through contact tracing that you were in contact with someone who tested positive, and answers to other important questions can be found here: https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/updates-events/coronavirus/

Resources for Students Experiencing Distress

The University of Connecticut is committed to supporting students in their mental health, their psychological and social well-being, and their connection to their academic experience and overall wellness. The university believes that academic, personal, and professional development can flourish only when each member of our community is assured equitable access to mental health services. The university aims to make access to mental health attainable while fostering a community reflecting equity and diversity and understands that good mental health may lead to personal and professional growth, greater self-awareness, increased social engagement, enhanced academic success, and campus and community involvement.

Students who feel they may benefit from speaking with a mental health professional can find support and resources through the **Student Health and Wellness-Mental Health** (SHaW-MH) office. Through SHaW-MH, students can make an appointment with a mental health professional and engage in confidential conversations or seek recommendations or referrals for any mental health or psychological concern.
Mental health services are included as part of the university's student health insurance plan and also partially funded through university fees. If you do not have UConn's student health insurance plan, most major insurance plans are

also accepted. Students can visit the **Student Health and Wellness-Mental Health located in Storrs on the main campus in the Arjona Building, 4th Floor,** or contact the office at **(860) 486-4705, or** [**https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/**](https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/) for services or questions**.**

Course Schedule

The course schedule is subject to change with notification. It is your responsibility to keep up with all announced changes throughout the semester.

Items listed as "DUE" must be completed prior to the beginning of class.

Module 1 – Introduction to Multimedia & Project Planning

TUES 1/19   Introduction & Overview

CLASS:	DUE:
- Discuss the syllabus, goals, and requirements for the course - Meet your creative groups	- Complete Creative Group questionnaire - Purchase your textbook and required equipment

THURS 1/21   Understanding Multimedia

CLASS:	DUE:
- Defining multimedia - Characteristics of new media - What is a story?	Read Chapter 1

TUES 1/26   Project Planning & Evaluation

CLASS:	DUE:
- The Three P's - Previsualization Tools	Read Chapter 3

Module 2 – Visual Aesthetics & Photography

THURS 1/28   Visual Communication

CLASS:	DUE:
- Aesthetics - Field of View - Elements & Principles of Design - Rule of Thirds	Read Chapter 4

TUES 2/2   Photography

CLASS:	DUE:
- Exposure Triangle (ISO, Shutter Speed, Aperture) - Focal Length & Depth of Field	Read Chapter 10

THURS 2/4   Photography

CLASS:	DUE:
Photography workshop ASSIGN: ***Story Through Stills*** (due 2/11)	

TUES 2/9   Page & User Interface Design

CLASS:	DUE:
- Breaking out of the box - Designing User Interfaces	- Read Chapter 5 ***Story Through Stills*** presentations due Thursday

THURS 2/11   Presentations

CLASS:	DUE:
• Student Presentations: ***Story Through Stills***	→ **QUIZ #1 (Chapters 3, 4, & 10) – due by 11:59pm** • Read "How to Critique" handout (HuskyCT) • Provide feedback on presentations to your Creative Group on Teams

Module 3 – Sound & Interactive Media

TUES 2/16   Audio Production

CLASS:	DUE:
• Understanding sound • Types of microphones & Sound recording	• Read Chapter 12

THUS 2/18   Audio Production

CLASS:	DUE:
• Audio Workshop ASSIGN: ***Story Through Audio*** (due 2/25)	

TUES 2/23   Interactive Storytelling

CLASS:	DUE:
• User Interface & Usability • Designing an interactive narrative • "Content dictates form" – VR/AR/Online storytelling overview	• Read Chapter 6 • ***Story Through Audio*** due Thursday

THURS 2/25   Presentations

CLASS:	DUE:
• Student Presentations: ***Story Through Audio***	→ **QUIZ #2 (Chapters 5, 6, & 12) – due by 11:59pm** • Provide feedback on presentations to your Creative Group on Teams

Mid-Semester Feedback

Module 4 – Pitching

TUES 3/2   Pitching Your Idea

CLASS:	DUE:
• What makes a successful pitch? • Pitch decks, look books, storyboards (revisited) • Creative group work session ASSIGN: ***Semester Project Components***	• ***Semester Project Pitch*** due Thursday

THURS 3/4   Semester Project Pitches

CLASS:	DUE:
• Student Presentations: ***Semester Project Pitch***	• Provide feedback on pitches to your Creative Group on Teams

Module 5 – Video & Basic Animation

TUES 3/9   Video Production

CLASS:	DUE:
• Visual Composition	• Read Chapter 13

• Framing & Camera Movement	

THURS 3/11   Video Production

CLASS:	DUE:
• Camera Workshop • 2-camera setup for interviews • Understanding B-roll ASSIGN: **Video Interview & Animated Component** (due 4/6)	• Read Chapter 11

TUES 3/16   Lighting

CLASS:	DUE:
• 3-point lighting • Lighting workshop	• Reading / Online Tutorial TBA

THURS 3/18   Editing

CLASS:	DUE:
• Basic video editing techniques	• Read Chapter 14

TUES 3/23   Editing & Titling

CLASS:	DUE:
• Graphics & Typography (for video)	• Read Chapters 8 & 9

THURS 3/25   Editing & Basic Animation

CLASS:	DUE:
• Animating lower thirds in Premiere • Basic logo animation • Additional Premiere techniques	• Finish filming your video interview

SAT 3/27 – Emergency closing class makeup date
MON 3/29 – Last day to withdraw from a course

TUES 3/30   Lab Time

CLASS:	DUE:
• In-Class Editing Lab	• Bring **all** assets (video, audio, logos, etc.) to class for Editing Lab.

THURS 4/1   Lab Time

CLASS:	DUE:
• In-Class Editing Lab • Sign up for Presentation Slots	• Bring **all** assets (video, audio, logos, etc.) to class for Editing Lab. • **Video Interview & Animated Component** due Tuesday

TUES 4/6   Presentations

CLASS:	DUE:
• Student Presentations: **Video Interview & Animated Component**	• Provide feedback on presentations to your Creative Group on Teams

THURS 4/8   Presentations

CLASS:	DUE:
• Student Presentations: ***Video Interview & Animated Component***	**→ QUIZ #3 (Chapters 8, 9, 11, 13, & 14) – due by 11:59pm** • Provide feedback on presentations to your Creative Group on Teams

SPRING BREAK 4/12 – 4/16

Module 6 – Web Design

TUES 4/20   Basic Web Design

CLASS:	DUE:
• Principles & Tools • Portfolio website examples ASSIGN: ***Portfolio Website Draft*** (due 4/22)	• Read Chapter 7 (please note that you are NOT responsible for coding in this class) • ***Portfolio Website Draft*** due Thurs!

THURS 4/22   Presentations

CLASS:	DUE:
• Student Presentations: ***Portfolio Website Draft***	• Provide feedback on presentations to your Creative Group on Teams

TUES 4/27

CLASS:	DUE:
• Review components of ***Final Project Presentation***	• Provide feedback on presentations to your Creative Group on Teams

READING DAYS 4/29 – 5/2 (NO CLASS)

EXAM WEEK 5/3 – 5/8

TUES 5/4 (regularly scheduled class time)

EXAM PERIOD:	DUE:
• ***Final Project Presentations***	• ***Final Critique due Thursday 5/6 at 5:00PM***