NYU Abu Dhabi — Interactive Media and Technology

COMMUNICATIONS LAB

MDMED-AD 102-002

Spring 2017

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor

Pierre Depaz (pierre.depaz@nyu.edu)

Meeting Time

Tuesday — 11:50AM - 1:05PM
Thursday — 10:25AM - 1:05PM

Classroom

C3-153

Office

C3-032

Office Hours

Open door policy

Credits

4

Class website

http://commlab.nyuad.im

This course counts towards the following NYUAD degree requirement

- Concentrations > Multidisciplinary Minors > Interactive Media and Technology

Course Description

Communications Lab is a production based course that surveys various technologies including web development, 2D design, digital imaging, audio, video, and animation. The forms and uses of these communications technologies are explored in a laboratory context of experimentation, collaboration, and discussion. Much of class time will be spent introducing and playing with equipment and software essential to media production and contemporary storytelling. Each technology is examined as a tool that can be employed and utilized in a variety of situations and experiences. The world wide web will serve as the primary environment for content delivery and user-interaction. Principles of interpersonal communications and media theory are also introduced with an emphasis on storytelling fundamentals, user-centered design, and interactivity. Outside of the classroom, students will work both individually and in assigned groups on a variety of assignments. Each student will be expected to complete weekly homework exercises, 5 major assignments, and one final web portfolio project.

Course Objectives

When the course is finished, students will:
- Develop a fundamental skill set for producing media assets in a variety of forms
- Gain experience and confidence working with media production equipment and software
- Learn how to leverage production processes to take an idea and make it come to life
- Develop an understanding of storytelling fundamentals and basic web-based interactions
- Learn how to apply storytelling and user centered principles towards media production and interactivity
- Gain experience collaborating with others in both creative and technical processes

Course Assignments

ASSIGNMENT #1: WEB SITE
Due Thursday February 18
Create a web page to house and debut your 30MFF. Think about how you want to "brand" the film. What is the story? The title? The tag line? The font? The colors? Reviews? Bios for the actors? Behind the scenes photos? Any "interactivity" on the page? Your final site with video embed should be uploaded and live on your dreamhost account. It should include a .html file, a .css file, and a .js file. You should incorporate at least one element of "interactivity" on the page.

ASSIGNMENT #2: SOUNDS LIKE PIECE

Due Tuesday March 8

Create a 2-3 minute sound piece that "takes us on a journey". Your piece should be structured as a story (i.e. have a beginning, a middle, and an end) and ultimately live on a web page. It can take many forms including but not limited to an interview, a song, a soundscape, a remix, a site-specific experience, or a combination of any of these. It is up to you to decide! You are free to use any sounds you like, but your piece MUST INCLUDE some originally recorded audio. Your final piece should be experiences on a web page.

ASSIGNMENT #3: COMIX STRIP

Due Tuesday April 5

Create a 6 panel "interactive" comic using Adobe Illustrator and/or Photoshop to create the content. Your comic can include drawings, photographs, mixed-media, whatever you like. But there MUST be some original content. Also, your piece must tell a story, live on a web page, and include some form of interactivity. Possible interactivity includes, but is not limited to, adding sound, offering different display options, triggering animation, or "choose your own adventure" features.

ASSIGNMENT #4: VID-E-OH!!!

Due Thursday April 21

Create a 4-6 minute "interactive" video that lives on a web page and uses popcorn.js, p5.js, or any other js library to incorporate elements of interactivity.

ASSIGNMENT #5: DAS FX

Due Thursday May 12

Create a 2 minute Animation/Effects video with sound that lives on a web page and incorporates some form of interactivity. Your piece must have an identifiable main character and tell a story.

FINAL ASSIGNMENT: WEB PORTFOLIO

Due Thursday May 19

Make a well-designed, personalized, interactive home page for yourself. The page should have links to all 5 of your Comm-Lab assignments.

Grading

The following are the components of the final grade:

Attendance	10%
Class Participation	10%
Homework + Blog Posts	15%
Major Assignments (5x10%)	50%
Final Project	15%
Total	100%

Readings

All readings will be available as PDFs on the class GitHub (https://github.com/pierredepaz/alternate-realities/wiki/readings). Required readings will be available at the NYU Bookstore.

Required Text:

- E.M. Forrester - *The Machine Stops (Short Story)*
- Scott McCloud - *Understanding Comics*
- Walter Murch - *In The Blink Of An Eye*

Equipment

- Laptop (IM)
- Sound Kit
- Canon DSLR
- Light Kit
- Green Screen Studio
- Storage Drive*

Attendance

Attendance and arriving on time to all class sessions is required and expected, too many unexcused absences will lower your final grade. Two unexcused absences lower your final grade by a letter. Each subsequent unexcused absence will lower another letter grade. Two tardies will count as one absence. Arriving more than 15 minutes late will also count as an absence. If you will be missing a class due to illness, or unavoidable personal circumstances, you must notify your professor in advance via email for the absence to be eligible to be excused.

Academic Integrity

As set forth in NYU Abu Dhabi's Academic Integrity Policy, the relationship between students and faculty at NYU Abu Dhabi is defined by a shared commitment to academic excellence and is grounded in an expectation of fairness, honesty, and respect, which are essential to maintaining the integrity of the community. Every student who enrolls and everyone who accepts an appointment as a member of the faculty or staff at NYU Abu Dhabi agrees to abide by the expectation of academic honesty.

The full policies and procedures relating to Academic Integrity may be found on the NYUAD Student Portal: https://students.nyuad.nyu.edu/campus-life/student-policies/community-standards-policies/academic-integrity/

Schedule

Week 1 - 01/24 - INTRODUCTION

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- Housekeeping.

Workshop
- 30MFF
- Web Design
- Discussing Assignment #1 - Webpage

Homework
- **READ** Web Tuts: Introducing Wireframes to Your Design Process
- **READ** Scott Murray's Interactive Data Viz Ch.3 Technology Fundamentals up to but not including Javascript
- **DOWNLOAD** A Text Editor
    - Recommend: Atom
- **DOWNLOAD** An FTP Client
    - Recommend: Cyberduck
- **CREATE** a "Basic Wireframe" for your 30MFF World Premiere Site (feel free to draw on paper)

Week 2 - 01/31 - WEB FUNDAMENTALS

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- Review Homework
- Web Development Theory

Workshop

- Web Development 101

Homework
- **READ** "The Importance of Color, Font, & Icons"
- **EXPLORE** the "Web Learning Links" listed on http://commlab.nyuad.im
- **READ** MDN Javascript Basics
- **READ** Javascript section of Ch.3 - Interactive Data Viz for the Web by Scott Murray up to but not including the section on SVGs
- **START** building a web page with HTML, CSS, & "some JS" for your 30MFF World Premiere Site

Week 3 - 02/06 - WEB FUNDAMENTALS II

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- Reviewing Homework
- Basic Javascript

Workshop
- p5JS
- jQuery

Homework
- **DUE** Assignment #1 "Web Page with 'Interactivity' "

Week 4 - 02/14 - AUDIO TECHNOLOGIES

ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- Presenting Assignment #1
- Discussing Assignment #2
- Assign Audio teams

Workshop
- Tech workshop with microphones

Homework
- **WATCH** Kirby Ferguson's <u>Embrace the Remix</u>
- **READ** <u>Theft & Artistry</u>
- **READ** & **WATCH** <u>Vimeo Video School - Capturing Good Sound</u>
- **WORK** with your partner(s) to plan your sound piece. **BEGIN** recording/collecting audio clips. Be prepared to share these assets in class.

Week 5 - 02/21 - STORYTELLING

Readings
- <u>Allergy To Originality</u>

Lecture
- Discuss Homework
- Storytelling

Workshop
- Audio Editing in Audacity and Adobe Audition

Homework
- **READ** E.M. Forrester's <u>"The Machine Stops"</u>
- **WORK** with Audacity and/or Logic
- **EXPLORE** p5JS <u>Sound Examples</u>
- **RECORD** & **EDIT** Sound Pieces for Assignment #2

Week 6 - 02/27 - INTERACTIVITY WITH SOUND

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- Discuss "The Machine Stops".
- Web Interactions with Sound

Workshop
- Group work for sound editing

Homework
- **DUE** Assignment #2 "Sound Pieces"

Week 7 - 03/07 - PRESENTATIONS

ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- Presenting sound pieces

Workshop
- Tech Workshop #2: Camera/Lights/Green Screen

Homework
- **READ** Scott McCloud's *"Understanding Comics"* Ch. 1 - 4
- **WATCH** Robert Castillo's *"S.P.I.C. The Storyboard of My Life"* - The Bread Mess & The Bottle Incident

Week 8 - 03/14 - MIDTERM WEEK

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- None

Workshop
- None

Homework
- None

Week 9 - 03/21 - BREAK

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- Spring Break

Workshop
- Spring Break

Homework
- Spring Break

Week 10 - 03/28 - 2D DESIGN & VISUAL STORYTELLING

Readings
- *None*

Lecture

- Discuss Assignment #3

Workshop
- 2D Design Software: Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator

Homework
- **READ** Scott McCloud's "Understanding Comics" Ch. 5 - 9
- **WATCH** Adobe Suite Tutorial Video(s)
  - Lynda.com Tutorials - Adobe Illustrator & Adobe Photoshop Essential Training
  - Adobe TV Tutorials
  - Tasty Tuts - Adobe Illustrator Tutorials
  - Tasty Tuts - Adobe Photoshop Tutorials
- **CREATE** a story in 3 Images (a.k.a. the power of sequencing) - collect 3 images (your own photos, screen grabs, doodles, cut from magazines, etc) that "tell a story" (**MUST** have a beginning, a middle, and an end). They can exist on paper, on a web page, wherever - just need to be able to present and share with the class.
- **WORK** on Assignment #3

Week 10 - 03/28 - 2D CONTINUED

Readings
- *None.*

Lecture
- Discuss Scott McCloud
- Share Image Sequences
- Storyboard Slides

Workshop
- p5Play

Homework
- **FINISH** Assignment #3
- **FOR THURSDAY** the 7th
  - **READ** Walter Murch's "In The Blink Of An Eye" pp.1-42
  - **WATCH** "Vimeo Video School - Do More With Your DSLR"
  - **READ** "The Easy Guide to Understanding Aperture (f Stop)"
  - **WATCH** "Vimeo Video School - An Introdution to 3 Point Lighting"

Week 11 - 04/04 - VIDEO PRODUCTION
ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- Present Assignment #3
- Discuss Assignment #4

Workshop
- Production Fundamentals
- Introduction to Adobe Premiere

Homework
- **READ** Walter Murch's "In The Blink Of An Eye" pp.43-72 & Epilogue
- **CHOOSE** a video option.
- **DRAFT** a one page script (a basic outline with bullet points)
- **CREATE** a storyboard. Be prepared to share your storyboard in class
- **WATCH** - <u>What Is Neorealism?</u>

Week 12 - 04/11 - EDITING AND VIDEO INTERACTION

Readings
- *None.*

Lecture
- Discuss Murch
- Present Storyboards
- Editing with Adobe Premiere Pro.

Workshop

- Work on Assignment #4

Homework
- **COMPLETE** Assignment #4

Week 13 - 04/18 - INTRO TO ANIMATION
ASSIGNMENT #4 DUE

Readings
- None

Lecture
- Present Assignment #4 - Video Piece
- Discuss Assignment #5
- Assign Final Groups

Workshop
- Intro to Animation

Homework
- **REVIEW** the videos above
- **START** to experiment with both DragonFrame and After Effects
- **PREPARE** an idea for Assignment #5. Also, please be prepared to share an "inspiration piece" that you hope to emulate.

Week 14 - 04/25 - ANIMATION AND FX II

Readings
- None

Lecture
- Share Assignment 5 ideas + inspiration

Workshop

- After Effects
  - General
  - Motion Tracking
  - Character Animation
  - Motion Tracking
  - Green Screen
- DragonScreen

Homework
- **WORK** on Assignment #5

Week 15 - 05/02 - ANIMATION AND FX III

Readings
- *None*

Lecture
- Group updates
- Discuss Final Portfolio

Workshop
- Work Session

Homework
- Prepare for final presentation

Week 16 - 05/09 - FINAL PROJECT DUE

FINAL PROJECT DUE

Readings
- None

Lecture
- Work session (Pierre is absent)

Workshop

- Final Project Due
- Course Review / Course Evaluation

Homework

- None