Course Description

In this course we will continue exploring interactive forms, focusing on computer-based media. We will look at old as well as new models in order to think about how interactive modes of viewership affect the work. We will also consider various issues pertaining to so-called “interactive media” in cyberculture, including (but not limited to) issues in distribution, access, novelty, convention, mediation, interactive gaming and gaming communities, and more.

Classes will involve group and individual discussions of work and readings, critiques, presentations of artists’ work by the instructor, and exercises and workshops to develop ideas and working processes.

On a practical level, this course will focus on Macromedia Flash and Director as mean for producing interactive work.

Studio Work

*Four projects must be completed by the due dates. Projects are due at the beginning of class on the day of critique. Make sure to have work ready to show by 11:00 am on those days.* Project work must be carried out thoughtfully, with care and attention given to the demands of your ideas. You must use your time well and be realistic in planning the material scale of your projects in relation to the time and money you can afford to spend on them. The instructor will help you to organize your time, materials, and working process.

Journal

Buy a blank book of a size that you will enjoy carrying with you everywhere. *Use this journal/sketchbook for a few minutes everyday.* Draw in it, write in it, collect and paste found pictures and text in it. Use these “notes” to help you develop ideas for your projects. Make a concerted effort to attend current exhibitions, local art events, and surf the web; Use your journal to record questions about and responses to these events. *Always bring your journal with you to class meetings.*
Materials

Students are responsible for purchasing a journal/sketchbook, miscellaneous supplies as needed.

Recommended texts

Norman, Donald, The Design of Everyday Things (1990)
Visual Quickstart Guides to Flash 5 and Director 8
Phil Gross and Jason Roberts Director 8 Demystified (2000)

Attendance/Participation

Because much of the work for this course is carried out in scheduled class time (exercises, workshops, presentations, critiques, discussions), prompt attendance at all classes is mandatory. Do not schedule appointments, employment hours or holiday travel plans which will conflict with scheduled classes. After the first 3 classes of the semester, 5% will be deducted from your grade for each undocumented (i.e. doctor’s note) absence and each late arrival or early departure in excess of 25 minutes.

Grading

Class participation and regular attendance are as important to your grade as the quality of your work. Your grade will also largely be an indication of how much of your own potential you have fulfilled over the course of the term. The semester grade will be determined by a combination of attendance, quality of work produced, participation in discussions and critiques, and individual achievement, growth and enthusiasm. Late work will not be accepted.

The scaled importance of each element is as follows:
Project 1: 15%
Project 2: 20%
Project 3: 20%
Project 4: 20%
Attendance: 10%
Participation: 10%
Quality/Achievement: 5%

Please note: this is NOT a software course. If you are expecting to get an A because you master Flash and Director, you will be disappointed. Students are expected to develop intellectual and creative skills around interactivity, to produce engaging interactive work, and to show individual development.
Assignment #1: Creating an Interactive Animation

Using Macromedia Flash, create an animation that starts and stops when your viewer interacts with it.

Due date: Thursday 1/23, 11:00 am

Assignment #2: Sustaining Interaction

Using Macromedia Flash, make a word game

There are only two main limitations to this assignment:
1. You may only use the “go to frame” action in Flash and simple animations
2. You can use TEXT ONLY (no graphics). You may create the text from within Flash, or any other way (consider Photoshop, Illustrator, or scanning made or found text).

Think particularly about what keeps a user involved in your piece. What keeps them interested? What makes them want to keep playing your game?

Due date: Tuesday 2/11, 11:00 am

Assignment #3: Interactive Narrative Using Sound and Image

For this assignment, you will make a Flash project that uses only sound and image to create an interactive narrative. This time there are no constraints on what you may do in Flash. However, you may not use text, either written or as voice over. You also must incorporate some kind of interactivity, so that somehow the viewer must be involved in moving the story forward. Think carefully about this; the least interesting solution is to have the viewer click a button that would make the narrative move forward.

The dictionary defines “narrative” as: the representation in art of an event or story.

Consider the following for collecting sounds:

You may:
• Download a sound from the web
• Use SoundEdit 16 to edit a portion of a sound from a CD track
• Experiment with the speech function in Simple Text
• Record a sound using the system mikes
• Record a sound using any other means available to you
• Use sounds from the default library in Flash, but please be creative with them!
You may not:

- Use voice over
- Use music that someone else has written, unless you edit and alter it considerably

**Due Date: Thursday 3/6, 11:00 am**

**Assignment #4: Macromedia Director**

For this assignment, you will make an interactive piece using Macromedia Director (consider your needs for an interactive CD-ROM to get a job or to get into graduate school)

The following are stipulations for your project:

- The topic for your assignment is **anachronism**. The dictionary defines anachronism as: an error in chronology, especially a chronological misplacing of persons, events, objects, or customs in regard to each other.
- The imagery you use must be photographic (raster-based). It may be still, video, or a combination. You may shoot it yourself with any kind of camera, or scan objects (this is a kind of photographic process), or appropriate photographs.
- For navigation: you may not use buttons. The navigation must be integrated into the image itself.

**Final Due Date: Tuesday 4/22 by 11:00 am**
1/7  Course introduction, discuss assignment #1
1/9  Intro to Flash
1/14 More on Flash
1/16 Lab for Assignment #1
1/21 Lab for Assignment #1
1/23 Assignment #1 due at 11:00 am, critique
1/28 Intro to Assignment #2
1/30 Lab for Assignment #2
2/4  Lab for Assignment #2, individual meetings to review work in progress
2/6  Lab for Assignment #2
2/11 Assignment #2 due at 11:00 am, critique
2/13 Intro to Assignment #3
2/18 Lab for Assignment #3
2/20 Lab for Assignment #3
2/25 Lab for Assignment #3, individual meetings to review work in progress
2/27 Lab for Assignment #3, individual meetings to review work in progress
3/4  Lab for Assignment #3
3/6  Assignment #3 due at 11:00 am, critique
3/11 Spring Break – NO CLASS
3/13 Spring Break – NO CLASS
3/18 Intro to Assignment #4
3/20 Lab for Assignment #4, individual meetings to review work in progress
3/25 Lab for Assignment #4
3/27 Lab for Assignment #4
4/1  Lab for Assignment #4, individual meetings to review work in progress
4/3  Lab for Assignment #4, individual meetings to review work in progress
4/8  Lab for Assignment #4
4/10 Lab for Assignment #4
4/15 Lab for Assignment #4
4/17 Lab for Assignment #4
4/22 Assignment #4 due by 11:00 am