

## Dynamic Media, Production Skills

We th: 00-5: 50 p.m. Rm. 212

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Students in this class will learn to create compelling images, using specific theoretical and software techniques through instruction and individual practice.

The course is structured through demonstration as well as through in class and outside of class home-work. Ultimately this class will culminate in the production of a time based final project, using the skills learned during the course of the year. It will require outside effort and, in addition, will require use of tools such as After Effects, Commotion, Photoshop, Illustrator, Final Cut, Maya, and 3Dstudio.

This is not a technical After Effects course, rather, the purpose of this class is to give students a full understanding of the specific theory and ideas which come into play with time based visual imagery as well as give students the specific technical training to create compelling content. In addition, students will be asked to begin thinking like artists to pursue their own aesthetic sense.

### **Attendance/Homework/Grading Policy:**

#### Attendance:

Attendance is absolutely important in this course. If you have three unauthorized absences you will fail the course. Authorized absences can only include such things as sickness or family emergency.

#### Homework:

Homework will be given on a weekly or biweekly basis. It will directly reflect upon what is covered in class but will encourage that the student investigating issues more deeply than dealt with in the classroom.

This is a challenging course and you will be spending at least 20 hours/week on homework.

#### Backups:

All project work completed over the course of each semester must be archived. SVA servers are not a reliable place to store data and may be deleted. As a result, it is recommended that students purchase a portable firewire drive or make frequent CD/DVD burns. Please note that excuses for missing homework will not be accepted.

It is the student's responsibility to keep up to date with the class, both in terms of homework assignments given and weekly topics. In most circumstances I will not cover material more than once.

#### Grading:

50% grading of weekly assignments

30% final assignment

20% attendance

### **Course Goals:**

Dynamic Media 4 is aimed at polishing the skills and techniques which have been developed over the last three semesters. It will be a project based creative lab in which students will explore motion and design ideas through multiweek homework assignments dealing with contemporary motion graphics. After being given an initial design challenge, students will identify a particular style or method to work in, research technical methods to execute the project, and output final results.

The end result of this class is the production of a dvd based demo reel containing the best work of the year, in addition to exceptional previous projects.

### **Project Structure:**

All class projects will be multi week assignments and will require the following documentation:

#### **\*Design Boards-**

<http://www.andersschroder.com/boards.html>

<http://chrissaunders.tv/CHRISSAUNDERS/LEAPFROG.html>

It is very important to remember that concept art and design boards directly reflect the actual look of the production method. It must be as faithful as possible to the overall style and method and should be an

image that, if given to another artist, could be faithfully recreated with little confusion.

**\*Project research-**

Project research and preproduction includes tests and examples of the expected problems and possible solutions to these problems. This does not need to be final, production quality art, but must be fleshed out motion, animation, or other methods. It is not sufficient to write a problem on a piece of paper with a proposed solution. All solutions must be tested before final implementation.

**\*Final Output-**

All projects must be output in final rendered form as h.264 quicktime and must be at least 30 seconds long unless specifically mentioned. Anything shorter than 30 seconds will result in an F for the assignment.

Final output must also include a shot breakdown of all the technical methods used for the entire piece. Remember that the goal of this semester is to produce excellent work to showcase your skills so it's in your best interest to produce as much documentation as possible showing your skillsets.

Failure to include all of the listed elements will result in an F grade for the assignment.

**Project Notes-** Because the projects for this class will be based upon the needs of the students, it's very important that students have a clear idea of what their thesis is, what their thesis needs are, and how to have these needs met. While the structure of this course includes a six week mini lab dealing with graphic design, typography, and motion, it will be up to the students to define the other projects in the semester.

Please be prepared to talk about the needs of your projects, what you might need help with, and anything that interests you.

A final note, since my background involves art, design, and motion graphics, I will not be focusing on topics such as high level compositing, color grading, or grain matching. The best way to think about this course is to imagine that I am working as your technical director for the course, helping to solve your technical problems. If you are not explicit with your issue then I can't help you.

**Class #1:**

Introduction to Semester I

Introduction to the Contract

Introduction to the expectation of the course.

**Do:**

Think about what you need to accomplish for the semester and the year. What topics do you need further involvement with? Arrive to class #2 with a list of possible topics which could be included in the syllabus. Possible topics can include:

**TECHNICAL**

2d Particle systems

3d Particle Systems

2d or 3d Set Extensions

High End modeling, texture, lighting, and render

Multipass rendering and Composite

2d/3d integration

Global Illumination

**THEORETICAL**

Color Theory

Composition

Type as Motion

Cultural Awareness

Image Subversion

## **Class #2:**

Arrive to class with the following and present a professional presentation (<10 minutes) of:

1. Thesis storyboards
2. Thesis concept art
3. Thesis animatics

The point of this exercise is for me to become familiar with your thesis ideas and for you to be comfortable presenting your needs. If you do not have some of the listed items presented then please spend time preparing missing elements. Remember that at this point, we're still fleshing out the thesis so it doesn't have to be absolutely finalized art.

A review of your present thesis  
The contract

## **Class #3:**

### **Project #1      Brand Your Channel-a six week assignment**

The initial project for the semester will be to conceive of a new television network which has never been created. Students will be asked to think about creating a channel which could actually be on television, regardless of whether it could have any commercial value or viability. This means that students will need to think about content and footage(what's on the channel), target market and demographic (who it's aimed at), and stylistic approach (what it looks like).

Before beginning the project, it will be very important to look at a lot of television and to make mental notes about what station ID looks like, how the personality of a channel is influenced by the market, and how design is used to communicate messages. Also, remember that you must come up with a channel that has never been done so it's important to do your research.

### **Homework:**

#### **WEEK #1**

**\*Concept Development** - Think about what your channel is. Do research to develop a better idea of what your channel will be and what niche it will fill. Make sure that your idea is something that you like and will be productive working on for the semester.

For this week's assignment, students will need the following:

**\*Channel Name-** Names are obviously important.

**\*Channel Mission Statement (one page typed)-** This is a general description of the channel's purpose and personality. Start with a paragraph about the general goals and personality of the channel. Invent at least five programs that could air on the channel and are representative of the overall feel. Who is the intended audience, who will watch it and why? This document should be at least a page and will be referred to over the course of the project.

**\*Channel Logo (at least 6 varieties, AI document)-** Take a look at [www.brandsoftheworld.com](http://www.brandsoftheworld.com) to begin your investigation into what your logo will look like. After researching and getting a sense of what is out there, you'll need to create a logo for your channel. It's important to remember that the whole point of a logo is visibility, readability, and identifiability, so it makes sense to think about these points while making your logo. In addition, think about how the logo would move in space, or over video, and in low resolution format and think about what font you would use for your logo. Most important is to think about how a logo communicates the personality of your channel.

## **Class #4-5:**

Student Topic  
Student Project

### **Do:**

To Be Announced

## **Class #6:**

Project #2

**\*Style guide-** Write a **5-10 page PDF** style guide for your television channel which illustrates the design aesthetics of the television channel. The best way to do this will be to create a series of design boards which illustrate what could be a still from a particular station identity. The point of the style guide is to create a document which defines consistent, typical approaches for usage of the logo. Remember that a

style guide needs to explicitly define what the logo treatment and design placement looks like so make thoughtful designs as these will be used for your follow up assignments.

Things to think about include the following:

**\*logo use and misuse-**The logo shape is key to defining the identity of the channel. Equally, how it is used in conjunction with other elements is very important. Define a way that the logo should be displayed. Can imagery overlay it? Must it always be in the right corner? Can it be reshaped?

**\*color palette-**Color plays a key part in establishing a unique and recognizable brand. What are the colors used in the logo. Are there variant colors?

**\*typography and copy style-**Consistent typography is integral to maintaining brand integrity. In addition, consistent usage and format of copywriting is important. Think about what should be bolded, what font sizes should be used, and what subheaders should look like.

**\*design elements-**In addition to the logo, color palette, and typography are there any specific design elements which will be consistently used in the channel? How would these motifs be used? Are they made of cardboard, are they vector shapes, are they 3d cubes?

**Class #7-9:**  
Student Topic  
Student Project

**Do:**  
To Be Announced

**Class #10-12**

**Station ID** Using your style guide, logo, and station demographic information you will make a series of station IDs that could fit into the design style specified by your guide.

**The identity for the show will include:**

**\*Station ID (x 1)-**5 seconds with keyable out. Think of this as the business card for your station. It needs to be short, sweet, and to the point.

**\*Logo Animation Bug(x 1)-**5 seconds. Think of this as the personality of the logo. How does it animate and what does it behave like? Is it childish or mature?

**\*Bumper In/Bumper Out (x 3)-**5 seconds in and 5 seconds out.

**Homework:**

**\*Design Boards (week1)-**This reflects what you see as an appropriate style and aesthetic for this project and is directly based upon the style guide you created in last week's assignment.

**\*Rough Edit (week1)-**All footage should be shot and all elements prepped. Be prepared to show a rough edit of where your piece is.

**\*Final output(week2+3)- includes a identity package with associated collateral.**

**Class #13-14:**  
In class work on final project

**FINAL PROJECT (30% of your final grade):**

The final project for the semester will be to create a polished, edited, work print of your thesis (with as little proxy footage as possible), complete with title sequence and credits. The scope of the project will be large including pre-production storyboards, initial concept sketches, and a final animated piece.

Specifically, in terms of title sequence and credits, students will be required to present initial style frames and approaches which must be maintained in the final produced piece. The format, in terms of software and technique, is open to individual interpretation but the style must be consistent with the work, as defined through your story boards, concept ideas, animatics, and look frames. You will be responsible for collecting all source footage, image creation (2d or 3d), video as well as audio.

