Spring 2008 – AD499: Interactive Art Media and Processes

MW 11am – 1:50pm
January 14th – April 30th

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Class Website: http://mypage.siu.edu/ludwig
Class Wiki: http://499s08.pbwiki.com, password: *glove*
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office hours: Tues. 1pm – 5:30pm & by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This special topics class explores methods and technologies that focus on participation and reaction, audience involvement and input/output. Inspired by such historical practices as Dada, Bauhaus and Fluxus as well as contemporary practices, we will explore media to create works that are conceptual in nature, interdisciplinary, installation-based, temporary, physical, performative and/or public. We will explore how computing may be used in the more physical realms of sculpture, performance and installation.

Creative projects may take the form of any of the following:

- Interactive or kinetic sculpture
- Video, sound and web works
- Technology-assisted performances
- Installation works

Other possibilities are available and will be determined by student interest and access to gear. No previous experience in programming is necessary, but a familiarity with the desktop environment (using and storing files, downloading) is required. You must have a willingness to dive into the frustrations inherent in programming, such as thinking through logical progression and converting your ideas into numerological equations.

METHODS:

We will complete and critique three creative projects. Readings and research will stimulate discussions on contemporary issues in new media. There will be an artist presentation and a 5-page paper.

The final project of the semester will be due on the final Monday of the semester, which is April 28th. There will be no exceptions to this deadline. The reason for this is because I leave town on May 1st for a creative project. All grading **MUST** be done by April 30th.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- greater familiarization with the themes of new media
- greater familiarization with contemporary practitioners within new media fields
- build a comfort-level with computers as a tool for making art
- integrate computing into student's primary practice
- expand the scope of computing for students into tangible works
- create a higher comfort level with collaborative learning
- make some good art

COMPUTER FACILITIES:

The success of your work in this class will require resources beyond those in the Glove 107 classroom. Some of you own laptops or other digital equipment that can be used at your convenience. For those of you who do not own your own equipment, here is an outline of the facilities available to you:

- **Glove 107 Studio**, 432 South Washington. This studio is available to you during non-class hours to work on your projects. The Glove Factory building gets locked at midnight. Our studio is equipped with two MacBook laptops, which are available for student use in the classroom. Some equipment is also available on a checkout basis. You will be given a FOB to gain access to this room.
- **Slide Library, Allyn Bldg Basement,** 1100 S Normal Ave. The School of Art and Design has a few video camera, digital cameras and video projectors available for checkout to students enrolled in SoAD classes. Generally checkouts are from one afternoon to the following morning or over the weekend. With proper advance notice, other arrangements can be made. The slide library is open during business hours.
- **Quiqley Hall 110 Computer Lab**, 875 S Normal Ave, across Normal Avenue from Woody Hall
  This lab is available during all open hours for you to use. Most of the computers are G5 Towers
  Open hours are posted on the door after the first week of class.
- **New Media Center**, 1100 Lincoln Drive, The NMC is in the basement of the College of Mass Communication and Media Arts (MCMA). This lab includes two specialized classrooms/labs equipped with enhanced computers, peripheral devices, and software to facilitate work in various visual and audio media. The labs support work in digital imaging, web design, multimedia authoring, digital video and audio, MIDI applications, 3D modeling and animation and large format inkjet printing. While the Center primarily serves MCMA, it is also dedicated to maintaining an open access policy for other members of the university community having need of the unique tools and services available on campus only in the MCMA NMC.

  Spring NMC 2008 hours

  Website: **http://nmc.siu.edu**
  Schedule at: **http://nmc.siu.edu/inner.php?pageID=303**

GLOVE 107 CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Class Facilities: Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Don't fear the equipment but be gentle with it. Make sure that it is on a secure surface or embedded into works in a secure way. Consider the environment. Wetness is especially bad for components; dirt can be a problem too. Don't jam cords into components. Things should be a snug but easy fit.
- Put everything away when you're done with it. Don't take anything more than necessary out of the classroom. Make sure your sign–out sheets are up to date. Let me know where things are and if you are experiencing technical difficulties with equipment.
- Recognize that the artwork made in this class is largely in the "prototype" phase. Equipment is here to be used; however it will have to be returned, in good working order, at the end of the semester. If you are on a roll with something, consider investing in the equipment, so that you can work with it into the future.
- Don't let people into the classroom who don't belong here.
- Don't give out the combination code to the locker.

Critique: Art is fundamentally about communicating an idea to an audience. Regardless of whether the idea is expressed rationally or poetically; audience reaction is the only measure of an artwork's success. This relationship is heightened in interactive work; where the artist must study how the audience interacts with a piece in order to hone its design. Therefore open participation in critique as both artist and audience is IMPERATIVE in this class and counts for a surprising percentage toward your grade. You have very little chance of an A grade without SIGNIFICANT participation in discussion and critique.

Attendance: Each student is allowed one absence. After that, each absence lowers your final grade by 1/3. On the fourth absence, a student's final grade will be dropped one letter. On the seventh absence, it will be dropped by two letters, and on the eighth absence the student will fail the class. Three late-to-class marks count as one absence.

Late Work: If you're work is not finished by the time of critique, you must do 3 things in order to receive any credit for the project:

1. Show up for the critique and participate enthusiastically in the discourse.
2. Show your unfinished work unabashedly; share your challenges and allow the students to participate in your problem solving.
3. Speak to me individually about a new calendar plan for finishing the unfinished work.

GRADING:

Individual projects will be critiqued but not graded. Your grade for each project is split evenly between process and product. You will have an individual conference with me at mid-term where we will discuss your progress, your strengths and weaknesses, areas of improvement and an in-progress grade. You will not receive your final grade until after the final critique of your work.

UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

Project 1:	**15%**
Project 2;	**15%**
Project 3:	**15%**
Research Paper:	**15%**
Presentation on New Media Artist:	**10%**
Attendance/Participation:	**30%**

GRADUATE LEVEL

Project 1:	**20%**
Project 2;	**20%**
Project 3:	**20%**
Research Paper:	**20%**
Presentation on New Media Artist:	**5%**
Attendance/Participation:	**15%**

"Graduate Level" work will demonstrate higher rigor in three areas: sophistication of concept, completeness of research and level of craft. However, *process* still counts for ½ of each project grade. If you are working hard to solve your technical problems, a non-functional work can still potentially receive a decent grade.

Grading Scale

A = excellent: outstanding achievement relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
B = good: achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
C = satisfactory: achievement meets all course requirements
D = poor: achievement worthy of credit, but fails to fully meet the course requirements
F = no credit: work is not worthy of credit
Incomplete = only with prior arrangement with the instructor under extenuating circumstances

Please note that B's are common in this class and indicate very good, above average work. A's are reserved for excellence.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

Required readings will be handed out in class. Much technical support for what we do in this class is found online. Additional recommended resources:

Physical Computing by Dan O'Sullivan and Tom Igoe
Introduction to general physical computing technology:

Multimedia: From Wagner to Virtual Reality by Randall Packer (Editor) and Ken Jordan
Collection of seminal historical essays on technology and art:

Twyla Tharp: The Creative Habit by Twyla Tharp and Mark Reiter
Inspiration, how to generate ideas, performing exercises

Also, if you are going to be working with any imaging software, such as Adobe Photoshop, Final Cut Pro or Express, Macromedia Flash, etc. I generally recommend the *Visual Quickstart Guide* books by *Peachpit Press* for good, basic instructions on how to use the basic tools within a program.