

VFX374 Compositing 1 Syllabus

DePaul University

Course Information

Course Code: VFX374

Course Title: Compositing 1

Prerequisites: VFX 200 or ANI 105 or GD 105 or DC 220

Term: Fall 2021

Section: 401

Class Hours: Wednesdays, 1:30pm - 4:45pm

Location: CDM 632

Faculty Information

Brian Andrews

bandrew4@cdm.depaul.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9am - 12pm

Office Hours Location: Zoom or Phone. Appointments can be made on BlueStar.

Course Description

Compositing is the art and science of manipulating the content of photographic images. This project-based course builds the core tool set for compositing live-action filmed footage.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Navigate the interface of a node-based compositing application.
- Remove rigs and visual artifacts from video footage
- Efficiently rotoscope using motion trackers and curves.
- Design and produce green screen content for visual effects.
- Create a clean chromakey matte from greenscreen or bluescreen footage.
- Composite moving images with photorealistic lighting and perspective.

Software & Technology

NukeX and NukeStudio

This course uses NukeX and NukeStudio. Nuke licences for home use will be provided by SCA tech staff.

Tech Support

If you are having tech issues, please reach out for support as soon as possible.

- A knowledge base of common issues is available at: <http://depaulscaavsupport.groovehq.com/help>
- All support inquiries should be sent to scaavsupport@depaul.edu.
- For a general orientation please view the DePaul SCA Tech Orientation:
https://depauledu-my.sharepoint.com/:v/r/personal/tcochron_depaul_edu/Documents/How%20To%20Tech/How_To_Tech.mp4?csf=1&web=1&e=725iqQ

Textbook (Optional)

The Art and Science of Digital Compositing, Second Edition by Ron Brinkmann

Available free online through the university library. Login with your campus connect here:

<https://go.oreilly.com/depaul/>

Direct link (After login):

<https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/the-art-and/9780080879260/>

Assignments & Grading

Nuke Exercises: 20%

Team Project:

VFX Preproduction Packet: 10%

Footage: 10%

Post-Visualization: 10%

Final Composited Sequence: 20%

Peer Evaluation: 10%

Nuke Performance Evaluation: 20%

Course Outline

Week 1

Topics: Course overview; Introduction to compositing; Digital image fundamentals; Introduction to Nuke.

Assignments: Nuke Exercise 1 - Shark Composite

Week 2

Topics: Nuke Fundamentals: Interface, Timing, Animation & Color.

Assignments: Nuke Exercise 2

Due: Nuke Exercise 1

Week 3

Topics: Shot design; Pre-production; 2D Tracking; Team project production.

Assignments: Nuke Exercise 3, Team project preproduction packet

Due: Nuke Exercise 2

Week 4

Topics: Rotoscoping; Rig Removal; Team project production.

Due: Nuke Exercise 3

Week 5

Topics: Transparency; Shooting on a greenscreen; Team project production.

Week 6

Topics: Chromakeying; Team project production.

Assignments: Nuke Exercise 5

Optional Reading: *Keylight Users Guide* (PDF)

Due: Nuke Exercise 4

Week 7

Topics: Compositing Workflows; Nuke Studio; Team project footage review.

Due: Nuke Exercise 5, Team project greenscreen footage

Week 8

Topics: Advanced chromakeying techniques, Managing noise and grain; Team project production

Due: Team Project Rough Cut

Week 9

Topics: Compositing color management, Compositing effects; Team project production.

Due: Team project post-visualization

Week 10

Topics: Team project final critique, Peer review, Nuke Performance evaluation overview.

Due: Team project final sequence

Finals Week

Note: Final class day runs from 11:30pm-1:45pm.

Topics: Nuke performance evaluation.

Course Policies

- Focus: Class time requires your complete attention. All students are expected to participate in all class activities. This means no distractions, such as cell phone use, web browsing, texting/chatting, food, or working on other projects in class.
- Professionalism: Students are expected to act according to the professional environment of the classroom. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Maintaining a positive and open-minded attitude while participating in class discussions.
 - Progressively achieving the highest standards of quality of artwork to be submitted for grading.
 - Defending their artwork in an articulate manner that demonstrates critical and analytical thinking.
 - Demonstrating neat, self-disciplined, and timely work habits.
 - Attending class on time and staying throughout the whole class period.
- Resubmissions: Visual effects are a highly iterative process. I highly encourage revisions and resubmission of work based on feedback from the class. Resubmitted files should be submitted to the original submission folder on D2L. Resubmissions will be accepted until the beginning of the final class of the course. Project reviews are time based and therefore not eligible for resubmissions. Late work penalties cannot be made up by resubmissions.
- Late work: Assignments submitted late will have their grades reduced by 15% per class day the assignment is late. Late assignments are not eligible for resubmissions.
- Contact: Please attend office hours and ask questions in person, as this is often the fastest way to answer a complex question. I also am available outside of office hours by appointment. I make every effort to respond to email within 24 hours, with the exception of Sundays and holidays. If you have an issue or emergency, please contact me as soon as possible before the next class date.
- Have fun: While making films and VFX can be challenging and stressful, don't forget to have fun and enjoy the process. We are all artists, and our art thrives when we put all of our passion and enthusiasm into our work.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Precautions:

Keeping our DePaul community safe is of utmost importance in the pandemic. Students, faculty and staff are expected to:

- (1) wear a mask as required at all times while indoors on campus
- (2) refrain from eating and drinking in classrooms
- (3) keep current with their COVID-19 vaccinations or exemptions
- (4) stay home if sick

- (5) participate in any required COVID-19 testing
- (6) complete the online Health and Safety Guidelines for Returning to Campus training
- (7) abide by the City of Chicago Emergency Travel Advisory. By doing these things, we are Taking Care of DePaul, Together. The recommendations may change as local, state, and federal guidelines evolve. Students who do not abide by the mask requirement may be subject to the student conduct process and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office. Students who have a medical reason for not complying with any requirements should register with DePaul's Center for Student with Disabilities (CSD).

University Policies

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

Online Course Evaluations

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

Academic Policies

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at:

<http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: csd@depaul.edu.

Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.

Phone number: (312)362-8002

Fax: (312)362-6544

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