Syllabus for VFX-374 – Digital Compositing I

Course Information

Name: DIGITAL COMPOSITING I
Course #: VFX-374-401
Quarter: Fall 2016
Time: Tuesday 13:30 – 16:45
Campus: LOOP
Room: 14 E Jackson - 210
System: D2L

Instructor Information

Instructor: Savvas Paritsis (Assistant Professor)
                     MFA-NYU-Tisch School of the Arts
Office: CDM 404
Phone: 312-362-5857
e-mail: savvas@cdm.depaul.edu
Office hours: Wednesday 14:00 – 17:00
Advising hours: Monday 14:00 – 17:00

Course Summary

Compositing is the art of combining all the elements of a Visual Effect in one frame, making it look like it was all shot at the same time, under the same lights, with the same camera. This class introduces the fundamental techniques of digital compositing, using Adobe After Effects.

Learning goals

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be expected to:
- apply the fundamental techniques of compositing: transparency, keying, tracking.
- plan and execute simple Visual Effects, from conception to execution and delivery.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course, but some familiarity with Photoshop and Adobe Premiere Pro would be very useful.

Grading

Please note that late assignments will not be accepted. You must submit on time, even if you are not able to come to class on that particular day. There are many ways to submit material online. Make sure to read and understand the notes provided in class.

- Assignments: 50%
- Final Project: 25%
- Attendance: 25%

Textbooks

After Effects Apprentice - Real World Skills for the Aspiring Motion Graphics Artist
- Publisher: Focal Press; 3rd edition (August 23, 2012)
- ISBN-13: 978-0240817361
- Link: After Effects Apprentice

In addition, students have access to **Lynda.com**, where you can find all the lessons and materials contained in the book. To connect to Lynda.com, follow the link and log in with your Campus Connect ID: Lynda.com Login

Required Supplies: External Hard Drive

All our class exercises and home assignments deal with projects and media. It is the responsibility of the student to back up all projects & media. Do not leave your projects on the lab computer and always make sure to back up your portable drive to another drive back home. Please note: hardware problems are not acceptable as an excuse for late submissions.

Ideally, your drive should run at 7200 rpm, have a capacity of at least 500 GB (1 TB preferred) and have Thunderball, USB 3 or FW 800 connections. USB2 is NOT acceptable.

Week-by-week

Week 1 - Introduction
Introduction to Compositing and After Effects: Fundamental concepts of Compositing, Introduction to the AE Interface & Tools

Week 2 - Basic Animation
Basic Animation: Fundamentals of animation, Keyframes & Transform properties, Anchor Point, Keyframe types, Motion Sketch, Smoother, Project Settings & Parameters

Week 3 - Layer Control & Blending
Layer Control & Blending: Layer Editing, Stacking, Work Area, Effects & Presets
Assignment #1 is due.

Week 4 - Transparency A
Transparency - Part A: Mask & Pen tool, Bezier curves
Assignment #2 is due.

Week 5 - Transparency B
Transparency - Part B: Track Matte, Luma Matte, Stencils
Assignment #3 is due.

Week 6 – Keying
Keying: Import Issues, Footage Interpretation, Keylight basics

Week 7 – Tracking & Output
Tracking: Stabilization, 1-point tracking, 4-point tracking
Assignment #4 is due.

Week 8 – Additional Keying & Tracking tools
Color Correction, Alpha painting, Mocha Demo
Assignment #5 is due.

Week 9 – Group Project Review
Group presentations & Notes

Week 10 - Recap & Final Project Review
Recap & Final Project: Wish list, Questions, Final project

Course 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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