

MCOM 417: Advanced Video Production
Spring 2013
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m., UC323
Professor Drew Morton

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays (2:30-5 p.m.) and Wednesday (1 p.m.-6 p.m.), UC409.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

Advanced Video Production is a both a seminar that deals with the theory of new media and a practicum whose end result is a visual essay that brings together the theoretical readings of the course, a research subject of your own choosing, and film production technology. In the first ten weeks of the course, we will discuss several theories based around the ambiguous subject area of new media, which is often synonymous with theories of convergence and digital media. Students are expected to critically engage with these readings both in an essay format and in an in-class discussion and to utilize them as a philosophical foundation to their visual essay (which will be completed in the final five weeks of the semester, both with in-class supervised lab time and on your own).

Before the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand the fundamental theories of new media.
2. Critically engage with the theories discussed in class via short response papers.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of basic new media production tools.
4. Mobilize the new media theories assigned in class for the creation of a new media object.

REQUIRED TEXTS/MATERIALS:

Bolter, Jay David and Richard Grusin. Remediation: Understanding New Media (MIT Press, 1999). ISBN: 978-0262522793.

Manovich, Lev. The Language of New Media (MIT Press, 2001). ISBN: 978-0262133746.

Weynand, Diana. Apple Pro Training Series: Final Cut Express 4 (Peachpit Press, 2007).

3 Pack of Mini-DV tapes.

Other required readings will be distributed in PDF format via electronic distribution.

You will also need to be able to secure the films being assigned for a given day. You can do this through Netflix or Amazon Streaming most easily.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Response Papers (4): 40%

Final Creative Project: 40%

Class Attendance/Participation/Quizzes: 20%

Response Papers and the Creative Project

The conceptual depth (old media vs. new media, theories of industrial convergence, and new media practice) of this class requires a great deal of reading and viewing. That said, in order to gauge your comprehension of the material, you will be required to turn in response papers that analyze one film within the context of one of the three aforementioned frameworks. The

framework will be assigned by me. The response papers are to be no longer than three pages, double-spaced, and will provide a spring board for your final research paper.

The final visual essay will not be assigned but will rather be determined by you and I during a mandatory meeting in week six of the semester.

Both the bi-weekly response papers and the final research paper should be typed using Times New Roman 12 pt. font and double-spaced with 1-inch margins on all sides.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Weeks One and Two: Old Media vs. New Media: Remediation and Reproduction

01.22: Introduction

01.24: Reading: Bolter and Grusin, 2-84.

01.29: Reading: Choose one chapter from the second section of Bolter and Grusin (except the computer games chapter!). You will present a brief outline of the chosen section.

01.31: Reading: Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," (PDF).
Screening: Exit Through the Gift Shop (2010).
Response Paper #1 (Remediation) Due

Weeks Three through Five: Old Media vs. New Media: The Language of New Media

02.05: Reading: Manovich, Introduction.
In-Class Screening: Man with a Movie Camera (1929).

02.07: Reading: Manovich, Chapter One.

02.12: Reading: Manovich, Chapter Two.

02.14: Reading: Manovich, Chapter Three.

02.19: Reading: Manovich, Chapter Four and Five.

02.21: Reading: Manovich, Chapter Six.
Response Paper #2 (The Language of New Media) Due

Week Six: Convergence Culture and Transmedia Storytelling

02.26: Reading: Henry Jenkins, "Searching for the Origami Unicorn: The Matrix and Transmedia Storytelling," (PDF).
Screening: The Matrix (1999).

02.28: Reading: Drew Morton, "Stylistic Remediation Becomes Transmedia Style: The Scott Pilgrim Experience," (PDF).

In-Class Screening: Scott Pilgrim vs. The World (2010).
Mandatory Meeting Regarding Final Creative Projects

Weeks Seven through Nine: Video Game Theory and Practice

- 03.05: Reading: Roger Ebert, "Video Games Can Never Be Art," (Online).
Henry Jenkins, "Games, The New Lively Art," (Online).
Playing: Pick a game of your choice (can be computer, console, or smart phone based) and play it for 2 hours.
- 03.07: Reading: Wolf and Perron, Chapter Four (Handout).
Drew Morton, David O'Grady, and Jennifer Porst, "Towards a New Genre of Video Game Play," (Online).
Response Paper #3 (Transmedia) Due
- 03.19: Reading: Bolter and Grusin, 88-103.
- 03.21: Reading: Henry Jenkins, "Game Design as Narrative Architecture," (PDF).
Jorge Luis Borges, "The Garden of Forking Paths," (Online.).
Screening: The Game (1997).
- 03.26: Reading: Wolf and Perron, Chapter Three (Handout).
Screening: The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters (2007).
- 03.28: Reading: Wolf and Perron, Chapter Five (Handout).
Response Paper #4 (Video Games) Due

Weeks Ten through Fourteen: New Media Practice

04.02-05.02: In Class Lab Time

Week Fifteen:

- 05.07: Presentations of New Media Creations
- 05.09: Presentations of New Media Creations

COURSE POLICIES:

Be sure to complete your reading and assignments on the date they are scheduled on the syllabus.

Late assignments are not accepted.

Excessive absences will affect your final grade in the course (see the grade breakdown above).
If you miss more than eight meetings, you will be terminated from the course.

Cell phones are to be set on vibrate and not to be used during class.

Be sure to bring all your course materials to class each day we meet (this includes the textbooks, DV tapes, etc.).

This is a lab-intensive course. That means that attendance and participation are especially important. You will be asked to share and critique one another's creative work (constructively and kindly!). Please see me if you have any reservations about this.

You are not required to buy any software for this course. Supervised, in-class, lab time will be provided to you. If you should you need access to the lab's resources outside of class, let me know.

This class involves new media theory and practice. You need not be an artist to function as a designer! All I ask is that you approach everything with a patient and open mind. Do not admit defeat in the face of these new technological and creative challenges. If I can do it, you can do it (and that is meant to be self-effacing towards me, not you)!

Finally, please allow a 24-48 hour turn-around time for any e-mails. Due to this policy, be sure not to leave any major concerns/questions about assignments for the last minute!

I reserve the right to alter this syllabus.

TAMUT POLICIES:

Disability Accommodations: Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the A&M-Texarkana Disability Services Office by calling 903-223-3062.

Academic Integrity: Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in this course. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, plagiarism, and undocumented use of materials from any source constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of 'F' in the course and/or disciplinary actions. For additional information, see the university catalog.

A&M-Texarkana Email Address: Upon application to Texas A&M University-Texarkana an individual will be assigned an A&M-Texarkana email account. This email account will be used to deliver official university correspondence. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via the university email account and is expected to check the official A&M-Texarkana email account on a frequent and consistent basis. Faculty and students are required to utilize the university email account when communicating about coursework.

Drop Policy: To drop this course after the census date (see [semester calendar](http://tamut.edu/Registrar/droppingwithdrawing-from-classes.html)), a student must complete the Drop/Withdrawal Request Form, located on the University website <http://tamut.edu/Registrar/droppingwithdrawing-from-classes.html> or obtained in the Registrar's Office. The student must submit the signed and completed form to the instructor of each course indicated on the form to be dropped for his/her signature. The signature is not an "approval" to drop, but rather confirmation that the student has discussed the drop/withdrawal with the faculty member. The form must be submitted to

the Registrar's office for processing in person, email Registrar@tamut.edu, mail (7101 University Ave., Texarkana, TX 75503) or fax (903-223-3140). Drop/withdraw forms missing any of the required information will not be accepted by the Registrar's Office for processing. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the form is completed properly before submission. If a student stops participating in class (attending and submitting assignments) but does not complete and submit the drop/withdrawal form, a final grade based on work completed as outlined in the syllabus will be assigned.