

Creative & Interactive Media Lab
lab.smashcast.org

SMASH Academy 2006

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 2:30 – 5:30pm
Evans, Rm. 39

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“Science and art belong to the whole world, and before them vanish the barriers of nationality.”

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

I. Course Description

Fusing creative media with technology, the Creative & Interactive Media Lab will teach students to use modern software, artistic expression, and relatable programming principles to create a variety of multimedia projects. Using the programs Dreamweaver, Photoshop, and Flash, students will create personal website profiles, animations and even program their own basic interactive games! A demanding curriculum will expose students to the creative process at a college level, and will incorporate mathematical principles and real world logic to teach programming languages.

II. Course Aims and Objectives:

Aims – Developing Creative & Technical Problem Solving Skills:

The aim of this course is to provide students with the confidence to approach the challenges of new technology, and the ability to effectively communicate their ideas in our increasingly digital world. Media technology is always evolving, but a solid understanding of the fundamentals behind the technology will provide each student with the instincts to solve more difficult problems that will arise with further advancements in the technology.

Specific Learning Objectives – The Relationship between Programming & Creativity:

Using Dreamweaver and Flash, students will develop their ability to distinguish between computer code and digital design, and the way that our modern technology fuses the two. Both of these programs have a unique **Code/Design** viewing interface that allows a user to understand the relationship between the two.

By the end of this course, students will have a greater familiarity with media technology such that they will be able to analyze this technology in terms of its programming and its creative design. This ability to break down common forms of technology, will ultimately allow you to produce your own media that will rival what we frequently consume at the mainstream level.

III. Format and Procedures:

Each three-hour lab session will be an intensive "hands-on" work period, supplemented with **demonstrations, group discussions and regular homework assignments**. Students should come prepared to work through challenging problem-solving exercises both in and out of class.

IV. Course Requirements:

1. Attendance

Attendance in every class is mandatory. Students will be responsible for any information or material missed as a result of missing class or arriving late. Students who must arrive late because of a prior English class will be excused, but still responsible from retrieving any missed information from their peers or the course website.

2. Course Materials:

(a) Course Website – Lab.smashcast.org: All supplemental readings, handouts, and tutorials will be available on the course website under the following sections:

- **Course Information**
- **Assignments**
- **Resources**

Before asking one of the instructors for help or clarity on any aspects of the course, **MAKE SURE TO CHECK THE COURSE WEBSITE FIRST!**

Additionally, the section titled, **External Links**, will contain information related to the various areas of the course. Use this section as a way to explore the various resources on the Internet and to enhance your understanding of course concepts, assignments, etc.

(b) Student Web Profiles: Each student will have their own page on the course website where they will post assignments and any other work they complete in class. This is also how you will turn in your homework (no need to print it out, or email it) for grading. In addition to completing the assignment you must annotate each project with a brief response statement summarizing your understanding of the concepts introduced in the assignment as well as a description of how you chose to solve the specific problem. **Your final grade will be determined by what is visible on your web profile page.**

(c) Required Software: The following software programs will be installed on each student's laptop on the first day of class or when designated by the instructor.

- **Macromedia Dreamweaver 8**
- **Adobe Photoshop CS2**
- **Macromedia Flash 8**

V. Grading Criteria: “Do your work, but more importantly, do it *well!*”

Participation	(10%)
Assignment 1	(15%)
Assignment 2	(15%)
Assignment 3	(15%)
Assignment 4	(15%)
Final Project	(30%)

Grades will be determined *first* on effort and *second* on execution. The projects are not meant to be a measure of your ability to complete and turn in assignments, but rather a measure of your ability to think methodically and creatively as you work towards solving the problem. Incomplete projects must be turned in on the due date for evaluation, but may be continued throughout the remainder of the course until the point of completion.

In other words: An incomplete project might not necessitate a lower grade, and a complete project might not necessitate a higher grade, but all projects must be turned in on time.

VI. Interactive Media Course Schedule

Week 1 - June 27 Multimedia & The Web	Discussion: What is media? How does it function in websites? Activity: Create a web profile and personal statement w/ references Homework: Revise personal statement and find more references
Week 1 – June 29 Multimedia & The Web	Discussion: What is an effective reference? How do you find it? Activity 1: Finalize web profiles and upload to course website Activity 2: Create a nametag montage with found imagery. Homework: Finalize nametag montage and insert in web profile.
Week 2 – July 4 (no class)	Homework: Finalize nametag montage and insert in web profile.
Week 2 – July 6 Understanding Flash	ASSIGNMENTS 1 & 2 DUE: Review & Critique Web Profiles Activity: The Interactive Presentation: <i>What's in A Word?</i> Homework: Prepare all the meanings for your assigned word.
Week 3 – July 11 Flash Basics	Discussion: How does interactivity aid communication? Activity: The Interactive Presentation: <i>What's in A Word?</i> (cont.) Homework: Create one frame for each interpretation of your word
Week 3 – July 13 Flash Basics	Discussion: Flash Q&A: Troubleshooting Your Projects... Activity: The Interactive Presentation: <i>What's in A Word?</i> Homework: Finalize Presentations and Upload to Web Profile
Week 4 – July 18 ActionScript: The Flash Programming Language	ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE: Review & Critique Presentations Final Project Discussion: Create an Interactive Game Activity: The Interactive Online Poll: <i>"Multi-Poll" Choices</i> Homework: Develop AT LEAST 15 quantitative questions
Week 4 – July 20 ActionScript: The Flash Programming Language	FIELDTRIP: Microsoft's Silicon Valley Campus Discussion: Using Polls to Profile People: Are they accurate? Homework: Finalize Online Polls and Upload to Web Profile
Week 5 – July 25 Final Project: The Interactive Game	ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE: Review & Critique Online Polls Activity: Create a flow chart representing your entire game Homework: Finalize the sequence of your interactive game.
Week 5 – July 27 Final Project: The Interactive Game	Activity: IN-CLASS WORKDAY: Finalize Your Game Homework: Finalize and upload your game to your web profile.