ASTU 4450 // NM TOPICS

Info

Tuesday and Thursday 2:00 - 4:50 // Curry 316

Description

ASTU 4450 is designed to explore variable concepts and processes in new media art making. This course is structured around three components – studio work, the development of technical skills, and discussions on the broad field of new media / electronic and time–based arts. Artistic voice is emphasized over technical skills. Prerequisite(s): ASTU 3450; or consent of instructor.

ASTU 4450 will focus on ideas surrounding MEDIATED BODIES, exploring the linguistic and physical limitations of comparing and contrasting ‘body’ to ‘technology.’ Students will explore how representations of bodies in electronic and performed media interrelate with constructions of gender, race, class, sexuality, age, disease, and criminality in postmodern culture. Special attention will be paid to how video and performance artists construct gender, race and other identity markers, and to video and performance artists whose identities as queer and people of color shape the creation and reception of the work.

What does it mean to integrate media and performance? How can artists harness new media and available technology for performance based work? Is documentation of a performed act a mediated performance? Further, how do we perform the daily use of technology? To investigate these questions we will begin by examining avant-garde practices in theater and literature during the 50s, 60s and 70s together with media art of the 80s and 90s. We will then trace these foundations within contemporary approaches to performance and virtual reality.

Expectations

• Come to class prepared & on time with the materials you need to work.
• Turn in assignments when they are due. Late or incomplete work may be graded, but not critiqued. Late work will be penalized a full letter grade for each day it’s late.
• Participate consistently in class discussions and critiques (especially those that are not your own).
• Respect your peers’ opinions, beliefs, orientations, and histories when civilly discussing work and concepts.
• Share your skills, experiences, and energy to strengthen the community.
• Look beyond the façade of aesthetics at the conceptual framework that underpins your project.
• Research everything all the time.
• Attempt to explore difficult questions in your work; this will be rewarded in your grades. Utilize the library and Internet as resources for researching artists and exhibitions.
• Gain support of your fellow students, and take collaborative risks when warranted.
Goals

• Activate a critical awareness of how we “perform” the use of everyday media and technology
• Develop a series of projects that respond to class themes and readings
• Expand our definition of “performance” to foster an appreciation for performances that occur beyond a screen
• Demonstrate the ability to research, organize, create and present an effective oral and visual presentation on an assigned subject;
• Demonstrate a grounding and realistic understanding of how to pursue an art project that uses multiple technologies
• Demonstrate proper procedure, maintenance, and competency with all New Media equipment.
• Identify patterns in historical and contemporary performance art practices
• Analyze critically your own work and the work of others in critique.

Method of Instruction

This studio course offers a three-tiered pedagogy: discussion/analysis, practice/experimentation and review/context. In-class lectures, exercises, technical labs, open-critique, discussion of readings/artists, and mile-stones will drive the course.

ASTU 4450 is divided into “input” and “output” days. Input Days (Tuesdays) center on acquiring skills/knowledge through exercises, discussion/analysis of readings or artists, group focus work and workshops. Output Days (Thursdays) are devoted to results: critique, review of student projects, one-on-one assessment meetings, and in-class work time.

Materials

You are responsible with providing the following:

• Articles, text, and links as assigned -- there is no required textbook purchase for this class, but there will be quite a lot of reading. All required reading material will be available online or will be placed on reserve in the library.
• A sketchbook/ journal
• Whatever other supplies your projects dictate. The University may have some of these, but probably not everything. (Pens, pencils, sewing kit, etc)
• UNT Email (This is how we will communicate outside of class)
• Shop cards- you must go through proper training & protocol to acquire shop cards for both the Sculpture Studio and the Fab Lab. (Yes these are two cards)
• External Hard Drive (at least 500 GB, 7200rpm) Seagate, LaCie, Western Digital, etc. Expect to pay around $120.00 for these, and I recommend the LaCie Rugged USB drive. (it is your responsibility to save your work).

* Students may check out and are responsible for returning, in good working order, the following camera package and equipment. (See separate list)

Students are financially responsible for missing, neglected, or broken equipment. Replacements can be ordered by contacting Mary Braden, who will provide you with a quote for the item in question. Students must turn in all equipment and rented materials in order to receive a final grade for the class.

Software Tutorial Resources

All students have free access to the website Lynda.com, you may access Lynda after the 12th class day.

Grading

You will be evaluated on the basis of completed projects (70%), & attendance and participation (30%). Projects will be graded on their timely completion (40%), originality in visual and conceptual approach (30%) and evidence of skill development, attention to detail and research (30%). Other factors that will affect your grade include participation in class
discussions, ability to respond to criticism and relate to suggestions for improvement to your work.

Break it down:

- PARTNER: 20 pts
- WEARABLE: 20 pts
- PERFORMANCE: 20 pts
  - Artist Presentation: 10 pts
  - Portfolio (with exhibition app receipt): 10 pts
  - Artist Statement: 10 pts
  - Attendance + Participation: 10 pts
- Total= 100 points possible

Your grade for individual projects will be evaluated on creativity AND craftsmanship. Creativity is your individual and unique approach to the assignment. Craftsmanship is your level of mastery of the technical aspects, including presentation. While active participation in class can raise your grade, the converse is true.

A = Superior – The grade A indicates that work is superlative and surpasses expectations for the assignment, that critique participation is exceptional, often leading discussions with full interest in other students’ ideas and work. 95-100 pts= A /// 90-95 pts= A-

B = Above Average – The grade B indicates that work is extraordinary and goes beyond the minimal requirements of an assignment, that critique participation is exemplary and fully respectful of other students’ ideas. 87-89 pts= B /// 83-86 pts= B /// 80-82 pts= B-

C = Average – The grade C indicates that work is completed as assigned, that participation in the critique is regular and fully respectful of other students’ ideas. 77-79 pts= C+ /// 73-76 pts= C /// 70-72 pts= C-

D = Below Average – The grade D indicates that work is completed, but is not completed as assigned, that participation in critique is sporadic or minimal. 60-69 pts= D+ ///

F = Fail – The grade F indicates that work is not completed as assigned and that there is minimal or no participation in the assignment critique. Below 60 pts= F ///

Questions
If you have questions about a grade from a specific project, you can make an appointment to discuss it with me during office hours. Questions about grades will not be allowed after 1 week of receiving the grade.

Critiques
A major component of the course is the ongoing development of an ability to comment upon work made by oneself and one’s peers. It is beneficial to receive such comments as they can accelerate ideas and act as motivation for future work. Your participation in critique is important. It will be considered as a component of your project grade and your final grade. Attendance of all class critiques is MANDATORY unless you have made arrangements in advance with Professor LaFleur to have an excused absence on that specific day. Being late to critique is disruptive, rude and hindering to the overall atmosphere. Failure to attend final class critique days will result in a failing course grade. It is important for everyone to be present and to start on time in order to adequately critique everyone’s work. Your participation in critique is important and it will be considered as a component of your project grade and your final grade.
Open Studio

Studio time will be built into this class. This time is for you to work under supervision in the classroom. This is the best
time to ask me specific questions about your work, and get feedback on your works in progress. It is expected that
you will have enough work to occupy the full class period.

Computer Issues

Occasionally, problems do arise. Files can be accidentally erased, disks can be corrupted, networks can crash, and
printers can break down. Be prepared! Backup all files. Drives and disks are cheap, your time is not.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory.

I will take attendance at the beginning of class. Two unexcused absences will lower the final grade by one degree (+/-).
Three unexcused absences will lower the final grade by one letter. Subsequent absences will lower the final grade by
an additional letter for each absence. In the event of medical, sports or extreme circumstances, an absence may be
excused at the professor's discretion.

2 tardies = 1 absence. Tardiness is defined as being 10 minutes late for class or departing 10 minutes before the
instructor has formally dismissed the class. A tardy that exceeds one half hour will be counted as an absence. Anyone
who does not make it back to class on time after a break will be marked tardy for that class. Likewise anyone who
does not return to class after the first half of class will be marked absent for the class. Students who miss
presentations and class discussions due to absences must obtain notes and assignment descriptions for the classes
missed from a responsible classmate prior to the end of the next class period.

Honor Code

To create a respectful learning environment, each student in this course agrees to an honor code, refraining from
stealing, lying about University business, and cheating on academic work. Breaking this honor code will result in a
failing grade in the course.

  • Stealing is the intentional taking of any property without right or permission // plagiarism.
  • Lying is intentional misrepresentation of any form.
  • Cheating is any practice, method, or assistance, whether explicitly forbidden or unmentioned, that involves any
degree of dishonesty, fraud, or deceit. Cheating includes plagiarism, which is representing another’s ideas or
words as one’s own.
  • Each student is responsible for learning and observing appropriate documentation of another’s work.

Disability Statement

The College of Visual Art and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those
with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty
members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disability, such as
appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when
doing so does not fundamentally alter the course.

If you have a disability it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability
Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must
be given to me no later than the first week of classes, your accommodation request will be considered after the
deadline. Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to
obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at www.unt.edu/oda, and by visiting the
ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You may also call the ODA at 940.565.4323.
Course Risk Factor

This course is recognized that there are certain risks inextricably associated with certain activities within the lab, and categories are assigned to the risk factors. Working with computers in a lab environment such as this class’ is considered a category 2 risk. I ask every student to be especially mindful of these risks. Be concerned for your safety and the safety of those around you, specifically as it relates to how you use your computer equipment.

Building Emergency Procedures

In case of an emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of a tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather related threat, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your teacher and act accordingly.

Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities

Each University of North Texas student is entitled to certain rights associated with higher education institutions. See www.unt.edu/csrr for further information. The instructor retains the right to change the syllabus with or without notice.

A few words about subject matter...

Art is always subjective. What someone considers beauty others might consider obscene. Regardless, it is my strict policy to never censor your art or restrain your freedom of speech. There are, however, some considerations in which to make note. As this class deals with the use of photographic/ videographic imagery it is important to be aware that recording illegal activities or illicit substances could very well lead to legal troubles with the authorities. Be aware that even though you may only be “documenting” said activities or substances you could still be implicated if anyone was to find your imagery problematic. The University follows all the laws of the State of Texas to the letter. Be the “cutting-edge” artist you want to be...but make sure you are protected legally, and if you ever have a question please ASK ME!

Course Schedule

* See Attached