INTRO TO COMPUTING ART
ART 2803

FALL 2023 / SEC 01

STAFFORD 119

MONDAY / WEDNESDAY
3:00PM - 5:50PM
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shauha.us/MSU/msu/
fall_23/2803_F_23

F2F

INSTRUCTOR:

AUBREY POHL (HE/HIM)
APOHL@CAAD.MSSTATE.EDU
(48 HOUR RESPONSE)
APOHL.XYZ
STAFFORD 211

OFFICE HOURS

BY APPOINTMENT / EMAIL
AND/OR
SCHEDULE A TIME TO MEET
IN MY OFFICE OR AT 929
COFFEE BAR.

ART 2803 / INTRO TO COMPUTING ART

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will build upon your foundational under-
standings of art, design, and conceptual thinking, as well as
explore the application of these foundations in the realm of
computing art. This course functions as a introduction to new
tools, software, concepts, creative methods, etc, as well as
an exploration of your individual creative process, research,
organization, and execution of ideas. Although we will focus
primarily on Adobe creative programs such as Photoshop, Illus-
trator, and Indesign, we will also look beyond these tools to
alternative or emerging methods of digital design (art).

COURSE STRUCTURE

In all disciplines, but especially in the creative arts
fields, most of the learning happens by doing the thing. Do
not underestimate your ability to self-learn and adapt to new
tools and challenges, as this is more important than any kind
of instruction I can give you. Work by yourself, research,
practice, question, work with each other, talk to each other
about the work, etc. More than anything, we need to be prob-
lem solvers (personally, I like to take as scientific approach
as I can to the art and design process). That being said, the
course is structured from a collection of the following:

PROJECTS - long term, intensive projects that are to be ap-
proached with extreme detail, care, and effort, and produce
portfolio defining work.

MINI-PROJECTS - short term, sometimes within a day, projects
or workshops that expose us to new tools, methods, modes of
thinking, concepts etc. These are low-stakes get your hands
dirty and experimental projects used to widen our perspectives
and give us productive rest in between larger projects.

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TUTORIALS - The classroom is often a mix of skill and technical abilities. To make sure the in-class time is productive for everyone, many days will function as tutorial walkthroughs for different tools or software that expose us to a variety of methods and capabilities of the computer as a tool for creating. Self-discovery and exploration is still vital, but making sure that everyone has some kind of shared understanding helps us move forward as a class as well as individuals.

WORKING DAYS - Some days (most days) the task at hand is simply to work (do the thing, whatever that needs to be). During working days, I will visit students one at a time or in small groups to discuss progress, give feedback, or assist with an issue in the process. PROCESS! The process of design (sketching, writing, thinking, testing, researching, etc) is more important than the final product, in my opinion (most of the time (for now)). Your process will grow and change as you do, and putting proper work and time into the development and exploration of your working processes will make you a stronger designer (problem solver).

CRITIQUE DAYS - SUPER DUPER ABSOLUTELY IMPORTANT! We learn by doing the work, but we grow as artists and conceptual thinkers by discussing the work with one another. Critique days are used to finish projects, where we present and discuss our final outputs and what we discovered along the way to one another. If you are presenting, tell us what you did and why you did it. Don't dwell on what you didn't do, and don't shoot your work down before we have the chance to take it in and respond. Be thoughtful, intentional, clear, precise, and brief (don't ramble too long. Explain the important concepts first and defend your choices with detail once a discussion has prompted so). If are not presenting, you should be looking, listening, digesting, and taking notes (for yourself and/or for others).

BREAKS - Breaks are just as important as the work itself. They give you time to digest or ponder solutions to a problem, and often to get some much needed mental rest. On working days,

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breaks can be taken (respectfully) as needed. Get a coffee. Take a walk. Stare at a bird and watch it rustle leaves around while it searches for seeds or insects. Etc. We will take regular class-wide breaks, but I have a tendency to ramble, so be prepared for breaks to take place at different times on different days.

alksdjfa;osdifjalskdasldkfj (nonsense) - Art and design are fluid practices. Like everything else in the world (including yourselves) it is always changing. While we do build from a strong foundation of understanding and history that came before us, we are also making discoveries everyday (even if they have been made before). When it needs to, the classroom can also become fluid. Be ready (as ready as you can be) for change in the project, process, structure, philosophy, etc.

REQUIREMENTS

Sketch book and sketching materials. Different tools work for different people, and digital sketching is okay, but you should also have a sketchbook for the course if you are able. Writing and sketching by hand helps us think through our ideas in ways a computer can not mimic, and guess what, a sketch book never runs out of battery!
*keep in mind that a sketch doesn't have to be an image on paper. Think outside the box (book).

Computer (duh). A Mac machine is HIGHLY recommended, with as much ram and storage you can afford. PC is okay, but you may be surprised to know that Mac is far more accessible when it comes to handling most creative softwares and printing.

External Hard Drive. I am not going to force you to purchase a hard drive if you cannot afford one, but they are a life saver and then some, and can help your computer run faster when using high capacity programs such as Adobe software. There are many options out there, but make sure it is a SSD drive. (solid state drive).

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Adobe Creative Suite. MSU is an Adobe Creative Campus, which means you are able to access all of the programs for $50 a year (yayyyy!). If you already are paying for a subscription, you should be able to contact Adobe and get the cheaper rate:

https://www.adobe.msstate.edu/student

OPEN MIND - Cheesy, sure, but still important. Artists and designers face an array of unique challenges with each project, and it is important not to assume an answer without exploring and putting your ideas to the test. There is no such thing as a perfect output, but rather endless possible solutions to an issue of visual communication. The intentional misuse of tools can be just as impactful as their intended use. New technology does not always equal better technology. Your perspective is important, but so is your ability to consider new or outside perspectives. Don't spend too much time trying to establish a style, but explore as many solutions as you can. Your "style" will show organically, and often changes (as you do (seeing a theme yet?)). So on and so forth.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

I've rambled enough, I'll keep this part simple. Our objective(s) for this course is not only to produce exceptional work, but much more importantly, to produce exceptional designers, artists, problem solvers, humans, etc, etc, etc, etc. Good work is a side affect of good people.

PHONE POLICY

No phones, headphones, or other distracting devices are allowed to be used in class. However, when we are not actively discussing something as a class, we will share and listen to music as a class:

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is not only mandatory, but absolutely vital to the development of your work and processes as an emerging designer. In my classes, or life in general for that matter, it is important to understand that mental and physical health comes before all else. I can be very flexible when it comes to lateness or absences, and ask that you communicate with me via email as you are comfortable if you are facing a crisis that you believe is going to affect your attendance. Do not abuse this flexibility, as it comes from a place of respect for each of you as human beings, I ask that you return this respect to me and my class (and each other). Design is an act of community, and your interactions with your peers and figures of design authority alike is one of the most important factors in learning design. My attendance policy is as follows:

Everyone is granted two free absences. That means you can miss two classes without notice and without penalty.
*this does not apply to project critique days.

Every (recorded) absence after your two free days result in a letter grade drop per absence.
(for example: 3 absences = automatic B, 4 = C, etc).

*** by staying in this course you agree to the rules and guidelines in this syllabus. Please refer to the following link to observe the important and mandatory MSU academic policies that fall under this agreement:

https://www.provost.msstate.edu/faculty-student-resources/university-syllabus ***

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EVALUATION / GRADING

Student work and projects will be evaluated as follows:

Each project starts at the ground floor, level 0, which means
each student much effectively complete the project in order to
attain the highest possible grade. This grade is determined by
work ethic, execution, process work, engagement, conceptual
development and application, and meeting of set deadlines.

Every deadline is a crucial part of the project, and must be
met with the highest possible degree of completion. As a de-
signer myself I understand the development of individual work-
flows and processes, however, as projects develop I will work
with students to advise and inform these processes under the
guidelines of the course / projects.

Projects are evaluated not only by the quality of the work,
but also by the level of care, detail, research, and develop-
ment put into the objective.

*YOUR FIRST IDEA IS VIRTUALLY NEVER YOUR BEST IDEA. Working
through your ideas and concepts alongside instructor direction
and peer review is crucial to formulating your best work.

Evaluation breakdown (subject to change):

~ 30% Exercises / Mini Projects
~ 50% Projects (From concept development to execution)
~ 20% Engagement in group critiques, class discussions,
research, processes work, and daily attendance / engagement.

**I will never tell you what to do. My job (as I see it) is to
provoke, assist, inspire, and improve your ideas, not create
them for you (self discovery!!).**

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IMPORTANT DATES (MSU)

AUGUST
----
22   LAST DAY TO DROP A CLASS WITHOUT A GRADE
23   LAST DAY TO REGISTER OR ADD A COURSE

SEPTEMBER
----
04   HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)
27   FIRST PROGRESS GRADES DUE

OCTOBER
----
05   LAST DAY TO DROP A CLASS WITH A 'W'
11   AP AT AIGA CONFERENCE (NO CLASS)
12-13 HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)
20   SECOND PROGRESS GRADES DUE
23   FACULTY ADVISING STARTS

NOVEMBER
----
13   LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM SEMESTER
17   FACULTY ADVISING ENDS
22-24 HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)
27   CLASSES RESUME
29   CLASSES END
30   READING DAY

DECEMBER

01-07 FINAL EXAM(S) / FINAL CRITIQUE
02   MAKE-UP DAY (IF NEEDED)
*   OUR FINAL CRITIQUE DAY IS TBD

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INTRO TO COMPUTING ART    COURSE OVERVIEW (subject to change)
ART 2803                  ------------------------------------------------------------
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FALL 2023 / SEC 01        WEEK 01    SYLLABUS INTRODUCTION
----------------------    ------------------------------------------------------------
STAFFORD 119              WEEK 02    MINI-PROJECT 01
----------------------    ------------------------------------------------------------
MONDAY / WEDNESDAY        WEEK 03    TUTORIALS / IN CLASS SOFTWARE PRACTICE
3:00PM - 5:50PM           ------------------------------------------------------------
----------------------    WEEK 04    09.04 - HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)
shauha.us/MSU/msu/                   PROJECT 01 START
fall_23/2803_F_23         ------------------------------------------------------------
----------------------    WEEK 05    WORKING DAYS / TUTORIALS
F2F                       ------------------------------------------------------------
----------------------    WEEK 06    WORKING DAYS / TUTORIALS
INSTRUCTOR:               ------------------------------------------------------------
----------------------    WEEK 07    PROJECT 01 END
AUBREY POHL (HE/HIM)      ------------------------------------------------------------
APOHL@CAAD.MSSTATE.EDU    WEEK 08    PROJECT 02 START
(48 HOUR RESPONSE)        ------------------------------------------------------------
APOHL.XYZ                 WEEK 09    WORKING DAYS / TUTORIALS
STAFFORD 211                         10.11 - AP @ AIGA (NO CLASS)
                          ------------------------------------------------------------
OFFICE HOURS              WEEK 10    WORKING DAYS / TUTORIALS
----------------------    ------------------------------------------------------------
BY APPOINTMENT / EMAIL    WEEK 11    PROJECT 02 END
*AND/OR*                  ------------------------------------------------------------
SCHEDULE A TIME TO MEET   WEEK 12    MINI-PROJECT 02
IN MY OFFICE OR AT 929    ------------------------------------------------------------
COFFEE BAR.               WEEK 13    PROJECT 03 START
----------------------    ------------------------------------------------------------
                          WEEK 14    WORKING DAYS / TUTORIALS
                          ------------------------------------------------------------
                          WEEK 15    WORKING DAYS / TUTORIALS
                                     11.22 - HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)
                          ------------------------------------------------------------
                          WEEK 16    WORKING DAYS / TUTORIALS
                          ------------------------------------------------------------
                          WEEK 17    PROJECT 03 END / FINAL CRITIQUE (TBD)
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