



## COURSE OUTLINE

**Course Number**  
DMA135

**Course Title**  
Digital Narrative

**Credits**  
3

**Hours:**  
**lecture/Lab/Other (1/4)**

**Pre-requisites**  
ART102, ART105 & DMA105 or permission of  
instructor

**Implementation**  
Fall 2009

### **Catalog description:**

Provides an exploration of narrative art, its structure and approaches, as it applies to time-based graphics. Students will investigate narrative in a variety of formats from comics to animation to film editing and various "artistic" permutations in between with emphasis on current digital practices.

### **Revised**

This course is revised by name and content. It was formerly named "Digital Audio & Video Production".

### **Required texts/other materials:** To be purchased by student

16+ GB removable storage device  
Sketch Pad/Book 9" X 12", 11" X 14", 14" X 17", 12" X 18" or 18" X 24"  
Sketch tools/media: pencils, colored pencils, pens, and/or markers, etc.  
Motion Graphics Design: Applied History & Aesthetics, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, by Jon Krasner

**Revision date:** 9/16/09

**Course coordinator:** Michelle Barfoot, X3458, barfootm@mccc.edu

### **Information resources:**

**Internet:** *As indicated by the instructor*

### **Suggested Reading:** *[Available at the school library]*

Cinematic Storytelling by Jennifer Van Sijll  
The Animator's Survival Kit, by Richard Williams, 2002  
How Video Works, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition by Weise  
Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art, Scott McCloud  
Visual Storytelling: The Art and Technique, Tony Caputo  
First Cut: Conversations With Film Editors, Gabriella Oldham  
Making Movies Work: Thinking Like a Filmmaker, Jon Boorstin  
In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Walter Murch  
From Word to Image: Storyboarding and the Filmmaking Process, Marcie Begleiter  
Filmmaking: Narrative and Structural Techniques, Bob Foss  
The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structures For Writers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Christopher Vogler

## **Other learning resources:**

Class membership on [www.lynda.com](http://www.lynda.com) for software training modules used in the course

## **Course Competencies/Goals:**

### ***The student will be able to:***

1. Understand historical perspectives on narrative creation both before and after the digital revolution;
2. Understand basic narrative structure and technique;
3. Demonstrate how to plan and execute a time-based media project;
4. Implement storyboarding techniques as a planning tool in the design of time-based narratives;
5. Apply basic design principles, visual storytelling and cinematography techniques to create a digital narrative work of art;
6. Demonstrate usage of formal animation techniques such as, sequencing, staging and timing;
7. Apply industry standard software tools as they relate to the production of animation, motion graphics and video editing;

## **Course-specific General Education Knowledge Goals and Core Skills.**

### **General Education Knowledge Goals**

**Goal 1. Communication.** Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

**Goal 4. Technology.** Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

**Goal 6. Humanities.** Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

**Goal 7. History.** Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

### **MCCC Core Skills**

**Goal A. Written and Oral Communication in English.** Students will communicate effectively in speech and writing, and demonstrate proficiency in reading.

**Goal B. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving.** Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information.

**Goal D. Information Literacy.** Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

**Goal E. Computer Literacy.** Students will use computers to access, analyze or present information, solve problems, and communicate with others.

## **Units of study in detail.**

### **Unit I**

#### **Digital Narrative Theory**

Students will learn about narrative concepts for the creation of linear time-based media forms such as video/film, 2D animation and motion graphics. Elements of visual

storytelling will be introduced including: context, character, conflict, plot, temporal and spatial staging.

**Learning Objectives**

***The student will be able to...***

Unit Objective:	Course Competencies							Gen Ed				Core			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	4	6	7	A	B	D	E
<i>i</i>	x	x		x		x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x
<i>ii</i>	x				x			x			x	x		x	
<i>iii</i>	x		x	x	x	x		x			x	x		x	
<i>iv</i>	x							x			x	x	x	x	
<i>v</i>	x			x				x		x		x		x	

- i. Create an effective written treatment for a digital narrative, including cinematic direction;
- ii. Describe the principles of animation;
- iii. Understand the fundamental principles of visual storytelling and cinematic construction;
- iv. Understand historical perspectives on narrative creation both before and after the digital revolution;
- v. Apply a common lexicon to digital narrative concepts;

**Unit II**

**2D Animation**

Students will learn how to create two-dimensional animation sequences using frame-by-frame animation and keyframing, (or tweening). Students will be introduced to vector based digital animation tools, such as Flash software, while learning basic animation principles including: squash and stretch, anticipation, staging, follow through, overlapping action, slow-out/ slow-in, arcs, secondary action, timing, exaggeration and personality and appeal.

**Learning Objectives**

***The student will be able to...***

Unit Objective:	Course Competencies							Gen Ed				Core			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	4	6	7	A	B	D	E
<i>i</i>		x		x		x		x		x		x	x	x	x
<i>ii</i>		x	x	x	x	x		x				x	x	x	
<i>iii</i>		x	x	x		x		x		x		x	x		
<i>iv</i>		x			x			x				x	x	x	x
<i>v</i>				x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x		x
<i>vi</i>				x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x		x
<i>vii</i>				x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x		x
<i>viii</i>						x	x	x	x				x		x
<i>ix</i>						x							x		
<i>x</i>				x	x	x	x	x				x	x		
<i>xi</i>									x				x		x
<i>xii</i>	x			x		x		x		x	x	x	x	x	

- i. Create a written narrative treatment for an animation, including direction;
- ii. Create storyboards that represent primary action and narrative direction;
- iii. Create static design compositions to define look and feel of animation project;
- iv. Document the design process and development of the animation;

- v. Develop rough animations;
- vi. Refine elements into a final animation;
- vii. Incorporate acquired sound files into a digital animation;
- viii. Engage elements and principles of design to create motion graphics;
- ix. Engage individual creative process;
- x. Engage in critical assessment of students' work;
- xi. Use standard industry tools in 2D animation and editing;
- xii. Conduct research to define a narrative context for a digital film;

### Unit III

#### **Short Film**

Students will create a short digital film based on traditional ideas of storytelling such as a narrative arc, three-act structure, character, setting, point-of-view, etc. The project will explore the mechanics and aesthetics of filmmaking; with an emphasis on the editing process using standard industry software programs.

#### Learning Objectives

*The student will be able to...*

Unit Objective:	Course Competencies							Gen Ed				Core			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	4	6	7	A	B	D	E
<i>i</i>				x		x		x				x	x	x	
<i>ii</i>			x	x		x		x				x	x		
<i>iii</i>		x						x	x			x	x	x	x
<i>iv</i>		x					x		x				x	x	x
<i>v</i>		x		x		x	x	x	x			x	x		x
<i>vi</i>		x		x		x	x	x	x			x	x		x
<i>vii</i>				x		x		x		x			x		
<i>viii</i>	x			x		x		x		x		x	x		
<i>ix</i>		x					x		x				x	x	x
<i>x</i>						x		x					x		

- i. Construct an effective narrative film project;
- ii. Create storyboards to define key cinematic moments in the digital film;
- iii. Document the design process and development of the digital film;
- iv. Incorporate acquired media elements for film narrative: photography, audio, public domain video footage, scanned images, etc.;
- v. Create a rough cut digital film;
- vi. Refine edit into a final cut of the digital film;
- vii. Engage individual creative process;
- viii. Engage in critical assessment of students' work;
- ix. Use standard industry software programs to edit digital audio and video files;
- x. Engage elements and principles of design to create design compositions;

### Unit IV

#### **Motion Graphics**

This project will explore contemporary motion graphic design. Techniques explored may include some or all of the following: frame-by-frame 2D animation, interpolated 2D animation, motion typography, cutout animation, stop motion, compositing, etc. Imagery may come from scanned images or drawings, digital type, vector objects, photographs,

public domain video footage, live action video clips, etc. Students will assemble/composite a final visual effects film using standard industry software programs such as Adobe After Effects.

**Learning Objectives**

***The student will be able to...***

Unit Objective:	Course Competencies							Gen Ed				Core			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	4	6	7	A	B	D	E
<i>i</i>	x			x		x		x		x	x	x	x	x	
<i>ii</i>			x	x		x		x				x	x		
<i>iii</i>		x						x	x			x	x	x	x
<i>iv</i>						x		x					x		
<i>v</i>		x					x		x				x	x	x
<i>vi</i>							x		x				x	x	x
<i>vii</i>	x			x		x		x		x		x	x		
<i>viii</i>		x					x		x				x	x	x
<i>ix</i>						x		x					x		

- i. Conduct research to define a narrative context for a motion graphics project;
- ii. Create storyboards to define key cinematic moments in the digital film;
- iii. Document the design process and development of the project;
- iv. Engage elements and principles of design to create design compositions;
- v. Incorporate acquired media elements into motion graphic film: photography, audio, public domain video footage, scanned images, etc.;
- vi. Composite multiple media into a final digital cut of a digital film;
- vii. Engage individual creative process;
- viii. Engage in critical assessment of students' work;
- ix. Use standard industry software programs to edit digital audio and video files;

**Evaluation of student learning:**

**Attendance & Participation – 20% of grade**

Since the course is largely experience-based, attendance is critical for student success. Students are expected to put in at least 4 - 6 hours per week of lab outside of class and to contribute to lectures, lab practices, discussions and critiques in class.

**Projects & Assignments – 80% of grade**

Instructional modes used: Tutorial-based assignments, lectures and laboratory instruction, project-based assignments with specifications and limitations set by the instructor, demonstrations by the instructor of professional software and systems, and discussions and critiques of student and professional work.

Unit 1: Digital Narrative Theory	20%
Unit 2: 2D Animation	20%
Unit 3: Short Film	20%
Unit 4: Motion Graphics	20%

**Academic Integrity Statement:**

Students are expected to comply with the college-wide requirements for academic integrity. Mercer County Community College is committed to Academic Integrity—the honest, fair, and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free

from fraud or deception. This implies that students are expected to be responsible for their own work. Presenting another individual's work as one's own and receiving excessive help from another individual will qualify as a violation of Academic Integrity. The entire policy on Academic Integrity is located in the Student handbook and is found on the college website:

[www.mccc.edu/admissions\\_policies\\_integrity.shtml](http://www.mccc.edu/admissions_policies_integrity.shtml)

### **Special Needs Accommodations**

Any student in this class who has special needs because of a disability is entitled to receive accommodations. Eligible students at Mercer County Community College are assured services under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you believe you are eligible for services, please contact Arlene Stinson, the Director of Academic Support Services. Mrs. Stinson can be reached at (609) 570-3525.