

Syllabus

Fall 2009

Prof. Kirt Witte

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Meeting Times: Tuesday / Thursday
11:00 AM - 1:30 PM

SCAD®

The University for Creative Careers®

School of Film, Dig Media, Perf, Department of Visual Effects, Savannah

VSFX 210, Section: 02 Digital 3-D Visual Effects

Mission of the College:

The Savannah College of Art and Design exists to prepare talented students for professional careers, emphasizing learning through individual attention in a positively oriented university environment.

Course Description:

This course explores space environments, including the foundations of modeling techniques for the creation of digital sets and effects. Shading techniques and natural and studio digital lighting are introduced. Motion studies specific to camera animation, special effects motion, complex parenting techniques, keyframe interpolation techniques and basic expression animation techniques are covered. Prerequisite: VSFX 130.

Course Goals: The following course goals articulate the general objectives and purpose of this course:

Though technical proficiency is expected, Digital 3-D Visual Effects primarily emphasizes the study of digital aesthetics. Digital 3-D Visual Effects seeks to develop technical and conceptual abilities that lead to content delivery in a linear, cinematic context. Professional work habits, techniques, and results are stressed.

Student Learning Outcomes: The following course outcomes indicate competencies and measurable skills that students develop as a result of completing this course:

1. Students will develop a technical understanding of 3D Modeling, Deformations, and Texturing.
2. Students will explore and utilize Procedural and Bitmapped Shaders.
3. Students will implement 3D modeling, Deformations and Textures as applied to Lighting & Animation requirements.
4. Students will acquire skills in 3D Cameras & Rendering techniques.
5. Students will demonstrate skills in Presentation & Critical discussion.

Course Materials:

Required Text(s):

Learning Autodesk Maya 2008 "Foundation" <NOT 2009 version>

Recommended Text(s):

Visual Quickstart Guide: Maya 8, by Morgan Robinson (ISBN: 0321476751)

The Art of Maya (3rd Edition): Alias, 2005 (ISBN: 1-894893-82-4)

Creating Striking Graphics with Maya and Photoshop: Daniel Gray, 2004 (ISBN: 0-7821-4274-5)

Digital Texturing and Painting, by Owen Demers (0-7357-0918-1)

Digital Lighting and Rendering, by Jeremy Birn (1-56205-954-8)

Adobe Photoshop for VFX Artists, by Lopsie Schwartz (1-59200-487-3)

Legal Guide for the Visual Artist (4th Ed.) Tad Crawford (ISBN# 1-58115-003-2)

The HDRI Handbook: High Dynamic Range Imaging for Photographers and CG Artists -by Christian Bloch (ISBN: 978-1-933952-05-5)

Required Material(s):

Blank CDs or DVDs. Sharpie to label your CDs/DVDs. External portable drives are highly suggested. Digital still camera *strongly* recommended.

Grading Opportunities:

Your overall course grade will be computed according to the following breakdown:

Assignment	Weight
Class Participation	20%
Project 1 Tutorial (pages 1 to 168)	%
High Res (4000 pixel) Still Rendering	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Group Project	20%
Final Project	20%

Grading Standards	Range
Letter grade: A = excellent	90 — 100 %
Letter grade: B = good	80 — 89 %
Letter grade: C = *	70 — 79 %
Letter grade: D = *	60 — 69%

Letter grade: **F** = failing

0 — 59%

*Refer to the student handbooks and departmental standards for minimal acceptance for passing grade.

Schedule of Classes:

Key events including assignments, projects due dates/exam dates:

Class 1:	Tuesday, September 15: Intro to class and overview, syllabus, pre-test given
Class 2:	Thursday, September 17: Intro to Maya interface & setting projects Maya preferences
Class 3:	Tuesday, September 22: Curves, Primitives, and Polygons
Class 4:	Thursday, September 24: Modeling with Polys – Box Modeling demo
Class 5:	Tuesday, September 29: Nurbs & SubDs - Tutorials Due
Class 6:	Thursday, October 1: Modeling with Polys -
Class 7:	Tuesday, October 6: Texturing, mapping, and UV Editor
Class 8:	Thursday, October 8: Cameras & Rendering discussion (Group finalization)
Class 9:	Tuesday, October 13: Assignment 2 Due (High Res Render 4K), in class critique
Class 10:	Thursday, October 15: Midterm Exam (Begin Assignment 4)
Class 11:	Tuesday, October 20: Lighting techniques
Class 12:	Maya Paint FX and Fluids
Class 13:	Intro to Maya Particles and Dynamics
Class 14:	Thursday, October 29: In class work session
Class 15:	Tuesday, November 3: Texturing for Modeling & Modeling for Texturing demo
Class 16:	Thursday, November 5: Assignment 4 Due (Group Project) in class critique
Class 17:	Tuesday, November 10: Constraints and Tree Building
Class 18:	Thursday, November 12: In class work session
Class 19:	Tuesday, November 17: In class work session

Course Information:

Field Trip(s):

Varies by quarter. Details to be discussed in class.

Extra Help Session(s):

Extra help is available via e-mail and by appointment.

Other Course Information:

<http://www.employeepages.scad.edu/~kwitte>

College Policy:

Academic Integrity:

Under all circumstances, students are expected to be honest in their dealings with faculty, administrative staff and fellow students.

In class assignments, students must submit work that fairly and accurately reflects their level of accomplishment. Any work that is not a product of the student's own efforts is considered dishonest. Students must not engage in academic dishonesty; doing so can have serious consequences.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Cheating, which includes, but is not limited to, (a) the giving or receiving of any unauthorized assistance in producing assignments or taking quizzes, tests or examinations; (b) dependence on the aid of sources including technology beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems or carrying out other assignments; (c) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the college faculty or staff; or (d) the use of unauthorized assistance in the preparation of works of art.
2. Plagiarism, which includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. Plagiarism also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.
3. Submission of the same work in two or more classes without prior written approval of the professors of the classes involved.
4. Submission of any work not actually produced by the student submitting the work without full and clear written acknowledgement of the actual author or creator of the work.

Attendance and Personal Conduct:

Only students who are properly registered for a course may attend that class. Students are expected to participate in all scheduled classes and examination periods. Absences in excess of four per quarter, or 20 percent of the course, result in a failing grade for the course. Tardiness, early departure or other time away from class in excess of 15 minutes is considered absence for the class period.

The student's appearance and conduct should be appropriate and should contribute to the academic and professional atmosphere of the college. The college reserves the right at its sole discretion to withdraw the privilege of enrollment from any student whose conduct is detrimental to the academic environment or to the well-being of other students, faculty or staff members, or to the college facilities.

***Flu-related absences:**

In an effort to reduce the spread of the H1N1 virus, the Savannah College of Art and Design is implementing various protocols suggested for colleges and universities by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Students who experience flu-like symptoms should not attempt to attend class until 24 hours after symptoms subside. Students who miss class due to the flu virus must contact their professors immediately, before class if possible but within 24 hours of the class meeting to discuss make up options if they are available.

Students should ensure that all absences are used wisely in case they become ill and need to miss class. Students who contract the flu virus may be granted leniency with the attendance policy, but must complete all required course assignments and attain all required learning outcomes. Individual circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the professor.

Enrollment policies:

Students are responsible for assuring proper enrollment. See the college catalog for information on add/drop, withdrawals, incompletes, and academic standing.

Midterm Conference(s):

Each student enrolled in the course will have a midterm conference scheduled outside of class time with the professor. Students are expected to keep this appointment.

Learning Support Resources and Academic and Safety Polices:

Information about SCAD learning support resources and academic and safety policies, including the Learning Assistance Center, the Jen Library, the Writing Center, SCAD Helpdesk, the Visual Resources Center, and Student Counseling and Disabilities Services can be found in the menu area of the Blackboard web site for this course.

Student Surveys:

The SCAD Student Survey and the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory will both be administered in Week 6 of spring quarter and online course evaluations will be available every quarter during weeks 8-10. SCAD's office of institutional research is responsible for gathering and delivering survey results to decision-makers on campus. For more information or questions, contact us at surveys@scad.edu.

Please refer to the college catalog or the student handbook for all college policies and procedures.