# Syllabus


Fall 2009
Prof. Kirt Witte
**Office building, room:** Montgomery Hall 417B
**Office phone:** (912) 525-8534
**Office hours:** Mon - Thurs 10am to 11am
**Email:** kwitte@scad.edu
**Building/Room:** MONTGO 204
**Meeting Times:** Monday / Wednesday
11:00 AM - 1:30 PM


SCAD®

The University for Creative Careers®

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

# VSFX 708, Section: 01
# Modeling for 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 covers many of the essential aspects of 3-D modeling, texturing, lighting, and animation for use in the Visual Effects industry. Professional workflows, techniques, and presentation skills will be stressed and encouraged throughout the class.

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

Explore relevant topics such as lighting, materials, cameras, and texturing.
Gain exposure to basic animation using key frames.
Gain exposure to advanced animation techniques using dynamics.
Gain exposure to advanced modeling techniques with SubDivision Surfaces.
Gain exposure to advanced lighting techniques using Radiance maps.

**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 demonstrate a basic mastery of 3-D modeling.

2. Students will evaluate professional practices and techniques used to create 3-D models.

3. Students will explain how 3-D models are used in the visual effects industry.

4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the methodology of the visual effects industry.

5. Students will evaluate and explain why efficient modeling, animation, and file manageament techniques are so important in the visual effects industry.

## Course Materials:

**Required Text(s):**

n/a

**Recommended Text(s):**

Learning Maya 8 – Foundation - Autodesk , 2006. (ISBN: 1-897177-33-X

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)

The HDRI Handbook: High Dynamic Range Imaging for Photographers and CG Artists -by Christian Bloch (ISBN-10: 1933952059)

**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 |
|---|---|
| Hi Res Modeling / Rendering project | 20% |
| Midterm Exam | 20% |
| HDRI Rendering Project | 20% |
| Group Project (Phase 01) | 20% |
| Group Project (Phase 02) | 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% |

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|---|---|
| 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:** | Monday, September 14: Intro to class and overview, syllabus |
| **Class 2:** | Wednesday, September 16: Maya Preferences & Setting Projects |
| **Class 3:** | Monday, September 21: Basic modeling techniques |
| **Class 4:** | Wednesday, September 23: More basic modeling techniques |
| **Class 5:** | Monday, September 28: Subdivision Surfaces & Non-Uniform Rational B-splines |
| **Class 6:** | Wednesday, September 30: Basic Materials and CG Lighting |
| **Class 7:** | Monday, October 5: Cameras, Lenses, Depth of Field, & Camera Animation |
| **Class 8:** | Wednesday, October 7: Assignment 1 Due (High Res Render 4K), in class critique |
| **Class 9:** | Monday, October 12: Intro to High Dynamic Range Imaging |
| **Class 10:** | Wednesday, October 14: Midterm Exam (Practical) |
| **Class 11:** | Monday, October 19: Midterm Conferences / Design concepts for Group Project |
| **Class 12:** | Wednesday, October 21: Assignment 2 Due (HDRi Rendering) 4K |
| **Class 13:** | Monday, October 26: File Management and Renderfarm usage |
| **Class 14:** | Wednesday, October 28:  Texturing for Modeling & Modeling for Texturing demo |
| **Class 15:** | Monday, November 2:  In class work session |
| **Class 16:** | Wednesday, November 4: Assignment 3 Due (Group Project – Phase 01) in class critique |
| **Class 17:** | Monday, November 9: 2D and 3D texturing painting techniques |
| **Class 18:** | Wednesday, November 11: In class work session |
| **Class 19:** | Monday, November 16: In class work session |

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|---|---|
| **Class 20:** | Wednesday, November 18: Assignment 4 Due (Group Project – Phase 02) in class critique |

## 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.