

Introduction to Digital Media

ART 74

Spring 2026 Section 01 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026 Modified 01/21/2026

Course Information

Class Days/Time	M/W 9:00 AM - 11:50 AM
Location	Room 110 in the Art Building

Course Description and Requisites

Fundamental concepts and methods of Digital Media production. Introduction to visualization software applications and web presentation techniques.

Misc/Lab: Activity 6 hours.

Letter Graded

Classroom Protocols

Students are expected to be punctual for class and actively engaged during all class meetings.

Program Information

Department Name: Art and Art History
Department Office: ART 116
Department Website: www.sjsu.edu/art
Department Email: art@sjsu.edu
Department phone number: 408-924-4325

Course Goals

This course will explore the fundamental concepts and methods of digital media art production. It provides an introduction to digital art, web presentation techniques, and digital based fabrication. We will explore both conceptually and technically what it means to manipulate images and create objects digitally, and we will investigate pure digital spaces and experience social and physical overlap of media. This course is a visual art course and will approach media from a fine art and theoretical perspective. Students will produce artworks using currently available imaging, composition, web design, and other software. Projects will be presented in print and on the web. The class will focus on current methods, trends and conceptual frameworks for artistic production involving contemporary technology. The course emphasizes creative and critical thinking, problem solving and computer literacy.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

LO1	Use Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator to generate rasterized and vector images for web and print
LO2	Introduction to HTML 5/ CSS
LO3	Use free, open-source, and demo software to expand software literacy
LO4	Understand the role of copyright, remix culture and the social graph
LO5	Practice critical thinking skills to address digital art and network cultures.
LO6	Practice writing skills to articulate the meaning and importance of digital art and networked cultures.
LO7	Develop a working understanding of software culture, open-source, and emergent social media with an emphasis on digital publics in the 21st century.
LO8	Establish a nomenclature and a working understanding of digital media artworks and processes used by contemporary practitioners in the field including non-linear, networked, interactive, environmental, performance, projection, sound, physical computing and code-based methods of digital media art production.

Course Materials

ART 74 Course materials on-line on the SJSU Canvas site for the course

at: <https://sjsu.instructure.com>. Your Username is your 9-digit SJSU ID number, and your password is your SJSU-One account password.

Readings include:

- New Media Art - Introduction - Mark Tribe - Brown University Wiki
- Glitch: Thoughts on Glitch by Nick Briz
- "Getting Started with P5.js" by Lauren McCarthy, Casey Reas, and Ben Fry
 - Ch 1 - 6

Recommended Hardware

- Laptop. It is required that students will produce work for this class on a computer. If you do not have your own computer, do not have a powerful enough computer, or the software that is used, you may rent a laptop through [SJSU IRC Equipment Loaning services](https://www.sjsu.edu/it/services/classroom-tech/equipment-loaning/). (<https://www.sjsu.edu/it/services/classroom-tech/equipment-loaning/>).
- 3-button mouse.
- Hard drive. Students are encouraged to save back-ups of class works in the hard drive.

Other technology requirements

Below is a list of major software platforms you will need to use for this course. Please review them now and decide whether you feel comfortable creating any required accounts. Although these tools have been vetted and are generally considered safe, be aware that they rely on online connectivity and may include content not regulated by the instructor or the institution.

- [ADOBE Creative Cloud](https://www.sjsu.edu/adobe/creative-cloud/access/adobe-cc-installation.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/adobe/creative-cloud/access/adobe-cc-installation.php>) - This is provided free to students, you must sign up for an adobe account using your SJSU email and log in via the enterprise option. You can then download the Adobe Cloud Manager and continue to download any of the suite of programs.
- [Audacity.com](https://sjsu.campusconcourse.com/Audacity.com) (<https://sjsu.campusconcourse.com/Audacity.com>) - For audio glitch art.
- [Notepad++](https://notepad-plus-plus.org/downloads/) (<https://notepad-plus-plus.org/downloads/>) - Our code editor for glitch art
- [Blender](https://www.blender.org/download/) (<https://www.blender.org/download/>) - For 3D modeling
- [weebly.com](https://sjsu.campusconcourse.com/weebly.com) (<https://sjsu.campusconcourse.com/weebly.com>) – We will use weebly as a template site editor as an introduction to creating our portfolios. The advantage of this site is that it is very easy to add and edit pages and to create new sites.
- github.com (<https://github.com>) - Host projects and collaborate. This is where our portfolios will stay.
- [Bootstrap](https://getbootstrap.com/docs/4.0/getting-started/download/) (<https://getbootstrap.com/docs/4.0/getting-started/download/>) - Responsive framework for building web pages that adjust dynamically to different screen sizes (desktop, tablet, phone). HTML, CSS, and javascript implemented.
- [VS code editor](https://code.visualstudio.com) (<https://code.visualstudio.com>) - A lightweight and customizable code editor used for writing and editing code in various programming languages. We'll use it to edit files locally and preview our work before uploading to GitHub.
- [editor.p5js.org](https://sjsu.campusconcourse.com/editor.p5js.org) (<https://sjsu.campusconcourse.com/editor.p5js.org>) - A JavaScript library for creative coding. Used to make visuals, animations, and interactive web sketches.

≡ Course Requirements and Assignments

Submission requirements and grading rubrics are outlined in the assignment prompts on Canvas.

Assignment	% points
#01 ~ What is New Media Art? LO5, LO6, LO7, LO8 Write an essay of 1,000 - 1,500 words with at least 3 examples of artists that you feel represent New Media Art and contextualize your own work as an artist. You are encouraged to link to videos, images, sounds and other media to support your findings. Read the following link and include Mark Tribe's definition of New Media Art, you may cite and propose an alternate definition, but you should discuss why it is better in comparison to Tribe. https://www.robertspahr.com/teaching/net/new_media_art_tribe.pdf (also in CANVAS)	10%
#02 ~ Raster vs. Vector - Pixel Art + Logo Design LO1, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO7, LO8 Begin by creating pixel-based imagery in Photoshop to understand resolution, grids, and intentional limitations of raster media. Then, transition to Adobe Illustrator to design a vector-based logo that represents your artistic identity, exploring scalability, precision, and flexibility within visual identity systems.	10%
#03 ~ Glitch Art LO1, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO7, LO8 Create a "glitch" piece by intentionally breaking or converting files (images, audio, etc.) to reveal aesthetic or conceptual "errors." Reflect on the political and cultural implications of file formats and remix. Generate a cohesive set of three glitched images using both Notepad++ and Audacity. At least one image must be glitched using Notepad++, and at least one must be glitched using Audacity (you may choose which method to use twice).	10%

#04 ~ Meme	5%
LO1, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO7, LO8	
Create an image-plus-text meme entirely in Photoshop. Use selections or masks to isolate elements, apply at least one adjustment layer for mood, and style your caption for maximum clarity and comic timing. The final meme should stand on its own but also reflect an awareness of where and how it might circulate online (story post, subreddit, Discord reaction, etc.).	
#05 ~ 3D	10%
LO1, LO3, LO5, LO7, LO8	
Using Blender, create a desk scene using loop cuts, extrusion, and shading/lighting techniques, finishing with a polished render that shows technical skill and creative intent.	
3D print one of your models (or a found model) and document it with photos, your render, and a short reflection. Make all source files (blend and .stl) downloadable.	
#06 ~ Net Art	10%
LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO7, LO8	
Using HTML, create a web narrative inspired by early net art and today's DIY communities on Neocities. Engage niche subcultures to evoke the playful, eclectic spirit of online spaces. This piece is not intended as a traditional website but rather a creative exploration that channels contemporary digital discourse in a poetic, experimental way.	
#07 ~ Portfolio	10%
LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO7, LO8	
Building on the skills you gained in the Net/Art assignment, create a polished yet personal portfolio featuring at least 10 works. Include a Home page, an About page, and five separate pages, one for each class module, with a navigation bar on each page for easy exploration. Let your personality shine through while keeping the site professional, and use Bootstrap for a responsive layout. Finally, host your portfolio on GitHub, ensuring you showcase the five class pieces plus at least one earlier project to highlight your growth.	

#08 ~ Code as Art	10%
LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO7, LO8	
<p>Create 3 works that explore your identity in digital space. First, make a coded self-portrait in p5.js using basic shapes and colors to represent yourself. Then use the diyps template to modify all 10 tools (keys 1–0), integrating your political, cultural, or aesthetic viewpoint. This custom tool should let you draw something meaningful to you. The last piece will be a short, simple game you create to explore game mechanics and interactive design.</p>	
#09 ~ Final project + presentation + Final portfolio	20%
LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO6, LO7, LO8	
<p>Create a work of digital media art using the ideas and techniques you learned in Art 74. Your completed work must be a 1,000-word document that serves as your artist statement and describes the conceptual basis and technical process of your artwork. Final projects will be presented in-class in physical and/or virtual form.</p> <p>Update portfolio to include all projects.</p>	
	100%
* All assignment rubrics and requirements will be provided in detail via Canvas well in advance of the due date. All assignments must be submitted via Canvas. Assignment due dates are listed in the Art 74 course schedule with a breakdown of weekly topics, techniques, workshops and both collaborative and individual projects.	
Be prepared to present your project the day it's due. This applies to all assignments listed above, except for the New Media essay.	

✓ Grading Information

TOTAL 100%

Determination of Grades

- Grades will be determined based on the sum of the 10 projects and according to the % chart which follows
- Extra credit options may be offered or requested.
- Late work: For each day the work is late (marked each 24 hours by the day and time of original deadline), the work decreases by 5%.

Numeric grade equivalents:

93% and above A

92% - 90% A-

89% - 88% B+

87% - 83% B

82% - 80% B-

79% - 78% C+

77% - 73% C

72% - 70% C-

69% - 68% D+

67% - 63% D

62% - 60% D-

below 60% F

Please note: Except in cases of documented emergencies, incomplete grades are not given in this course.

"All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades." See University Policy F13-1 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

AI Usage Policy

In this course, you may use AI tools for **coding assistance** (such as generating starter code or debugging help). However, **submitting AI-generated writing** as your own work is not permitted. If you choose to use AI-generated text, **properly cite the source** to avoid academic integrity violations. You can find resources on how to cite AI content in the APA style here:

- [SJSU iSchool Faculty Handbook on Academic Integrity](#)
- [SJSU AI Writer Toolbox](#)

Submitting AI-generated text without a citation is an academic integrity violation and can result in a failing grade and/or further disciplinary action. When you cite AI sources correctly, I will **not** lower your grade for using them. If you need guidance on how to cite AI, reach out to me.

If I suspect uncited AI, I will ask you to explain your ideas and writing process.

Additional Note:

This syllabus is subject to change, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, or in the case that changes will significantly enhance the quality of the course. Students will collectively have the opportunity to shape the ways in which the course unfolds.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Assignments, Assignments Due
1	01/26	Syllabus overview What is New Media Art? - Lecture Introduction to technique, aesthetics, + examples Intro to essay
	01/28	Class Introductions New Media Art continued Intro to Pixel Art
2	02/02	Due: Pixel Art Intro to Logo Design
	02/04	Due: What is New Media Art? Intro to Illustrator
3	02/09	Due: Logo Design Intro to Glitch Art (concepts + politics) Audacity + Notepad++ demos
	02/11	More glitch art

4	02/16	Due: Glitch Art Foundations of Meme Theory
	02/18	Meme production using Adobe Photoshop
5	02/23	Due: Meme Intro to Blender: Blender Basics & Low-Poly Modeling
	02/25	Blender continued Lighting + Rendering
6	03/02	Due: 3D render Intro to 3D printing
	03/04	More 3D printing Newart.city introduction: spatial web environments
7	03/09	Intro to Net Art history + examples Intro to HTML Intro to github
	03/11	More HTML
8	03/16	Due: Net art Intro to portfolio + What makes a great portfolio Work with a template site builder such as Weebly or Google sites
	03/18	Due: Template-Based Portfolio Website HTML translation of portfolio Intro to Bootstrap

9	03/23	Due: 3D Print Work on portfolio
	03/25	Due: Bootstrap Portfolio Portfolio Critiques
10	03/30	No class - Spring Break :)
	04/01	No class - Spring Break :D
11	04/06	Code as Art Ch 1-2
	04/08	Code as Art Ch 3
12	04/13	P5.js self portrait due Code as Art Ch 4 - 5
	04/15	P5.js DIY Photoshop due Code as Art Ch 6
13	04/20	Game/Interactive due Part IV: Visualization / HTML Pages and P5.js
	04/22	Catch up day
14	04/27	Intro to Final Project
	04/29	Final Project proposals due Work in-class on your Final projects
15	05/04	Final Project draft due: Show your progress and share any problems you're coming across.
	05/06	Work on Final Projects

16	05/11	Work on Final Projects - Last day of instruction
Final Exam	05/15 Friday 8:30 - 10:30AM	<p>Students will present their Final project</p> <p>Final Due</p> <p>Portfolio Update Due</p>
		<p><i>Note: This schedule is subject to change. You will be notified of any changes in a timely manner in class and via Canvas. Any changes will not affect your ability to complete the above assigned coursework.</i></p>