

DESMa 159B

VIDEO AND ANIMATION CAPSTONE SENIOR PROJECTS

MW 2:00-4:50PM PST

BROAD ART CENTER 4220

SPRING 2022

SYLLABUS

Instructor Dalena Tran

dalena@g.ucla.edu

Office hours by appointment

Teaching Assistant Issac Ruder

isaacruder@g.ucla.edu

Office hours by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Senior Projects provides a capstone experience for the major, culminating in a senior group exhibition in June. You will work closely with faculty to focus on a project defined by your individual skills and professional interests. Each project will develop from in-depth research, conceptual development, prototype development, refinement, and production. You will work closely with other students, engaging in the critical analysis and review of each other's works.

This course emphasizes the intersections between various video and animation practices, encouraging interdisciplinary research. You are free to explore any of the skills and interests developed during your time in DMA toward the creation of your final project. Work in all media will be considered. Video is a machine for thinking, moving freely across various modalities of research: sociological, semiotic, environmental, anthropological, technological, geopolitical.

At each stage of the process we will consider audience, accessibility, reception, and distribution of the work. We will consider the way each work interacts with other works in the context of a group show. We will consider a range of approaches for documentation of time-based work. Alongside each project, each artist will develop a plan for documenting and communicating their work after the piece is de-installed.

LEARNING GOALS

1. Develop theoretical and practical knowledge of video/animation, grounding production techniques in formal and conceptual practices
2. Develop an original body of work / research
3. Provide comprehensive examples of historical and contemporary video/animation practices
4. Explore issues surrounding audience, viewership, accessibility, and distribution

5. Establish lasting peer to peer support between artists

GRADING

- Attendance & Participation — 10%
- Weekly Meditations — 10%
- Project Proposals — 10%
- Midterm Rough Cuts — 10%
- Bio / Artist Statements — 10%
- Final Project — 50%
- Final Project Documentation — 5%

Outstanding or exceptional work will receive As, good work will receive Bs, sufficient work that does nothing more than meet requirements will receive Cs.

Your work will be assessed according to your overall enthusiasm: The amount of time, effort, and thought you contribute to the course; your willingness to explore, take risks, and expand into a new range of experiences; attention to quality of ideas and quality in execution of your ideas; critical thought; skills in craft according to assignment objectives; an understanding of materials presented in class and an ability to relate course materials to discussions, assignments, and your own art practice.

INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Much of the class time will be devoted to 1-on-1 meetings with the professor and TA. You should prep for these meetings. Show new findings, discuss conclusions, and present your goals for the following week. Make a list of questions beforehand that you want to discuss. Outside of these meetings, keep in mind that you are also welcome to discuss your work with any professor you feel could help you out. Your senior project professor might ask you to seek advice or have a meeting with someone specific to discuss your project. Be pro-active and report to your professor if this was helpful. You are also welcome to come to class after the last scheduled meeting each day for open office hours help.

PROCESS DOCUMENTATION

The quarter is broken up into smaller assignments that will guide you on the path of creating your senior project. It is recommended that you create a dedicated notebook or folder to track the assignments and research materials you compile. It is essential that you meet these deadlines so you don't fall behind. If you are struggling, talk to the professor or TA ahead of your meeting to communicate the issue or confusion. Process documentation is worth 15% of your grade.

ATTENDANCE

If there is an emergency and you will be late or absent please email the instructor and TA.

Communication is key. If you are late or absent, please send an email or a discord message notifying your instructor immediately. Given the difficulty of navigating Covid-19 related circumstances, we can discuss and modify course expectations on a case by case basis. The most important thing is to communicate immediately if you encounter any difficulties so we can assist and keep you on track to completing your senior project.

PARTICIPATION

Participation and risk-taking are essential parts of this course; come prepared, work hard, and share your work and ideas generously with your fellow students and faculty.

Students will be required to present their own work and to thoughtfully analyze, discuss, and critique the work of their classmates during lab sessions and full class meetings.

Participation includes:

- Weekly meetings with your instructor and TA
- Weekly meetings with lab groups
- Full class and join class meetings, discussions, and presentations
- Weekly solo writing meditation practice
- Completion of senior project/commitment to solo studio practice

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

If you miss deadlines due to valid, extenuating circumstances you may submit the required work at a date agreed upon with us. Please contact the instructor or TA to discuss modifying the deadline prior to the original deadline.

MANAGING MEDIA

Make a backup of all media. Render / Export well in advance of any deadline.

CONSENT

You must have the explicit consent of any person appearing within your work.

COMMITMENT TO EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

We understand the classroom as a space for practicing freedom; where one may challenge psychic, social, and cultural borders and create meaningful artistic expressions. To do so we must acknowledge and embrace the different identities and backgrounds we inhabit. A collaborative effort between the students and the teacher is needed for creating a supportive learning environment.

While everyone should feel free to experiment creatively and conceptually, if a class member points out that something you have said or shared with the group is offensive, avoid being defensive; instead approach the discussion as an opportunity for everyone to grow and learn from one another. All class members are encouraged to discuss such instances with the instructor so they can be addressed with greater care in the future.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students needing academic accommodations based on a disability should contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) at (310)825-1501 or in person at Murphy Hall A255. In order to ensure accommodations, students need to contact the CAE within the first two weeks of the term.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

MON 3/28

! DUE: Class Survey

! DUE: Intention Presentations

Syllabus

Discord Sign-up

WED 3/30

! DUE: Writing Meditation 1

WEEK 2

MON 4/4

! DUE: Writing Meditation 2

Screenings and Discussion

WED 4/6

TA Process Presentations, Q&A

Student Committee Formation

Project Proposals and Equipment Workshop

WEEK 3

MON 4/11

! DUE: Writing Meditation 3

! DUE: Project Proposal Draft

Individual Meetings, Studio

WED 4/13

Writing Workshop

Individual Meetings, Studio

WEEK 4

MON 4/18

! DUE: Writing Meditation 4

! DUE: Proposal Peer Feedback

Individual Meetings, Studio

WED 4/20

Artist Talk: TBA

Individual Meetings, Studio

WEEK 5

MON 4/25

! DUE: Writing Meditation 5

Color Correction Workshop

Critique w/ Other Faculty

WED 4/27

! DUE: Final Project Proposal

Critique w/ Other Faculty

WEEK 6

MON 5/2

!DUE: Writing Meditation 6
Screenings on Sound

WED 5/4

!DUE: Bio / Artist Statement Draft
Sound Design Workshop
Individual Meetings, Studio

WEEK 7

MON 5/9

Projection Workshop
Individual Meetings, Studio

WED 5/11

!DUE: Rought Cut 1
Rought Cut Screenings and Critique

WEEK 8

MON 5/16

Documentation Workshop
Individual Meetings, Studio

WED 5/18

!DUE: Rought Cut 2
Individual Meetings, Studio

WEEK 9

MON 5/23

Individual Meetings, Studio

WED 5/25

!DUE: Final Edit
Work Day, Installation begins

WEEK 10

MON 5/30

Memorial Day - No Class

WED 6/1

Installation complete

THUR 6/2

Senior Exhibition
6pm EDA

WEEK 11

MON 6/6

Group Critique
2-5pm EDA

WED 6/8

!DUE: Final Documentation
!DUE: Final Bio / Artist
Statement

FRIDAY 6/10

Deinstall

SATURDAY 6/11

Graduation

ASSIGNMENTS

INTENTION PRESENTATION (DUE 3/28)

Create a 5-10 minute slideshow presentation using Google Slides. This presentation is an introduction of your work, projects, research, and interests. Give some thought to what direction your senior project might take. Consider where you are in your work by including past and current work and what you want to focus on this term. Imagine 2 possible projects, and do research into prior work and artists related to your ideas. Include visual material. Take the time to organize your thoughts.

***Make sure your Google Slide presentation link sharing option is set to public*

Share the link to your presentation on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ **#intention-presentation**

PROJECT PROPOSAL DRAFT (DUE 4/11)

Project proposal draft (PDF) due including description, production timeline, and equipment needs:

Page 1: Project Description. Describe your project in as much detail as possible (1-3 paragraphs). Attempt to describe the project in as simple and direct language as possible. Avoid jargon. Some questions to consider: What are your main questions/influences? What ideas ground your research? What form does the project take? Why is the work urgent, necessary, relevant today? Who is the ideal audience / what community is the project most accountable to?

Page 2: Production Timeline. Key dates when specific phases of the project will be completed

Page 3: Resources/Materials. List all Resources/Materials needed to complete your project

Page 4: Visual Mock-up of Final Project. This can be hand-drawn sketches, 3d model, collage, whatever medium/form best communicates your project formally/conceptually.

Page 5: Concept Diagram. Place the main theme/keyword of your project at the center. Visually arrange other themes/keywords in relation to the central one.

Page 6: Bibliography. Who wrote about the various concepts and questions at work in your project? What are the different points of view you're considering? Gather as much research material related to your topic as possible. List your sources.

Page 7+ PROCESS. (2-5 pages) sketches, photographs of process, prototypes

Page X+ Visual Research Archive. (1-5 pages) How have other 'visual artists' approached the formal strategies or ideas at work in your final project? What form do you want the project to take? Collect images of works, environments, user interactions, whatever supporting material spurs your creativity.

Share the PDF on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ **#proposal-draft**

PROPOSAL PEER FEEDBACK (DUE 4/18)

Read all the draft project proposals from each of your classmates posted in the class Discord server under #Project-Proposal-Draft. Please spend time considering each work and collect thoughts/suggestions for your peers. You will be assigned one student to write to with constructive feedback (please make suggestions of artists to look at, book and articles to read, helpful tools, resources).

Share your notes and comments on 5+ of your classmate's proposals on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ #proposal-feedback

FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL (DUE 4/27)

Final project proposal (PDF) due. Taking feedback from faculty and peers into consideration, include description, production timeline, list of resources, visual mock-up, thematic diagram, bibliography, process, visual research archive and equipment needs:

Page 1: Project Description. Describe your project in as much detail as possible (1-3 paragraphs). Attempt to describe the project in as simple and direct language as possible. Avoid jargon. Some questions to consider: What are your main questions/influences? What ideas ground your research? What form does the project take? Why is the work urgent, necessary, relevant today? Who is the ideal audience / what community is the project most accountable to?

Page 2: Production Timeline. Key dates when specific phases of the project will be completed

Page 3: Resources/Materials. List all Resources/Materials needed to complete your project

Page 4: Visual Mock-up of Final Project. This can be hand-drawn sketches, 3d model, collage, whatever medium/form best communicates your project formally/conceptually.

Page 5: Concept Diagram. Place the main theme/keyword of your project at the center. Visually arrange other themes/keywords in relation to the central one.

Page 6: Bibliography. Who wrote about the various concepts and questions at work in your project? What are the different points of view you're considering? Gather as much research material related to your topic as possible. List your sources.

Page 7+ PROCESS. (2-5 pages) sketches, photographs of process, prototypes

Page X+ Visual Research Archive. (1-5 pages) How have other 'visual artists' approached the formal strategies or ideas at work in your final project? What form do you want the project to take? Collect images of works, environments, user interactions, whatever supporting material spurs your creativity.

Share the PDF on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ #final-proposal

BIO / ARTIST STATEMENT DRAFT (DUE 5/4)

Bio / artist statement draft due format to be discussed in class

Share your bio/statement on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ **#artist-statement**

ROUGH CUT 1 (DUE 5/11)

Approaching picture lock w/ rough sound. Rendered in the same file format as the final project. A test file as close to the final work as possible. Standard specs for video and animation include H.264 codec, 1920x1080, 24fps

Due midnight 24:00 PST. Upload your video file to Vimeo/Youtube and share your video link on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ **#rough-cut**

ROUGH CUT 2 (DUE 5/18)

Approaching final edit w/ refined sound. Rendered in the same file format as the final project. A test file as close to the final work as possible. Standard specs for video and animation include H.264 codec, 1920x1080, 24fps

Due midnight 24:00 PST. Upload your video file to Vimeo/Youtube and share your video link on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ **#rough-cut**

FINAL EDIT (DUE 5/18)

Final edit due, ready for install. Due midnight 24:00 PST.

Name your file as "LASTNAME_FIRSTNAME_TITLE_OF_PROJECT.mp4" and upload your video file to our class server's drop directory ⇒ **classes/Spring22/159B/drop/final-edit** AND Vimeo/Youtube and share your video link on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ **#final-edit**

FINAL DOCUMENTATION (DUE 6/8)

Final documentation should be 2+ images and/or video clips documenting your project install. Bio / Artist statement should be at least 4-5 sentences.

Image and video files should be named "Title_1.png...", "Title_2.png", "Title_1.mp4" and so on, inside of a folder named "LASTNAME_FIRSTNAME_TITLE_OF_PROJECT"

Upload the folder to our class server's drop directory ⇒ **classes/Spring22/159B/drop/final-doc** AND share your images/videos on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ **#final-documentation**

FINAL BIO / ARTIST STATEMENT (DUE 6/8)

Bio / Artist statement should be at least 4-5 sentences and should be a refined and/or extended version of your initial draft.

Upload a PDF file to our class server's drop directory ⇒ **classes/Spring22/159B/drop/final-statement** AND share it on our Discord server **ASSIGNMENTS** ⇒ **#artist-statement**

WEEKLY WRITING MEDITATIONS

Find a place (and a way) to write without interruption once a week.

Set a timer. Actively write for 30 min each session unless otherwise noted in the prompt.

Pause at 30 min and assess the writing.

Continue if the writing feels generative, keep going, get all the loose thoughts down.

Due in class on Mondays (with the exception of Meditation 1)

We will discuss the results of the meditations in our weekly meeting

MEDITATION 1 (DUE 3/30)

INQUIRY

List as many questions as you can about the project you are attempting. Do not compose answers at the moment, simply list the questions that emerge Abstract or Concrete, large or small, write down all questions that arise.

What materials can I use?

What will be the overall look and feel?

What are my 'points of view' toward the subject matter?

Who has dealt with this problem before?

Share to our Discord server **Meditation** ⇒ **#meditation-1**

MEDITATION 2 (DUE 4/4)

TACTICS

Write a list of tactics, a personal guide to the strategies that help you do your work. These can be as simple as “rules” as in: 'try shifting scale' or 'walk until an idea forms'...

It can be a list of verbs— what are the actions that help you begin, or help you in moments of uncertainty?

It can be a short manifesto of personal poetics or statement about the ethical considerations about your own work. Any length and format.

Share to our Discord server **Meditation** ⇒ **#meditation-2**

MEDITATION 3 (DUE 4/11)

CONCEPT DIAGRAM

Part One

Diagram. Place main theme of your project at the centre. Visually arrange other keywords/themes around the central one. Don't hold back, include any idea, theme, question that factors into your project, place ones you're unsure of at the margins.

Part Two

Now analyze : are there differences between your project in progress and your idealized concept diagram? What are these differences? Analyze why might these differences be present (are there certain subjects you are shying away from or are more difficult to articulate-- if so why)?

Are there elements of the concept diagram that have yet to be emphasized in the final project? Make a list.
How can you better emphasize these core ideas? Make a list.

How can you make sure to preserve some of the smaller / more nuanced nodes of the diagram? Make a list.

What are some specific changes you might introduce in order to emphasis these ideas within your final project-- strategies to heighten, underscore, bring attention to the ideas at play (ie. repetition, scale, duration, color etc.) Make a list.

Share to our Discord server **Meditation** ⇒ **#meditation-3**

MEDITATION 4 (DUE 4/18)

ANALYSIS

Take the questions generated in INQUIRY and answer all of them If the answer is indeterminate or unknown, describe the conditions of this indeterminacy

Share to our Discord server **Meditation** ⇒ **#meditation-4**

MEDITATION 5 (DUE 4/25)

COLOR

Select one dominant color that relates to your project / your research.

Write down a memory, a strong personal association with this color.

Re-name the color. Generate a name that has not been used for it before.

What tactics, strategies can you use to heighten a viewer's experience of this color in your project? How can you give it prominence?

Share to our Discord server **Meditation** ⇒ **#meditation-5**

MEDITATION 6 (DUE 5/2)

SOUND & VOICE

(select one SOUND / VOICE)

if your project includes sound-- complete SOUND meditation

if your project is silent / no sound-- complete VOICE meditation

or complete both for extra credit

SOUND

Is there a dominant sound to this project?

Write down a strong memory, associations with this sound / soundscape

List the qualities of this sound / soundscape. Challenge yourself to list as many as many qualities of the sound as possible. A long list (timbre, grain, distortion, pitch, human, non-human, near, distant, feeling, affect, movement, speed, dynamics, direction...)

How does this sound exist in time? Fast / slow? Dynamic? Constant / periodic / random?

How will you heighten this sound, give it prominence?

Make a list of kinds of touch involved in this project.

Make a list of all the textures, surfaces of this project.

How can you heighten the sensation of touch within this project (consider how can sound and touch overlap)?

VOICE

List a few moments in your life when you used a very loud voice.

List a few times when you spoke in a voice that was not your own.

List a few times when you whispered, spoke inaudibly, or weren't heard.

Take a look at what you've generated so far and choose the one memory that seems hot; write a paragraph recalling the moment.

Share to our Discord server **Meditation** ⇒ **#meditation-6**