

AD 463 Collaborative Studio- Creating a Fictional Civilization

Spring 2017

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Office Hours: TBD

Syllabus

Course Description

You will be making a fictional civilization through collaborating with other knowledge bases, skill sets, and perspectives. The structure of this course is meant to replicate the production pipeline in a real studio. Work is to be created as a team and will be exhibited at the end of the semester. The final deliverable is to create a level of immersion so that your fictional world earns a level of believability and authenticity. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways and in combinations of various mediums. However you choose to illustrate the concept of this world, the delivery must be original, completed, and encourage a level of immersion.

The goal is to play to your strengths so that you are able to execute your role in this production to the best of your abilities and so that you have work worthy of being shown in your own portfolios and demo reels. Once the class understands each other's strengths and areas of interest, the synchronization can begin in developing the production. Much of the outcome of the final exhibition will rely on the ability of all students to effectively collaborate.

Although we are creating a fictional civilization, we need to pull inspiration from real historic civilizations. All successful fantasy and sci/fi writers put a great deal of time into studying history, various cultures, the natural world, and even current events in order to materialize their universe. In this course, you will all be expected to do the same.

This production will require research, diligence, team participation, attention to detail, and the ability to meet deadlines. You are expected to devote time outside of class in order to meet these deadlines.

You will be required to create a blog posting, (via Moodle), weekly, in order to document your progress, show scans of the work in progress and schedule new goals for the coming week.

Course Objectives

- World Building
- Visual storytelling
- Character development and design
- Creature and animal rendering
- Storyboarding
- Concept Art
- Environment design
- Intro to Philosophy
- Intro to creative writing
- Prop, costume, and vehicle design
- 3D prototyping and modeling
- Art History
- Fantasy & Sci/Fi film and literature

Recommended Reading:

- *The Power of Myth* by Joseph Campbell
- *Writing Monsters* by Philip Athans
- *Video Game Storytelling* by Evan Skolnick
- *Write Characters Your Readers Won't Forget* by Stant Litore
- *Imaginative Realism* by James Gurney
- *Wonderbook-The Illustrated Guide to Creating Imaginative Fiction* by Jeff Vandermeer
- *The Steampunk Bible* by Jeff Vandermeer

Class Policies

Assignments:

Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Assignments that are not clearly labeled will not be accepted or graded. Late homework will be graded down one letter grade for every class late.

Academic Warning:

Students who do not complete and submit assignments on time and to a satisfactory standard will fail the class. It is the student's responsibility to obtain missed assignments from other classmates and make up work in time for the next class.

Data Backups:

You are expected to keep multiple backups of all course data and to have your current project files available at all times during class time. You are encouraged to keep a cloud storage account in addition to a physical backup.

Lab Policies:

Lab door codes are to be kept private within the roster of enrolled students. Lab projectors and speakers are only for instructor use. You are expected to use good judgement in setting lengthy rendering tasks using lab facilities. Failure to adhere to these policies can result in your being locked out of the labs.

Academic Warning:

Students who do not complete and submit assignments on time and to a satisfactory standard will fail the class. It is the student's responsibility to obtain missed assignments from other classmates and make up work in time for the next class.

Grading

The following factors will be considered when assigning your grade:

A. Ability to intellectually engage the material investigated in the course.

Students are to thoughtfully engage the material presented in readings, presentations and discussions. Responses to questions should be directly and thoughtful related to topics investigated in the assignment.

B. Communication.

The ability to communicate ideas and concepts to others. This includes written, verbal, and visual communication skills. Outside critics may be brought in at the end of each project to review your work in an open forum environment. These presentations should be considered "client presentations" and should be presented with a level of professionalism consistent with your work.

C. Independent thinking.

Independent thinking will be evaluated and will be based on the ideas and thoughts developed on an independent basis by the student. Depth of creative thought is primary to the independent thinking evaluation. Independent thinking must be clearly demonstrated in all aspects of the course including verbal participation in the classroom.

D. Professional Attitude.

Students are to express and articulate clearly their view toward the topics in this course in a method which reflects the quality of a professional in the field of design. It is the ethical responsibility of the student to support the learning community in this course in a positive and constructive manner. Maintaining a positive learning community is parallel to expectations one will experience in supporting a positive work environment after graduation.

Professional attitude includes, but is not limited to, the ability to maintain and contribute to a positive learning environment, professional attitude towards classmates, guests, and the instructor. To receive a positive evaluation, professional attitude must be clearly demonstrated on a consistent and daily basis. Do not take this portion of the course for granted--you are expected to demonstrate professional maturation processes within the course. The ability to receive and give critical feedback, respond to challenging situations with a positive attitude, and support an excellent working studio environment are all essential to receiving high marks in professional attitude evaluations.

NJIT uses the following grades:

A/4.0 (superior)
B+/3.5 (excellent)
B/3.0 (very good)
C+/2.5 (good)
C/2.0 (acceptable)
D/1.0 (minimum)
F/0.0 (inadequate).

Kepler

Project grading is not officially applied to student standing until project deliverables have been uploaded in the proper format to the Kepler system. Failure to upload work to Kepler will result in an F for the course.

ATTENDANCE POLICY, ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with either freshman or sophomore standing also have an attendance requirement overlaid on the grading criteria. No more than three unexcused absences are permitted without a grade reduction. Each unexcused absence above the three (starting with the fourth) will result in a grade reduction of 1 for the semester. In other words, four absences would result in a maximum grade of B (assuming everything done is of "A" quality), five absences would result in a maximum grade of "C", six in a maximum grade of "D", etc. Students do NOT receive extensions for submission of work due to any unexcused absences. Acceptance of late work is at the discretion of the individual instructor. Absences for illness in order to be excused MUST be accompanied by documentation from professional medical personnel who are NOT members of your family. Since religious holidays are known in advance, students who expect to be absent due to religious holidays must notify their instructor by the second week of class.

NJIT and instructors will endeavor to make any accommodations required and necessary for the success of students with disabilities. However, in order to receive accommodations disabilities MUST be documented with the NJIT Disability Office AND notification of request for accommodation must be made to the instructor by the second week of class. No accommodations can be granted "after the fact" unless due to a situation (injury/illness/etc.) that occurs or is documented during the semester. In those instances accommodations will commence upon notification or observation of the disability.