



Department of
Information Science Technology

Cullen College of Engineering

Course Syllabus — subject to change with notice

DIGM 4378
Senior Project

Spring 2024

Professor:	Phil Snyder, MFA
Lab Manager:	Can Le (chle2@uh.edu) Sugar Land campus
Professor's Office:	Room BH 345
Professor's Telephone:	713-743-4238
Professor's E-mail:	pcsnyder@central.uh.edu
Program Web Site:	https://dot.egr.uh.edu/digitalmedia
Course Locations:	Lecture & Lab: Face-to-Face AMG 218 (Section 19363)
Course Day/Time:	MON 11am-2pm
Office Hours:	Thursdays 11am-2pm (email for appointment)
Course Description:	Advanced digital video production from concept development and planning through post-production to delivery.
Prerequisites:	DIGM 2352, DIGM 3354
Credit:	3 semester hours
Course Goals:	This is an advanced video production course designed to develop hands-on skills in creating video and other motion media projects from concept to delivery through hands-on exercises in story, editing, cinematography, sound, and producing. The course establishes and reinforces skills in visual storytelling and aesthetic criticism.

Students completing the course will describe, demonstrate,

compare, analyze, integrate, and critique Digital Media technologies related to:

1. Advanced digital video camera operation and technology;
2. Compositing motion graphics;
3. Motion media aesthetics;
4. Advanced staging, lighting, and sound technology;
5. Advanced post-production video;
6. Digital video applications and output for transmedia;
7. Ethical issues in motion media;
8. Digital video business and job market prospects;

Recommended textbook: Kenworthy, C. (2012). *Master Shots, (2nd ed.)*. Studio City: Michael Wiese Productions (ISBN: 978-1-61593-087-6)

Required tools: Adobe Creative Cloud Suite 2023/2024, Personal Computer, External hard drive or high capacity flash drive

PDF files: To save paper, handouts for the course will only be supplied in Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF). These files can be read on any Windows, Mac, or Unix computer, providing you have the correct Acrobat Reader Software. Acrobat Reader is available free of charge from the Adobe Website (www.adobe.com). You can read the files on-screen or print the files on your own printer. However, you may not print them using the Image Digital Media Lab's machines (we don't have the budget for all the paper and toner it would take). The PDF files for this course can be copied from the instructional materials folder on the lab's servers to your portable memory, or you may access the instructional materials server from any computer using your web browser (<http://www.digitalmedia.tech.uh.edu>).

Why 5 hours per week? DIGM 4378 is a lecture/lab class and is governed by University policy as well as policies of the accrediting bodies. First, students should understand that each hour of class credit requires three hours per week: one hour in lecture and two hours of personal study/homework. Thus, a three-hour course requires nine hours per week: three in class and six on your own. However, lab earns in-class credit at one-third the rate of lecture. Thus, it takes three hours of lab to earn one hour of lecture credit. DIGM 4378 requires you to spend two hours in lecture. For

those two hours, you receive two hours of credit. The three hours of lab, counted together, are worth one hour of credit. Thus, you spend five hours per week in a three-hour lecture/lab class. Remember that you still “owe” Prof. Snyder a total of nine hours for the three-hour course. Nine minus five equals four. Thus, you should spend four hours per week on your own reading, studying, and working on homework and on-line quizzes. That’s the expectation of this course.

Important Information: As a student of the University of Houston, information available on the UH website will be critical to you in ensuring that your academic pursuits meet with success, and that you encounter the fewest financial and academic difficulties as possible. Please take a few moments to review each of the areas, and become familiar with the resources detailed on the website (<http://www.uh.edu/provost/stu/index.php>) with regard to: The UH Academic Honesty Policy; the UH Academic Calendar; Students with Disabilities; Religious Holy Day FAQs; and Other Information.

Assignments: DIGM 4378 is a project-centered course, and as such, there will be **no quizzes or exams**. Your performance will be evaluated based on the quality of your work. Assignments in both Lecture and Lab will have due dates and times, and late assignments will have 10 deducted per day late. **No assignments will be accepted more than seven days late.**

Netiquette in Class:

The College of Technology’s Main and Sugar Land campus buildings are fully wireless capable. That means that you can log-on to the Internet from any part of any of our buildings, including the classrooms. We encourage you to bring your laptops, netbooks, and so forth to lectures so that you can take digital notes, download materials your professor provide, and take advantage of websites that Prof. Snyder suggests.

However, it is extremely rude to use your laptop for surfing the web, answering e-mails, playing games, or other off-task functions during class. It is also a waste of your money, since your lectures are packed with important information being presented by your professor who knows more about the topic than you do. You are paying money to be in class. Do not waste your money by trying to ineffectively multi-task during class!

Cellphones, tablets, and other handheld devices fall into the same category as laptops. They should not be used for non-class activities.

CLASS SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

Week	Lecture Topic	Lecture Assignment	Lab Topic & Project	Lab Assignment
1	Introduction and Orientation Video 2	Project 1 Ideas	Advanced Camera movement	Assignment 1
2	Screenwriting Business	Project 1 Pitch	DSLR Scene from Script	Assignment 2
3	Documentary	Project 1 Script	Basic Animation in After Effects	Assignment 3
4	Telling Your Story	Project 1 Storyboard	Work on Project 1	Work on Project 1
5	Just Ad Milk	Casting Notices, etc.	Work on Project 1	Work on Project 1
6	Docudrama	Final Project Idea	Project 1 PSA Due Screenings: Project 1	Work on Project 1
7	Directing	Final Project Pitch	Car Interior Scene	Assignment 4
8	Creating a Reel	Research/Theme Paper	After Effects Animated Text	Assignment 5
9	Spring Break	Have Fun!		
10	XMPie Video	Final Project Script 1	Maya 3D Introduction	Assignment 6
11	Media Part 1	Final Project Script 2	Drone Operations	Assignment 7
12	Drones	Final Project Storyboard	Work on Final Project	Work on Final Project
13	Video & Transmedia	Work on Final Project	Work on Final Project	Work on Final Project
14	TBA	Work on Final Project	Work on Final Project	Work on Final Project
15	TBA	Work on Final Project	Work on Final Project	Work on Final Project
16	Final Project Screenings	Final Project Screenings	Final Project Due	—

Prof. Snyder realizes that you are an adult and are free to squander your time any way you want. However, you do NOT have the right to interfere with other students who are trying to listen to lectures. Therefore, if you insist on texting, e-mailing, or surfing, sit in the back of the classroom where you won't bother anybody.

Extra credit: **Overall course extra credit** may be earned through participation in the University of Houston chapter of the Graphic Communications Education Association (GCEA). Students who join GCEAUH and attend a minimum of three association meetings will earn three points extra credit on their final grades. GCEAUH officers will receive five points of extra credit on their final grades. You must notify Prof. Snyder of your eligibility for this extra credit.

Should the GCEAUH not meet during the semester, at his discretion, Prof. Snyder may assign alternative course extra credit assignments.

Attendance: Attendance at all class sessions is expected. There will be a grade penalty for **all** absences **except with a Doctor's note**. In other words, **there is no such thing as an excused absence. Be on time!** Tardies of more than 10 minutes count as 1/2 an absence. You may only accumulate three total absences—lecture or lab, full-days or tardies. You may be dropped after the fourth absence. Look at it this way: there is no way to make up any lecture or lab that you miss. Notes from friends or textbook readings are no substitute for actually being present in class when Prof. Snyder explains a concept or process. Here's another thought: you and the taxpayers of the State of Texas are paying Prof. Snyder to be present in the DIGM 3374 class. **Why pay money for something you don't take?** It would be like buying tickets to a live concert, then coming after it's over and expecting the band to play again just for you.

Grading:	Item	Percent of grade
	Attendance	10%
	Lecture Assignments.	25%
	Lab Assignments.	25%
	Projects 1 and 2	40%

Percent/letter grades:	A	94-100 A-	90-93
	B+. 87-89	B 84-86	B-. 80-83
	C+. 77-79	C 74-76	C-. 70-73
	D+. 67-69	D 64-66	D-. 60-63

Lab assignments:

Lab assignments are to be completed and submitted, either during the lab, or by midnight the night before the next lab for grading. You will submit them to the Canvas assignment portal.

Prof. Snyder hopes that students will perform their very best work, keeping in mind that they are creating content for their portfolios, and possibly, for their capstone projects. Students should remember that they only get one opportunity to make a good first impression.

All written lab assignments are to be converted to PDF and submitted as such unless otherwise directed. All video or other motion media assignments will be exported and submitted in H.264 compression and as .mpg4 files. More specific instructions will be given in class.

Lab assignments are all graded according to the following rubric:

Unsubmitted projects will receive a zero (0) or **F** grade.

If a project is submitted but has **any** technical flaw that will prevent it from working, it will receive a **D** grade. For example, if the project is submitted at the wrong size, it will receive a D.

C is the standard project grade. It means that the content of the project is technically accurate.

A **B** project is not only technically accurate, but also attractive. In addition to “working,” the project shows that the student has applied the basic principles of graphic design (use of type, balance, and so forth).

A is assigned to projects in which the student has obviously gone above and beyond the call of duty. Captions and attractive presentation are examples of “beyond the call of duty.”

There is no need for a student to earn any less than a B on any project. Don't be meek! Show your work to Prof. Snyder in advance for advice!

Any grade earned on a project during the preliminary review can be upgraded by the student by repairing defects or improving the appearance of the work. Simply resubmit your reworked projects to Prof. Snyder. Grades for projects submitted on the day of the final examination are final.

Grade expectations:

Prof. Snyder expects students in the course to be capable and motivated professionals. No such student should be content

with a grade less than “B.” Please provide the attention, motivation and effort necessary to reach this grade expectation.

Due date policy: Late work is “yesterday’s news.” In keeping with this idea, assignments must be turned in as scheduled. Please see the assignments on Blackboard for specific due dates. Late work will receive a grade penalty of 10% per class session. **No assignments will be accepted more than seven days late.**

Adds/drops: Please refer to the University’s Undergraduate Catalog and the Schedule of Classes for the appropriate add/drop dates and procedures. Those procedures must be followed to the letter.

Incompletes: An “incomplete” grade will only be issued if the student is maintaining an acceptable level of achievement and cannot, due to some factor **beyond the control of the student**, complete one or more major assignment. If a student wishes an “incomplete” grade, s/he must explain the situation to Prof. Snyder in advance and make specific arrangements to make up missing work no later than one year after the “incomplete” is issued.

Classroom cleanliness: Janitorial services are rarely provided in rooms GB 320. For this reason, and to keep the equipment clean, **no food or drink is allowed in the room for any reason at any time.** ***Please clean up after yourself!***

FAX: The college will not accept assignments that are faxed to the office. There is no use trying.

Americans with Disabilities Act: Any student who may be in need of additional help under the ADA guidelines should contact Prof. Snyder ASAP.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (<http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/uhsugarland/>) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the “Let’s Talk” program, a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus.

http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html <http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/uhsugarland/>

Excused Absence Policy Regular class attendance, participation, and engagement in coursework are important contributors to student success. Absences may be excused as provided in the University of Houston Undergraduate Excused Absence Policy and

Graduate Excused Absence Policy for reasons including: medical illness of student or close relative, death of a close family member, legal or government proceeding that a student is obligated to attend, recognized professional and educational activities where the student is presenting, and University-sponsored activity or athletic competition. Under these policies, students with excused absences will be provided with an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam or other work that contributes to the course grade or a satisfactory alternative. Please read the full policy for details regarding reasons for excused absences, the approval process, and extended absences. Additional policies address absences related to military service, religious holy days, pregnancy and related conditions, and disability.

Recording of Class

Students **may not record** all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the Center for Students with DisABILITIES. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

Syllabus Changes

Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through (specify how students will be notified of changes).

Resources for Online Learning

The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our Power-On website. Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, and Blackboard; requesting a laptop through the Laptop Loaner Program; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

UH Email

Email communications related to this course will be sent to your Exchange email account which each University of Houston student receives. The Exchange mail server can be accessed via Outlook, which provides a single location for organizing and managing day-to-day information, from email and calendars to contacts and task lists. Exchange email accounts can be accessed by logging into Office 365 with your Cougarnet credentials or through Access UH. Additional assistance can be found at the Get Help page.

Webcams

Access to a webcam is required for students participating remotely in this course. Webcams must be turned on (state when webcams are required to be on and the academic basis for requiring them to be on). (Example: Webcams must be turned on during exams to ensure the academic integrity of exam administration.)

Honor Code Statement

Students may be asked to sign an honor code statement as part of their submission of any graded work including but not limited to projects, quizzes, and exams: "I understand and agree to abide by the provisions in the (select: University of Houston Undergraduate Academic Honesty Policy, University of Houston Graduate Academic Honesty Policy). I understand that academic honesty is taken very seriously and, in the cases of violations, penalties may include suspension or expulsion from the University of Houston."