University of Missouri - Columbia
School of Information Science and Learning Technologies

IS&LT 4364/7364 - Summer 2007 (3 Hrs.)

Flash Authoring

Lead Instructor: Dr. Joi L. Moore, Associate

Professor

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Course Information

Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to provide students with knowledge necessary to create basic timeline-based animations using Flash (formerly Macromedia Flash). During this course, you will develop a thorough understanding of Flash. The course will cover topics like vector images, animation, sound, ActionScript, and much more. At the conclusion of this course, you will have produced Flash web-based animations and have a better understanding of the power of Flash in web site design and development.

Prerequisites

Students should have taken the 4360/7360 Introduction to Web Development, or demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

- creating and formatting a web page (i.e., basic html knowledge)
- accessing and maintaining a website using the SFTP/SecureFX
- inserting graphics
- setting up hyperlinks

Course Objectives

Upon the successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

- demonstrate proficiency of Adobe Flash
  - set up Flash documents with appropriate dimensions and frame rates
  - draw vector graphic using drawing tools
  - separate animated objects on necessary layers and rearrange layers to change the stacking order
  - create three types of reuseable symbols: graphic, button, & movie clip

- create and edit instances on the stage using symbols in the library
- organize the layers, timeline, & library in a manageable manner
- publish source fla files to swf files with appropriate settings
- analyze published swf files with Flash components
  - apply various timeline-based animation techniques
    - create frame-by-frame animation
    - create two types of tweening animation: shape tweening and motion tweening with motion guides
    - create mask and masking effects
  - script basic actions for user interaction
    - create user control in playing and stopping animation as well as sound using actionscript
    - create user control for non-linear navigation
    - load external swf files on demand into a fla frame
  - integrate Flash into web site design
    - embed published swf file into html pages
    - describe the advantages and disadvantages of using Flash animation in web site design
  - perform the multimedia design cycle
    - generate a design plan and storyboard before production
    - conduct formative evaluation with peers and target audience
  - demonstrate interface and interaction design principles
    - apply appropriate visual design, based on colors, text fonts, etc.
    - create intuitive and user-friendly interfaces

Virtual Office Hours

By appointment, can meet in-person, or virtually via Instant Messaging (IM), video conference (iChat), or telephone (573-884-2797). For initial contact, you should use the private message feature in the Sakai course discussion board.

Graduate Teaching Assistants: Zone Mentors. You can reach them via zone@missouri.edu.

Digital Media Zone

The ZONE is staffed by Mentors (Faculty and PhD students) who are focused on helping you *learn by doing*. The ZONE is a physical and virtual space/place where you can receive help and support from those who have special knowledge and skills, but where you are ultimately responsible for your own learning. Your Instructor and the ZONE Mentors do not teach you in a traditional classroom approach. *They help you learn by providing guidance and support while you learn by doing*.

The ZONE is part of the School of Information Science & Learning Technologies in the College of Education at the University of Missouri-Columbia. It is physically located in the top level of the Reflector in Townsend Hall. The Reflector is a technology-rich support environment for students in the MU College of Education.

To learn more about the ZONE and the full range of support for online students enrolled in Digital

Media Zone courses offered by the ZONE, please visit http://zone.missouri.edu.

Here are directions and a map to the Zone

Course Materials and Resources

The following software is required for this class:

- Macromedia Flash 8 or CS3
    - If you are new to the Macromedia family, the only version that you can buy now is Flash 8 or Flash CS3. You can download a trial of Flash CS3 from Adobe Flash CS3 Professional website. The free trial expires in 30 days. It is highly recommend that you purchase a copy of Flash CS3 for yourself. You can purchase the educational version of Adobe Software from the Computer Spectrum in the MU Student Bookstore.
- Flash Player 8 or 9. If you are not sure whether you have flash player 8 or 9 installed, go to this Flash Player website to verify it.
- File Transfer Protocol (FTP) program: SecureFX (for PC users) OR MacSFTP (for Mac users). You can download a free copy of FTP programs from the Software Distribution Center.
- Student support and additional resources are offered through the Digital Media ZONE.

Textbooks:

- The **required** textbook is available at University Bookstore, most Barnes & Nobles, or through Amazon.com:
    - Gonzalex, J. (2005). *Macromedia Flash Professional 8 Hands-On Training (H.O.T)*. ISBN 0321293886
- A **recommended** textbook for journalism students:
    - McAdams, M. (2001) *Flash Journalism: How to Create Multimedia News Packages* (Paperback) ISBN: 0240806972
- If you are more experienced, or just really interested in animation, here's a list of books that are useful.
    - Flash 5 Cartooning. Wiley John & Sons. ISBN 0764535471
    - The Flash Animator. Corsaro, Sandro. ISBN 0735712824
    - Web Animation Expert. Davis, Graham. ISBN 1586636790
    - Flash MX Bible. Reinhardt, Robert. ISBN 0764536567
    - Macromedia Flash MX: The Compete Reference. Underdahl, Brian. ISBN 0072134860
    - Inside Flash MX. Keating, Jody. ISBN 0735712549

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Grading and Deadlines

The following assignments must be turned in for a grade. It is your responsibility to submit these assignments by the due dates.

Element	Due Dates (11:45 pm, Central Time)	Percentage

Orientation Activities	June 14	4
Unit Assignments (8)	Throughout the semester	32
Class Participation	Throughout the semester	12
Final Project		
• Project Description	July 5	2
• Design Plan & Storyboard	July 16	10
• Interactive Animation Project	July 25 and 30	25
• Peer Evaluations	July 27	5
• Evaluation Report	August 1	10
Total		**100**

The dates for assignments may change as the semester progresses and brief descriptions of each element are listed in the Student Responsibilities section in the syllabus. Detailed instructions and assessment expectations will be provided. All course information will be located in the Resources section of Sakai. Generally, the rubrics will determine whether the assignments contain the basic requirements and demonstrate solid work. To receive an "A" for this course, however, your work must exceed the basic requirements of the assignments and demonstrate solid work.

Grading Scale (Percentage)

Graduate Students
Note: For the Final Project, graduate students will be required to complete an evaluation report with a different assessment to support the expected learning outcomes of a graduate course. This information will be provided with the detailed instructions for the final project.
A: (100-90), B: (89-80), C: (79-70), F:(69-0)

Undergraduate Students
A+: (100-97), A: (96 - 93), A-: (92 - 90)
B+: (89 - 87). B: (86 - 83), B-: (82 - 80)
C+: (79 - 77). C: (76 - 73), C-: (72 - 70)
D+: (69 - 67). D: (66 - 63), D-: (62 - 60)
F : (59 - 0)

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Student Responsibilities

You will receive specific detailed instructions on how you should produce and turn in the projects in the online course material during the semester.

File Naming Policies:
All work submitted for grading must include the student's last name and assignment name as part of the file name. For example, "moore-unit1.fla". Work will be graded only when the student name is included.

Assignments Web Page:
You are to create a web page that serves as an index to your Flash units and assignments. This allows for easier review of your projects by the instructor, ZONE mentors, and classmates. You are to upload each unit of work and individual assignment that will be graded to a web server, and place a link on your "assignments.html" page. Place the "assignments.html" page in a directory named "flash", and add links for each flash assignment.

Submit the URL for your assignment page to the "Student Assignment Web Pages" folder in the Resources section of Sakai. The title should be formatted as "Lastname, Firstname". Flash work will be graded only when it is accessible from the Assignments Web Page.

Orientation Activities:
This activity will orient you to the Sakai environment, the Digital Media ZONE, and course topics.

Unit Assignments:
For the majority of the course, you will complete 1 to 2 "Units of Instruction" each week . A unit is comprised of one or more chapters from the required textbook, and/or additional material provided on the course website. There are exercises (not graded) and graded assignments associated with each unit. You should strive to complete each unit to the best of your ability before asking for feedback. It is okay if you do not complete exactly right on your first attempt, but you should use the feedback to correct the errors before submitting for a grade. A zero will given when there is no attempt to complete a unit.

To receive credit for a unit, you must complete the work, and post your work (swf and html files) to your Assignment webpage.

Class Participation:
Participation and idea sharing are integral components for the success of this course. The goal is to create a collaborative learning environment to assist everyone with reaching their learning expectations. Therefore, you can assist classmates by responding to questions posted on the discussion boards or helping them solve a problem with a unit. Throughout the semester, you are expected to participate in class discussions regarding a Flash technique or scripting.

Final Project:
To complete the final project, you must create a design plan & storyboard for your interactive animation movie and then you must develop and test your animation movie. You will describe your testing experience in an evaluation report. The animation movie must be completed before you implement your evaluation. You will have the opportunity to make revisions based on what you learned with your target audience.

Interactive Animation Project Description

You will provide a brief description of your anticipated project on the course discussion board. This will provide an opportunity to discuss ideas with the course facilitator and classmates.

Design Plan & Storyboard

You will create a storyboard for your final project animation. This storyboard does not have to be fancy. It can be hand-drawn on paper and scanned if you want. This storyboard will be used as your guide when you create your animation. It, of course, can evolve during the development of your animation, but it should be complete enough to reflect a good idea of your final animation without actually seeing the animation. You need to submit this storyboard for instructor feedback before you start your final animation; otherwise, your project idea may not be be accepted. You must submit your storyboard by the due date, to receive feedback early enough to work on your final animation.

Interactive Animation Project

The interactive animation project will be developed independently. Although your animation movie will reflect individual interests, each animation should be developed with a clear purpose with recognized design fundamentals as guides. Your animation project should be representative of your animation techniques. I would recommend that you make your final project about something important, meaningful to you, and related to your field of study. If you are a teacher or trainer, you may develop an animated instructional module that your students could use in your class. Another option is to create an animated cartoon to tell a short story about an event. Or, create an interactive movie that reports an important news event. Spend some time considering your options before choosing your topic. However, all topics must be approved. **Important Note:** personal websites or portfolios are not acceptable projects.

Project Peer Evaluations

You will be asked to provide feedback or suggestions for final animation movies created by classmates. Looking at existing projects is a good strategy for learning new techniques and generating ideas for future projects.

Evaluation Report

Evaluation is one of the essential components for creating effective multimedia programs. You will test your project in an environment that closely resembles the environment of the target audience and report your findings.

How To Succeed

You should check the Announcements and Course Schedule each Monday for any changes or important events related to the course

Here are some tips for getting most out of this course:

- This is an Internet course, which is much different from the experience you typically receive in a face-to-face setting. Although you do not have to meet face-to-face every week for 2 to 3 hours, you will still have activities to replace the time spent in the classroom. Hence, you should expect to spend **at least 8 hours per week** for course activities and/or assignments. The project-based nature of the activities coupled with the demands of Internet-based learning can require a considerable amount of time.

- Class work in an Internet-based course is structured differently than that of a weekly, face-to-face course. Therefore, managing the course responsibilities may seem overwhelming. However, if you manage your time wisely, you should be able to complete all activities by the due dates.
- Each Monday and Thursday, you should read the Announcements for tasks and course updates.
- The Course Schedule provides a general outline of weekly activities. However, these activities can change depending on the needs of the students. Meaning, your instructor may assign additional readings and/or tasks to help you with your activities. You should check the course schedule each Monday and check the discussion board at least once a day.
- Maintain a reasonable pace through the course. Do not wait until the last week to begin engaging in the work nor the last day before an assignment is due. Make a schedule for yourself indicating when you will focus on the topics of the course during the week.
- There will be a lot of interaction with other classmates, which is an important component of an online course. Get to know your classmates and the ZONE mentors. Take advantage early of the opportunity to learn about your classmates and let them know about you. Contribute by writing about yourself and also by responding to what others write. Forming a community with your fellow students will make the course more enjoyable and will aid your learning.
- Work collaboratively. How much you learn and how much enjoy this course will depend on the sense of connection you develop with your fellow students. Try to help your fellow students and try to benefit from what they have to offer.
- Check the discussion board often. I encourage you to share ideas and ask questions. There will be times when I provide valuable tips and strategies for completing a task in Flash. Make sure that you review the discussion board for similar problems and questions before posting for help.
- Check your understanding. Your goal is to understand the theories, principles, development, and concepts central to the course. Do not stop with the reading the course materials. Always review the underlying concepts and interact with your peers to see if you need to strengthen your understanding
- Contact a ZONE mentor when you need help. The ZONE mentors are there to help you and you should feel free to contact them anytime you need help with anything related to this course. See http://zone.missouri.edu/support.html

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Course Policies

Reviewing Student Work

Many ZONE online courses require you to present your work electronically so other students can see it; and you will also be asked to review the work of other students, as part of the instructional process of the class.

Your work may be used as an example of how to accomplish a technique or for ideas by other students. In many cases having other students peer review your work helps support your own learning and leads to better outcomes for everyone in the course.

If at any time you feel uncomfortable sharing your work, or with the feedback or comments on your work by other students, contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Feedback

You may receive feedback on all of your work. If you want feedback before an assignment is due, you MUST request the feedback at least 1 day prior to the due date to allow enough time for us to give you feedback and for you to implement our suggestions. If you submit a request for feedback at a later time, we will do our best to give you feedback but do not rely on our comments - we may be too busy to help you by the due date. No matter what, you should always utilize the knowledge base of your fellow classmates when you have a question or need help. Post to the discussion boards and ask for feedback from your classmates.

Feedback will not be given on your final project. At this point in the semester, you should have a solid understanding of the concepts required to complete the final project. If you run into problem, ask questions and we will help, but we will not step through your Flash file to verify that you did everything correctly.

Late Work

The due dates listed for assignments may change as the semester progresses. However, it is important to note that late work will be penalized. If you have conflicts, problems, or something unexpected arises, do not hesitate to contact the instructor, facilitator, or mentors. Submitted assignments will be reviewed and graded immediately after the posted due date. Any assignments submitted within **2 days** after the due date will receive an automatic 10% reduction in grade. Work will not be accepted after 2 days and you will receive an automatic zero. If you are having problems completing an assignment, you should contact the course facilitator as soon as possible, preferably before the due date. Otherwise, the assumption will be that you chose not to submit your assignment.

Re-grading Policies and Procedure

Request for re-grading should be turned in via email no later than 48 hours after receiving the grade for each project. Write an email with a proper and detailed statement as to which part should be reviewed and why you request for regrading. If your statement is not appropriate, your request will not be honored. After a re-grading, you may receive a higher grade, the same grade, or a lower grade, depending on whether the same grading standard had been applied to your work before the review.

Incomplete

Incompletes in this course will be given if, and only if:

- The completed portion of the student's work in the course is of passing quality and
- There is such evidence of hardship as to make it unjust to hold the student to the limits previously fixed for the completion of his/her work.

If you meet the above criteria and you wish an Incomplete in this course, you must immediately send an email to (moorejoi@missouri.edu). In most cases, an Incomplete will result in an automatic drop in letter grade. Requests for Incompletes must be provided two weeks prior to the Final Project due

date.

For those students who are taking an incomplete for zone courses, all the course assignments and projects must be completed and turned in for grades before the start day of the coming semester; otherwise, a letter grade F will be given for the course.

For more information on Incompletes, please visit:
http://registrar.missouri.edu/Policies_Rules_and_Regulations/incomplete.htm

Course Withdrawal

Withdrawals will adhere to university policies regarding dates and grades. If request for a withdrawal is submitted after the university due date, a student will only receive a W for a "passing" status in the course. Otherwise, an F will be reported.

For more information on Withdrawals, please visit:
http://registrar.missouri.edu/Records_Transcripts_and_Degree_Audit/Records/Grades/withdraw.htm

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Disabilities and Accommodations

If you need accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please contact the ZONE manager, Paul Turner, immediately. Please call the ZONE manager, visit the ZONE manager when he is on duty in the ZONE, or use one of the other contact methods identified on the ZONE web site. To request academic accommodations (for example, a note taker or translator), students must also register with Disability Services, AO38 Brady Commons, 882-4696. It is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting academic accommodations, and for accommodations planning in cooperation with students and instructors, as needed and consistent with course requirements. Another resource, MU's Adaptive Computing Technology Center, 884-2828, is available to provide computing assistance to students with disabilities.

The above statement is the standard statement required by the University...which does not seem to apply much if you are taking this course at a distance. If you have a disability that you feel requires special accommodations relative to this course, please contact the ZONE manager, Paul Turner, using the contact methods provided at http://zone.missouri.edu/support/contact.html .

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Academic Dishonesty

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult the course instructor.

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