Introduction

The emphasis of Visual Communication Project II is on individual project development and realization in a studio course environment. The students should develop projects, which are related to the department content in video, multimedia, and advertisement, and which can be realized in one term period.

About this guide

This guide is written for general orientation and help. Main purpose is to organize possible projects in major categories and standardize them. For some individual projects the guide might not be sufficient enough. In these cases the students and the instructor will work out individual project guidelines and production steps, which go conform to the course objectives.

General Objectives for Projects

Each project has to be related to planning, media integration, and production techniques and tools. Major component media included are computer text, graphics, photography, animation, speech, sound, and video. The objectives for each project are

- **Learning writing skills** in the form of concept documents, treatments, functional specifications, step-outlines, drafts, scripts, and screenplays.

- **Understand and appreciate interactive multimedia, television and advertisement** - The industry, products, and trends.

- **Understand and apply good interactive design** - Navigation, screen layout, buttons and icons, audio, video, animation, text and graphics.

- **Understand and apply a professional production process** - client discovery, design, prototype, production, authoring and quality assurance in the case of interactive media; client discovery, purpose, genre, proposal, treatment, screenplay, preproduction, production, post-production, design in the case of film/video, etc.
Projects

The possible individual projects for this course can be summarized in four major categories:

- **Video** – Documentary, Fiction, Animation, and Experimental.
- **Interactive Media** – CD ROM and DVD, Web, Media Art
- **Mixed Media Campaign** – Advertising/Promotion Campaign and Public Service/Charity related to Television, Print Media, and Internet
- **Research Project** – Research Paper in related theoretical topics with mediated representation.
PROJECTS

Project 1: Video

The project can be based on an original idea or an adaptation. You are free to choose between fiction, documentary, animation or experimental projects. The finished video should have a minimum length of 10 minutes, and should be delivered at the end of the term as a complete package including cassette package, poster and postcard design. The project includes the following steps for production and evaluation:

1. To set-up a world-wide-web presence (i.e. web-site) – with weekly entries recording your thoughts, observations, impressions on class discussions, readings and the production.

2. To write a proposal – The proposal should present and outline in an appealing way the project for possible clients and producers. It should not only include a short summary of the story/content of the film, but also give an overview of the production and the style of the film/video project.

3. To write a cover letter – Cover letter to a possible producer, production company or broadcaster.

4. To prepare a budget – The budget should give detailed information about the costs and expenses of the video production under real world conditions. How much would this film/video cost, if this would not be a school project? How much does it cost as a school project? All possible production costs above the line and below the line have to be calculated, for example: costs for writing, music, personal, rental, travel, transport, food and more.

5. To prepare a schedule – The schedule should clearly include and describe all production steps till the final submission of the master copy to the jury at the end of the term.

6. To write a step outline for the film/video project

7. To prepare a production folder – This folder will be handed in for the first project review in week 7 of the term and should include all documents under 1 to 5 and additionally production data like team lists, actors list, location lists and photos, etc.

8. To prepare a storyboard and floor plans

9. To write a screenplay

10. To shoot and edit

11. To prepare production graphics and design poster, postcard and cassette package

12. To deliver a Master tape, DVD, and production package for the final jury in week 14 of the term

13. To do a production follow up for the final jury – was the schedule extended and why, was the budget extended and why, what changed from the first planning till the final master.
For each jury/review or review hand in three printed copies of your production folder and prepare a presentation of your project and its state. It might be helpful also to add additional notes and sketches to give a more insight view of the creative process.

Note

For a documentary project it might be not possible to write more than an outline of the film. In this case research material and interview protocols should be added.
Project 2: Interactive Media

The project can be a similar project like in Visual Communication Project I. It is free to choose between CD ROM and DVD application as a delivery medium, and an installation or web-based media art project. The application can be interactive fiction, or interactive story, a game or a promotional project. The software and hardware to use in this kind of project will not be limited, but the tools used in former classes are recommended. Possible software packages to use are Macromedia Director, Macromedia Flash, Photoshop, Adobe After Effects, Media Cleaner, Final Cut Pro.

The finished product should be at least in a Beta state, that is, developed beyond the prototype state (the state we left it at in VCP I). The finished project should be delivered at the end of the term as a complete package including CD/DVD package, poster design, read me, and guidelines, and distribution/publishing plan.

The project includes the following steps for production and evaluation:

1. To set-up a world-wide-web presence (i.e. web-site) – with weekly entries recording your thoughts, observations, impressions on class discussions, readings and the production

2. To write a proposal – The proposal should present and outline in an appealing way the project for possible clients and producers, / publishers. It should not only include a short summary of the story/content of the interactive media product, but also give an overview of the production, special features and the style / design of the project.

3. To write a cover letter – Standard cover letter to a producer or distributor

4. To prepare a budget - The budget should give detailed information about the costs and expenses of the multimedia production under real world conditions. How much would this cost, if this would not be a school project? How much does it cost as a school project? All possible production costs above the line and below the line have to be calculated, for example: costs for writing, music, personal, programming, rental and more.

5. To prepare a schedule – The schedule should clearly include and describe all production steps till the final submission of the master copy to the jury at the end of the term.

6. To write a Top Level Design Document of the interactive media project including a competitive analysis

7. To prepare a node map, asset database (list for small projects) and sample screen designs

8. To prepare a production folder – This folder will be handed in for the first project review in week 8 of the term and should include all documents under 1 to 5 and additionally production data, documents and notes

9. To write a Functional Specification

10. To produce, program and present the multimedia application

11. To prepare additional production documents, graphic design and packaging

12. To deliver the final project for the jury
13. To do a production follow up for the final jury – was the schedule extended and why, was the budget extended and why, what changed from the first planning till the final project … (Report and Notebook/Production Diary)

For each jury/review hand in three printed copies of your production folder and prepare a presentation of your project and its state, it might be helpful also to add additional notes and sketches to give a more insight view of the creative process.

Note

This project can be realized in a lot of different variations and computer oriented or based media forms. I recommend to prepare the project carefully and realistic. In many cases it is better to keep it small and also to reduce the amount of programming without loosing interesting interactive features. A detailed research and careful planning counts. Be creative also in the production.
Project 3: Mixed Media Campaign

The project can be an advertising or promotion campaign, or public service and charity campaign, which include the realization and production of different media products, for example: TV ad, Print ad, and/or Website plus Banners.

The campaign should be documented with all representative documents for the client, master for the TV ad, print outs for print ads and billboards, etc. Emphasis is on corporate identity, image, and design consistency.

The project includes the following steps for production and evaluation:

1. To set-up a world-wide-web presence (i.e. websites) - with weekly entries recording your thoughts, observations, impressions on class discussions, readings and the production.

2. To write a proposal - The proposal should present and outline in an appealing way the project for possible clients. It should not only include a short summary of the campaign content, but also give an overview of the production, strategies and objectives, and the style / design of the project.

3. To write a cover letter

4. To prepare a budget - The budget should give detailed information about the costs and expenses of the production under real world conditions. How much would this cost, if this would not be a school project? How much does it cost as a school project? All possible production costs above the line and below the line have to be calculated, for example: costs for writing, music, personal, printing, rental and more.

5. To prepare a schedule - The schedule should clearly include and describe all production steps till the final submission of the master copy to the jury at the end of the term.

6. To write a strategy paper and outlines for spots, etc., including a competitive analysis

7. To prepare detailed storyboards and layout, draft sketches and mock ups

8. To prepare a production folder - This folder will be handed in for the first review in week 8 of the term and should include all documents under 1 to 5 and additionally production data, documents and notes

9. To write and prepare a final campaign presentation

10. To produce, edit, master and print the ads

11. To prepare additional production documents, graphic design and packaging

12. To deliver the final project for the jury

13. To do a production follow up for the final jury - was the schedule extended and why, was the budget extended and why, what changed from the first planning till the final project … (Report and Notebook/Production Diary)
For each jury/review hand in three printed copies of your production folder and prepare a presentation of your project and its state, it might be helpful also to add additional notes and sketches to give a more insight view of the creative process.

Note

Try to find a co-advisor for this project, who is related to the field and can help you with the outline of marketing strategies and objectives. This co-advisor will be included in the project evaluation.
Project 4: Research Project

This project is an open project, which can be related to courses taken in the third and fourth year of studies in Communication and Design. The student is free to choose a topic out of these courses and develop together with a co-advisor the outline for this kind of project. Amongst the requirements in this project is the production of a poster intended for seminar presentation.

The project includes the following steps for production and evaluation:

1. **To set-up a world-wide-web presence** (i.e. web-site) – with weekly entries recording your thoughts, observations, impressions on class discussions, readings and the production

2. **To write a proposal** – The proposal should present and outline the project. It should not only include a short summary of the content / theme / thesis, but also give an overview of the project process. It should include an abstract, as well.

3. **To prepare a bibliography** – A tentative bibliography that lists, in line with the MLA Style Guide cited under the Readings section of this guide, all the material that will be conducted during the research, including books, articles in edited volumes and refereed journals, websites, review articles, films, etc.

4. **To prepare a schedule** – The schedule should clearly include and describe all production / process steps till the final submission of the project to the jury at the end of the term.

5. **To write a literature review** – The literature review is a (approx.) 5 page document that relates the research problem to the literature available in the field within a theoretical framework. It details the ways in which the sources listed in the bibliography will be employed in the paper.

6. **To prepare a presentation folder** – This folder will be handed in for the first review in week 7 of the term and should include all documents under 1 to 4 and additionally production data, documents and notes.

7. **To research the topic in detail and write a draft for evaluation** – For this draft a special submission date will be fixed.

8. **To write the final paper**

9. **To produce a poster** – A poster that intends to present a preview of the paper in an academic setting (i.e. seminar, panel, journal submission meeting) should be designed.

10. **To deliver the final project for the jury**

For each jury hand in three printed copies of your production folder and prepare a presentation of your project and its state, it might be helpful also to add additional notes and sketches to give a more insight view of the creative process.

**Note**

Please consult your instructor in the earliest possible state of your project plans to define the project details.
Guidelines for Group Projects

As stated in the syllabus of this course, the emphasis is on individual projects. Students are allowed to build small groups depending on the project and have the possibility to assume responsibility for a part of a project, assuming that the project is elaborate enough. Each project step should allow evaluating individual works. “Writing projects/assignments” should be produced individually.

Each student will get one grade for his or her work and one grade for the group project. Additionally, each student has to submit a self-evaluation report on each major project step.
Syllabus

General Information

Introduction to planning, media integration, and production techniques and tools of interactive multimedia. Through practical exercises. The course will expose students to major component media including computer text, graphics, photography, animation, speech, sound, and video. Technical and human interface issues also are covered. Credit units: 4.

Course Structure

During class sessions, your active participation is required in the following areas:
- critical group discussions and progress reviews of project and homework assignments;
- demonstrations and presentations
- informal group discussions based on readings and assignments;
- individual discussions, while working on project assignments.

Course Readings

- Michael Rabiger, Directing, Focal Press 1997
- Larry Elin, Designing and Developing Multimedia, Allyn & Bacon 2001
- Mark S. Meadows, Pause and Effect: The Art of Interactive Narrative, New Riders 2002
- David Mamet, On Directing Film, Faber and Faber 1991
- Robert Bresson, Notes on the Cinematographer, Green Integer 1997
- Daniel Arjion, Grammar of the Film Language, Silman-James 1991
- Herbert Zettl, Sight, Sound, Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics, Wadsworth 1990
- Steven D. Katz, Film Directing Shot by Shot: Visualizing from Concept to Screen, Focal 1991
- Joseph Gibaldi, MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, MLA 1995
- David R. Krathwohl, Methods of educational and social science research, Longman 1998
- Gerald R. Adams, Understanding research methods, Longman 1985
- Sergei Eisenstein, Breaking the Inertia, Trans. Alan Y Upchurch, http://139.179.88.22/~bits/texts/inertia.txt (Mirror of a document that used to be on the CILECT Website)

Course Components

- Lectures will cover things not in the textbooks, and will expand the texts.
- Texts will aid in understanding the lectures, are necessary for reference and the studio or on-location work.
- Lab will teach advanced production skills enabling you to complete your Final Project.
- Writing and projects will demonstrate your understanding of lectures, texts and the lab.
PROJECTS

Project Assignments

• Project assignments are described in this project guide.
• CD's, tapes and documents have to be labeled with your name, student-id, the name of the assignment, the date the assignment is being handed in, the course number and section.
• All assignments have to be handed in at the beginning of the class session at which day they are due. Late projects, etc. will be penalized on a sliding scale. 1 point for the first day (the day of class), 2 points more for the second, 3 points more for the third, and so on.
• Everything handed-in on time can be reworked for a possible higher grade. A late work will not be allowed to be rewritten.

Subjective grading criteria

• Written work - This is, above all, also a course, which involves writing. Therefore, everything should be well written, clear, concise, complete and written for the intended audience. I expect everyone to behave professionally; so all work must be delivered on time.
• Interactive Design, visual design, video production - Shows an understanding of the purpose of, and audience for, the multimedia piece or film. Makes proper use of audio, text and graphic elements.
• Final Project - Demonstrates a grasp of the production process, the tools and the ability to manage time and resources.
• All productions should show a steady growth of competence and confidence. Your ability to communicate visually should steadily improve as you gain more and more knowledge through reading, discussions and experimenting and critique.

General Evaluation Criteria

• Preparation
• Process - the ability to experiment and develop thoughtful solutions for projects
• Product - craft and quality of project assignments
• Professionalism - work habits (including punctuality and attendance), following instructions and ability to meet deadlines.

Grading

• 20% Participation and in-class works - the website requirement will have an important influence on this.
• 30% Production Folder and Project Presentation in Project Review week 7 and 8
• 50% Term-Project – The project will be evaluated by a jury in week 14.
Course Schedule Week 1 to 14

Week 1:  Introduction and Senior Project Orientation
        Section 1 – 8.02.
        Section 2 – 4.02.

Week 2:  Case Study I – Film, Video Projects
        Section 1 – 15.02.
        Section 2 – 11.02.

Week 3:  Case Study II – Interactive Projects
        Case Study III – Research Projects
        Section 1 – 22.02.
        Section 2 – 18.02.

Week 4:  Case Study IV – Mixed Media and Advertising
        Section 1 – 1.03.
        Section 2 – 25.02.

Week 5:  Work in progress and consultations
        Section 1 – 8.03.
        Section 2 – 4.03.

Week 6:  Work in progress and individual consultations
        Section 1 – 15.03.
        Section 2 – 11.03.

Week 7:  Review I of project proposals and project folders
        Section 1 – 22.03.
        Section 2 – 18.03.

Assignment due: Project Folders have to be submitted at the beginning of each section!

Week 8:  Review I of project proposals and project folders continues
        Section 1 – 29.03.
        Section 2 – 25.03.
Week 9: Advanced Media Production Techniques and Tutorials I
   Section 1 – 05.04.
   Section 2 – 01.04.

Week 10: Advanced Media Production Techniques and Tutorials II
   Section 1 – 19.04.
   Section 2 – 08.04.

11. – 15.04. Mid Semester Break
20. – 23.04. PASO 5 (Attendance required)

Week 11: Project Review: Production
   Section 1 – 26.04.
   Section 2 – 29.04.

   **Assignment due: All shootings and productions have to be finished for critics at the beginning of each section.**

Week 12: Project Work in Progress
   Section 1 – 03.05.
   Section 2 – 06.05.

Week 13: Project Review: Design
   Section 1 – 10.05.
   Section 2 – 13.05.

Week 14: Term Project Jury and Final Presentation
   Section 1 – 17.05.
   Section 2 – 20.05.

Week 15: Public Presentation and Make Up’s