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1 contributor

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Syllabus for *Drawing with Machines*

- *Drawing with Machines* (60-428, Fall 2021)
- Times: Mon/Wed, 1:25-4:15pm, August 30 – December 1, 2021
- Location: Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, CFA-111
- Carnegie Mellon University School of Art & IDeATe Program
- 12 Units; IPO (In-Person Only)
- Professor Golan Levin

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Overview

Course Description

This is an advanced studio course in experimental drawing, generative art, computational design, and mechatronic mishegas. Working at the boundaries of code, automation, physical materials, and gestural mark-making, we will explore personal and peculiar new approaches to digital fabrication; the development of ultra-niche workflows as a mode of creative practice; and the use of algorithms and machine collaborators as nontraditional intermediaries between mind, hand, and paper.

Units in this course include: rule-based art and conditional design; chance and stochastic composition; real-time interaction and contingency; asemic cartography; synthetic automatism and ersatz perception; and more. Through rigorous exercises in freestyle computing, participants will develop skills in the control of machines by (e.g.) AxiDraw, Line-Us, Scribit, Rotrics, and Universal Robots to govern line, texture, tone, shape and mass in a variety of wet and dry drawing media. Interested students should have a portfolio of creative visual work, and programming experience equivalent to an introductory course such as 15-104, 110 or 112. Enrollment by permission of instructor.

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Be proficient in creating computer programs to execute drawings with machines, using a variety of different tools, such as p5.js, Processing, and X-Y plotters.
- Gain familiarity with the repertoire of artists, designers, works and activities around algorithmic art with robots and mechatronic plotters.
- Understand the role of computation in making drawings that explore concepts of procedurality and generativity.
- Understand how to document and present creative work online, and in person.

Unit Topics

1. Drawing Machines
2. Introductory Tooling
3. Exercises with Lines
4. Hatching and Fills
5. Shapes and Clipping
6. Pattern (Tiling, symmetries, Truchet logics)
7. Texture (Distribution, flows, biomorphic algorithms)
8. Student Choice: Asemic / Real-Time / Multiples
9. Material Conditions

Course Profile

Key Topics

What are the key subject topics that this course will cover?

This course considers the creation of generative art and algorithmic form-making using computer programming techniques and robotic drawing tools.

Prerequisite Knowledge

What prior knowledge must students have in order to be successful in this course?

- This is an advanced studio course, intended for students who have already had at least one semester of elementary programming (in any language). Students must be familiar and comfortable with computer programming fundamentals, such as iteration, conditional testing, functional abstraction, static and dynamic memory structures, and object-oriented programming, as taught in a course like 15-104, 15-110, or 15-112.
- Students are expected to have had some prior experience with a creative coding toolkit for the arts, such as Processing or p5.js.
- A strong foundation in mathematics, especially including geometry, algebra, and trigonometry, will also be very helpful.
- This is a polyglot course, taught using a combination of Java, JavaScript, and Python. Students fluent in only one language may need to do some additional preparation.

Course Relevance

How is this course relevant to the targeted student populations?

This course is relevant to students who are interested in:

- Experimentation with new forms of drawing and markmaking
- Exploring the use of computation in expanding our expressive vocabulary
- Developing expertise in the practical skills, aesthetic evaluation, and conceptual underpinning of generative and procedural form-making

Course Goals

What are the overall goals of this course that students will achieve after completing it?

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Be proficient in creating computer programs capable of responding to user interaction, in a variety of different creative coding tools, such as p5.js and Unity3D.

- Demonstrate familiarity with the artists, designers, works and workflows centered around interactive art, generative form, and computational design.
- Understand the role of computation in artworks that explore concepts of transmediality, connectivity, generativity, and immersivity, and how these may be applied to the production of expressive and provocative new culture.
- Understand how to document and present creative work online, and in person.

Assessment Structure

How will students be assessed in this course: assignments, exams, final, presentation, project, etc.?

There are approximately 10 main assignments (software art coding projects). The student's grade is determined from their attendance, classroom conduct, and civic participation.

Learning Resources

What resources will be available for students: web pages, learning applications, texts, case studies, etc.?

Available resources include specialized hardware, GitHub repositories, a Discord server, a course web site, and a small classroom library, as well as links to online resources.

Extra Time Commitments

Are there extra time commitments required outside of the regularly scheduled course meeting times?

There are no *specific* extra time committments outside of regularly posted meeting times. However, students will need to use plotting equipment outside of class time, and may also wish to take advantage of the Professor's posted office hours.

Course Tags

Keywords referencing general topics and/or course structure.

- Computational
- Creative Coding
- New Media Art
- IDeATe
- Interdisciplinary
- Lab Component
- Research
- Maker

Administrata

Access to Plotting Equipment

It is anticipated that you will execute your assignments using the plotter equipment at the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry. Exceptions to this are as follows:

- If you happen to possess your own plotter equipent, you are welcome/encouraged to use it.
- If you happen to have access to hardware elsewhere on campus which can be used for mark-making (such as the robot arms in the School of Architecture dFab, or the School of Art CNC router), you are welcome/encouraged to do do so, but you are on your own to seek assistance with that equipment if you need it.
- We have 4 tiny Line-Us plotters which may be signed out with the professor's permission. If you are traveling or quarantined, you may request to borrow one.

To ensure access to STUDIO plotters, we will have STUDIO Monitors (staff) who will be on-site to make sure that you have access. Studio Monitors are currently scheduled for work Mondays through Thursdays, 5-11pm; this schedule may be expanded and/or is subject to change.

Required Course Materials

- **Personal Sketchbook**. It is extremely wise to plan your projects on paper before writing any code. In support of this, you are required to maintain a personal sketchbook for this course.
- **Laptop**. Students should have access to a personal laptop.
- **Software**. Recent, well-updated installations of Mac OSX, Windows and Linux are all acceptable operating systems. However, although all of the programming toolkits with which we work are free and cross-platform, it is possible that example projects may only be provided for Mac OSX. This is a polyglot course; the programming environments used for example projects and sample code will be a mixture of p5.js (JavaScript), Processing (Java), and Python.
- **Camera**. Students should have access to some sort of camera to document their work. A smartphone with a camera is acceptable.
- **Art Supplies**. Although some limited supplies exist in our classroom, you will be expected to obtain your own art supplies, such as pens, pencils, markers and paper, according to your individual interests.
- **Specific Art Supplies**. Students are expected to have a baseline of a few common supplies. Please be sure to put your name on your belongings.
  - Strathmore 300 Series Bristol pad (270 g/m), 9"W x 12"H, smooth surface (not vellum), 20 sheets (Product #342-9)
  - Itoya Original Art Profolio - 9"W x 12"H, Black, Portrait, 24 Pages portfolio book
  - Art Alternatives 4"x6" spiral-bound, hard cover, micro-perforated sketchbook
  - PILOT G2 Rolling Ball Gel Pens, Fine Point, Black

- PILOT Precise V7 Premium Rolling Ball pens, Black
- A pencil-case

Communication Tools

This course uses the following software systems to share information:

- **Email**. The Professor will send emails once or twice a week. Please read them.
- **A WordPress website**, through which you will publish your projects, located at https://courses.ideate.cmu.edu/60-428/f2021/.
- **A Google Calendar**, http://bit.ly/golancoursecalendar, with key dates.
- **A Discord Server**, for informal communication and asynchronoous chat.
- **Zoom**. Although this course is expected to be IPO (In-Person Only), it is possible that some sessions (or portions of sessions) may be conducted remotely, as necessary and appropriate. A link and password will be sent to you.

The STUDIO Space

- Masks are mandatory in the STUDIO space.
- Your keycards will get you in 8am-11pm.
- We have Monitors (staff) working most evenings until 11.
- Please go home before the Monitors close up shop. No overnighting is permitted. Sleep in your own bed, please.
- No food or drink. Partially because of COVID; partially because this is a drawing course.
- Please clean up after yourself.
- If you don't feel well, please stay home.
- The STUDIO's pandemic capacity is 18 persons. We are interested in restarting the STUDIO's student culture, but we're taking it slowly. You may bring a friend if you think they might like to become a part of this community, but we're not ready for you to bring your posse.

COVID-19 Accommodations

Mask-Wearing Expectations

Everyone in the STUDIO is expected to wear a mask this semester. A large supply of facial coverings as well as sanitizing wipes can be found near the STUDIO entrance.

If you do not wear a facial covering to class, I will ask you to put one on. If you do not comply, you will be referred to the Office of Community Standards and Integrity for follow up, which could include disciplinary action.

Health-Related Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and *refrain from attending class and other on-campus events if you feel even slightly unwell*. You are emphatically encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment of illness. In the event of any contagious illness, please do not come to class or to campus to turn in work. Instead notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that accommodations can be made. Please note that documentation (a Doctor's note) for medical excuses is not required.

Classroom Streams/Recordings

Students who are unable to attend class in person may request that a session be recorded and/or streamed over Zoom. I will make a good-faith effort to accommodate such requests, particularly for *lectures*. However, I can offer no guarantees about the quality of the transmission or recording. For non-lecture events (demonstrations, discussions, critiques, workshops, work days), it may be impossible to document the session satisfactorily.

Recordings of class sessions, if they are made, are covered under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and must not be shared with anyone outside the course. The purpose of these recordings is so students in this course (and only students in this course) can watch or re-watch past class sessions. Feel free to use the recordings if you would like to review something we discussed in class or if you are temporarily unable to attend class.

Grades in a Time of Stress

The effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic make life extraordinarily stressful for everyone. I'm utterly uninterested in this class being an additional source of stress. We are gathered to make creative work because doing so is a source of meaning, hope, and self-betterment. Do the projects because your heart is in the work, not because you are concerned about grades.

We will have 10 projects this semester. Whether you do them or not, or whether you do them well or not, has no bearing on your grade.

Typically I do not allow *unexcused* absences, i.e., an absence in which you neglected to contacted me before class ("I'm feeling ill today", "I have a religious holiday", etc.). However, owing to the kinds of unusual circumstances that may arise this fall, **you are permitted one unexcused absence**.

Civics and Attendance

Attendance and Presence

In this course, your presence, collegial conduct, and civic participation are of paramount importance, and your final grade is based on your regular attendance and active engagement. That said, I also recognize that students may need to miss class for a variety of reasons (e.g. religious observance, job interview, university-sanctioned event, family emergency, or illness).

I distinguish between *excused* absences, *unexcused* absences, and *inexcusable* absences.

- An *excused* absence is one in which you have notified me in a professional and timely way: generally, at least 24 hours in advance, except for illness/emergency. **If you know you're going to be absent or tardy, please contact me in a timely way regarding your situation.** Email is best, but I am also amenable to receiving mesages via Discord, via text messages (a number given to you in email), and via messages on Twitter (@golan). If you're ill, or if you know you will have a planned absence, please let me know before the beginning of that class session: I can be extremely understanding and accommodating about planned and necessary absences, family circumstances, and/or medical issues when you inform me in a timely and professional manner. Excused absences are fine and will have no impact on your final grade. If you encounter extenuating circumstances and must miss a significant number of sessions, please come and discuss the issue with me; I would like to find a way to support you.
- An *unexcused* absence is one in which you're unexpectedly not present. Owing to the COVID-19 crisis, you are permitted one *unexcused* absence. Two additional *unexcused* absences (beyond the one allowed) will lower your final grade by one letter (e.g. A⟶B, B⟶C). An unexcused tardiness beyond 20 minutes is equal to one unexcused absence.
- An *inexcusable* absence is an unallowable form of *unexcused* absence. One example of an inexcusable absence is when you don't show up to class, and then I catch you afterwards in the hallway, chatting with your friends. This is very disappointing.

You are responsible for what happens in class whether you're here or not. Organize with your classmates to get class information and material that you have missed.

Mental presence and social media.

Focus is precious. Physical presence means nothing if you're "checked out"; your mental presence is extremely important. During the professor's lectures or guest presentations, distracted participation is prohibited. You are expected to be able to function for a few hours without tweeting, facebooking, chatting, texting, emailing, or doing work for other courses.

A Word About Unexcused Absences in Critiques

Sometimes, students who haven't completed their projects skip class during critiques, because they are too embarrassed to come to class empty-handed. This type of absence is stupendously self-destructive, and is one of the most objectionable things you can do in this class. Please have courage. Your participation on critique days is essential, even if your own project is incomplete or missing, because these sessions and conversations help you understand our class standards, expectations, and criteria for good work. If you are empty-handed, just say so; it happens. Even if you are without a project, you are still expected to contribute productively to the class discussion.

Rubrics and Grading

General Expectations

There are a few elementary things you can do to ensure that you receive an excellent grade in this course. These things may seem simple and obvious, but it's sometimes surprising how few students seem to get this right:

- **Be good**. Have a positive attitude.
- **Be present**. Show up to all of the course sessions, on time.
- **Be responsible**. Communicate with the professor beforehand if you must miss a session.
- **Be helpful**. Help your classmates when they're stuck.
- **Be generous**. Make helpful contributions to discussions.

Following the recommendations below will not affect your grade, but will bring much greater value to you in our class, at school, and in life:

- **Be diligent**. Submit all of the Deliverables, on time. And document them clearly and thoroughly. Follow the instructions: do all parts of the Deliverables, paying careful attention to seemingly trivial requirements (such as categorizing your blog posts correctly, formatting your code properly, giving your blog post a title in the requested format etc.).
- **Be fearless**. Work outside your comfort zone. Give yourself permission to weird.
- **Be conscientious**. Pay attention to details of craft and execution. Put your heart in the work.
- **Be persevering**. Become resourceful about getting the assistance you need.

Follow Your Passion

This is art school. With very rare exceptions (I'll be clear), I will always prefer that you make the assignment interesting to you — if necessary, by creatively bending the rules or re-interpreting the assignment. Our assignments are starting-points, prompts and propositions. Think beyond them.

Notwithstanding the above, you will always be expected to meet basic expectations in regards to deliverables and documentation. Did you include an image of your project? Did you write the requested narrative?

Policies for Late Work

Our class is fast-paced. When you submit work late, you lose big-time: not because of some point-deduction scheme, but because you miss the chance to share, show off, discuss and get feedback on your work.

At times this semester, your creative projects may be evaluated by outside experts who review your work in class or online. If your assignment is not visible by the time those persons do their reviews, then your work is officially considered "too late" and may not be able to obtain meaningful feedback.

Rubrics for Creative Projects

The purpose of our open-ended Projects is to provide well-circumscribed opportunities for you to make creative work with code. Generally the Project prompts will invite you to explore a specific conceptual theme or set of programming techniques, but, unless stated otherwise, there is no correct solution, and no specific requirement for how to implement your idea. A Project also asks not just for a creative solution, but also for some creativity in defining and approaching the problem. It is expected that your Projects will be documented and published on our WordPress website.

The open-ended Projects will be considered according to the following criteria:

- **Curiosity**: Are you asking questions as you work?
- **Tenacity**: Are you forging through difficult problems without giving up?
- **Execution**: Are you crafting with purpose, precision, and attention?
- **Inventiveness**: Are you discovering/exploring methods outside the obvious and predictable?
- **Fulfillment**: Did you meet all of the requested supporting criteria (such as providing scans of sketches, categorizing your blog post correctly, documenting your process, etc.)?

With Projects, it may not matter how much time a student spent making it. You may sometimes observe a very quickly-executed solution which succeeds because of its strong concept. Usually, however, the quality of a project is rewarded by extra attention to its craft.

Projects always have a list of straightforward *supporting requirements*. If you fail to meet these, you will cause disappointment. Nearly every Project assignment will ask you to:

- Create a unique blog post for your project, on our course website.
- Make sure your blog post is titled and categorized as requested.
- Embed your interactive project into the post, if this is technologically possible.
- Include a static documentation image of your project, such as a screenshot or photograph.
- Include scans or photos of any notebook sketches, if you have them. In the case of dynamic work, include dynamic documentation too: embed a YouTube, Vimeo demonstrating your project. Often, an animated GIF will be required.
- Write 100-200 words about your project, describing its development process. In your writing, include some critical reflection and analysis of your project: In what ways did you succeed, and in what ways could it be better?
- Embed or link to your code, if appropriate.

Related to our course policies on Academic Integrity, you must also:

- *Name any other students* from whom you received advice or help. If you had collaborators, explain how the work was distributed among the collaborators.
- *Cite and link* to the sources for any code, external libraries, or other media (e.g. photographs, soundtracks, source images) which you used in your Project. Citing your sources is super important, folks. Err on the side of generosity.

In addition to spoken and/or written feedback, the professor may also provide feedback to you on your projects, in the form of letter scores of A,B,C,D, or F, as follows:

- **A** (Excellent): You made something notable
- **B** (Good): You made something that fulfills all requirements
- **C** (Needs Improvement): You tried to make something
- **D** (Unacceptable): You didn't even try
- **F** (Nothing submitted): You didn't even show up

(*These scores do not figure into your official grade.*)

Academic Integrity

Your behavior as a responsible member of the new-media arts community is very important — as demonstrated, for example, by properly citing your sources and borrowed code, and crediting those who have helped you. These expectations and obligations are addressed here, in our course Academic Integrity Policy.

Summary of CMU Academic Integrity Policies

Carnegie Mellon University prohibits academic dishonesty. This includes plagiarism, and may consist of: submitting the work of someone else as one's own; failing to cite assistance you received; or the failure to properly cite materials or ideas from other sources. Nearly all of these problems can be circumvented if you're clear and generous in giving credit where credit is due. Please read the University Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism to understand the penalties associated with academic dishonesty at Carnegie Mellon University. I reserve the right to determine an appropriate penalty based on the violation of academic dishonesty that occurs. The penalty for plagiarizing may range from failure on the specific plagiarized assignment to failure in the class. If you have any questions about this policy as it relates to work you are doing in the course, please feel free to contact the professor.

Policies for Open-Ended Creative Projects

For your open-ended, public-facing projects, which will be presented and hosted in this WordPress site, there are no "correct answers". Your curiosity, creativity, ingenuity and originality are prized.

You may borrow code or ideas from other sources, within the limits of "reasonable person" principles described below, provided you attribute your sources. Your work will appear, publicly, on the open Internet. Your projects will likely be discussed and critiqued in front of (and with the assistance of) your peers.

As studio art students, you are expected or invited to make extensive use of open-source libraries, tutorials, and freely-distributed code. When working in this way, much like a knitting circle, our classroom is structured around peer instruction, in which students are expected to help each other learn.

Use of Free and Open-Source Code in Projects

Credit is perhaps the most important form of currency in the economies of commons-based peer production and open-source media arts. You are expected to cite the source of any code you use. Please note the following expectations and guidelines:

Use Libraries. In your Projects, the use of general, reusable libraries is strongly encouraged. The people who developed and contributed these components to the community worked hard, often for no pay; acknowledge them by citing their name and linking to their repository.

Be Careful. Using others' code from general libraries is different than using others' code from their specific projects. It sometimes happens that an artist places the entire source code for their sketch or artwork online, as a resource from which others can learn. You may even discover the work of a student in some other class or school, who has posted code for a project which responds to a similar assignment. *You should probably avoid this code*. At the very least, you should be very, very careful about approaching such code for possible re-use. If it is necessary to do so, it is best to extract components that solve a specific technical problem, rather than those parts which operate to create a unique experience. Your challenge, if and/or when you work with others' code, is to *make it your own*. It should be clear that forking an artwork from someone's page on GitHub, Glitch.com, OpenProcessing, etc., and simply changing the colors would be disgracefully lazy. Doing so without proper citation would be actionable plagiarism.

Policies Regarding Informal Collaboration

Our course places a very high value on civic responsibility that includes, but is not limited to, helping others learn. In this course, we strongly encourage you to give help (or ask others for help) in using various toolkits, algorithms, libraries, or other facilities. Please note the following expectations:

- In this class, *it's OK to give and receive help*. In fact, it's better than OK! But students who receive help from someone else are obliged to acknowledge that person in their project report, clarifying the nature of the help that was received.
- *We are all teachers*. Students with advanced skills are expected to help others, yet refrain from doing another's work for them. You can usually tell when you're about to cross the line: Ask yourself whether you are teaching someone to fish, or merely giving them the fish.
- When in doubt: *give credit* to the people who have helped you.

Policies Regarding Formal Collaboration

The assignments in this course are primarily intended to be executed by individuals. That said, I am in favor of students collaborating if such collaborations arise organically and can be conducted safely. Please note the following expectations:

- *Use proper social distancing*. In light of the ongoing the COVID-19 pandemic, please respect University and other health guidelines regarding personal distance. Do not share computer keyboards; sit at least 6 feet apart; etcetera.
- *Notify the Professor*. It's helpful for me to know who is working with whom. Students who wish to collaborate should jointly inform the professor as early as possible.
- *Only pairs*. Unless permission is explicitly granted by the Professor, collaborations in this course are restricted to pairs of students.
- *Describe who did what*. Written reports for collaborative projects should describe how your effort was distributed.
- *Only collaborators from this class*. Your project collaborator, if you have one, must be in this class. You may not collaborate with people from outside the course (e.g. your housemate).
- *Avoid co-dependency*. You may not collaborate with the same person (i.e. submit assignments jointly) for more than two projects.

Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct

I am committed to providing an educational experience that is free of harassment and intimidation for everyone in this course—regardless of gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion (or lack thereof), or technology choices. I will not tolerate any form of harassment and/or discriminatory, oppressive, suppressive, or violent behavior.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, offensive verbal comments, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption, inappropriate or non-consensual physical contact, unwelcome sexual attention, and/or refusing to accept the limits or boundaries set by another participant in our classroom. I further define *suppressive* behavior as any sort of communication that stifles or belittles another. Participants who have been asked to stop any behavior are expected to comply immediately. I expect all of the participants in our course community to adhere to this code of conduct–including me, the Professor.

Debate and free exchange of ideas is encouraged, but I will not tolerate harassment. If someone engages in harassing behavior, I may take any action deemed appropriate in the Carnegie Mellon University Policy against Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault, Discriminatory Harassment, or other community policies. If you experience or witness harassment, threatening behavior, suppressive behavior, or have any other concerns, I encourage you to speak up, say something, and/or let us know immediately.

Carnegie Mellon University is firmly committed to intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and expression, and respect for the dignity of each individual. Acts of discriminatory harassment or intimidation by a student directed toward any member of the community are inconsistent with this commitment and will not be tolerated. Consistent with the University's Statement of Assurance, prohibited acts include harassment and intimidation motivated by discriminatory intent based on race, color, national origin, sex, handicap or disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, ancestry, belief, veteran status, or genetic information. Any such harassment or intimidation of or by a student should be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs for resolution.

Inclusivity Statement

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present activities that accommodate and value a diversity of gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. I will gladly honor your request to address you by the pronouns and name you specify.

I commit to make individual arrangements to address disabilities or religious needs (e.g. religious events in conflict with class meetings). Please advise me of these requirements early in the semester so that I may make appropriate accommodations.

Zoom & Remote Education

This course is planned for an in-person modality, but it's possible that we may use Zoom if appropriate or necessary. For example, if there is a guest artist who visits the class by Zoom, or if we transition to another quarantine, etc.

Zoom Policies

- In general, please **keep your mic muted**, in order to reduce stray noise.
- You may use the "raise hand feature" to get attention, but I recommend **actually raising your hand** in the video if possible 🙂
- You are also very welcome to **ask or respond to questions in the chat**; I will do my best to notice and respond to your remarks. Please note that Zoom chats do not persist and are deleted when the session closes.

- You are welcome to **use reactions** (clapping and thumbs up), if it feels like the right thing to do.
- You are welcome to **use a background image** in your video if you wish.

Zoom Suggestions

- Having *some* cameras *occasionally* turned off is understandable, reasonable, and quite manageable; having *a majority* of cameras *persistently* turned off makes it very difficult for me to teach. **Please consider sharing your camera** when/if you're comfortable doing so. If you have any concerns about sharing your video, please email me and we can discuss possible adjustments.

Freedom of Speech

Freedom of Speech Committment

This course may present content that includes nudity and imagery, language, or dialogue that may offend some students. In viewing and discussing works of art, we encourage the broadest possible tolerance consistent with United States law.

Being in an art school, you should expect to be exposed to content that challenges your moral, ethical, and aesthetic values. In case of extremely graphic content we will warn the class in advance, but if you have a history of PTSD please let us know privately if there are types of content that are known to act as trauma triggers for you.

Freedom of speech is the foundation of our community and our nation. The works we view or produce in this class may awe, illuminate, challenge, unsettle, confound, provoke, and, at times, offend. We defend the freedom to create content and exhibit such work anywhere in the world, and we recognize the privilege of living in a country where creating, exhibiting, and experiencing such work is a constitutional right. To exhibit a work of art is not to endorse the work or the vision, ideas, and opinions of the artist. It is to uphold the right of all to experience diverse visions and views. If and when controversies arise from the exhibition of a work of art, we welcome public discussion and debate with the belief that such discussion is integral to the experience of the art. Consistent with our fundamental commitment to freedom of speech, however, we will not censor exhibitions or other presentations in response to political or ideological pressure.

Too often, the educator is the last to be informed of the charge. If you feel offended by course content, please first contact the professor privately in writing. In your email or letter, please address the following questions:

- To what in the presented work or assignment do you object?
- What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this work?
- What do you feel might be the result of viewing, reading or learning about this work?

- Is there a work of equal value that you would recommend which would serve as an alternative to the work in question?

Materials are considered innocent until proven guilty. Allegedly offensive materials will not be removed until after the review process has completed.

Taking Care of Yourself

Take care of yourself. Your well-being is more important than your performance in this course. Please do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is here to help: call 412-268-2922 and visit their website at http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty or family member you trust for help getting connected to the support that can help. If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal or in danger of harm to self or others, call someone immediately, day or night:

- **CaPS Counseling: +1-412-268-2922**
- **Re:solve Crisis Network: +1-888-796-8226**
- **On campus CMU Police: +1-412-268-2323**

FERPA Statement

FERPA (The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) is a federal law that protects the confidentiality of student records. It restricts others from accessing or discussing your educational records without your consent. In this section, we discuss why you have been asked to sign a waiver, which grants your consent to have your work shown online.

In a typical class, your homework (and other information delineating your academic performance) would not be visible to the public. Indeed, the FERPA law requires that you have the right to privacy in this regard. This is one of the main reasons for the existence of so many "walled gardens" for courseware, such as Autolab, Canvas, Moodle, Blackboard and Piazza, which keep all student work hidden behind passwords and paywalls.

An essential component of the educational experience in new media arts, however, is learning how to participate in the "Grand Conversation" all around us, by becoming more effective culture operators. We cannot do this in the safe space of a password-protected courseware module. Our work is strengthened and sharpened in the forge of public scrutiny: in this case, the agora of the Internet.

Sometimes students are afraid to publish something because it is of poor quality. They think that they will receive embarrassing, negative critiques. In fact, negative critique is quite rare. The most common thing that happens when one creates an artwork of poor quality, is that it is simply *ignored*. Being ignored — this, not being shunned or derided — this is the fate of mediocre work.

On the other hand, if something is truly great is published — and great projects can happen, and have happened, even in an introductory class like this one — there is the chance that it may be circulated widely on the Internet. Every year that I have taught this course, a handful of the students' projects get blogged and receive as many as 50,000 views in a week. It cannot be emphasized that this is an absolutely transformative experience for students, that cannot be obtained without taking the risk to work publicly. Students can and do get job offers and build careers on the basis of such success.

That said, there are also plenty of reasons why you may wish to work anonymously, when you work online. Perhaps you are concerned about stalkers or harassment. Perhaps you wish to address themes in your work which might not meet with the approval of your parents or future employers. These are valid considerations. On our course website, you will be identified by a public-facing username. For these reasons, you have been given the opportunity to select a blog username which can help protect your anonymity.

Land Notice

The Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, Carnegie Mellon University, and the city of Pittsburgh is situated on land that has been continuously inhabited for over 16,000 years, serving as a home to members of the Adena, Hopewell, Monongahela, Lenape, Shawnee, Wyandot, Tisagechroami, Delaware, and Mohican communities before becoming a territory of the Iroquois Confederacy. The Iroquois Confederacy included the Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora people, whose relationships with the land continue to this day. The Seneca name for Pittsburgh is Dionde:gâ.