Course Title

Augmenting the Gallery

Course Number
IMNY-UT 9001D01

Spring 2019

Syllabus last updated on: 28 JAN 2019

Lecturer Contact Information
Pierre Depaz
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Course Details
Time: Weds 09:15am - 12:45pm
Location: St. Agnes

Prerequisites
None

Units earned
4

Course Description
Wall labels, audio guides and informative maps are just some of the ways galleries and museums convey additional information about an art collection. How can we utilize new interactive mixed reality tools to design and deliver immersive experiences that breathe new life into an exhibit?

Augmented and virtual reality are powerful tools for new media production and storytelling, but how can these tools serve to enhance our gallery experience without distracting from the power and importance of a pre-existing collection? This production course seeks to experiment with new ways to experience a museum collection through mixed reality. Topics covered include exhibition installation and curation, mixed reality production in Unity, mobile development for Augmented Reality.
Course Objective
- Understand the theoretical concepts and challenges of curating and exhibiting artworks.
- Understand the diversity of exhibition spaces and missions in Berlin.
- Learn how to prototype, iterate and integrate relevant mobile digital content within a given exhibition.
- Become familiar with the development workflow in the Unity game engine.
- Acquire a familiarity with Augmented Reality design and development.
- Acquire a familiarity with user-interface design and information delivery on mobile platforms.

Learning Outcomes
- Curatorial awareness: be able to understand the ideas and intent behind the organization, layout, presentation and layout of a given body of work.
- Design awareness: be able to understand how to structure an application around the principles of human-computer interaction and user-cantered design.
- Real-world implementation: be able to propose and implement a design around a given constraint (i.e., that of a real-world exhibition).
- Technical fluency: be able to develop a basic, functioning mobile application using the Unity Engine and the Augmented Reality toolkits.

Assessment Components

Technical projects - 25% Students will have to complete a series of short technical projects in order to develop and demonstrate proficiency with the Unity engine and Augmented Reality workflow. Students will be able to start from an existing tech template and will be expected to present their projects in class on the day that it is due for a group review.

Participation - 20% Participation will include (a) in-class discussion of readings and discussion of your classmates’ project presentations, (b) completion of all homework assignments, (c) posting your weekly reading responses online and (d) contribution to the class resources — whether by finding interesting exhibitions in the city, or interesting AR projects not mentioned during class, and sharing them with your instructors and classmates.

Group gallery project - 30% - Due April 24 - You will complete a longer project which will be experienced in-situ at the gallery. This group project will include (a) pre-emptive analysis of the artist and the artworks and will be documented online, (b) design and development of the Augmented Reality and (c) presentation in the gallery with user-testing and post-production conclusions on the success of the application.

Project design - 25% - Due May 22nd - You will design a digital project proposal for a large-scale institution, by applying your knowledge of both museum’s curatorial and educational goals, as well as project planning and presentation best practices as seen in-class. Your report should include background research on the gallery and the artist(s) exhibited, analysis of the curation intent, the practical installation and description of the attendees, and conclude with possibilities for augmentation with digital technologies. You will submit both a PDF of your proposal to your instructor, as well as present it to your classmates at the end of the semester.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments

Required Text(s)
All required readings will be provided as a digital copy.

**Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)**
All supplemental readings will be provided as a digital copy.

**Internet Research Guidelines**
To be discussed in class

**Additional Required Equipment**
Students are encouraged to work with their laptop and can also use their own smart phones for mobile development. Nonetheless, essential work will take place in the computer lab.

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**Session 1 - 06 Feb 2019 - Introduction**
*This session focuses in the first half on housekeeping matters, introducing the course materials, learning objectives and technological tools. The second part introduces students to the current state of technology in mixed and augmented reality and will ask some questions about the relationship between the digital and the physical.*

**Session 2 - 13 Feb 2019 - Basics of Unity**
*This session dives deeper into the development workflow of Unity, the main software that we will be using for the class. Students will first be invited to show and discuss their homework and reflect on the invisible narratives that exist around one single object.*

**Reading:**
- Ivan Sutherland, The Ultimate Display.

**Homework (due on that day):** Choose an object. Develop a simple screen interaction which cycles through media assets and provides information about that object. Follow the online tutorial for the code, but use your own assets and descriptions to create your own narrative.

**Lecture:**
- History and principles of Mixed and Augmented Reality.
- Introduction to ARKit/ARCore and setting up a development environment.

**Session 3 - 20 Feb 2019 - Unity and Interaction Design**
*This session takes a step back from the hands-on development in Unity in order to look at some design concepts. What is interface design? What is interaction design? What is UX design? We will discuss the specificities and interconnections of all these disciplines in the context of Augmented Reality, as well as practical methods for implementing them.*
Reading:

Homework (due on that day): Develop an AR application which allows your user to position multiple objects around the physical world. The objects that you choose should tell a broader story by their relationship. You should implement an input for your user to place objects, and UI components to provide feedback and information.


Session 4 - 27 Feb 2019 - Museums and technology
The first part of this session consists of an overview and analysis of current digital technologies used in museums in Berlin and around the world. What are the different strategies pursued by curators? What are the biggest successes and biggest drawbacks? How could these be improved in line with the museum’s mission? The second part of the session is dedicated to working time on the students’ projects.

Reading:
- Opening the Frame of the Art Museum: Technology between Art and Tool, Kirsten Boehner, Phoebe Sengers et. al., in Digital Arts and Culture, 2005 (pages tbd.).

Homework (due on that day): Develop a first application with ARKit using a marker to tell a story about a particular place or object. You can use text, images, 3D models and/or sound.

Lecture: Survey of the current state of technology in museum institutions across the world, and the logic behind them.

Session 5 - 6 March 2019 - Historical overview of the contemporary art gallery
This session focuses on the art gallery as a historical construct and formation, as well as their place in the cultural landscape of Berlin. How did art galleries develop into what we know today? What is the range of art galleries today? What purpose do they serve in a modern art world?

Reading:
- When Worlds Collide: The contemporary as art gallery, Christopher R. Marshall, 2005. TBD
- On the methodologies of the adaptation of text for gallery-based exhibition, Ajay Hothi, 2005, [https://core.ac.uk/reader/43099242](https://core.ac.uk/reader/43099242)

Homework (due on that day): Develop an application with ARKit that uses spatiality to create a pathway or itinerary, telling a story along the building and surroundings of St. Agnes.

Lecture: The specificities of an art gallery. Its histories and roles. Overview of the art world and art market today.
Session 6 - 13 March 2019 - Visit to Zönoteka - Curating and installing a show
Visit of Zönoteka, our partner gallery for this class, and meeting the curator, installers and artist of the upcoming show. We will see in practice what it means to install an art show, what was the reasoning behind a particular art show, and the process leading up to the opening night. We then return to class and start brainstorming ideas of for possible augmented applications in connection with the upcoming show.

Reading:
- Herne, S., Communities of practice in art and design and museum and gallery education, 2006. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681360500487512.

Homework (due on that day): Choose an application designed by one of your classmates and modify it in order to add at least two new features, deepening the intent of the original design.

Lecture: The life cycle of an exhibition: curation, installation, presentation, communication.

March 15 - Opening at Zönoteka (not mandatory)

Session 7 - 20 March 2019 - Visit to Zönoteka - A show in action - The sociability of art galleries
This session complements the visit on opening night at Zönoteka (March 15th). Students will present their impressions and interpretations of the pieces exhibited, as well as the behavior of the audience members. We will use this opportunity to explore further the social dynamics of art-gallery owners and museum-goers, in terms of sociology and psychology, and compare it to the sociology and psychology of individual app users.

Reading:

Homework (due on that day): Come with a short draft of an idea for your gallery project: concept, purpose, technology. Post it on the class website. Before Spring Break, send me an email with the names of two ideas you would like to work on.

Lecture: Museums and sociology. The role of the visitor. Cultural Capital.

- 27 March 2019 - Spring Break -

Session 8 - 03 April 2019 - Idea brainstorming and group formation - Project development practices
This session focuses on laying out the technical specifications and roadmaps for the student projects. We will establish a roadmap for the next several weeks.

Reading:
- Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius, José Luis Borges, in Fictions, 1961. TBD

Homework: N/A
Lecture: Discussion about the reading. Presentation on how to draft the specifics of an interactive project. In-class working session for Design and Technical documents.

Session 9 - 10 April 2019 - Principles of exhibition and curation
This session introduces students to the principles and practices of curating a show for an art gallery. What do curators do? How do they select artists? How do they organize a show spatially and theoretically, by taking into account technical requirements, artistic intent and expected audiences? Why put up a show in the first place? The second part of this session will be dedicated to student work.

Reading:

Homework (due on that day): Build a minimum viable prototype for your group idea.
Lecture: Curation and selection of artworks in a limited space. The impact of digital technology and transformed storage and access.

Session 10 - 17 April 2019 - Work Session
This session will be dedicated to in-class working time in expectation of the presentation next week.

Reading: N/A
Homework (due on that day): Make significant progress in the development of your project. Make at least one office hour appointment with your instructor for specific advice and debugging.
Lecture: Work session.

Session 11 - 24 April 2019 - Zönoteka - Project review - Next project
The first part of this session focuses on the presentation of the augmented projects at the Zönoteka gallery, allowing students to present their projects to the curators, artists, and their fellow students, seeing how it works in a real-world situation. The second part of the session will introduce students to their next and final assignment: the development of a concept prototype for a larger institution.

Reading: N/A
Homework (due on that day): Finalize your presentation for the Zönoteka gallery. Debug the application, and include a short presentation on your device.
Lecture: Presentation at Zönoteka, critique and discussion of the next project.

- 1 May 2019 - Public Holiday - No Class
Session 12 - Make-up Day: 3 May 2019 - Museum visit
tbc: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, at the Bauhaus exhibition. Students will have the opportunity to apply their knowledge to broader institutions.

Reading:

Homework (due on that day): Research on the Bauhaus (as a school, an ideology, a cultural influence, etc.) before the visit, and post your findings on your blog. After the visit, write a follow up to that post about what you learned during the visit, and what the visit left out.
Lecture: Visit to the museum institution. Students will have the opportunity to meet and ask questions about the exhibition to members of HKW's team. We will then regroup at Saint Agnes and discuss students expectations with the reality of the exhibition.

Session 13 - 8 May 2019 - Design and accessibility in public and digital spaces
This session will look at inclusivity and design for abilities as it relates to both physical spaces, in the case of cultural institutions, and digital spaces, in the case of application design and development. Students will get an opportunity to look critically at existing projects and at their own projects and assess how inclusive or exclusive they are.

Reading:

Homework (due on that day): Present a first draft of your final project proposal to the class.
Lecture: Accessibility in physical and digital spaces.

Session 14 - 15 May 2019 - Museums and online technology
This session will look at how museums engage in technology that is no longer online. Wether through social media, online access of physical collections or online exploration of non-accessible collections, the Internet has changed the way consider accessibility and information.

Reading:
Homework (due on that day): Choose a museum website, explore its contents and write a blog post listing the online-first features (user accounts, interactive maps and plans) and content.

Lecture: Accessibility in physical and digital spaces.

Session 15 - 22 May 2019 - Presenting Design Proposals
Final session, course evaluations.

Classroom Etiquette
Laptops are not allowed during class time, unless we are working on technical aspects of the course, since they distract not just you, but classmates as well. In order to avoid unnecessary printing of materials, students are encouraged to take notes from readings and write down questions as preparation for class discussions.

Suggested Co-Curricular Activities
Students are strongly suggested to visit museums and galleries in the city on their own, outside of the required class visits. The museum and gallery scene in the city is an incredibly diverse array of curatorial projects, materials, histories and approaches. Some recommended visits will be listed on the class website, but feel free to add to that list by editing the wiki.

Your Lecturer
Pierre Depaz is an educator, artist and programmer from France. He's taught at NYU and CUNY and is currently teaching at Film-Universität Babelsberg. He is interested in the multiple ways computers are attempting to represent and interface with human concepts and emotions. His academic research revolves around simulation, semantics and public organization through technological means, while his artistic practice includes digital games, computer simulations, interactive installations, networked performances and experimental web projects, and has been exhibited in NYC, Paris, Cairo, Abu Dhabi, Brussels and Berlin.
Academic Policies

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well-structured arguments in their work. The student writes comprehensive essays / answers to exam questions and their work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading.

Grade B: The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy.

Grade C: The work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement.

Grade D: The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, poor research.

Grade F: The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible.

Grade Conversion
Your lecturer may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

A = 94-100 or 4.0
A- = 90-93 or 3.7
B+ = 87-89 or 3.3
B = 84-86 or 3.0
B- = 80-83 or 2.7
C+ = 77-79 or 2.3
C = 74-76 or 2.0
C- = 70-73 or 1.7
D+ = 67-69 or 1.3
D = 65-66 or 1.0
F = below 65 or 0

Attendance Policy
Participation in all classes is essential for your academic success, especially in courses that meet only once per week. Your attendance in both content and language courses is required and will be checked at each class meeting. As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor by e-mail immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, religious observance or emergencies. Your professor or NYU Berlin's administration may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from NYU Berlin's Director or Wellness Counselor as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances must be presented to the Director. Doctor's notes need to be submitted to the Academics Office, who will inform your professors. Doctor's notes need to be from a local doctor and carry a signature and a stamp. If you want the reasons for your absence to be treated confidentially, please approach NYU Berlin's Director or Wellness Counselor.
Unexcused absences affect students’ grades: In content courses each unexcused absence (equaling one week's worth of classes) leads to a deduction of 2% of the overall grade and may negatively affect your class participation grade. In German Language classes two or three (consecutive or non-consecutive) unexcused absences (equaling one week's worth of classes) lead to a 2% deduction of the overall grade. Three unexcused absences in one content course and five unexcused absences in your German language course may lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequent late arrival or late arrival back from in-class breaks. Please note that for classes involving a field trip, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to arrive in time at the announced meeting point.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to the Academics Office; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

**Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays**
Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer AND NYU Berlin's Academics Office in writing via e-mail one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#).

**Late Submission of Work**

1. Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.

2. Late work should be submitted in person to the lecturer or to the Academics Office, who will write on the essay or other work the date and time of submission, in the presence of the student. Another member of the administrative staff may also personally accept the work and will write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.

3. Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (excluding weekends and public or religious holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of NYU Berlin's administration), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.

4. Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (excluding weekends and public or religious holidays) following the submission date receives an F.

5. End of semester essays must be submitted on time.
(6) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.

(7) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

Provisions for Students with Disabilities
Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see their website for further information.

Plagiarism Policy
The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. Proper referencing of your sources avoids plagiarism (see as one possible help the NYU library guide to referencing styles.

NYU Berlin takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For a summary please follow the link to NYU Global's academic policies.