

# ADVANCED VISUAL EFFECTS

UWM FILM 460 – 407 (25163)

UWM DEPT. OF FILM

COURSE TITLE: Advanced Visual Effects

COURSE #: FILM 460-407 (25163)

MEETING TIMES / LOCATION: Tuesday 5pm–8:50pm, MIT B56

INSTRUCTOR: Mr. Bobby Ciraldo

OFFICE HOURS: An hour before or after class, in office B55B, by appointment only.

E-MAIL: [ciraldo@uwm.edu](mailto:ciraldo@uwm.edu)

For full schedule, lecture outlines, downloadable syllabus and assignments, go here:

<http://ciraldo.stream/uwm-vfx2/17s2/syllabus-17s2/>

## Course Description

This course focuses on the use of After Effects and other visual effects apps as powerful digital tools for producing animation and visual effects in creative video projects.

Over the course of the semester, students will learn how to perform advanced functions in AE and others, including Image Sequences, Expressions, basic 3D modeling, Linear Light, Camera Tracking, and more.

## Course Objectives

By the end of the semester each student should develop a comfortable working relationship with some dense pieces of creative production software. It's important to

note that our focus will be on short, individual, creative art projects. Successful time management and idea generation will be crucial.

## Course Work

Each class (roughly,) we'll cover a new topic with a **lecture**, do an **in-class exercise** based on the new topic, and get a **homework assignment** based on the new topic as well. The homework will be due the following week, so we'll start class by watching and discussing the prior week's homework. There will also be a **final project** that will build on topics learned.

## Grading Policy

Your grade will be based on your **attendance**, the **in-class exercises** we'll do, weekly **homework**, your **final project**, and **class participation**.

Here's the breakdown I will use:

**33% — In-Class Exercises**

**33% — Homework**

**24% — Final Project**

**10% — Class Participation**

By **class participation** I especially mean participating in class discussion about new or old topics, discussion about student projects we're critiquing as a class, and general engagement level.

## Attendance & Your Grade

In general, **Don't Be Absent**. Stuff comes up though, in which case here's my policy:

**After the 1st absence, each additional absence diminishes your final grade by 1/3.**

So for example, a final grade of an **A** along with **2 total absences** will result in a final grade of **A-**, while **3 total absences** would be a **B+**, and so on. **This is regardless of excused vs unexcused.** We only meet once a week, and you need to be here to go over the relevant course material and make good use of the lab time. **Talk to me if you think you have extenuating circumstances.**

## Grading Scale

Your work will be graded using the 4-point scale:

<b>A+</b>	<b>4.330</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>Great</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>Ok</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>Not So Good</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>Uh Oh</b>

Generally speaking, **Excellent** means that one has transcended the expectations of the project and delighted all. **Great** means that the work meets all requirements and feels thorough, rich and interesting. **Good** means one has gotten pretty close to all requirements with a few exceptions. **Ok** means the work was a good effort but is somewhat incomplete. **Not So Good** means the work fails to meet the project description in several ways, and to boot, the work is sloppy, rushed and not thoughtful. Lastly, **Uh Oh** means the work never found its way to the instructor (or was turned in too late, see below.)

**Final grades** are always capped at **4.0**, but **projects** earning **A+**'s can still contribute the **4.33** towards the final average **almost like extra credit**.

Each project comes with its own objectives and challenges (technical, formal and conceptual) and each project will be graded in relation to achievement in meeting those

objectives and challenges.

Graduate students enrolled in the course will produce a **final project** of greater duration than that of the undergraduates. We can discuss this more as the semester moves forward.

## Late Assignments

I accept late projects, but the grade will be reduced. **Within the first week** the grade will be **reduced by a whole letter grade** (so e.g., an A becomes a B). **Within the second week**, the grade is **reduced another letter grade**, and so on. A late project, upon being graded, will be returned without comments, and in fact may not be graded until the end of the semester.

A late project is just simply late, no big deal. So when you come to class on project due dates, come prepared WITH YOUR PROJECT FINISHED AND EXPORTED – NO exporting or finishing up during class time!

## BACK UP YOUR WORK!!

**You** are responsible for backing up your own data. Back up your data to a Flash USB drive, external hard drive, DVD, Dropbox, Google Drive, iCloud, etc. Losing your data (for whatever reason!) does not excuse late work – without exception.

## Conduct, Devices, Other Stuff

Respectfulness is paramount. In all matters of conduct, ask yourself, **“Am I being respectful of others?”** Nearly every action can be measured against the latter question. This applies to attitude, speech, action, etc.

No distracting devices or behavior (vaporizers, cell phones, work from other classes, etc.) is allowed during lecture. All comments, critique, and all other engagement with others in the class is to be conducted **respectfully and fairly**.

## Course Book(s) / Recommended Texts / Readings

No texts are required for this course. Tons of additional tutorials exist online (e.g., at sites like creativecow.net and videocopilot.net or simply youtube) and all that you'll need to know for your productions in this class will be online at our class site.

## Schedule

Schedule is subject to change according to the ebb and flow of the course. All changes will be updated on the class site, and all updates will be sent via email.

The full schedule can be found at the URL below:

<http://ciraldo.stream/uwm-vfx2/17s2/schedule-17s2>

## Equipment / Facility Access and Work Permits

There will be several class sessions set aside for production, but in no way will you be able to finish your projects by utilizing this time alone. You'll need to supplement your work time in MIT B56, B68 or CRT 187.

After-hours access to Mitchell Hall (MIT B68 or MIT B56, our AE labs) is available for all students enrolled in the "hand reader" lock system, via the northwest entrance (below the loading dock). Students register for a "hand reader" at the PSOA Box Office on the 1st floor of the Zelazo Center.

# Drops and Incompletes

Incompletes will be considered ONLY for situations in which you are maintaining a “B” or better grade at the end of classes, and you are unable, because of illness or other circumstances beyond your control, to complete your course work. You must provide written documentation indicating that you were prevented from completing your course requirements. You must complete course work for an Incomplete during the first 8 weeks of the next semester of enrollment (excluding summer sessions). Access to department facilities for the purpose of completing course requirements is extended 5 weeks into the next semester.

Here is a link to information about drops and withdrawals:

<http://uwm.edu/onestop/calendar/category/academic-dates-and-deadlines/>

# Special Needs and Questions

If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible. Feel free to visit me during office hours to discuss assignments or any questions or requests you have. The Department of Film follows UWM academic policies which are posted on the departmental bulletin board, or available online at <http://uwm.edu/arc>

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The campus Learning Technology Center, located in the east wing of the Library, can also provide consultation and resources concerning these issues.