UVU UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY™

Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: https://catalog.uvu.edu/

Semester: Fall   **Year:** 2025
Course Prefix: ART   **Course and Section #:3250-002**
Course Title: Environment Design   **Credits:** 3

Course Description

Develops and improves skills in designing, rendering, and painting environments and landscapes for use in illustration, animation, video games, and film.

Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:

☐ General Education Requirements
☐ Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
☐ Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
☒ Discipline Core Requirements in Program
☐ Elective Core Requirements in Program
☐ Open Elective
Other: *Click here to enter text.*

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Adam Munoa

Student Learning Outcomes

Design creative environments and backgrounds for
illustration and entertainment art through improving
thumbnails, comps, and drawing skills;
Exhibit improved abilities in painting environments using traditional and/or
digital media;
Demonstrate skills in harmonizing environment compositions by more
effectively using color schemes and controlling lighting effects through color
and value control;
Exhibit skill in enhancing mood through color and value control, heightening
the effect of focal points by successfully representing atmospheric perspective.

Course Materials and Texts

Desktop Computer or Laptop (if needed)

Digital Painting software i.e. Photoshop, Procreate or Corel Painter

Digital Painting tablet i.e. Wacom Intuos, Cintiq, iPad Pro etc...

Stylus

Sketchbook and proper drawing materials (if needed)

Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy

Assignments

1. **Introduction to Environment Design** – Explore the fundamentals of environmental storytelling and its role in visual development.
2. **Photoshop Workspace and Brush Setup** – Learn to configure brushes, layers, and shortcuts for efficient digital painting.
3. **Thumbnail Sketching for Environments** – Create small, quick compositions to explore environment layout and ideas.
4. **Understanding Value and Light** – Practice building depth and mood using grayscale values.
5. **Basic Perspective for Landscape Design** – Apply one-, two-, and three-point perspective to environment sketches.
6. **Shape Language in Environment Design** – Use basic geometric forms to create readable and compelling silhouettes.
7. **Painting Natural Environments** – Start painting forests, mountains, or deserts using reference and imagination.
8. **Atmospheric Perspective and Depth** – Use fading color, detail, and contrast to create believable space.
9. **Color Theory in Landscape Art** – Learn to apply hue, saturation, and temperature to control mood and storytelling.
10. **Environment Painting 1 Review** – Refine and present your first full-environment painting for feedback.
11. **Architectural Forms in Design** – Introduce man-made structures into your environment concepts.
12. **Historical and Cultural Influence** – Use research to inform the look and feel of buildings and spaces.
13. **Lighting and Shadow in Architecture** – Paint cast shadows and lighting to integrate structures with landscapes.
14. **Interior Environment Concepts** – Design and paint indoor spaces with spatial flow and function.
15. **Mood and Narrative in Environments** – Convey story elements using props, lighting, and weather.
16. **Photo Textures and Integration** – Use photo-bashing and blending techniques for added realism.
17. **Urban Environment Concepts** – Explore the design of streetscapes, alleys, and futuristic cities.
18. **Composition and Focal Point Control** – Guide the viewer's eye with layout, contrast, and rhythm.

19. **Time of Day and Lighting Variations** – Paint the same scene under different lighting conditions (e.g., dusk, night).
20. **Environment Painting 2 Review** – Present your second polished scene for class critique.
21. **Advanced Painting Techniques** – Use layer modes, custom brushes, and texture overlays to enhance complexity.
22. **Fantasy and Sci-Fi World Building** – Push design boundaries by inventing otherworldly landscapes.
23. **Using 3D Block-ins as Painting Base** – Incorporate basic 3D shapes to aid in complex compositions.
24. **Weather and Environmental Effects** – Add fog, rain, snow, or magic effects for atmosphere and story.
25. **Animating a Simple Pan or Zoom** – Create subtle motion in your scene using Photoshop timeline or for presentation boards.
26. **Portfolio-Ready Polish Techniques** – Add final passes of detail, contrast, and paint-over work.
27. **Visual Development Sheet Assembly** – Build a presentable layout including sketches, thumbnails, and final art.
28. **Final Project Planning and Work Session** – Begin assembling your final key environment painting.
29. **Final Project Refinement** – Polish your final scene and supporting materials.
30. **Final Presentation and Reflection** – Showcase your best work, receive feedback, and reflect on your creative growth.

Assessments

- did you meet the concept of the assignment
- did you meet the deadline/is the work complete
- did you follow strong design principles
- did you come up creative and fun solutions
- did you show technical mastery of materials

Grading Policy

- A 90-100%
- A-90-92.9%
- B 80-89%
- C 70-79%
- D 65-69%
- E 0-64%
- UW indicates an unofficial withdrawal from class

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments
N/A

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion
To further explore various digital painting techniques for environments

Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative AI

AI programs are not a replacement for your human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. Writing, thinking, and brainstorming are crafts that you must develop over time to develop your own individual voice. At the same time, you should learn how to use AI and in what instances AI can assist you.

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas;
- Finding information on your topic;
- Refining Style direction.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating your work in classroom contexts, such as by using AI tools to compose discussion board prompts/responses assigned to you or content that you put into a Teams/Canvas chat.
- Generating artwork for class assignments.
- Generating final artwork.

You are responsible for the information you submit and that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content. Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty.

Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. In such cases, no more than 25% of the student work should be generated by AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me for a conversation before submitting your work.

Using Remote Testing Software

☒ This course does not use remote testing software.

☐ This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

Required University Syllabus Statements

Accommodations/Students with Disabilities

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at DHHservices@uvu.edu

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

Academic Integrity

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their rights and responsibilities. In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in UVU Policy 541: *Student Code of Conduct*.

Equity and Title IX

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

Religious Accommodation

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu. If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a specially dedicated space for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.