

## project interactive multimedia

[www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/multimedia/course-pim.html](http://www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/multimedia/course-pim.html)

status:

- 31/1/08 – adapted wrt learning goals
- 23/1/08 (v1) – (severely) criticized because of low profile learning goals

**period**

6

**duration**

1 month

**credits**

6

**lecturer(s)**

A. Eliëns

**target students**

IMM & Inf students, year 1

**aim(s)**

To design and develop a moderately complex multimedia application, with both educational and game elements, as part of a communication strategy for some particular goal or issue of societal relevance.

More specifically, the course aims to teach:

- elementary web-based multimedia technology
- programming and tools for interactive animation and video
- first principles of information visualisation
- basic media and communication theory
- the design of an effective communication plan
- the business and societal context of media deployment

**course description**

Each year a special theme will be selected around which the interactive multimedia application will be built, e.g. the climate issue or an interactive museum.

The course will cover one month of intensive full time work, of which the first two weeks will be devoted to learning elementary multimedia techniques, including interactive video, flex and actionscript, and the following two weeks to develop the application, formulate a business/communication plan, and set out a strategy for positioning a viral game or video. During the course there will be lectures dealing with media and communication theory, semiotics, as well as critical theory concerning the *creative industry*. Apart from theoretical lectures,

there will be regular workshops and presentation sessions in which the students present their work and get feedback. The course will include sessions on the design and game aspects of interactive multimedia information systems. The end product will be shown in a public session, with a jury of among others members the CAMeRA institute.

### **mode of tuition**

large group college, small group workshops, presentation sessions and practicum

### **grading**

Final grading will be determined by:

- (10%) basic assignments flex/actionscript
- (20%) design of the interactive multimedia application
- (20%) the business/communication plan
- (10%) essay on one of the theoretical topics
- (10%) presentation in class
- (30%) delivery and presentation of the application

### **supervision**

student assistants, supported by educational assistant with in-depth knowledge of the platform and technology (flex/actionscript/interactive video)

### **technology**

Apart from basic HTML, CSS and possibly PHP, actionscript and flex (Flex 2 SDK<sup>1</sup>), in combination with interactive flash video, as developed for the *clima futura* game platform.

### **requirements**

Students must have succesfully followed *web technology*, be familiar with XML, CSS and javascript, and have elementary knowledge of programming and algorithms

### **benefits**

Awareness of communication issues, (intensive) use of media technology, including content development and scripting, communication and game design, project planning, oral and written reports.

### **pitfalls**

A sufficient level of technical expertise required. Another critical issue is the choice of topics, which is preferably done with an external partner, such as the VU Climate Center. The structure of supervision should be such that creativity is stimulated, in order to maintain a high level of motivation.

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<sup>1</sup>[www.adobe.com/products/flex](http://www.adobe.com/products/flex)

### remarks

This course does require some level of technical expertise and practical skills of programming and web development, as well as (minimal) knowledge of mathematics, needed for animation and visualisation. It does allow, however, for students to find creative solutions to communication and in applying multimedia, using a variety of techniques.

### related courses

The course builds on the *web technology* course, and may also profit from the course *online information systems*.

### background

The inspiration and technical platform for this course stems from our work in the Clima Futura [1] project<sup>2</sup> Also our experience in developing a *climate portal*<sup>3</sup>, see resource(s), in the *multimedia casus 2007/08* serves as an inspiration and pilot experience for the *project interactive multimedia*.

### structure – outline

- week 1 – introduction of platform and design issues [1]
- week 1 – concept design of multimedia application(s) [4]
- week 2 – essentials of animation and visualisation [4]
- week 2 – basic media and communication theory [2]
- week 3 – information presentation in flex RIA platform
- week 3 – student presentations of design and storyboards
- week 4 – business and societal context of the creative industry [3]
- week 4 – delivery and presentation of final application(s)

### preparation efforts – required

Development of manual *interactive video*, tutorial animation and visualisation in actionscript/flex. Construction of basic assignments animation and visualisation. Course website, with schedule and additional information. Selection of a theme.

### resource(s) – in development

- information presentation in flex – [www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/media/tutorial-flex.html](http://www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/media/tutorial-flex.html)
- animation in actionscript – [www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/media/tutorial-animation.html](http://www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/media/tutorial-animation.html)
- interactive video – [www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/media/example-iv.html](http://www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/media/example-iv.html)

### reference(s)

[1] Eliëns A., van de Watering M., Huurdeman H., Bhikharie S.V., Lemmers H., Vellinga P. , Clima Futura @ VU – communicating (unconvenient) science, In

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<sup>2</sup>[www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/projects/project-climate.html](http://www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/projects/project-climate.html)

<sup>3</sup>[www.few.vu.nl/~casus07](http://www.few.vu.nl/~casus07)

Proc. GAME-ON 07, Nov 20-22, University of Bologna, Marco Rocchetti (ed.), pp. 125-129, EUROSIS-ETI Publication, ISBN 9789077381373

[2] Kress G. and van Leeuwen T. (1996), Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design, Routledge

[3] Geert Lovink and Ned Rossiter (eds), MyCreativity<sup>4</sup> Reader, A Critique of Creative Industries, Institute of Network Cultures, Amsterdam 2007

[4] A. Eliëns, topical media & game development – [www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/media](http://www.cs.vu.nl/~eliens/media)

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<sup>4</sup>[www.networkcultures.org/mycreativity](http://www.networkcultures.org/mycreativity)