

IMD 520 - the Interactive Paradigm

Instructor: Nate Aldrich

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office hours: Tuesday, 1:00 – 2:00pm @ IMRC 126
or by request

**Course materials are available for download at:
www.nbaldrich.com/imd520-interactive_paradigm.html**

The term 'interactivity' has become almost a catch-all phrase invoked often in contradictory and confusing ways to the point of teetering on meaninglessness. This course will explore the idea that Interactivity is a contemporary world-view, a way of understanding how the world operates. This world view has historical anchor points and is extant in much of the creative works taking place in the Arts & Sciences today.

Understanding the Interactive paradigm in context brings a vital critical perspective that will inform most contemporary art practices. Students can expect to explore the theoretical history of Interactivity, see how it is reflected in the literature and work of a variety of disciplines and then apply that research to their own individual projects.

How the grade is constructed:

1. There will be four (4) 500 word essays due over the course of the semester, as indicated on the syllabus. The content of each will be culled from the readings assigned. Each essay is worth a possible five (5) points, with a total of twenty (20) points possible.
2. Each student will create an interactive project. The project can be individual or group, but group projects are subject to expressed approval by the instructor. The content of the project will be defined by the student, presented to the class as indicated in the syllabus, and discussed and modified as the semester progresses. Ideally, this project will be inspired by or predicated on some aspect of the ideas presented in the course! The projects will be on public display during the final class period in the IMRC. Additional various deadlines for the pieces are indicated in the syllabus. This project is worth a possible fifty (50) points toward the final grade.

3. Each student is expected to actively participate in the classroom discussions that should serve as the adrenaline of the course. This participation, along with the various other assignments indicated on the syllabus, will contribute the final fifteen (30) points to your grade. The instructor will be the final and sole arbiter in assigning these points.
4. The final grade will be constructed by adding the numbers together, then assigning the grade indicated by the total. Simple!
5. **Deductions in grade points will be assigned for absences!** Every student is expected to attend all classes during the course of the semester. As life is unpredictable at points, should anything arise that imperils your attendance, please communicate this to the instructor immediately. Each absence will incur a 1/2 letter grade deduction unless otherwise agreed to by the instructor in advance.

Please note: Any missed assignments may or may not be made up, through late submission or alternate assignments, solely at the discretion of the instructor. It is the student's obligation to inquire in a reasonable timeframe about this possibility. Work not submitted will receive 0 points.

About creating pieces for the class:

The pieces you create for this course are up to you. They must reflect upon one or more aspects of the research we will do to define and comprehend Interactivity as we understand it today. The work can take most any form, from plastic or media arts to performance or essay.

Each student will propose their work in a presentation. We will critique this proposal as a group. Progress and new directions in the project will be reported at regular intervals identified in the syllabus, so we as a group can make sure we are all on track.

The final projects will be presented to the IMFA and campus community in an open public forum. All projects must be complete and presented for grading at this forum. The instructor reserves the right to invite guest adjudicators to assist in the evaluation process.

On electronic devices in the classroom:

Due to an escalating potential for classroom disruption, the following is the policy for this course:

Please shut your phone off prior to class time. If your phone rings or if you are

found using it, it will be confiscated for the duration of the class period. If this occurs more than once over the course of the semester, you will be marked as absent that day.

If you are found to be using your laptop for *anything other than class notes*, and that includes doing your work for class during class or googling something we may be discussing, you will be asked to shut your computer off. If this occurs more than once over the course of the semester, you will be marked as absent that day.

If this somehow creates a hardship, please come speak to me.

In the event of an extended disruption of normal classroom activities, the format for this course may be modified to enable its completion within its programmed time frame. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to the syllabus that will supersede this version.

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact Ann Smith, Director of Disability Services, 121 East Annex, 581-2319, as early as possible in the term.

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, and all forms of misrepresentation in academic work, and is unacceptable at the University of Maine. As stated in the University of Maine's on-line undergraduate Student Handbook, plagiarism (the submission of another's work without appropriate attribution) and cheating are violations of the University of Maine Student Conduct Code. An instructor who has probable cause or reason to believe a student has cheated may act upon such evidence, including reporting this to the Department Chair for appropriate action.

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8/31 Introduction

Introductions; How this course will work; what's expected; readings in *the Interactivity Reader*; writing responses: objectifying your ideas, they are not you!

9/7 Interactivity as Cultural Perception pt. 1: from determinacy (back) to indeterminacy

please read: the Interactivity Reader Part 1; Sections 1 & 2.

assignment: write a 500 word response to an aspect of the reading that captured your imagination.

9/14 Interactivity as Cultural Perception pt. 2: contemporary information structures

please read: the Interactivity Reader Part 1; Sections 3 & 4.

assignment: write a 500 word response to an aspect of the reading that captured your imagination.

9/21 Art Beyond Objects:

process challenges the Object as a fundamental form in creative practice.

please read: the Interactivity Reader Part 2.

assignment: write a 500 word response to an aspect of the reading that captured your imagination.

9/28 Art and Interactivity:

art that models the interactive paradigm.

please read: the Interactivity Reader Part 3.

assignment: write a 500 word response to an aspect of the reading that captured your imagination.

10/5 Vetting the Ideas:

what to make of all this?

assignment: Please come to class prepared with any questions, comments and concerns you have regarding the subject matter we have covered. This is an opportunity to personalize this exploration in service of your upcoming projects.

10/12 Project Proposals:

making your case for an interactive piece.

assignment: please come prepared to give a 15 minute presentation on the interactive project you will create for the semester.

10/19 NO CLASS!

10/26 Studio Visits

Please be prepared to host a visit to your studio that presents the progress you are making on your project including what is going well and what is not.

11/2 Group Critiques

Please come prepared to help each other work out the bugs both conceptually and practically in your work to date. What is your continuing research?

11/9 Studio Visits

Please be prepared to host a visit to your studio that presents the progress you are making on your project including what is going well and what is not.

11/16 Group Critiques

Please come prepared to help each other work out the bugs both conceptually and practically in your work to date. What is your continuing research?

11/30 Final Prep!

We will only know when we get there what is needed.

12/7 Project Presentations!

This class period will be dedicated to presenting our final projects to the IMFA & greater campus community.