



MONASH University

FIT9028
Digital media authoring

Unit guide

Semester 1, 2009

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FIT9028 Digital media authoring - Semester 1, 2009

Unit leader :

Cheryl Howard

Lecturer(s) :

Berwick

- Cheryl Howard

Caulfield

- Cheryl Howard
- William Lay

Tutors(s) :

Berwick

- Cheryl Howard

Caulfield

- Cheryl Howard
- William Lay

Introduction

Welcome to FIT9028 Digital Media Authoring for Semester 2, 2008. This 6 point unit is a General Elective or part of the Master of Multimedia for Art & Design degree. The unit has been designed to provide you with an understanding of the principles and practices of programming within a multimedia authoring environment. It explores developing applications using the current version of Flash and ActionScript 3.0.

Unit synopsis

ASCED Discipline Group classification: 029999 Information Technology not elsewhere classified

This unit provides a focus on specialist tools and techniques that are used for developing content-rich interactive multimedia systems. This unit will cover fundamental multimedia principles, practical development processes, the integration of mixed-media assets, interactive design and programming for digital media and different technologies for product deployment. Students will create content-rich interactive web and CD-ROM products using industry standard authoring tools.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

At the completion of this unit students will have a theoretical and conceptual understanding of:

- information technology and the software tools as they relate to (and are used in) multimedia systems;
- the Adobe Flash CS4 authoring environment for CD-ROM and web based systems development;
- codecs and compression techniques associated with digital video, images and sound and the appropriate application of these for use in application development;
- the formal process undertaken for preparing and documenting the various development stages of a multimedia system;
- how to achieve a range of special effects which are commonly required for advanced interactive design in multimedia systems;
- fundamental programming techniques and how to carry this knowledge across multiple languages.

Attitudes, Values and Beliefs

At the completion of this unit students will have developed attitudes that enable them to:

- outline strengths and weaknesses of information technology in the context of the development and use of multimedia systems;
- make informed decisions on the most appropriate blend of tools and technologies to support a given multimedia system requirement;
- formulate constructive criticism within the construct of critical analysis.

Practical Skills

At the completion of this unit students will have the skills to:

- apply advanced interactive design techniques to a multimedia system using time/frame based authoring environments;
- use a blend of industry standard multimedia tools and products.
- write code to assist in advanced system interaction with the programming language ActionScript 3.0;
- further enhance and refine user interface and navigational design and creativity skills in multimedia systems;
- specify an appropriate toolset for developing and supporting advanced features/functionality in a multimedia system.

Relationships, Communication and TeamWork

At the completion of this unit students will have developed the teamwork skills needed to:

- build confidence in formal presentation techniques presenting personal ideas, research concepts and developmental progress;
- discuss and share developmental processes and techniques within an informal populated environment.

Workload

Broadly the time required to complete this topic is shown in the following table, but note this is just a rough indication. You may need to spend more time on some activities depending on your background and knowledge. In addition, you need to spend extra time on assignments and review.

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Attending lectures and reviewing notes	3 hours
Doing activities in lab classes	2 hours
Readings	3 hours
Contact (e-mail, consultation, etc.)	30 minutes
Total	8 hours 30 minutes

Unit relationships

Prerequisites

Before attempting this unit you must have satisfactorily completed FIT9027, or equivalent. You should have a basic knowledge of Multimedia fundamentals such as appropriate file formats, file sizes, basic multimedia authoring principles, digital imaging skills, an adequate skill level in several fundamental multimedia applications with a basic knowledge of programming principles and practices.

Relationships

FIT9028 is a core unit in the Master of Multimedia for Art & Design or a General Elective.

Before attempting this unit you must have satisfactorily completed FIT9027, or equivalent.

You may NOT study this unit and IMS2402, MMS2402, Translation Set: MMS9402, in your degree.

Continuous improvement

Monash is committed to 'Excellence in education' (Monash Directions 2025 - <http://www.monash.edu.au/about/monash-directions/directions.html>) and strives for the highest possible quality in teaching and learning.

To monitor how successful we are in providing quality teaching and learning Monash regularly seeks feedback from students, employers and staff. One of the key formal ways students have to provide feedback is through Unit Evaluation Surveys. The University's Unit Evaluation policy (<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/unit-evaluation-policy.html>) requires that every unit offered is evaluated each year. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the surveys as they are an important avenue for students to "have their say". The feedback is anonymous and provides the Faculty with evidence of aspects that students are satisfied and areas for improvement.

Faculties have the option of administering the Unit Evaluation survey online through the my.monash portal or in class. Lecturers will inform students of the method being used for this unit towards the end of the semester.

Student Evaluations

If you wish to view how previous students rated this unit, please go to <http://www.monash.edu.au/unit-evaluation-reports/>

Unit staff - contact details

Unit leader

Ms Cheryl Howard

Lecturer

Phone +61 3 990 47158

Lecturer(s) :

Ms Cheryl Howard

Lecturer

Phone +61 3 990 47158

Contact hours : Tuesday 1-2pm & 4-5pm

Mr William Lay

Contact hours : Tuesday 1-2pm

Tutor(s) :

Ms Cheryl Howard

Lecturer

Phone +61 3 990 47158

Mr William Lay

Teaching and learning method

This unit will be delivered via a 2 hour lecture and a 2 hour laboratory class each week.

Lectures will be used to present and explain programming principles and practices within the context of the authoring environment of Flash.

Laboratories will be used for practical experience in the development, coding, testing and debugging of the functions specific to the authoring environment.

Tutorial allocation

On-campus students should register for tutorials/laboratories using Allocate+.

Communication, participation and feedback

Monash aims to provide a learning environment in which students receive a range of ongoing feedback throughout their studies. You will receive feedback on your work and progress in this unit. This may take the form of group feedback, individual feedback, peer feedback, self-comparison, verbal and written feedback, discussions (on line and in class) as well as more formal feedback related to assignment marks and grades. You are encouraged to draw on a variety of feedback to enhance your learning.

It is essential that you take action immediately if you realise that you have a problem that is affecting your study. Semesters are short, so we can help you best if you let us know as soon as problems arise. Regardless of whether the problem is related directly to your progress in the unit, if it is likely to interfere with your progress you should discuss it with your lecturer or a Community Service counsellor as soon as possible.

Unit Schedule

Week	Topic	Study guide	References/Readings	Key dates
1	Overview of the Unit, Overview of Flash Basics, Game Development & Design Principles	Assignment Overview & Documentation, Drawing tools and techniques, Appropriate organisation of timeline	Green: 1 and 2	Complete Lab tasks
2	Flash Symbols, ActionScript Basics, Navigation & Events	Applying interactive affordance in Flash, Navigation working with buttons, Drop Menus, MovieClip behaviour and hierarchy	Green: 3 and 4; Shupe: 1, 2 & 5	Complete Lab tasks
3	Flash Animation Basics	Animation in Flash Using Tweening Techniques, Motion Guides and Masks	Green: 6 & 7	Complete Lab tasks and Submit Portfolio Project - Design Specification Document (10% of practical assessment mark)
4	Using Flash Components, Input and Form Elements	Create a basic component-based form, Accept input from components and store in variables	Green: 9	Complete Lab tasks and Submit Splash Animation
5	Scripted Animation, MovieClip objects	Linking objects to MovieClips, using the Flash Display List feature, conditional programming	Shupe: 4, 7, 8, 9	Complete Lab tasks and Submit Options Selections
6	Reading from text and XML files), using variables to track data, random numbers	Using externally loaded SWF content, Load data from text and XML files, exploring Flash's built-in random function	Green: 11; Shupe: 14	Complete Lab tasks and Submit Navigation / Graphic Portfolio Prototype
Mid semester break				
7	Flash object oriented design, Introduction to custom classes	Planning and creating an external class, Public/private methods and variables	Shupe: 3 & 6	Complete Lab tasks and Submit Randomisation
8			Shupe: 3 & 10	

	Exploring keyboard events, Using Movie Clips to Change States	Capturing keyboard events, Moving objects with the keyboard, collision detection		Complete lab tasks and Submit On-line Exam
9	Advanced ActionScript Techniques, Arrays, Math functions, Strings and Saving Data	Using arrays, random numbers, text formatting and saving data in context by building simple applications	Green: 6; Shupe: 4, 6 & 10	Complete Lab tasks and Submit Selecting Alternate Skin
10	Using Sound Objects and Video in Flash	Basic use of externally loaded streaming content (background music and effects), FLV video with Flash Video components	Green: 5 & 8; Shupe 11 & 12	Complete Lab tasks
11	Optimising Flash for Web and CD Publishing	Demonstrating using a Pre-loader, Programming Checklist, Debugging and Tweaking Game Code	Green 13; Shupe 13	Complete Lab tasks and Submit Music and Sound Effects
12	Publishing Flash Movies - CSS, HTML	Additional web publishing techniques	Green 4 & 10; Shupe 13	Submit completed Portfolio Project
13	Revision	Student Demonstrations		

Unit Resources

Prescribed text(s) and readings

Foundation Flash CS4 for Designers
 By Tom Green, David Stiller
 Friends of Ed (2008)
 ISBN-10: 1-4302-1093-1
 ISBN-13: 978-1-4302-1093-1

Learning ActionScript 3.0 - A Beginner's Guide
 By Rich Shupe with Zevan Rosser
 O'Reilly (2008)
 ISBN-10: 0-596-52787-X
 ISBN-13: 978-0-596-52787-7

See also: "Recommended Reading" below for a list of recommended references

Text books are available from the [Monash University Book Shops](#). Availability from other suppliers cannot be assured. The Bookshop orders texts in specifically for this unit. You are advised to purchase your text book early.

Recommended text(s) and readings

Flash 8 Projects for Learning Animation and Interactivity by Rich Shupe & Robert Hoekman, Jr. Publisher: O'Reilly (2006) ISBN: 0-596-10223-2

Object-Oriented ActionScript for Flash 8 By Peter Elst & Todd Yard Publisher: Friends of ED (2006) ISBN: 1590596196

Required software and/or hardware

All software required for use in this unit can be accessed from allocated campus laboratories/tutorial rooms.

The software used in this unit consists of:

- Adobe Flash CS4 Professional
- Adobe Photoshop CS4
- Adobe Illustrator CS4

30 Day Trial/Evaluation versions of the named software can be downloaded for personal use if necessary from the following websites:

- <http://www.adobe.com/>

Equipment and consumables required or provided

Students studying off-campus are required to have the minimum system configuration specified by the Faculty as a condition of accepting admission, and regular Internet access. On-campus students, and those studying at supported study locations may use the facilities available in the computing labs. Information about computer use for students is available from the ITS Student Resource Guide in the Monash University Handbook. You will need to allocate up to **n** hours per week for use of a computer, including time for newsgroups/discussion groups.

Study resources

Study resources we will provide for your study are:

available on the FIT9028 web site on MOODLE. It will host lecture slides, weekly tutorial requirements and assignment specifications. In addition, supplementary resources may also be posted.

Library access

The Monash University Library site contains details about borrowing rights and catalogue searching. To learn more about the library and the various resources available, please go to <http://www.lib.monash.edu.au>.

The Educational Library and Media Resources (LMR) is also a very resourceful place to visit at <http://www.education.monash.edu.au/library/>

Monash University Studies Online (MUSO)

All unit and lecture materials are available through MUSO (Monash University Studies Online). Blackboard is the primary application used to deliver your unit resources. Some units will be piloted in Moodle. If your unit is piloted in Moodle, you will see a link from your Blackboard unit to Moodle (<http://moodle.monash.edu.au>) and can

bookmark this link to access directly. In Moodle, from the Faculty of Information Technology category, click on the link for your unit.

You can access MUSO and Blackboard via the portal: <http://my.monash.edu.au>

Click on the Study and enrolment tab, then Blackboard under the MUSO learning systems.

In order for your Blackboard unit(s) to function correctly, your computer needs to be correctly configured.

For example:

- Blackboard supported browser
- Supported Java runtime environment

For more information, please visit: <http://www.monash.edu.au/muso/support/students/downloadables-student.html>

You can contact the MUSO Support by phone : (+61 3) 9903 1268

For further contact information including operational hours, please visit:
<http://www.monash.edu.au/muso/support/students/contact.html>

Further information can be obtained from the MUSO support site:
<http://www.monash.edu.au/muso/support/index.html>

Assessment

Unit assessment policy

The unit is assessed with one major assignment with 3 project milestones (60%) and a three hour closed book examination (40%). To pass the unit you must:

- achieve no less than 40% of the possible marks in the exam
- achieve no less than 40% of the possible total marks for the assignment
- achieve no less than 50% of possible marks

Assignment tasks

• Assignment Task

Title : Portfolio Development Project

Description :

Students will use skills and techniques covered in the weekly labs to develop a Flash-based Portfolio. It is important that students complete each week's lab activities and implement the techniques used in each activity in their portfolio as relevant skills will be covered during this time. The interface design must give the user multiple ways to access the various content sections. The visual and technical design components must make use of a variety of Flash skills. In addition to any personal portfolio categories, the following pages must be included as a bare minimum:

- ◆ Splash screen introducing your portfolio, etc.
- ◆ About page with details of yourself - qualifications, job aspirations, areas of interest, etc.

- ◆ Contact page including a functional e-mail link
- ◆ A "gallery" page presenting examples of your work including thumbnails with links to larger images

It is important that you identify additional information screens immediately because the Portfolio Design Specifications will be required by Week 3 and a complete navigational and graphical prototype will be required by Week 6. This is to ensure that you have an appropriate amount of time to develop and implement the functional aspects of the portfolio, and to assist in time management of the project.

The functional aspects of your project must demonstrate your skill using different tools and techniques of the Flash authoring environment. They must include the following:

- ◆ Appropriate level of graphic design showing a combination of text and graphics presenting your content on each screen
- ◆ Include at least 2 "skins" for your interface (eg: different colour scheme / background, artistic style, corporate vs artistic, etc.)
- ◆ Demonstrate 3 different ways of navigating through your portfolio (eg: main buttons, branching menus, sliding menu, thumbnails, < and >, etc.)
- ◆ Thumbnails, when clicked, will display larger images as draggable pop-ups (as per week 6)
- ◆ An example of an original short video using the *.flv format (funny home video, past assignment, anything as long as it is original)
- ◆ An example of a short animation (eg: Splash animation)
- ◆ Appropriate use of background music and sound effects

The **Portfolio Design Specification** documentation is designed to outline and organise the development process of the project. Appropriate headings are provided as a guide to what you should include in the design specifications for your selected game project. Be aware that part of your final assessment will include how well you develop your project in accordance to what you stipulate in this document. In other words, a small but completed project will score very well as opposed to a large incomplete one!

The **Navigation/GUI Prototype** will demonstrate how you have structured your portfolio and show the majority of your interface design. The portfolio components **DO NOT** have to function for this prototype as dummy data and/or portfolio components can be used to show the overall look-and-feel if the portfolio. The prototype should include a clearly defined internal structure on the time line (as demonstrated in labs), clearly show the main screen elements of the portfolio, and an example of each major screen of the portfolio. [NOTE: the individual screen elements are only there to show their position on the screen and **DO NOT** have to function at this stage. All that is required is a complete screen layout with appropriate design suited to the portfolio you are developing.]

The final part of this assessment is the submission of a **functional portfolio**, developed according to the specification documents submitted in Week 3. There are 5 common components that must also be successfully integrated into the final application. These will also be covered in the weekly lab tasks conducted throughout the semester and will be assessed separately but are an integral part of your final mark. These are the basic functions or features required to make the portfolio have at least an elementary level of interaction. Additionally, you must successfully demonstrate various Flash features including animation, appropriate use of different symbol types, application and use of different types of media (eg: images, audio), and Flash components.

Weekly tasks will be available to download from MOODLE. It is expected that students will download the materials relevant to each week's activity. Working through each activity will give students an understanding of various techniques and their suggested application, however it will be up to each individual student to determine how to best implement these techniques to best suit their needs.

Weighting : 60%

Criteria for assessment :

The project will be worth 60% of the final grade and will be marked out of 100. The marks for this project will be assigned as follows:

Portfolio Design (60)

40 Portfolio Design Specification Document to be submitted by **Week 3**. For more detailed information see Section 2: Portfolio Design Specification section of the Unit Outline document (see below).

20 Navigation/Graphic Prototype to be submitted by **Week 6**. This will demonstrate how you have structured your portfolio and show the majority of your interface design - placeholder graphics are NOT satisfactory for this assessment task. The navigation components must be functional. However, the portfolio components DO NOT have to be fully functional for this prototype as dummy data and/or other portfolio components can be used to show the overall look-and-feel if the interface.

Portfolio Implementation (40)

15 Successful integration of the 5 common project requirements (5 requirements x 3 marks each). These will also be covered in the weekly lab tasks conducted throughout the semester. These are the basic functions or features required to make the portfolio have at least an elementary level of interaction and will be set for submission in **Weeks 4, 5, 7, 9 and 11**.

25 A functional portfolio, including the integration of the 5 common tasks to be submitted by **Week 12**. The marking criteria used for this component includes:

- ◆ Interface design and brand development including the overall look-and-feel of the portfolio's graphics/interface, consistency of layout and design, and presentation and readability of content (5).
- ◆ The implementation of Flash features including animation, appropriate use of different symbol types, application of different types of media (image/audio), and Flash components (10).
- ◆ The final product is complete and works without error. It must include all items, as specified in the brief, which function correctly. Internal and external assets must be organised in a logical structure, with appropriate navigation structures implemented (10).

Due date : By 3pm Friday of the specified week

Remarks (optional - leave blank for none) :

Full details are available in the FIT9028 Unit Outline 09 document that is available for download from the MOODLE site.

Examinations

• **Examination 1**

Weighting : 40%

Length : 3 hours

Type (open/closed book) : Closed book

Remarks (optional - leave blank for none) :

The examination has 2 parts:

1. A ONE hour on-line Exam administered in Week 8 at the beginning of the scheduled Lab including Multiple Choice / True or False / Definitions / Short Answer question formats drawn from the lecture / lab notes (15%)
2. A TWO hour Scenario Design and Development administered during the normal exam period questions drawn from principles and practices covered in lectures (25%). Examples of these questions formats will be provided in the final lecture and as quizzes on MUSO in Week 13.

Assignment submission

Major project milestones will be submitted by 4pm Wednesday of the week that they are due to the designated submission box on a CD-ROM and with the appropriate paper Assignment Cover Sheet correctly filled out and attached.

These are available from the Berwick and Caulfield School of Information Technology offices in Building 903 or on level 6 of building H respectively. Further instructions will be provided with the assignment specifications.

Assignment coversheets

Assignment coversheets can be found :

- via the "Student assignment coversheets" (<http://infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/assignments/>) page on the faculty website
- if the students submit their assignments electronically online via MOODLE, coversheets are provided within those systems

University and Faculty policy on assessment

Due dates and extensions

The due dates for the submission of assignments are given in the previous section. Please make every effort to submit work by the due dates. It is your responsibility to structure your study program around assignment deadlines, family, work and other commitments. Factors such as normal work pressures, vacations, etc. are seldom regarded as appropriate reasons for granting extensions. Students are advised to NOT assume that granting of an extension is a matter of course.

Requests for extensions must be made to the unit lecturer at your campus at least two days before the due date. You will be asked to forward original medical certificates in cases of illness, and may be asked to provide other forms of documentation where necessary. A copy of the email or other written communication of an extension must be attached to the assignment submission.

Late assignment

Assignments received after the due date will be subject to a penalty of 10% per day (including weekend days).

Assignments received later than one week after the due date will not be accepted for assessment unless prior (alternate) arrangements have been made with the unit Lecturer due to special circumstances.

Return dates

Students can expect assignments to be returned within two weeks of the submission date or after receipt, whichever is later.

Assessment for the unit as a whole is in accordance with the provisions of the Monash University Education Policy at <http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/>

We will aim to have assignment results made available to you within two weeks after assignment receipt.

Plagiarism, cheating and collusion

Plagiarism and cheating are regarded as very serious offences. In cases where cheating has been confirmed, students have been severely penalised, from losing all marks for an assignment, to facing disciplinary action at the Faculty level. While we would wish that all our students adhere to sound ethical conduct and honesty, I will ask you to acquaint yourself with Student Rights and Responsibilities (<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/about/committees-groups/facboard/policies/studrights.html>) and the Faculty regulations that apply to students detected cheating as these will be applied in all detected cases.

In this University, cheating means seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in any examination or any other written or practical work to be submitted or completed by a student for assessment. It includes the use, or attempted use, of any means to gain an unfair advantage for any assessable work in the unit, where the means is contrary to the instructions for such work.

When you submit an individual assessment item, such as a program, a report, an essay, assignment or other piece of work, under your name you are understood to be stating that this is your own work. If a submission is identical with, or similar to, someone else's work, an assumption of cheating may arise. If you are planning on working with another student, it is acceptable to undertake research together, and discuss problems, but it is not acceptable to jointly develop or share solutions unless this is specified by your lecturer.

Intentionally providing students with your solutions to assignments is classified as "assisting to cheat" and students who do this may be subject to disciplinary action. You should take reasonable care that your solution is not accidentally or deliberately obtained by other students. For example, do not leave copies of your work in progress on the hard drives of shared computers, and do not show your work to other students. If you believe this may have happened, please be sure to contact your lecturer as soon as possible.

Cheating also includes taking into an examination any material contrary to the regulations, including any bilingual dictionary, whether or not with the intention of using it to obtain an advantage.

Plagiarism involves the false representation of another person's ideas, or findings, as your own by either copying material or paraphrasing without citing sources. It is both professional and ethical to reference clearly the ideas and information that you have used from another writer. If the source is not identified, then you have plagiarised work of the other author. Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that is insulting to the reader and grossly unfair to your student colleagues.

Register of counselling about plagiarism

The university requires faculties to keep a simple and confidential register to record counselling to students about plagiarism (e.g. warnings). The register is accessible to Associate Deans Teaching (or nominees) and, where requested, students concerned have access to their own details in the register. The register is to serve as a record of counselling about the nature of plagiarism, not as a record of allegations; and no provision of appeals in relation to the register is necessary or applicable.

Non-discriminatory language

The Faculty of Information Technology is committed to the use of non-discriminatory language in all forms of communication. Discriminatory language is that which refers in abusive terms to gender, race, age, sexual orientation, citizenship or nationality, ethnic or language background, physical or mental ability, or political or religious views, or which stereotypes groups in an adverse manner. This is not meant to preclude or inhibit legitimate academic debate on any issue; however, the language used in such debate should be non-discriminatory and sensitive to these matters. It is important to avoid the use of discriminatory language in your communications and written work. The most common form of discriminatory language in academic work tends to be in the area of gender inclusiveness. You are, therefore, requested to check for this and to ensure your work and communications are non-discriminatory in all respects.

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities that may disadvantage them in assessment should seek advice from one of the following before completing assessment tasks and examinations:

- Faculty of Information Technology Student Service staff, and / or
- your Unit Coordinator, or
- [Disabilities Liaison Unit](#)

Deferred assessment and special consideration

Deferred assessment (not to be confused with an extension for submission of an assignment) may be granted in cases of extenuating personal circumstances such as serious personal illness or bereavement. Information and forms for Special Consideration and deferred assessment applications are available at <http://www.monash.edu.au/exams/special-consideration.html>. Contact the Faculty's Student Services staff at your campus for further information and advice.