

Designing and Producing Media for Education

Enrollment: 18      Responses: 19

**STUDENT LEARNING**

1. What are the most valuable things you have gained from this course? (Possibilities may range from acquisition of very concrete skills or knowledge to changes in perspective or ways of thinking.)

This is one of the most practical and useful courses I've ever taken. I learned about technology, and how to literally create a project from start to finish.

Hands-on experience!! What a great way to really learn how to produce a project.

I really enjoyed the fact that this was a skill-building class. It allowed me to gain knowledge with programs and skills as well as learning the theory curriculum.

I came with an interest in working with different forms of media – and a desire to create. This course provided me with that chance, but more importantly, taught me about the process. It is so well designed (the class) – it all makes sense.

How to critically look at a media to ensure that it serves its purpose. How to work together as a team and offer design suggestions.

There is so much. This class above all others is about communication. How do we express our ideas to others effectively? In each level of the course - from the design to the production (pre-production and part-production) - we have had to organize our thoughts through planning, then execution of these projects, but most importantly, we have had to share and respond to classmates' projects and they to ours!

How to go through the entire process of making educational media – from developing the concept to learning how to use a camera, to editing, to doing a formative evaluation – we learned a great deal and had to put our learning to practice.

Where to begin? I walked in with a clean, blank sheet of skills regarding media and how it's used in education. The most valuable things range from technical, planning, editing, and organization skills. Absolutely loved this class!

The space for creativity in producing educational media in a community of insightful, helpful and dedicated peers. The opportunity to put into practice all we've spoken about for the past semesters. AND FINALLY, BUT NOT LEAST, THE FANTASTIC instruction and facilitating by instructor Joe Blatt.

It was great to have a “hands-on” opportunity to practice designing and producing media – I really got a good understanding of the process and trying it out myself reinforced that.

Everything related to production: filming, sound, editing, etc. PLUS ... how to work with a group of people and take their comments/suggestions.

Technical media production skills, ability to evaluate own work and that of others.

Being given the opportunity to design and produce my own media. Learning about good/bad design of web pages. How to create a documentary. Working with audio, etc.

Design from conception to final project. Collaborating as a team. Receiving and giving feedback. Technical skills – video camera, editing, sound. The entire process was incredibly comprehensive. A great opportunity.

A sound grounding in some design theory/instructional design. Great advice and guidance from Joe.

The entire process of designing and producing media. Although we each chose a specific format, we learned the design and implementation process for a website, video, audio, etc. To reflect deeply on our work.

Joe’s real world experience really helped me learn real world design skills. Also, I learned some very concrete technical skills.

I really feel like I really experienced the iterative process of design through this course. The feedback from classmates and professor, the required formative evaluation, and the expert guests who described design, all contributed to an atmosphere of thinking and rethinking our individual designs.

A broad perspective on how to carry out a project, from the most basic of idea brainstorming through planning and implementation.

## **COURSE ACTIVITIES**

**2. What specific course activities and materials did you find most valuable? (Consider lectures, section discussions, case studies, guest speakers, readings, field activities, written assignments, feedback from the instructor(s), etc.) How did these activities or materials help you to learn?**

Lectures – especially guest speakers who represented a wide variety of media disciplines. Working with classmates to get feedback.

Some of the readings weren't particularly relevant, however, the guests, presentations, and lectures were phenomenal.

Formative Evaluation Process. Expert Reviewer Partners. Digital Video Editors' Handbook.

The guest speakers were great and totally relevant! All of the assignments are totally appropriate, and timely. Very useful. Not too much, and not too little.

Guest speakers – it was great to hear stories from the field, the processes and challenges that the professionals face.

I felt that peer interaction was the most valuable aspect of the course. It really helped me to understand how others viewed my project.

The evaluation process – conducting our own evaluations (getting feedback on our pilot) and having someone responsible for giving us feedback AND being responsible for giving someone else feedback – was very valuable to my learning.

Guest speakers really brought the technicality articles and books to life. The actual field activities (filming, planning, editing) really broadened my interest in media and I would love to pursue this further.

The massive amounts of feedback provided by peers, Joe Blatt, and TF Jessica Poser has contributed tremendously to my learning. IN ADDITION, Joe's excellent selections for course reading really helped to frame topics and project work.

Guest lectures from people in the field as well as sampling each others' projects along the way were both really helpful. I wound up picking and choosing readings that applied directly to my project and design more generally, but they were all very interesting. I wish I had more time to read!

Sharing each other's work/progress.

Working in small groups to discuss project.

Readings. Lectures. Discussions in class – different perspectives. Web discussions – really forced me to think about what we had been reading and discussing in class.

The structure of the course was extremely helpful – pacing the proposal, pilot, feedback, and final presentation stages made a daunting project more doable. The readings were very interesting and pertinent. The sharing of class projects was always helpful. I learned much from classmates, too.

The main assignment – forced you to apply the readings and learn by doing. Instructor and class feedback.

The most valuable course activity was Joe's lectures. He is a dynamic professor who prepared thoroughly for his course.

Feedback from classmates and Joe were great. The way we got to develop an education piece of media really allowed me to reflect upon educational concepts I've learned in other classes.

I liked the guest speakers. I liked the sharing of our projects with classmates and I liked how everything in the course was directed back at our own projects.

I found the guest speakers to be exceptionally valuable, particularly their practical approach to the ideas and issues they were presenting.

**2b. In what ways does this course introduce and encourage consideration of diversity and/or diverse perspectives? (Consider content and process.)**

Encourages diversity in media. Encourages broad appeal in creating a project to be viewed by large audiences.

You have to consider all the possible needs of the audience.

People's projects were SO diverse ... it was awesome! People did projects I wouldn't have even thought of.

(no comments)

(no comments)

The nature of the project is very diverse. DVDs vs. computer games vs. radio. The topics of interest are also very different and involve people from a variety of backgrounds.

It touches on it through the readings and a bit in class discussion, but most of all through the diversity of projects the class created.

Wow. So much exposure to different perspectives ranging from stereotypes, multiculturalism and gay families.

Absolutely everywhere – every opinion is respected and discussed.

I think we all had to consider at some point audience needs – and if those were diverse, then diversity issues were addressed.

The class is diverse, and their work/subject matter is diverse.

(no comments)

Everyone's project was completely different -- different media, different themes, different styles.

The range of class projects was incredibly diverse and covered a wide range of diversity issues. We also had readings that focused on making projects that are considerate of diversity issues.

The range of projects was unbelievable – and part of the benefit of the course!

This course is based on producing media from the lens of diversity. Even though there is a target audience, it's necessary to consider the diversity within that audience. How will different people interpret the media?

(no comments)

(no comments)

I believe the formation of groups by matching diverse competencies encourage diversity in our approach to the coursework.

#### INSTRUCTOR(S)

##### 3a. In what ways was the instructor most effective and why?

Very effective in designing, engaging, and stimulating lectures that lasted 3 hours. Great the whole time! Gave great feedback. Made it possible for the creation of these projects.

Joe is phenomenal. It's hard to pinpoint just how or why – he just is. Take all of his classes.

Excellent lecturer. Great balance of activities. Really knowledgeable field expert. Contacts with media specialists. Best instructor at Harvard – Hands Down!

Joe is great! Really knows his material, and has such a positive attitude. He is very supportive, and knows how to (and when) to give feedback.

He engages with the students personally. He encourages students to challenge themselves through the works they are designing and producing.

Professor Blatt was very effective in letting the media guide the course. I found that he took a particular stance in teaching. He never lectured us to death! He guided us in the exploration of media topics and introduced us to people/experts that were engaging in the work of media design! Awesome.

Joe is very organized and knowledgeable, and really gave us a structure to use for developing our projects. He keeps the class moving along at an appropriate pace.

Joe is always full of energy and his enthusiasm is contagious. He is very experienced and even through the class was 3 hours, it FLEW by.

Joe is a most fantastic teacher, facilitator, and mentor; his insight in producing educational media lent experience to our discourse.

Joe was very enthusiastic and supportive of our work – great!

His lectures/PowerPoint is very clear and informative.

Joe is positive and supportive. He also offers constructive criticism well.

Available to everyone. Friendly and incredibly positive, motivational. Easy to understand. Direct and succinct. Brilliant!

Enthusiastic, knowledgeable, supportive ... THE BEST!

Down-to-earth instruction and advice from someone who knows what he is talking about!

It's clearly evident that Joe loves teaching! He scaffolds the process every step of the way, from background research to designing the pilot to the presentation of the project. His instruction is definitely learner-centered as he's always vigilant of the differences in students' learning styles. He allows the students to provide ample feedback to each other.

He is great at giving productive feedback. He has a wealth of real world \_\_\_\_\_ [illegible].

He was excellent at relating what we were learning in class with our own projects and keeping us thinking about how our projects could be improved. His humor and positive attitude really helped keep the class fresh and upbeat.

The instructor was incredibly effective in his ability to tie together the logic of the course and the particular guest lecturers' contributions to our overall course goals. I have taken courses with lots of guest speakers before and often they seem to be "stand-alone" presentations that are simply related to the overall goals of the course. I felt that every speaker was tied to our course goals and made a significant contribution to them.

## INSTRUCTOR(S) continued

3b. What recommendations would you make to the instructor to strengthen his or her teaching and/or make the course more valuable? (Consider content, materials, activities, assignments that should be dropped or added, grading procedures, amount and kind of feedback, utilization of TFs, as well as changes in instructor behavior.)

Maybe make the course longer for even better results. Focus more on dissemination of projects.

Joe is great. Don't change a thing!

Don't make this a year-long class. I think the half year works really well. Don't change class too much! It was great!!

(no comments)

To ensure that everyone gets adequate feedback. It seemed because of certain media designs some students received more feedback and suggestions than others.

I found it hard to focus on other materials that were required of me, i.e. the appearance releases, etc. The job of creating these massive projects was all encompassing, so I tended to forget about these other very important steps of the process. This really has nothing to do with instruction but maybe hammer these things home throughout the pre-production process!

Too many readings, especially if we aren't doing a video (or, vice-versa, not doing a web project), \_\_\_\_\_ [illegible] and we didn't really have a chance to discuss them. I'd rather have that time to discuss specific problems with the class – to bring them into class more and have 'workshops.' Also, I didn't get much out of the media presentations.

None. He did a wonderful job of incorporating a range of different types of educational media. Fabulous!

If on-line discussions, please start and facilitate early; discussions were late and slow...

It would be helpful to have us form project groups early on to help each other through specific issues related to different media. Also, a training workshop in either IMovie or final cut production would've been helpful. Fewer readings, too – we spend so much time on the actual project.

Maybe less readings and tell some people to save money and not buy the Web book if they aren't doing web projects.

(no comments)

More time! I loved this class. Wanted more feedback on my own project, maybe more interaction with students. Looking back, though I didn't enjoy it at first, web discussion was great!

Everything was amazing, including structure, readings, feedback, and technical support. Thanks! I valued the interaction with other people's projects, so maybe more of that would be great.

A little more guidance on expectations for each stage.

Less time in presenting the "effective media clip" piece and more time on lectures (explaining process).

I think the only thing that should be improved is the room. Also, it would be helpful if we had a real progressive scan DVD player available.

Could work on PowerPoint lectures, since the multiple bullets and unchanging format can become tedious. That said, these lectures are generally broken up well with other activities.

I would suggest a bit more by way of instruction. It would be helpful to have the course assignments at the beginning of the semester. Knowing what is expected in the project proposal would help to target the scope of thought about the project throughout the semester.

#### ADVICE TO STUDENTS

**4. To help prospective students choose wisely, what advice would you give to students who are thinking of taking this course (about its level, the amount of work required, any prior training needed, ways to get the most out of the course, etc.)?**

Even if you know nothing about technology, you should take this class for the opportunity to be creative. IT'S AMAZING.

Take this class!!

TAKE this class, especially if you're interested in media production. Have a good idea of what you want to do and be committed to it or else you won't enjoy it. Love what you work on.

This is an awesome course! Beneficial to all! Take this if you can! Be sure to have a project in mind when you start.

This is a great class. Expect to work hard but feel that you accomplished something.

I found it hard to focus on other materials that were required of me, i.e. the appearance releases, etc. The job of creating these massive projects was all encompassing, so I tended to forget about these other very important steps of the process. This really has nothing to do with instruction but maybe hammer these things home throughout the pre-production process! Be aware of supplementary guidelines! Possibly hire a production assistant. – Get a partner! This is a huge undertaking.

Take the class if you have a specific project in mind and are willing to spend lots of time doing it. This is a hard but rewarding class, and it takes a great deal of time.

If you are the type of student who likes to work hard and have an end product other than a paper this is the class to take! It was a lot of work, time-wise, but you get what you put in and it's all worth it. Best class I've taken at HGSE all year!!

FANTASTIC, EXCELLENT, TREMENDOUS course in producing educational media.

Take it if you want hands-on experience. This was one of the more valuable experiences I had in graduate school.

This class is amazing if you have a very specific production piece in mind. This is not for anyone who isn't ready to think small in terms of focus, and big in terms of how much work you're going to do on a small project.

The class is advertised as having a 'course section' that meets from 6-7 pm → that doesn't mean you get to work on your project for an hour, as I had thought we would.

Be prepared for a lot of work on your own design. Be creative. Have a plan before you join the class (maybe something you were working on or were interested in before).

Take this course if you have a project idea about which you're really passionate. Many, many hours of work but well worth it.

(no comments)

Take this course if you want to have a comprehensive look of educational media production. Although the project is quite time-consuming, if you love what you do and believe in its mission, then time really flies by. Not getting a single grade may be scary but it really encourages us to focus on the process, not on the grade. The one thing about this class is that you need to learn the format that you choose (for website, HTML, for video, Imovie, etc.).

If you can get into this course, you must take it. It's a great low stakes way to exhibit a performance of understanding.

Take this class if you are interested in designing media for education. It is the best design course at HGSE.

I would encourage students to treat this as a real-world project development opportunity.