



Digital Design Graphics Technology  
Napa Valley College

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### **DDGT241 Final Project Outline**

The final project of DDGT 241 is to create a professional level animation showcasing all the skills you have learned in the DDGT program – modeling, animation, digital graphics, web-design, compositing, and video editing. This project is deadline sensitive and is due by 10:00am on the day of the final. This will be a group project.

Requirements: The final animated short story will include:

1. A written outline.
2. Gantt Chart.
3. Storyboards.
4. The storyboard video in FHD (1920x1080) with the H.264 compression (audio optional for this version).
5. The final video should be rendered in 4K HD quality (3840x2160) with the H.264 compression.
6. Somewhere in the video, you will include every student's individual animated logo they created earlier in semester using After Effects.
7. The video will include opening and closing titles. Titles must include:
  - a. Video Title
  - b. Every Student's name, logo, contact info, and project contributions.
  - c. DDGT program name, DDGT Logo, website address, and [ddgt@napavalley.edu](mailto:ddgt@napavalley.edu) email.
8. The video must include at least 12 individual sound effects that you gather from any source available (music overlay is required unless you can give a valid reason otherwise). You should find sources in WAV format.
9. There must be at least two objects in the video that are rigged and animated.
10. You must create and include your own materials / textures created in Photoshop (PSD's also to be turned in with the final project) somewhere visible (not obscure) in the animation. You must have at least one custom material for each member of the project – does not need to be created by every member of the team.
11. You must use the compositor link in After Effects and demonstrate a link between 3ds Max and After Effects with the use of helpers. This must be done using two different types of examples.
12. Your video must be put together using a video editor like Adobe Premiere and / or Adobe After Effects.
13. The final video will be submitted to me to upload to Vimeo and I will provide you with the HTML link or embed code. This video should be placed on the DDGT241 Final Project website **as well as on each student's portfolio website on its own page with a full description of the project included.**

14. You will create a poster in both portrait and landscape orientations (instructor will provide template) showcasing the project.
15. Have fun with the project and be creative. However, remember that I will have to show this to future students and other teachers / administrators. Keep it professional: no profanity, drug references, etc.

Suggestions:

- The story is up to you but it should be complex enough to be a challenge but simple enough to be able to be completed on time. Remember that a good story is arguably the most important part of your project. The only stipulation to the story is that it must promote the DDGT program in some fashion. See the previous class final projects for additional ideas.
- You should realize which scenes of your story are optional and which ones are necessary. If you run short on time, you have the ability to leave the optional scenes out.
- Keep in mind that most people will be rendering around the same time as you so you will be competing for lab resources.
- 18 weeks is not a lot of time for a large project like this, please use your time efficiently and stay focused.
- The length of your video is up to you. Keep it simple and keep it moving. Do not create a long video for the sake of it.
- Use multiple cameras in your animation. Do not use only one camera for the full animation. Cut between the cameras in your final video for greater effect.
- Google, "Photoshop self-tiling materials tutorial" for ideas on your textures / materials.
- When test rendering, consider rendering every "nth" frame at smaller resolutions for previews.

Final: Turn in by the day of the final (or before):

1. A copy of your outline.
2. A copy of your original Gantt chart and a copy of your final Gantt chart for comparison.
3. Your storyboard video.
4. The final 4K HD (3840x2160) video following the guidelines listed above.
5. The location of the rendered sequence of files for your final video as a Targa Sequence.
6. Your Photoshop files used for creating your unique textures (one for each member of the class).
7. You will be required to submit a standalone MAX file of your scene or model to be used as an "Easter Egg" in future projects.
8. Website must be published with prior approval from instructor.
9. Poster in both Landscape and Portrait formats in PSD and PDF formats.

Suggested Resources:

- Lynda.com
- Digital Tutors.com
- Freesound.org
- zapsplat.com (sounds)

The grading will take the following into consideration:

- The story
- The outline
- Creativity
- How true to the outline you were able to be
- The inclusion of logos
- Titles
- Environment
- Models
- Textures
- Rigging
- Lighting
- Sounds
- Use of After Effects and the compositor link
- Polish
- Website
- Poster
- Storyboards
- Timing

Addition suggestions directly from prior students:

- Don't panic when you get behind. You don't know how long everything is really going to take, some things take longer and others will take shorter amounts of time.
- Be "visionary" but not too "visionary". (Be ambitious but not too ambitious.)
  - Do NOT take 18 units in one semester!
- Be prepared to make compromises.
- Try and spread the work around evenly and fairly.
- Don't forget about your other assignments (Ascent)!
- Work like mad over spring break
- Communication is crucial
- Don't hesitate to take on a larger project than you think you can handle. Learning new skills and pushing yourself is part of the process.
- One-up us with authority!
- Avoid the compositor link at all cost (Instructor to add comments).
- Optimize for polygon count like nuts before rendering!
- Look at the AEC library of max assets to see if that could save you some work.
- Work hard
- Give more time for rendering and mistakes in rendering. You don't know till the renders are done if you made mistakes, so give yourself extra, extra time!
- If doing UHD, finish one sequence very early and do a test render. If the renders are longer than 3 hours per frame, go to FHD. DON'T WAIT UNTIL APRIL. (Instructor to add comments).
- Make sure everyone is working off of the project drive and not their personal drive. We know who you are, it has your username in the map that 3DS Max or Premiere can't find.
- To the person(s) in charge of post-production:
  - Make sure people give you PNGs of their logos (well... all graphics really) instead of JPEGs, it makes life much easier.
  - You should be in possession of the class's sound-bar, not the guy in the class who plays Pandora everyday (we didn't have this problem, but some might)
  - Make sure your classmates are giving you renders by having them make a premiere sequence and bringing all of their frames into it in the correct order (you don't want to manage their files; some people will have 20 different folders holding the frames for 1 sequence. Let them do the hard work of finding them and putting the puzzle together).
  - Double checks everyone's frames, even if they checked them in premiere. You'll find that they miss a lot of small stuff and have to re-render some scenes.
  - Use the alpha channels to your advantage, but also don't forget to turn them off when you don't need them.
  - When working in After effects:
    - (on a solid) CC Particle system and CC Particle world can make smoke, dust, sparks, and much more. It's the most used effects you'll use on a

solid. Play around with it for a while, you'll discover many cool things like the magical girl particles (you'll know when you find it).

- Don't link cameras in Max if there is going to be a state set for it.
- If you can't get the link from Max to work right, manually key-frame the solid yourself (sometimes it's even easier to just key-frame manually instead of using the dummy altogether).
- Before working with state sets, save a copy of the 3DS Max file. In the 2018 version of Max, state sets would pretty much corrupt the file. It's a lot easier to just save a copy of it and **DON'T SAVE THE COPY WHEN FINISHED.**
- Have the solid follow the dummy and not the effect
- For applying AE effects to your video, here is the steps:
  - Have a preview of the scene
  - Make a AE project for each individual scene
  - Do the 3DS Max link or make a new composition
  - Bring in the preview, scale to proportion, and do the effects
  - When you have the final renders, put them into the premiere timeline
  - Make a copy in the timeline
  - Open the AE project that has the effect for the scene
  - Select and right click the frames in Premiere and select "Replace with After Effects composition"
  - Copy-paste the solids, dummies, and/or cameras into the new composition
  - Save and check in both AE and premiere that everything lines up. The frames will be linked to the AE file
- Start thinking out your video and story before winter break to save yourself the time and stress of trying to come up with a video in 2 weeks.
- Communicate with one another constantly and always check on each other to make sure everything is going smoothly.
- While it is good to be optimistic also be realistic in what you can achieve in the weeks you have to make your video.
- If for whatever reason you want to render in UHD (3840x2160) give yourselves at the least a month and a half to two months to render.
- If you and your group are working with XREFs make sure everyone has their own versions of the XREFs so that no one encounters any issues with changing important things. (Instructor to add comments).

*Last updated 8/23/2018 gjs*