

# IL 277

## Digitally Rebuilding the Ancient World

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### COURSE OBJECTIVES

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Advances in computer graphics mean that more complex displays can be produced and manipulated with minimal effort, opening the door to highly interactive representations of visual data. Advocates of simulation-based training and “virtual reality” environments claim that the natural experiences in the real (3D) world will transfer into the synthetic (3D) visualization. Conversely, using these tools hasten learning and provide a more robust understanding.

This kind of visualization may hold great potential in learning about ancient architecture and the reconstruction of historical sites. Unlike video recreations and reenactments, the viewers are free to explore a site according to their interests. Through a review of existing models and hands-on development of their own site, students will learn about the power of these representations, and some of the challenges introduced by this new presentation medium.

### COURSE CONTENT

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**Prerequisites:** Humanities 201.

**Course Fee:** Enrolling in this course requires a copy of *Unreal Tournament*. Since this package had to be purchased and installed in advance there is a \$25 course fee. You will retain the software at the end of the course. Please pay the instructor by the 3<sup>rd</sup> class meeting.

#### **Texts & Readings:**

Mastering Unreal Technology: The Art of Level Design by Jason Busby, Zak Parrish, Joel VanEenwyk, Sams, ISBN: 0-672-32692-2 (*Strongly Recommended*)

Links to various online primary sources will be posted to blackboard

#### **Blogs**

You are expected to keep an on-line journal of your activities in the class. In this class, you will spend a lot of time learning how to construct 3D models. Given the experiential nature of this class, you will probably also spend a lot of time learning what *not* to do. Daily reflection on your day’s efforts will help to focus your mind on how to overcome problems faced. The blog will also be used to respond to special assignments, such as summaries of on-line articles or critiques of comparable presentation technologies.

## Group Project

For much of this course, you will work in groups to construct a hypothetical site that demonstrates knowledge of architectural and/or urban design principles of a specific historical culture (e.g. Greeks, Egyptians, Mayans, etc). Your model will incorporate the various modeling concepts and technologies studied in the class. The grade for the group project will reflect mastery of both the technical construction of the model, as well as fidelity to and presentation of the cultural design principles. On the last day of the course, each group will present their model to the class, highlighting the features, design decisions, and potential flaws or shortcomings. All members of the group will participate in some aspect of the final presentation.

## Final Reflection

The final paper for this class will be a personal reflection on the use of 3D modeling for presenting historical sites. This paper will integrate reactions to the interactive experience methods, contemplation of the development process, and critiques of all the group projects.

## Grading

The course grade will be based on the group project, journal entries and a final reflection paper on the use of this new media.

|     |                             |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| 30% | Blog Entries                |
| 50% | Group Project               |
| 15% | Final Reflection Paper      |
| 5%  | Participation/Collaboration |

|                |                |                |                |          |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------|
|                | B+ .... 87-89  | C+ .... 77-79  | D+ .... 67-69  | Below 60 |
| A ..... 93-100 | B ..... 83-86  | C ..... 73-76  | D ..... 63-66  | F        |
| A- ..... 90-92 | B- ..... 80-82 | C- ..... 70-72 | D- ..... 60-62 |          |

## Meeting Times

Class will meet Monday through Friday from 9:30AM to 12:00AM and from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. There will be substantial homework that you will need to complete every evening. To ensure that you have time to complete your homework assignments, and can make meaningful contributions to your group project, *keep yourself free from any other commitments* until the end of the May term.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

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### **Attendance Policy**

Class attendance is vital to your success in this course. This class will meet for only 14 days; you are expected to attend every class. If you miss more than one day, you will be administratively dropped from the course with a grade of DP or DF, depending on the circumstances and the amount of work you have done.

### **Academic Integrity**

Honesty and integrity are qualities we value in ourselves and in others. Therefore, you are expected to be fully aware of your responsibility to maintain the highest degree of integrity in all of your work. It is accepted that you have read and understood the standards for academic integrity at Roanoke College.

The Guidelines for Computer Use as stated on page 15 of the Academic Integrity Handbook are particularly relevant to this course. In the electronic age, source code is often available on the Internet or through CD-ROMs that supplement textbooks. If you use code from any other source, you are required to cite the source by adding comments to the top of your files. At no time should there be an electronic transfer of class-related code between students.

By submitting work under your name, you are indicating that **you** have completed the assignment. This means that you should be able to completely explain all the details of your work, i.e. every line of code in computer programs. Failure to be able to account for your decisions (to my satisfaction) will result in referral to the Academic Integrity Council.