

INFO 5900

VIRTUAL REALITY AND ITS APPLICATIONS

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COURSE INFORMATION

- INFO 5900, Section 021, 3 Credit Hours
- Title: Virtual Reality and its Applications
- Course schedule: See Table 1
- Face-to-face classes:
 - Time: Wednesday 5:30 pm – 08:20 pm (CT)
 - Location: NTDP D215

Instructor Contact Information

- **Dr. Sharad Sharma**, Professor, Department of Information Science, College of Information, University of North Texas.
- Office: E292C
- Phone: 940 565-2605
- Email address: sharad.sharma@unt.edu
- Office hours:
 - Wednesday 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm (CT)
 - Office: E292C

Communicating with Your Instructor

This course will have a website in UNT Canvas (<https://unt.instructure.com/login/canvas>) for online discussion, assignment submissions, and sharing of reading materials. Students are welcome to make an appointment with the instructor and/or the teaching assistant (TA) to discuss course-related questions. If you need to schedule an individual meeting with the instructor or the TA, please send her/him an email via the course website in Canvas Course Messages. We will also use a discussion forum in Canvas where you can ask questions and get answers from the instructor, TA, and other students.

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

- Pre-requisite: None
- Students are recommended to prepare their own laptops. If anyone does not have a laptop, she/he can borrow one from UNT library (<https://library.unt.edu/services/laptop-checkout/>).

Course Format

INFO 5900, Section 021 will hold face-to-face lectures by the instructor. This will be supplemented by lecture demonstrations for modeling, animation, and programming VR environment. The course uses Canvas, UNT's learning management system. ALL course materials will be available at the course site on Canvas that is accessible to all students. Students will submit all assignments through the tools available on Canvas. Attending classes is mandatory.

Course Description

The goal of this course is to introduce students to Virtual Reality (VR) hardware, software, and provide an opportunity for them to apply this knowledge to applications for education, visualization, and games. This course applies cutting-edge VR technology currently available in academia and industry. Topics include input devices, output devices, computer graphics principles for VR, geometric modeling principles for VR, human factors in VR, data visualization in VR, traditional and emerging applications in VR. Students learn the value of visualization and how to best leverage visualization methods in VR. Students will design, model, and program the VR environment by developing a complete VR application as a group project.

Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the basic principles of VR.
2. Describe the historical development of VR.
3. Understand potentials and limits of VR
4. Understand and Illustrate the process of creating virtual environments.
5. Identify and describe applications for current virtual reality hardware and software.
6. Design and develop a complete VR application through group projects.

Materials

Textbook information (required):

- Kelly S. Hale, Kay M. Stanney. (2014). Handbook of Virtual Environments: Design, Implementation, and Applications, Second Edition, CRC Press. ISBN 978042909871
- Burdea, Grigore C., and Coiffet , Philippe. (2003). Virtual Reality Technology, 2nd ed. Wiley-Interscience, 2003. ISBN: 978-0-471-36089-6.

Supplementary materials and/or readings (recommended):

- Python Documentation: <https://www.python.org/doc/>.
- Julie A. Jacko (Ed.). (2012). Human-Computer Interaction Handbook (3rd Edition), CRC Press. ISBN 1-4398-2943-8
- Alan Dix, Janet Finlay, Gregory Abowd, and Russell Beale (2003): Human-Computer Interaction. 3rd Edition. Prentice Hall, 2003. <http://hcibook.com/e3/> ISBN 0-13-046109-1

Teaching Philosophy

The instructor will take a problem-solving approach and work with students to challenge virtual reality problems. The assignments in 3D modelling, animation, and VR programming will help students get prepared for the final VR project. Learning by doing is another teaching philosophy in this course. Practicing is an essential part of learning VR. Students are expected to study 10-15 hours per week and submit their projects and assignments on time to achieve satisfactory class performance. Interactions with the instructor and TA are strongly encouraged.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS/ASSISTANCE

UIT Help Desk: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>

The University of North Texas provides student technical support in the use of Canvas and supported resources. The student help desk may be reached at:

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940.565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 330

Hours are:

- Monday-Thursday 8am-midnight
- Friday 8am-8pm
- Saturday 9am-5pm
- Sunday 8am-midnight
- Canvas technical requirements: <https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>

Minimum Technical Skills Needed

Using the Internet and the learning management system Canvas, using email with attachments, creating and submitting files in commonly used word processing program formats, downloading and installing software are necessary. Students will be taught how to use vizard toolkit that uses python programming.

Student Academic Support Services

- [Code of Student Conduct](#): provides Code of Student Conduct along with other useful links
- [Office of Disability Access](#): exists to prevent discrimination based on disability and to help students reach a higher level of independence
- [Counseling and Testing Services](#): provides counseling services to the UNT community, as well as testing services; such as admissions testing, computer-based testing, career testing, and other tests
- [UNT Libraries](#)
- [UNT Learning Center](#): provides a variety of services, including tutoring, to enhance the student academic experience
- [UNT Writing Center](#): offers free writing tutoring to all UNT students, undergraduate and graduate, including online tutoring
- [Succeed at UNT](#): information regarding how to be a successful student at UNT

ASSESSMENT & GRADING

Assessments

A student's grade is composed of the following:

- Assignments (5) 30%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Final Project 30%

- Final Exam 20%

Grading

Midterm Exam and Final Exam (40%). Exams are given in the class room during class time. Exams are closed notes, closed book, open mind. There will be no make-ups for Mid-Term Exam and Final Exam.

Assignments (30%). The class will have **five assignments**. These assignments are designed to help students understand important concepts and gain hands-on experience in 3D modeling, Python programming, and problem-solving. First assignment will be focused on 3D modeling and animation using google sketch-up and/or 3Ds max. Second and third Assignments will be focused on Vizard (VR toolkit) that uses python programming. Fourth and fifth assignment will be focused on Unity engine and/or unreal engine (Gaming Engine). Assignments will be due at 11:59 pm on the due date. If students have any questions, they could ask the instructor for help.

Final Project (30%)

A major part of this course is the **group project**. Lectures will prepare the class for the development of VR applications in any area. Groups of 2 to 4 students will select a topic of their own choice and submit a project proposal for evaluation and approval by the teaching instructor. The groups will then develop a complete VR application, and demonstrate the application to the class. The project has **two phases**:

- Phase 1: 3D Modelling
- Phase 2: Programming and visualization

The project topics are determined by the creativity and imagination of the students. Project deliverables and related due dates are explained in detail on canvas. Each project will be graded as follows:

- Presentation to class --- 20%
- Demonstration to teaching instructor & staff --- 60%
- Project report --- 20%

The Final project must include:

- Vision: Use of textures and 3D models to provide detailed information in the project.
- Sound: Use speech, music or ambient sounds to help provide information about this place.
- Animation: Use at least three animated object in the project.
- Interactivity: Use at least five user-triggered events in the environment.
- Characters: Have animated agents (path following behavior) in the environment.
- Sensors: Use at least three different types of sensors (Proximity, Time, Touch, and Visibility) in the project.
- Player: Add a Player Controller to the Scene: First Person Controller or 3rd Person Controller
- AI Implementation: AI functionality depending upon the project (navigation, behaviors, shortest path, etc.), implement different behaviors (selfish, altruistic, learning, adaptive, etc.) in the environment through a user menu (number of agent's assignment).
- Interface: Design the interface that include menu items such as buttons, etc.

The project grade for each group member may be modified by taking into account a member's contribution to the project. Projects, Mid-term and Final exams are mandatory.

Total Points Possible for Semester/Grading Scale = 100

1000-900 = A	899-800 = B
799-700 = C	699-600 = D
599 and below = F	

Grading Table

Assignment	Points Possible	Percentage of Final Grade
Assignment 1: 3D Modelling	100 points	6%
Assignment 2: Vizard (python programming)	100 points	6%
Assignment 3: Vizard (python programming)	100 points	6%
Assignment 4: Unity 3D	100 points	6%
Assignment 5: Unity 3D	100 points	6%
Midterm exam	100 points	20%
Project:	100 points	30%
Final Exam:	100 points	20%
Total Points Possible	800 points	100%

COURSE CALENDAR

The contents of the course are organized into 16 weeks. Please refer to Table 1 for topics, readings materials, and assignments due dates. Assignments will due on **11:59 pm of the day** of the specified week.

Table 1. Study Schedule and Due Dates

Dates	Title	Due
26-Jan	Introduction	
2-Feb	VR Input Devices and 3Ds Max	Assignment 1: 3Ds Max + Google Sketch Up Due: 9 Feb
9-Feb	Python Programming (Vizard)	Assignment 2: Vizard Due: 23 Feb
16-Feb	VR Input Devices, Vizard/ Python Programming	3D First Person Shooter game, Google Sketch up
23-Feb	Unity Programming: Unity , Unity Interface , Unity UI Interface , Interface Overview , survival-shooter-tutorial	Assignment 3: Vizard 2 Due: 2 March
2-Mar	VR Output Devices	
9-Mar	Computer Graphics Principles for VR,	Assignment 4: Unity3D, Due: 23 March
16-Mar	Mid Term Exam	Unity 3D UI Player Settings , Slider , Button , Health and Damage
23-Mar	Spring Break	Assignment 5: Unity3D, Due: 6 April
30-Mar	Geometric Modeling Principles for VR	Project Proposal Presentation & Report

6-Apr	Human Factors in VR	
13-Apr	Data Visualization	
20-Apr	Traditional Applications in VR	Mid Project Demo
27-Apr	Emerging Applications in VR/Augmented Reality	
4-May	Group Project Presentations/ Demo , Presentations.	Due date for Report
11-May	Reading Day	
18-May	Final Exam	

Assignment Related Materials

- To get help:
 - ✓ Python Docs: <https://docs.python.org/3/>
 - ✓ Vizard Tutorials: https://docs.worldviz.com/vizard/latest/index.htm#Tutorial_list.htm
 - ✓ Unity 3D: <https://learn.unity.com/>
 - ✓ Google Sketch Up: <https://www.sketchup.com/>

COURSE EVALUATION

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at <http://spot.unt.edu/> or email spot@unt.edu.

COURSE POLICIES

Assignment Policy

Some of the assignments (python) are coding work. Students should write their codes either in vizard IDE. Any kind of copy is forbidden. If it is found, this assignment will get 0 points. Students are required to sign an Academic Honesty Statement. The Final project is a group project and should be your group's work.

Instructor Responsibilities and Feedback

- Helping students grow and learn
- Providing clear instructions for assessments
- Answering questions about assignments
- Identifying additional resources as necessary
- Providing grading rubrics
- Reviewing and updating course content

- The instructor and TA will respond to students' emails and questions posted to the discussion boards within two or three days except for the weekends
- Assignments grades and feedbacks will be returned to the students within one week after the submission deadline.

Late Work and Missed Work

Students are expected to submit assignments on time by Canvas. **The due are 11:59 pm of the due date specified in Table 1.** If an extenuating circumstance such as a medically diagnosed illness or family emergency arises, which prevents you from submitting your assignments, you should contact the instructor as soon as possible before the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted in this course. All work turned in after the deadline will receive a grade of zero unless the student has a university-excused absence and provides documentation with 48 hours of the missed deadline. A student who is having trouble with assignments is strongly encouraged to contact the instructor and the TA as early as possible for personal advising.

Syllabus Change Policy

The instructor(s) may, at his/her/their discretion, change any part of the course before or during the term, including assignments, grade breakdowns, due dates, and schedule. Such changes will be communicated to students via either email or Canvas announcement.

Course Incomplete Grade

The UNT Graduate Catalog (<http://catalog.unt.edu/index.php?catoid=16>) describes and explains grading policies. A grade of Incomplete (I) will be given only for a justifiable reason and only if the student is passing the course. The student is responsible for meeting with the instructor to request an incomplete and discuss requirements for completing the course. If an incomplete is not removed within the time frame agreed to by instructor and student, the instructor may assign a grade of F.

Withdrawal

The UNT Graduate Catalog (<http://catalog.unt.edu/index.php?catoid=16>) describes and explains withdrawal policies and deadlines. The UNT semester course schedule lists specific deadlines regarding withdrawal. A grade of Withdraw (W) or Withdraw-Failing (WF) will be given depending on a student's attendance record and grade earned. Please note that a student who simply stops attending class and does not file a withdrawal form may receive an F.

Attendance Policy

Students are required to attend all classes and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. Prior to the meeting, please read pre-assigned chapters for the class and prepare your questions for discussion. Research has shown that students who attend class are more likely to be successful. You should attend every class unless you have a university excused absence such as active military service, a religious holy day, or an official university function as stated in the Student Attendance and Authorized Absences Policy (PDF) (https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.039_StudAttnandAuthAbsence.Pub2_19.pdf). If you

cannot attend a class due to an emergency, please let me know. Your safety and well-being are important to me.

Face Coverings

UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering when indoors, regardless of vaccination status, to protect yourself and others from COVID infection, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Face covering guidelines could change based on community health conditions.

COVID-19 Impact on Attendance

While attendance is expected as outlined above, it is important that you communicate with the professor and the instructional team prior to being absent, so you, the professor, and the instructional team can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals. Please inform the professor and instructional team if you are unable to attend class meetings because you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>) please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Team at COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure.

Students' Responsibility for Their Learning

The students are required to follow course schedule and finish the class work, assignments, and exams. Students are expected to study 10-15 hours per week to achieve satisfactory class performance. Students do not have programming experience are encouraged to find extra materials to study.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access

I desire for students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be encouraged by this course, that learning needs are addressed, and that the diversity you carry into class is seen as a resource, strength and benefit. We should all be respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, and more. All of your voices should be heard. Suggestions are welcomed and respected – please let me know ways to improve the course. If any class assignments conflict with your religious events, let's make arrangements. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.

UNT POLICIES

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Statement

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all

instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail: eagleconnect.unt.edu/.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website at <http://www.ecfr.gov/>. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an

on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](#).

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.