course info

mon/wed 8:30am – 11:00am
room 007 / print design lab

professor / contact info

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class description & objectives

Today’s designers are continually asked to work in multiple mediums, whether on paper or on screen. A solid understanding of typography is essential. This course develops students’ understanding of typography through practical projects and current technologies that require them to explore the use of letters, words, and text to further develop their ability as visual communicators. The projects require students to become familiar with current computer utilities that enable them to achieve specific typographic effects.

• In depth study of typography and its underlying principals.
• Identify type anatomy and properly use type specification and measurement terms.
• Identify and compare the similarities and differences between the major type classifications.
• Choose an appropriate typeface for a particular background, match a particular type personality with a message.
• Establish a hierarchy of information through type treatments.
• Manage type classes using Extensis Suitcase, a font management software package.
• Edit type using Adobe Illustrator.
• Craft type using a page layout program by controlling all character and paragraph formatting, include control over kerning and tracking, tabs and indents, and leading. We will be learning and using both QuarkXPress and Adobe InDesign. Some assignments will be program-specific, while others will be of your choice.

class format & responsibilities

This is a studio class, therefore you will work in class on your projects AND be expected to work outside of class on your own. Each class will generally begin with a class discussion, design lesson, or group critique. It is extremely important whatever your career, that you have the ability to interpret, express, and communicate ideas to others. There will be some computer instruction every class. You will have homework every class, and most of the time, there will be some kind of assignment due. Be on time. Come to class prepared to work and have all sketches and materials ready as specified in the previous class or on the syllabus.

No using zip disks. Learn how to use dependable media.
No iChat, AIM, icq, msn, irc, online games, or anything of the like during class.
All mobile phones must be turned off during class—including vibrate mode—except on class break.
Be present during class.
**Attendance Policy**

All students are required and expected to attend all classes. Absences affect your work, so they affect your grade. Email or call me beforehand if you are going to miss a class.

One unexcused absence is allowed (no questions asked), in the interest of mental health. When you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to get the information covered in class from one of your classmates. I do not have time to do this for you.

Excused absences (sickness, with a note from the health center or family doctor; death in the family; other extenuating circumstances) require you to make up the work missed. Make arrangements with me to make up work in an appropriate time frame.

Unexcused absences seriously affect your grade. PLAN AHEAD and TALK TO ME if you need to miss a class.

There are consequences for failure to attend the scheduled classes, which are outlined as follows:

1. 1 unexcused absence = freebee. no consequence (null & void on a group critique day)
2. 2 unexcused absences = lowering of final grade by one half a letter grade
3. 3 unexcused absences = lowering of final grade by one letter grade
4. 4 unexcused absences = lowering of final grade by one and a half letter grade
5. 5 unexcused absences = lowering of final grade by two letter grades
6. 6 unexcused absences = failure of course

**Tardiness/Lateness**

If you are more than 30 minutes late for class, it will be considered an absence. Late is defined as arriving five minutes after class starts or leaving more than 20 minutes before the end of class (unless I dismiss you). Three late arrivals counts as one missed class. If you arrive after I have taken attendance, it is your responsibility to make sure I have not marked you as absent.

**What’s in a grade?**

Your grade will be made up of three areas: Project grades (75%), Quizzes & Homework (10%), and Class Participation (15%). Specific aspects of these areas are explained below.

**Class Participation — 15%**
Includes your attendance, and your attitude and active participation during individual and group critiques.

**Quizzes & Homework — 10%**
There will be scheduled small assignments and quizzes given based on reading, discussion and handouts.

**Projects — 75%**
Each project will be based on 100 points. At the end of the semester, all points will be totalled and divided by the number of projects to determine your final project grade. Each project is graded on five criterion: Creativity, Process, Organization and Coherence, Design Style, and Craftsmanship

Projects receiving a score of 91–100:

**Creativity:** The piece is an interesting and sophisticated response to the problem. The main idea is clear.

**Process:** Shows a work process that exceeds the minimum project requirements. I am looking for many ideas/sketches as part of your problem-solving process.

**Organization and Coherence:** Has a logical structure appropriate to the subject, purpose, audience, and discipline.

**Design Style:** Has clear and concise command of hierarchy, typography, color schemes, and layout.

**Craftsmanship:** Contains few—if any—errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar. Mounting is precise and clean. A design grid was established and followed. The work utilized the computer program(s) efficiently and typography relationships are appropriate and lined-up.
Projects receiving a score of 81–90:

**Creativity:** The piece is a clear response to the problem. The central idea is clearly stated, but is handled in a less sophisticated way than an “A” project.

**Process:** Shows a work process that goes slightly above what was asked for as a minimum. The student’s ability to follow instructions plays an important role here. Shows development, but could be expanded.

**Organization and Coherence:** Has a logical structure appropriate to the subject, purpose, audience, and discipline, but may have some haphazard elements detracting from the overall design organization.

**Design Style:** Has a good command of hierarchy, typography, color schemes, and layout. The style fits the audience and purpose. The elements are varied, yet well-structured and focused, yet there may be an occasional awkward or ineffective construction.

**Craftsmanship:** May contain a few mechanical errors. Contains few errors in spelling, but they do not impede understanding. Mounting is neatly completed. A design grid was established and followed. The work utilized the computer program(s) efficiently and typography relationships are mostly appropriate and lined-up.

Projects receiving a score of 71–80:

**Creativity:** The piece responds to the problem, but presents its central idea in general terms. Does not strike an appropriate level of sophistication and precision.

**Process:** Exhibits only a basic comprehension of source material, with some lapses in understanding. The design elements lack clarity and relevance. Lacks in development and should be explored further. The work level is at the basic minimum of the assignment.

**Organization and Coherence:** Arranges ideas ineffectively or illogically.

**Design Style:** Has an unclear hierarchy. The design is unfocused and cumbersome—lacking a command of typography and basic layout.

**Craftsmanship:** Contains a few mechanical errors. Contains a few spelling/grammar errors that begin to detract from the understanding. Mounting may be somewhat sloppy. Design grid may have been established, but not followed throughout.

Projects receiving a score of 61–70:

**Creativity:** Does not respond to the topic adequately—its central idea is unclear. Does not strike an appropriate level of sophistication and precision.

**Process:** Exhibits only a basic comprehension of source material, with some lapses in understanding. The design elements lack clarity and relevance. Lacks in development and should be explored further. The work level is at the basic minimum of the assignment.

**Organization and Coherence:** Arranges ideas ineffectively or illogically.

**Design Style:** Has an unclear hierarchy. The design is unfocused and cumbersome—lacking a command of typography and basic layout.

**Craftsmanship:** Contains many mechanical errors which impede the understanding of the piece. Format may be inappropriate and/or may indicate neglect or misreading of project specs.

**project submission**

My guidelines are “real world.” On time. Professionally-done. The habits you form here can enhance your level of success after graduation. Clients employ and depend on designers who are not only skilled, talented, flexible, and good communicators, but who are reliable. Talent does not meet a deadline—planning and discipline does. Discipline is just another word for good work habits.

**FAQ**

What if I’m absent from class and I have a project or assignment due?

Absences from class do not excuse you from a deadline. You must call ahead and notify me how your project is getting to me. Have a friend, classmate, relative, or messenger service deliver the package.
What if I was really lost on a project and didn’t know what to do?

You and I should know this long before the project is due. Talk to me when you are having trouble. I can only help you if you ask.

What if the computer crashed and I lost my work? Or perhaps the printer wasn’t working?

There will be technical problems—and none of them are valid excuses for missing a deadline.

What if I’m not satisfied with the grade I have received on my project?

You improve it. You may re-submit a project for an improvement on your grade at any time up to the last week of the semester. You must submit the original project with the original grading comments. The new project must be presented as specified on the original assignment sheet.

**required supplies**

- Portable mass storage device used: USB Flash Drive. [usb/firewire hard drive; CD-r/rw; DVD-r/rw]
- Large Sketch Book (see below)
- Binder/Folder to hold handouts/etc.
- Several black matte boards (32” x 40” not foam core)
- Pencils and eraser & extra fine point black sharpies for sketching.
- *The Complete Manual of Typography* | by James Felici
- *Typesense: Making Sense of Type on the Computer* | by Susan G. Wheeler, Gary S. Wheeler

**the sketchbook**

Your sketchbook will become an extension of you while in this class. It will be the most important aspect of your time spent in this course. This book will become your “think tank.” It will count as a project grade at the end and will be critiqued in your final review. Do not take this loosely! Get it. Use it. Depend on it.

Each week you will be expected to collect a minimum of 5 type specimens. What constitutes a specimen? Anything you see that interests you. Anything you look at and say, “wow, that’s really cool/interesting.” Tear things out of magazines; collect business cards; take pictures of exhibits, cars, posters, anything that has been designed! Collect website url’s, books you’re looked at—xerox things from the library—BE CREATIVE! Write about it if you want. Do some sketches along side your specimens for thumbnail/idea-generation practice. The more you do, the better your grade.

Thumbnails!! For each project that you are assigned, you will be expected to come up with many thumbnail sketches before you even think about sitting in front of the computer. Resist the urge! Good designers can draw to some degree, and FAST. It doesn’t matter if you think it looks “bad” or not—as long as you can get your idea across, you have a powerful tool. This does not come easy to most. You will need to work on it and train yourself, just as you will be working on your computer skills.

**project outline**

- project one: *Typographic Studies (two parts)*
- project two: *Visual Hierarchy*
- project three: *Initials Study*
- project four: *Visual Quotes*
- project five: *Typeface Study Poster*
- project six: *Magazine Spreads*
- project seven: *The Letter “A”*
- project eight: *Large-Format Project (TBD)*
- project nine: *Book Design*