

# introduction to GRAPHIC DESIGN | ar 131 a

## **course info**

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

## **professor / contact info**

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## **class objectives**

- To introduce and familiarize you with the principles of graphic design.
- Create strong compositional designs through the use of format, line, shape, contrast, positive/negative space, rhythm, direction, balance, and repetition.
- Solve visual problems by expressing ideas through the creative use of images and text.
- Recognize elements of and produce professional-quality design.
- Gain a strong skill of rapid and strong idea generation through thumbnail sketches.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the principles of design through the sharing of ideas during group critiques.
- Develop an understanding of the Macintosh computer (using OS X), how it works, how the design lab is set up and runs.
- Gain an intermediate knowledge of the three main types of design programs: vector-based program (Adobe Illustrator), raster-based program (Adobe Photoshop), and page-layout program (QuarkXPress).

## **class format and 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—end of story. Learn how to use dependable media.

No iChat, AIM, icq, msn, irc, or anything of the like during class.

Be present during class. And for pete's sake, don't do your freelance work during class.

## **grading**

### Attendance/Class Participation/Homework — 15%

If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, it does not go unnoticed. Absences affect your work, so they affect your grade. E-mail 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. If you are involved in a spring sport, please meet with me as soon as possible in the beginning of the semester, bring me your schedule of away games (and other meets/games) that might conflict with my class. Talk to your coaches and then talk to me and we will plan ahead so that you do not fall behind with your work.

### Projects — 75%

Each project is graded on three aspects:

- **Creativity/Problem Solving:** How well was the problem solved and how creative was the solution?
- **Presentation/Execution:** Neatness and a level of professionalism in the completed work. Did the work utilize the computer program efficiently and with authority or was the student guided by the program? Were the design principles used efficiently? How well is the work presented in terms of matting and neatness?
- **Deadline/Attitude:** Was the project handed in on the day specified and in a positive mental attitude?

### Quizzes — 10%

There will be scheduled quizzes given periodically throughout the semester based on handouts, reading assignments, and computer skills.

## **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. You can FedEx overnight to the college from most locations by 5:00pm the previous day. Be sure to mark it to my attention. If my name isn't on it, I won't receive it.

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 as follows:

You must submit the original project with the original grading comments.  
The new project must be presented as specified on the original assignment sheet.

### **talk to me**

If you need to see me, please make arrangements to meet with me. The best way to reach me is by e-mail. I have a mailbox in the art office where you may leave correspondence, or you can call me. I am here most days either teaching or working, so talk to me and we will find a time to meet if you have any questions or concerns about anything.

### **required supplies**

- Portable mass storage device used: USB Flash Drive. [The art department has ordered a 256 MB drive for each of you. You will pay Jan in the art department during normal art department hours.] You may purchase your own firewire or USB drive of comparable or larger size. \*There will be no use of ZIP disks—they are not reliable.\*
- Large Sketch Book (see below)
- Binder/Folder to hold handouts/etc.
- Several black mat boards (32" x 40" not foam core)
- Pencils and eraser & extra fine point black sharpies for sketching.
- *Graphic Design Basics* | by Amy E. Arntson
- *Illustrator CS for Windows and Macintosh : Visual QuickStart Guide* | by Elaine Weinmann, Peter Lourekas

### **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 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.

**class schedule** >> *subject to change*

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01.10	Lecture	Discuss syllabus, course requirements and grading Sketchbook explained “What is Graphic Design?” [Fields of design, design process, etc.] Introduction to the Macintosh & Design Lab: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OS X environment</li><li>• Folder &amp; application navigation</li><li>• Server navigation, saving/backup procedures</li><li>• Printing</li></ul>
	Reading	Chapter 1: pp. 2-13
	Assignment	Successful/Unsuccessful Design Research Project
01.12	<u>Due</u>	<u>Present Successful/Unsuccessful Design assignment</u>
	Lecture	What are thumbnails? Design process. More on OS X operating system
	Assignment	Project #1: Shape and Value Design given At least 10 thumbnails in Sketchbook for next class Reading assignment: Chapter 3: pp.40-44 [stop at “Letterforms”]
01.17	[no class]	<i>MLK Day</i>
01.19	Lesson	Value and Contrast, Weight and Texture Illustrator Tutorial – working with shapes/value
	Reading	Chapter 2: pp. 16-37
	Assignment	Study for QUIZ on Chapter 2 Make sure you have your mat board for Monday’s class.
01.24	QUIZ	QUIZ on Chapter 2: Graphic Design History
	Lesson	Mounting Demonstration – Mount Shape and Value Design project
	Reading	Chapter 3: pp.44-51
	Assignment	Mount Shape and Value project for Critique on Wednesday
01.26	<u>Due</u>	<u>Critique of Project #1: Shape and Value Design</u>
	Lecture	Typography, Form and Functions
	Lesson	Tutorial on Extensis Suitcase [font management application] Working with type in Illustrator Photoshop lesson – scanning/cropping for Presentations
	Reading	Handout on Typography
	Assignment	Select and begin research for Contemporary Designer project
01.31	Lecture	The Figure/Ground Principal
	Lesson	Photoshop lesson – how to use for Presentations
	Classwork	Begin thumbnails for Figure/Ground assignment Individual meetings for Contemporary Designer Presentations
	Assignment	Thumbnails for Figure/Ground
02.02	Classwork	Studio class – work on presentations and/or Figure/Ground Individual meetings to see Figure/Ground thumbnails
	Assignment	Finish up Contemporary Design Presentation (for next week) Work on Figure/Ground
02.07	<u>Due</u>	<u>Contemporary Design Presentations</u>
	Classwork	Remainder of class for Figure/Ground work

02.09	<u>Due</u> Lecture  Assignment	<u>Critique of Project #2: Figure/Ground</u> Symbol Design Introduction to Project #3: Logo/Identity Design Thumbnails for Logo/Identity project due next class
02.14	Classwork  Lesson  Assignment	Studio class – working on Logo/Identity project Individual meetings to discuss thumbnails More on Typography – Identifying letterforms Color Printing Tutorial Reading on Quark XPress [handout given]
02.16	Lesson Classwork Reading Assignment	Introduction to Quark XPress Studio class – working on Logo/Identity project Chapter 6: pp.88-117 Finish Logo/Identity project for working-critique next class Study for QUIZ on Chapter 6
02.21	QUIZ <u>Due</u> Lesson  Reading Assignment	QUIZ on Chapter 6/Typography <u>Working critique [printed, but not mounted]</u> Taking Logo/Identity one step further: letterhead & business cards Quark Tutorial – import illustrator work to Quark Chapter 7; pp.120-141 Lay out letterhead and business card in Quark
02.23	Classwork Assignment	Studio class – finishing up Logo/Identity project Mount Project for class critique on Monday
02.28	<u>Due</u> Lesson Classwork Assignment	<u>Critique on Project #3: Logo/Identity Design</u> Quark lesson – Key commands & how to set type. Exercises in how to set type Typographic Studies Part I
03.02	<u>Due</u> Lesson  Assignment	<u>Typographic Studies Part I</u> More on Quark, key commands, and type-setting Typographic Studies Part II given & explained Study for QUIZ on Quark (knowledge and key commands) Begin work on Project #4: Typographic Studies Part II
	[spring break]	
03.14	QUIZ Classwork	QUIZ on Quark knowledge & key commands Studio class – working on Typographic Studies Part II
03.16	Classwork Lesson Classwork Assignment	On-screen working-critique of Type Studies II Photoshop Tutorial Studio class to finish up project Project 5 given – begin gathering images
03.21	<u>Due</u> Lesson  Reading Assignment	<u>Project #4: Typographic Studies Part II</u> (no critique) Advanced Photoshop Techniques In-class tutorial File types: EPS/TIFF In-class scanning How Photoshop and Quark work together Chapter 8; pp. 144-163 Thumbnails due next class for Project #5: Poster Design

03.23	Classwork	Studio class – Poster Design
03.28	[no class]	<i>Easter Recess</i>
03.30	Classwork	Studio class – Poster Design
04.04	<u>Due</u> Classwork Assignment	<u>Critique on Project #5: Poster Design</u> Project #6: Poetry in Motion, given & discussed Reading TBD Thumbnails for Poetry in Motion
04.06	Classwork	Studio class – final project Individual meetings to discuss ideas & thumbnails
04.11	Classwork	Studio class – final project
04.13	Classwork	Studio class – final project
04.18	Classwork	Studio class – final project
04.20	Classwork	Studio class – final project
04.25	Classwork	Studio class – final project Installations in student gallery? or HUB? (TBA)
04.27	Classwork	Studio class – final project Course evaluations

Final Critiques TBD (May 2-7)