

typography and information design AR 230

course info

spring 2007
mon/wed 8:30am–11:00am
design lab 007

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.

This class is two-fold. Much emphasis is placed on technical understanding of ALL of the tools you will be using in your field. This includes hardware and software as well as typographic principles. We will also be engaged in an on-going discussion of the critical issues in communication in the art world today.

- 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 Adobe InDesign, page layout program by controlling all character and paragraph formatting.

class format

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. Expect to devote between of 5–10 hours each week to assignments and lab work in addition to class meetings. You may work in either the 007 or 104 lab. Lab availability schedules are posted on the outside of each door. Plan accordingly and do not enter when another class is in progress.

All assignments are due at the beginning of class, unless indicated otherwise. You will not be printing, cutting, or mounting your work at the beginning of class.

“ASK THREE, THEN ME.”

In order for you to be self-sufficient, you need to be proactive. Engage with your classmates. Use the manuals. Use the help menu. Use Google!!! If you have a question, you must ask three of your classmates before asking me. You'll thank me for it when you're in the lab at 2am and you can troubleshoot your own problems!

attendance policy

All students are required and expected to attend all classes. Absences affect your work, so they affect your grade. If you cannot make a class you must email me, or leave a note with Jan in the Art Office before the meeting of the class. If you do not email me, the absence will not be excused! Absences must be accompanied by an appropriate Dean's or doctor's excuse to be validated.

Three unexcused absences may result in your grade being decreased one whole letter. Each additional absence will lower the final grade five percentage points. Three late arrivals is equivalent to one missed class.

If you are more than 15 minutes late for class, you will be marked absent. Three late arrivals is the equivalent of 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.

grading

Grading for a course in studio art must be in harmony with its goals. While many of these goals are objectively measurable, some are more subjective. Competency and understanding the methods and uses of typography can be directly observed. The instructor reserves the right to apply qualitative judgement in determining a grade based on creativity (concept) and craftsmanship (form). The commitment to this pursuit in the form of effort, time and progress must be a factor in determining grades.

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, your overall **attitude**, and **active participation** during individual and group critiques. Misbehavior and poor attitude will affect your grade!

Quizzes & Homework – 10%

There will be scheduled small assignments, papers, and quizzes given based on reading, discussion and handouts.

Projects – 75%

You will be evaluated in the following areas: Creativity, Process, Organization & Coherence, Design Style, and Craftsmanship.

Grading Scale:

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

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.

!! important notes !!

- You must bring your textbooks, flash drives, your sketchbooks and any other materials you need to do your work to each class. Coming to class without materials or textbook counts as an unexcused absence!
- **Students** will be responsible for all material covered in classes that they have missed. Do not ask me!
- Absences from class do not excuse you from a deadline.
- There will be technical problems—none are excuses for missing a deadline. Plan ahead. Avoid problems.
- Excuses of any kind will not be tolerated. Don't even bother.
- No iChat, AIM, icq, msn, irc, online games, facebook, myspace, blogs, or anything of the like during class.
- Mobile phones must be turned off and stowed-away during class. I should never see them.

- Students are expected to uphold the standards of academic honesty, as indicated in the Student Handbook.

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 (subject to change)

- 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

class schedule

Schedules will be given on a regular basis as the class progresses and will include assignments, projects, and class time table.