George Mason University

AVT 311 Fall 2019

GRAPHIC DESIGN METHOD/PRINCIPLES

Syllabus and Policies

Instructor: Shanshan Cui
Location: Art and Design Building 1022

Class meeting days and time:
Section 2 TTh 10:30-1:10

Prerequisite:
AVT 215—or permission of instructor

Syllabus and Policies

The syllabus and project statements serve as your guide throughout the semester.
Refer to them frequently. You are expected to know and understand this information.

Course Description

The course emphasizes developing multiple design solutions that require some research as to the demographics, history, and/or culture. It further develops skills in design and typography, introduces conceptual problem solving, audience considerations, and the broad-based tools that designers must use to develop effective visual communication solutions.

Objectives

To develop visual sensitivity and competency in graphic communications by following a disciplined design process
To define problems, research, conceptualize, establish priorities, and develop graphic alternatives
To develop computer design skills in page layout and image creation programs
To develop the ability to effectively communicate graphic design concepts visually as well as verbally

Content

There are three major content areas for this course:
Type and Image
Design Method and Principles
Form and Communication

Through lecture, studio, and critique, students will design a series of projects developed from rough schematic level to final mounted presentation. The learning objectives in these areas are achieved through a series of sequential projects. The knowledge and concepts learned in one content area will be immediately transferred and applied in the next project. I will give lectures to clarify and expand the concepts and objectives from the project statements. Students shall provide a few solutions to the visual communication problem, as well as records of development and exploration of ideas that lead to the solutions.

Course Expectations

The projects require one to be disciplined and to work within very strict parameters. In professional practice, graphic designers solve clients' problems, which requires them to be comfortable working within strict requirements set forth by the clients. The projects in this course will prepare you to work within these limitations.

You will be given as much time as possible to work during the studio. But lectures and critiques will consume a significant amount of the time. The time spent in the studio may only be a fraction of the time that is necessary to complete the projects successfully so be prepared to make headway outside of the classroom.

The primary objective of the course is to provide creative solutions to design problems, not to learn design software from the beginning. You should have basic skills in design software and use it as a design tool with certain proficiency.

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Design Process The process of design is critical. You shall follow the recommended design process as outlined in the Project Statement. In many cases, you shall follow specific methodologies, as they are known to increase ideation and to enhance production efficiency. Evaluation of your design process will always factor heavily in the final project grade. You are required to present many ideas for the critique and develop a final solution based on these ideas.

Process Documentation and Pinterest Board

Students are required to keep well-organized, well-presented documentations of your design/learning experience in this class. These documentations should be arranged in chronological order. You will have to submit your process with the final design of each project on Pinterest.com. You will also be required to keep a sketchbook, which will also be used to document your process.
• You will create four project boards (one for each project) and one assignments/exercises board. Your Pinterest project boards should contain design brief, notes, research, thumbnail ideation, sketches, roughs, refinement, and final solutions of all class projects. Your assignment board should document all the work you have completed.
• Your Pinterest boards must be well organized, comprehensive but not redundant. You should include a heading/subheading, and a description/comments.
• Your process Pinterest account will count toward a significant part of your final grade.

Be forewarned! Take your design process seriously. Use your process notebook to help you advance from one idea to another; not only use the notebook to record what you are doing, but to maintain a dialogue with yourself, identify why you are making the design decisions you are making. **Keep your process boards current as you progress through each project and assignment/exercise.** Students have often mistakenly believed that they could finish their project first, and organize and assemble their process boards/books later. This is a daunting task to do shortly before a deadline. Your work will suffer if you do not follow the design process.

Performance Requirements, Critiques, and Class Participation

Due to the dynamics of the course your attendance, participation, and punctuality are critical to your successful completion of the class. You must be on time—and prepared—with no exceptions. Not being properly prepared with required assignments is considered an absence from the class. Students arriving late for thirty minutes or more will be marked absent. Three tardy marks equal to one absence. Students who leave before the class is dismissed will be counted as absent.

If absent, you are responsible for materials covered in class. Please "buddy-up" with a classmate for this information.

After three absences your final grade of the semester will be lowered by half letter grade (B to B-, or B- to C+) for each accumulative absence beyond three.

Students who are having difficulty with the attendance requirement may be asked to drop the class. Student who miss four or more classes in a row, and do not otherwise contact the teacher are subject to receiving an SA grade.

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Critiques are an important opportunity to shape verbal skills. Designers in professional practice need to be able to convey ideas to clients, ask relevant questions, and understand client concerns. Critiques may last one or two class periods. Individual or group critiques will be held at each stage of a project. Attendance to critiques is mandatory. Students who fail to have adequate work to present will lose a valuable opportunity to learn, which will also directly affect their grades. You may be counted as absent if you do not have the required work to present at the progress and final critiques.

I enforce deadline strictly. Final projects are due at the beginning of class. Projects and process boards turned after the start of class are automatically reduced 1/2 letter grade. Late submissions receive a full letter grade down for each class day late (i.e. A to B, B- to C-, or 60 to 50, 50 to 40). No extensions will be given. A late process board/notebook means that the entire project will be counted late. Make sure that your instructor can access your Pinterest project boards before the deadline. Projects will not be accepted one week past the due date. Failure to turn in any project will automatically result in a fail grade.

There will be no makeup for a project. A project may not be redone for a higher grade. Personal communication devices must be turned to "silent mode" and put away.

Grading Policy

I grade each project according to the criteria stated in the Project Statement. Each project will be given a letter grade based on the + or – system. This evaluation includes your performance in meeting interim deadlines, presenting adequate research and the required quantity of sketches (and I do mean QUANTITY), and participating in critiques and other class activities. I will provide an evaluation sheet when returning your design.

All final projects will be graded by the following criteria: concept/development/process, execution, and presentation.
• Concept/Development/Process—is defined as research, schematic thumbnail sketches, and computer roughs.
• Execution—is defined as the implementation of the design (visual organization, typography, communication). Basically, how successful is your design solution? How well did you incorporate your research and class/instructor feedback?
• Presentation—is defined as the final production quality of your project, as well as, your professional presentation (attendance, deadlines, verbal/written articulation, and participation).

Teaching/Design Archives
A non-returnable digital portfolio on a flash drive or DVD of all final projects (four projects and one assignment) in both pdf and jpg formats must be turned in on the last day of class. Each project and file should be clearly labeled.

The final semester grade is determined by project 1 (15%); project 2 and 3 (20% each); assignments (5%); class participation (10%); teaching archives (5%). In lieu of a final exam, there will be final semester project (25%).

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Grading Scale (Overview of grading standards)

A. Excellent

Superior execution; maximum originality; excellent concentration and initiative; cooperative with peers; excellent judgment; superior attitude and dedication; highly imaginative, original, and experimental; very consistent in work ethic; significant improvement.

B. Good

Strong execution and originality; adequate concentration and initiative; cooperative with peers; good attitude, dedication, and judgment; imaginative and experimental; consistent in work ethic; noticeable improvement.

C. Satisfactory

Average execution, concentration, organization, and attitude; some imagination and originality; lacks some consistency in work ethic; some improvement.

D. Poor

Poor execution and improvement; limited originality; little concentration and organization; poor judgment; evades responsibility and cooperation; lacks work ethic, concentration, organization.

F. Unacceptable

Fails to execute to minimum standards, insignificant improvement; no originality; minimum concentration and organization; evades responsibility and cooperation; no work ethic.

Required Textbook

Timothy Samara; *Design Elements: A Graphic Style Manual*, 2nd Edition, 2014
Rockport Publishers; ISBN-13: 978-1592539277

Recommended Readings

Universal Principles of Design, by William Lidwell, Kritina Holden, Jill Butler
Type Image Message, by Nancy Skolos, Thomas Wedell
Type & Image: The Language of Graphic Design, by Meggs, Philip B.
Graphic Design: The New Basics, by Ellen Lupton

Materials   USB Drive or cloud based storage. *It is important to backup your work*
Project-dependent materials that will vary per concept
Super-Black mounting boards, thin super-black boards, acetate, spray mount, black or white mounting tape, cutting pad, Xacto™ knives & blades, self-healing cutting mat (all for home use) for final project submission
Other materials for sketching and taking notes

University and School of Art Policies

In accordance with George Mason University policy, turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

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Commitment to Diversity
This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design
As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours
SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

Artsbus - Dates for Fall 2019
September 21   October 19   November 16

ArtsBus Credit
* Each student must have up to 5 AVT 300/Artsbus credits before graduation. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment.
* If you plan/need to go on multiple Artsbus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please go to the Artsbus website: http://artsbus.gmu.edu "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding Artsbus policy.
* Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need Artsbus credit BUT may need to go on the Artsbus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center of the Arts. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an Artsbus trip.

Visual Voices Lecture Series Fall 2019
Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater: http://soa. gmu.edu/visualvoices/

September 5, 2019   Spector, Buzz   "Buzz Spector: I stack things. I tear stuff up"

September 26, 2019   Ashcraft, Tom   "Workingman Collective: Navigating a Collaborative Practice"

October 10, 2019 -   Potter, Kristine   "Mythologizing America"

October 24, 2019 –   Wickerham, Daniel and Lomax, Malcolm
                            "Supplementals, Collective Consciousness, and Communicable Diseases"

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Important Deadlines:

Last Day to Submit: Domicile Reclassification Application	August 26
Labor Day: University Closed	September 2
Last day to add classes: All individualized section forms due	September 3
Last Day to Drop: With 100% Tuition Refund	September 9
Drop period begins: 50% Tuition Refund Period Begins	September 10
Final Drop Deadline: Last Day with 50 % TuitionRefund	September 17
Student Self-Withdrawal Period: (100% Tuition Liability)	September 18 – September 30
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	
	September 23 – October 18
Selective Withdrawal Period:(undergraduate students only) (100% tuition liability)	October 1 – October 29
Fall Break(Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)	October 14
Incomplete work from spring/summer 2019 due to instructor	October 25
Incomplete grade changes from spring/summer 2019 due to Registrar	November 1
Thanksgiving recess(No Classes)	November 27- December 1
Last day of classes	December 7
Reading Day(s)	December 9 – December 10
Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	
Exam Period	December 11 –December 18
Winter Graduation Ceremony	Thursday, December 19

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the SoA office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed) , LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences
If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

Official Communications via Mason E-Mail
Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

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Attendance Policies
Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Honor Code
Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously. No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, A Writer's Reference.) The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, "When in doubt, cite."

Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

Writing Center
Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

The Collaborative Learning Hub Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ittraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.

Provisions Research Center for Art & Social Change is located in Room L001 of the Art & Design Building. This student resource assists students in exploring and engaging new models for artmaking that lead to a more inclusive, equitable, and connected society. Provisions is also a hub for developing art projects through Mason Exhibitions, the Mural Brigade, and art partners throughout the metropolitan area, and beyond. Feel free to come in and browse the library, study, eat, etc. The University Art Librarian, Stephanie Grimm, will have regular hours in Provisions on Tuesdays at 2pm. Contact Don Russell for more information: drusse10@gmu.edu

Office: 2014   Office hour: TTh 9:30-10:15, by appointment   E-mail: scui1@gmu.edu