

LMC 2720: Principles of Visual Design

Skiles 318
9:05 - 9:55am MWF

Instructor: Fred Leighton
email: fred.leighton@lmc.gatech.edu
twitter: fleighton3
Office hours: W 2 - 5pm
Office: Skiles 328

Prerequisites

Undergraduate Semester level ENGL 1102 Minimum Grade of D.

Course Overview

This course will focus on the basics of visual design and its relation to the wider study of communication design: a discipline which features several media formats, used individually or in combination, to communicate messages. Information design, interaction design, graphic design, typography, web design, and animation are all examples of communication design. We will study the components of visual design and composition, examine individual examples, and study communication systems. Class content will consist of lectures, discussions, readings, and project assignments. Project work will give students the opportunity to build design skills and explore visual communication for specific uses. Students are expected to attain necessary software skills for project work outside of class time.

Core Areas and Attributes

This course is not listed in Core Area C: Humanities, Fine Arts, and Ethics in the Core Curriculum. In the Bachelor of Science Computational Media Degree Requirements, Interaction Design & Experimental Media Thread, it is a required course along with LMC 2700.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will:

Understand the basic principles of visual design and be able to utilize design skills in project work.

Have the ability to analyze and discuss visual communication.

Be able to design visual communication pieces in a variety of media formats.

Course Format

3 class meetings per week, mixed format, lectures, discussions, lab/studio time.

Required Readings

Resources which are required to successfully complete the course.

Lupton, Ellen. *Thinking with Type: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, & Students (Design Briefs)*. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004.

Poulin, Richard. *The Language of Graphic Design: An Illustrated Handbook for Understanding Fundamental Design Principles*, Rockport Publishers, Inc. Beverly, Mass., 2011.

Supplementary Readings

Resources which are useful in the course and beyond, but are not required to be purchased for the course.

Albers, Josef. *Interaction of Color*, 1994.

Fraser, Tom and Banks, Adam, *Designer's Color Manual, The Complete Guide to Color Theory and Application*. Chronicle Books, San Francisco, CA, 2004.

Hill, Charles A., and Marguerite H. Helmers. *Defining Visual Rhetorics*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Mahwah, NJ, 2004.

McCracken, Daniel, Wolfe, Rosalee J., *User-Centered Website Development, A Human-Computer Interaction Approach*. Pearson Prentice Hall, Uppers Saddle River, NJ, 2004.

Meggs, Philip B. *Type & Image: The Language of Graphic Design*. Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, NY, 1992.

Mitchell, William J., *The Reconfigured Eye, Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1992.

Moggridge, Bill, *Designing Interactions*. The MIT Press. Cambridge, Mass, 2007.

Moggridge, Bill, *Designing Media*. The MIT Press. Cambridge, Mass, 2010.

Raskin, Jef, *The Humane Interface*. Addison-Wesley, Boston, 2000.

Sturkin, Marita and Cartwright, Lisa, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*,

Oxford University Press, 2009.

Taylor, Joshua C., Learning to Look: A Handbook for the Visual Arts. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1981.

Tufte, Edward. Envisioning Information. Graphics Press, Cheshire, Conn., 1990.

Materials

Materials necessary for the course.

Sketchbook & pencil

Steel ruler

Plastic cutting board

8.5" x 11" paper

Black mounting board

Glue stick

X-acto knife

Software

Software which will be useful in the class included design and Imaging: InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, and/or equivalent, i.e. open source software: InkScape, Gimp etc.

Web and Scripting: HTML, CSS, Dreamweaver, Flash (ActionScript), and/or equivalent, i.e. HTML editors and other tools.

Please note: This is not a class on software. Students are expected to attain necessary software skills for project work outside of class time.

Grading Opportunities

The final course grade will be calculated from the following areas:

20% assignments

70% projects

10% participation

There will be four graded assignments which will each be worth 5% of the final grade. Assignments are given for work in class and/or for one week or less in duration.

There will be four graded projects, two of which will be worth 10% (two weeks duration), and two which will be worth 25% (four weeks duration) of the final grade.

Attendance policy: You are asked to come to class whenever possible and to participate in the discussions and group work. Attendance will not be taken and will not directly affect your grade. However, attendance is part of class participation, which will be worth 10% of your overall grade.

Grading Standards

Letter Grades

- A (90-100) - Excellent
- B (80-89) - Good
- C (70-79) - Average
- D (60-69) - Below Average (passing)
- F (59 or below) - Failure

Criteria for evaluation of assignments and projects:

Quality of work relating to concepts, ideas and research, as well as effective and creative use of tools for required tasks. All graded work assignments, and projects, will clearly state the objectives and areas of grading. This information will be included in the assignment, or project description on T-Square. Any feedback for graded work will communicate how a student performed and how the grade was calculated following these criteria. If there is any question during the semester as to why a grade was given or how it was determined, please see the instructor during office hours or other scheduled appointment time.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is critical to understanding the subject matter and successfully completing the course.

Missing class without the following valid excuses will result in an unexcused absence:

family emergency

illness and can provide a doctor's note or equivalent from Stamps Health Services.

GT extracurricular activity and can provide note from coach or advisor.

internship or job interview and can provide documentation from company.

You must communicate with the instructor and provide documentation within one week for an absence to be counted as excused.

5 unexcused absences are allowed for the semester.

At 6 unexcused absences, your course grade will drop by one letter grade, and will continue to drop by one letter grade for every 3 unexcused absences beyond 6.

Be on time for class and stay for the duration of class session.

Attendance at critiques is very important - you will be made aware of the dates for critiques well in advance via the class schedule and announcements from the instructor. Thoughtful participation in critiques is a key component of your participation grade in the course.

Academic Honesty and Student Conduct

Honor code: You are asked to abide by the GT honor code in this class. Information is available at: <http://www.honor.gatech.edu>.

The issues of plagiarism and responsibilities in collaborative assignments/projects are especially important. For details, please see: <http://www.honor.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=9>

Communications Center

From the Communications Center website:

The Communication Center, located in Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons 447, promotes excellence in WOVEN communication—written, oral, visual, electronic, and nonverbal—in ways that enable members of the Georgia Tech community to have greater success in their academic and workplace careers, as well as in their civic and community lives. Trained professionals and peer tutors are available to provide assistance to students.

More information is available at: <http://www.communicationcenter.gatech.edu>

Students with Disabilities

Learning support services for students with disabilities is provided.

Students should self-report to the Access Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students at:
220 Student Services Building
Atlanta, GA 30332-0285
404.894.2564 (voice) or 404.894.1664 (voice/TDD)

Information about ADAPTS is located at: <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu>.

Please Note: This Syllabus is subject to change during the course – the instructor will notify students of changes.

Schedule

updated 4.18.14

Week 1 Introduction / Basics of Graphic Design

Intro to Communication Design, Visual Design, overview of course

Monday January 6

Introduction to Visual Design, overview of course

Assignments:

for Wednesday, next class:

Read:

An Introduction to Graphic Design, William Drenttel and Jessica Helfand
<http://observatory.designobserver.com/entry.html?entry=8727>

Blog Entry:

Write a short blog entry in your T-Square Blog answering questions from Introductory Survey assignment in Assignments on T-Square. This is not a graded assignment.

Wednesday January 8

Basics of graphic design

Friday January 10

Basics of graphic design continued

Assignments:

for next week:

Read:

Poulin, chapters 1 - 3 (Point, Line, Shape), 8 - 10 (Scale, Movement, Space), 11 - 15 (Balance, Symmetry, Asymmetry, Tension, Closure)

Week 2

Basic Design Principles

Monday January 13

Graphic Design

Poulin, chapters 1 - 3, 9, Point, Line, Shape, Movement

Wednesday January 15

Graphic Design

Poulin, chapters 11 - 15, Balance, Symmetry, Asymmetry, Tension, Closure

Friday January 17

Graphic Design

Poulin, chapters 8, 10, 21, 22, Scale, Space, Frame, Proportion

Assignments:

for next week:

Read:

Poulin, chapters 6, 8, 9 (Color, Tone, Contrast)
Lupton, chapter 1 (pgs. 13-35)

Week 3

Graphic Design

Type and Typography

Monday January 20

no class - MLK Jr. Day Holiday

Wednesday January 22

Poulin, chapters 6, 18, 19, Color, Tone, Contrast

Friday January 24

Introduction to Type and Typography
Lupton, chapter 1 (pgs. 13 - 35)

Week 4

Type and Typography

Monday January 27

Type and Typography
Lupton, chapter 1 (pgs. 36 - 67)

Assign Project 1

Wednesday January 29

Type and Typography
Lupton, chapters 1 - 2 (pgs. 68 - 101)

Friday January 31

Type and Typography
Lupton, chapter 2 (pgs. 102 - 131)

Discuss process for Project 1, look at examples

work time for Project 1

Week 5

Type and Typography

Monday February 3

Type and Typography
Lupton, chapters 2 - 3 (pgs. 132 - 173)

Assignment 2 - working with grid layouts

Wednesday February 5

Type and Typography
Lupton, chapter 3 (pgs. 174 - 207)

Assignment 2 - working with grid layouts, due by start
of class Friday, February 7.

Friday February 7

work time for Project 1

Week 6

Critique

Information Design

Monday February 10

Project 1 Due

Assign Project 2

Critique

Wednesday February 12

Critique

Friday February 14

Information Design

Assign Project 2

For Monday read:

Visual Function, pp 1 – 27, Mijksenaar

Google Books: books.google.com/books?isbn=9064503036

Good Design in the Digital Age, Richard Buchanan (pdf file in Resources of T-Square).

Week 7

Information Design

Monday February 17

Information Design

for Wednesday: read Chapter 2, Graphical Integrity, from The Visual Display of Quantitative Information, Tufte (will be available as a pdf file in the Resources area of T-Square by 2pm today, Monday).

Wednesday February 19

Information Design

for Friday: read chapter from Envisioning Information, [Tufte_Layering_and_Separation.pdf](#).

Friday February 21

Information Design

Studio time for project 2

Week 8

Designing across Media

Monday February 24

Information Design

work time for Project 2

Wednesday February 26

work time for Project 2

Friday February 28

Project 2 due at start of class

critiques - discussion of project two

Read for Monday: McCracken_User-Centered_Web_Dev_chp5.pdf
(in T-Square Resources)

Week 9

Digital Environments

Design principles in digital environments: web, interactive

Monday March 3

HTML / CSS exercise

Wednesday March 5

Assign Project 3

Friday March 7

HTML / CSS exercise

Week 10

Monday March 10

HTML / CSS assignmen

Wednesday March 12

HTML / CSS

Friday March 14

HTML / CSS

Week 11

Monday March 17

no class - Spring Break

Wednesday March 19

no class - Spring Break

Friday March 21

no class - Spring Break

Week 12

Monday March 24

Word Press

Wednesday March 26

Tumblr

Friday March 28

studio time for project three

Week 13

Monday March 31

Project 3 Due

For Wed Read: Sturken and Cartwright, Intro and Chapter 1
(pdf in Resources / Readings)

Wednesday April 2

Introduction to Visual Culture

Assignment 4 given

for Monday - Read Practices of Looking, Sturken and Cartwright - chapter 2
in Resources / Readings on T-Square

Friday April 4

no class meeting - work on Assignment 4

Week 14

Visual Culture

Monday April 7

Assignment 4 due

Assign Project 4

Visual Culture

Discuss Chapter 2, Sturken and Cartwright

For next class, Wednesday, read Sturken and Cartwright, Chapter 3
in Resources/Readings on T-Square

Wednesday April 9

Visual Culture

Assign Project 4 - due April 30

Reading Assigned for Friday (next class)

Friday April 11

Visual Culture

Week 15

Monday April 14

studio time for project 4

Wednesday April 16

studio time for project 4

Friday April 18

studio time for project 4

Week 16

Monday April 21

studio time project 4

Wednesday April 23

project 4 discussions / feedback

Friday April 25

project 4 discussions / feedback

Exam Week

April 28 - May 2

Project 4 Due Wednesday April 30