

INTRO TO VISUAL DESIGN

GD105 / Sec. 403 / 4 credits
T/TH 10:10–11:40
DePaul Center 106B

INSTRUCTOR:

Jen Thomas
jthom116@cdm.depaul.edu

OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesdays
8:30–10:00 am
CDM 709

Course Description

This course will provide an introduction to the principles of visual design, primarily through an analysis of cognitive and gestalt psychology. We will look at a variety of different types of techniques that can be used to evaluate visual design, and study what things can be used to make design more effective. During this course, we will examine the perceptual forces at work in our visual processes from the standpoint of their usefulness to visual artists. This class will introduce concepts of visual perception, composition and color theory, and how these are affected by movement, duration and display. This course is primarily a lecture class, but class time will also include discussions, critiques and lab (computer work) time. You are expected to work about 3–6 hours a week outside of class.

Course Objectives

This course will focus on theories of how the mind processes visual information, and then practice the application of this learning to achieve effective visual communication. This course is designed specifically for the needs of Graphic Design, Game Development, Digital Cinema, Animation, and Interactive Media students (but all majors are welcome!) Everyone will receive an introduction to Adobe Photoshop (for raster graphics), Adobe Illustrator (for vector graphics) and Adobe Flash (for design in motion). However, learning software is secondary to our goal of gaining an understanding of the mechanisms of visual perception. Practical issues introduced include visual planning, typography, color palettes. Theoretical issues include composition (emphasis, rhythm, contrast, unity, balance, scale, hierarchies of information), movement, color, and spatial illusion.

Textbooks

Art & Visual Perception, Rudolf Arnheim. Berkeley: Univ. of CA Press, 1974.
Design Basics Index, Jim Krause. Cincinnati: HOW Design Books, 2004.

Supplies*

Sketchbook
Notebook or binder
Pencil and black ink pen
External hard drive/flash drive
**always bring supplies to every class*

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be called at the beginning of each class session. There are no excused absences. In the case of an emergency or dire circumstances, email me, preferably before class, to let me know. In the event of a missed class, it is the student's responsibility to catch up on any missed assignments. Missed lectures will not be repeated. After 2 absences, a student's grade will be lowered by 1 letter. Any student missing 4 classes or more will earn a grade of "F" for the quarter.

If a student is more than 5 minutes late for a class, it will count as tardy. Four tardies will count as an absence. If a student is 20 minutes (or more) late to class, it will count as an absence.

Late Work

In the client-driven design world, late work is rarely acceptable. In the case of this class, I will accept late work 1 class beyond the due date and it will receive a letter grade deduction. Beyond 1 class late, it will be considered a 0. In the event of late work, it must be uploaded to D2L prior to the following class session to be accepted.

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Course Structure

Each week you will have a reading assignment from the texts, as well as a design project to complete. We will be having weekly quizzes based on the readings, and weekly critiques of your projects. It is imperative that you show up on time, do the assigned reading and work promptly, etc. It's very easy to fall behind with such a schedule. There will not be a "mid-term exam", but there will be a final critique of class final projects on "final exam day".

Class Discussions and Critiques

Given the nature of this class, we'll be having discussions and lectures, in addition to weekly critiques. You are expected to participate in these exchanges in a professional manner. Participation in critiques and reviews is not optional. You are expected to both comment on your peers' work as well as offer your work for feedback. When you're discussing someone else's work, treat them with respect. When someone else is talking about your work, don't take it personally.

Grading

Projects will be graded on preparedness of student; ability to articulate ideas and effectively respond to feedback; design concept; effectiveness of design solution; visual communication of elements and principles of design; effectiveness of typography and layout; and attention to detail, including following directions and utilizing exceptional craft in execution.

30% Participation/Quizzes/Writing Assignments

50% Weekly Projects

20% Final Project

A = Superior performance; work excels consistently in all areas above

B = Exceeds basic expectations for all projects

C = Average performance; completion of all assignments on time and at an acceptable level

D = Less than satisfactory performance

F = Failure

Turning in assignments to d2l.depaul.edu

All course-related documents and assignments will be posted to the DePaul D2L site.

Unless instructed otherwise, all assigned work must be completed and submitted through the D2L system by the date and time specified under each assignment posting. There may be file size limits within the system around 20mb. You may also try compressing the file in a ZIP format.

DO NOT WAIT until the last minute to post your work. Plan ahead and consider upload times, computer glitches, etc. To make sure a file has successfully uploaded, I advise you to download it to your computer and re-open it after posting. If this results in success, you will know it was uploaded correctly in the first place! If all else fails, you may use YouSendIt.com, WeTransfer.com, or DropBox.com—all free file sharing and storage services. You must let me know at least one class ahead of time if this is the route that you're going to take.

Classroom Conduct

The use of cell phones, tablets, headphones, and gaming devices during class is strictly prohibited. The use of laptops and computers is also prohibited during lectures unless otherwise instructed. Turn off your phone before entering class. In addition, keep all food and drink out of the classroom. I reserve the right to lower a student's class participation grade in the event these policies are disregarded.

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Computer Labs

Computer labs are available for your use outside of class. For schedule information, please check here: www.cdm.depaul.edu/cim/academics/Pages/CIMLabResources.aspx. You'll need to swipe into the rooms with your DePaul ID, so please be sure it's activated.

Additional Web Resources

Please sign up for the DePaul Graphic Design Mail List:
mailman.depaul.edu/mailman/listinfo/design.

And be aware that DePaul has recently acquired an institution-wide license for lynda.com, which is a wonderful resource for all kinds of technical training. You'll need to sign in with your DePaul user and password using the link found at software.depaul.edu/training. Lynda.com offers software tutorials for programs such as Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, and loads of others. Spend some time poking around in it.

Additional Text Resources

A Primer of Visual Literacy, Dondis, MIT Paperback Press, 1973.

Graphic Design: The New Basics, Lupton and Phillips, Princeton Architectural Press, 2008.

Principles of Two-Dimensional Design, Wong, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1972

Academic Integrity

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at academicintegrity.depaul.edu.

Plagiarism

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Resources for Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (csd) at: Student Center, lpc, Suite #370; phone number: (773) 325 1677; fax: (773) 325 3720; tty: (773) 325 7296.

Withdrawal

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system (campusconnect.depaul.edu). Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or non-payment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

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Retroactive Withdrawal

This policy exists to assist students for whom extenuating circumstances prevented them from meeting the withdrawal deadline. During their college career students may be allowed one medical/personal administrative withdrawal and one college office administrative withdrawal, each for one or more courses in a single term. Repeated requests will not be considered. Submitting an appeal for retroactive withdrawal does not guarantee approval.

College office appeals for CDM students must be submitted online via MyCDM. The deadlines for submitting appeals are as follows:

Autumn: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent winter quarter

Winter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent spring quarter

Spring: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

Summer: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

Excused Absence

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html. Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

Incomplete

An incomplete grade is a special, temporary grade that may be assigned by an instructor when unforeseeable circumstances prevent a student from completing course requirements by the end of the term and when otherwise the student had a record of satisfactory progress in the course. cdm policy requires the student to initiate the request for incomplete grade before the end of the term in which the course is taken. Prior to submitting the incomplete request, the student must discuss the circumstances with the instructor. Students may initiate the incomplete request process in MyCDM.

- All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a cdm Associate Dean. Only exceptions cases will receive such approval.
- If approved, students are required to complete all remaining course requirement independently in consultation with the instructor by the deadline indicated on the incomplete request form.
- By default, an incomplete grade will automatically change to a grade of F after two quarters have elapsed (excluding summer) unless another grade is recorded by the instructor
- An incomplete grade does not grant the student permission to attend the same course in a future quarter.

**course syllabus and schedule subject to change at anytime throughout the quarter*

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Due dates and project details will be posted on D2L throughout the quarter
Quiz dates will be announced in class

WEEK	DATE	ARNHEIM	KRAUSE	TOPIC
One	Sept 11, 16	1–41	8–33, 60–91	Balance
Two	18, 23	42–95	124–51	Shape
Three	25, 30	96–133	230–69	Form and Type
Four	Oct 2, 7	372–443		Animation
Five	9, 14			Movement
Six	16, 21	218–57		Space
Seven	23, 28	258–302		Space
Eight	30, 4	303–329	170–203	Light
Nine	Nov 6, 11	330–371	206–17	Color
Ten	13, 18			
Eleven	25			Final Critique

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