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## TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY GRAPHIC DESIGN

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GD221

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DePaul University . Winter 2014  
Loop Campus . CDM Center Room 530  
Thursday 5:45pm–9:00pm  
**INFORMATION :** d2l.depaul.edu

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**David Sieren**  
dsieren@cdm.depaul.edu  
**OFFICE :** Loop Campus . CDM 635  
**HOURS :** By appointment

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

**TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY GRAPHIC DESIGN** examines the contemporary practice of Graphic Design in print, web, multimedia, and experimental design, both in the United States and abroad. Topics covered will span the past 40 years with an emphasis placed on the here and now. The most contemporary cutting edge design, designers, movements, as well as issues affecting the contemporary design field will be examined. Topics covered will focus on the evolution of the field in design aesthetics, styles, technology, communication methods in the context of changing social, political and cultural climates, and audiences.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Core to finding success as a designer is the acquisition of an in-depth knowledge of the forces actively at work that are shaping the discipline. A firm grasp and comprehension of current topics, social politics, philosophical issues of debate, and items of recent history that have lead us to this point in time is a necessity.

However, this course is designed to be of interest to *anyone* curious about the forces that have continually affected the discipline of Graphic Design over the past 40 years. Visual culture and communication affects everyone. Regardless of your core area of study, you will develop the ability to critically review contemporary design issues impacting society today.

The course centers thematically around three key areas of focus: typography, image making, and multimedia / experiential design. This course includes lectures, video viewing, guest speakers, studio and gallery visits, independent research and in-class discussion and debate.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Attendance is mandatory.** Attendance will be called at the beginning of each class session.

Students are allowed a maximum of 2 absences throughout the quarter. If any one student's absences exceeds the maximum of 2 allotted, penalties will be applied to their final grade for the quarter.

A 3rd absence will result in a 10% reduction of your final grade for the quarter. Additional absences will result in a 3% reduction per instance.

Tardiness is defined as not being present in the classroom when attendance is called. Tardiness that exceeds 20 minutes will be counted as an absence. 3 late arrivals, early departures or a combination of both are counted as a single absence. Students are responsible for reporting to the teacher at the end of class if they missed roll call but were present for the duration of class.

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If a student is absent they are fully responsible for doing the best they can to catch up. Questions or concerns may be emailed to the instructor, or may be addressed in person during office hours. Lectures will not be repeated.

Students are responsible for keeping track of their own attendance. If they are unsure of their status, they may ask the instructor at any time via email or in person during office hours. Follow-up is the student's responsibility.

*Please note: I will be abiding by DePaul University's 2009 Attendance Verification policy. This policy enables the university to (1) comply with U.S. Department of Education financial aid regulations for reporting on students' attendance, and (2) remind students to drop a class that they no longer intend to take in time to avoid tuition charges. As such, attendance for the first week of class is mandatory.*

### COURSE WORK

**Written Essays:** 6–9 times throughout the quarter, you will be assigned a topic to focus on for research during the week. In some instances you will be provided with materials and resources to review, which may include readings, video content, forums, etc. In other instances you will be required to conduct research on your own from scratch. Topics may center around research resulting from a field trip or guest speaker. Depending upon time, you may be able to begin working on these assignments during class.

You will be required to prepare a reaction, opinion or finding that must be turned in by 5:00pm on the day of the following class. This process will prepare you for in-class discussion and debate, which students are all expected to participate in. You may also be asked to present your solution or response to the group.

**Midterm Quiz:** The quiz consist of a series of short answer questions centered around images, topics, and quotations pulled from in-class lectures and assigned readings. Any topic that appears on the quiz will have been discussed in class.

**Final Research Paper:** You are required to write a 7–10 page research paper on a topic you'll choose from a list of issues affecting contemporary Graphic Design practice. Preparing for the paper will include research, image gathering, and analysis of specific works of design.

You will begin work on this final research project following the midterm quiz. Your paper will be complemented by an in-class presentation to be given at the end of the quarter. Details to come.

There is NO formal final exam. Your research paper and in-class presentation will serve to guide final evaluations.

*The final quantity of research-driven assignments given throughout the course of the quarter is subject to change.*

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### **Take notes in class.**

During lectures, use a writing implement and paper. The use of computers, tablets or other digital media during lectures is prohibited unless otherwise instructed. Students may be asked to turn monitors off, spinning them sideways to ensure they're not in use.

If a student wishes to use a recording device in class for any purpose, they are required to ask the instructor for permission. The instructor reserves the right to say no.

### **Turning in assignments to [d2l.depaul.edu](http://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 on the date and time specified under each assignment posting. (See "Late Assignment Policy" below for information on late submissions.)

Depending on the assignment, your project files will most likely be PDFs or Word Docs. If presentations or design-centric solutions result in large file sizes, you may have problems uploading to the D2L system. If a file fails to upload, you may need to create a smaller file and attempt a re-upload. You may also try compressing the file in a ZIP format.

To make sure a file successfully uploaded, you may want to download it to your computer and re-open it after posting. If this results in success, you'll know it uploaded correctly in the first place!

If all else fails, you can use [dropbox.com](http://dropbox.com), a free file storage website. This service is particularly handy for larger files. Once an account is created, you can upload your files and grant me access to that particular folder or file. You must let me know at least one class ahead of time if this is the route you're going to take.

### **Late assignment policy**

Assignments and projects turned in late will result in a 10% grade reduction for every day past the assigned due date (in addition to being graded based upon defined criteria).

A student has 10 days to turn in an assignment or project before it is considered irrevocably late, at which time zero points will be earned. Turning in a late assignment is far better than not turning it in at all—some points are better than none!

However, each student is allowed 1 extension to avoid the above penalty, to be used at their discretion at some point during the quarter. The extension must be requested in advance. A student will have one week after the initial due date to turn in the project. If late, the aforementioned penalty will apply.

Late assignment policies will not apply to the last two assignments (to be specified within assignment postings). No projects will be accepted after the final class period.

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If students would like more feedback on work than what is received in class, they can email the instructor or arrange for a discussion during office hours. Feedback will be given on a first-come first-serve basis, with no guarantee that all email correspondence will be responded to.

Do not ask for extensions or leniency outside of the policies outlined above.

### COMPUTER LAB LOGIN, LOCATIONS AND ACCESS

You will need a user name and password to access D2L. Your Campus Connect username and password should do the trick! D2L will be used for assignment submission, file access, class-related information, etc. Making sure you have access as outlined above is your responsibility.

### DISCUSSION, DEBATE AND IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION

Group discussion of topics and issues at hand is key to this class. It allows students to learn from each other, share ideas, and formulate opinions and arguments in real-time. Due to time limitations, length of group discussion may vary from week-to-week. When there is a discussion that involves assignment presentation, we may not be able to review everyone's work due to time constraints. This will be determined throughout the quarter.

Thoughtful participation in group discussions, the presentation of assignments when asked, and attendance on field trips all count towards an individual's "class participation," a factor in the student's final grade. This can not be made up after the fact due to an absence, as it required physical presence in the classroom.

### GRADING

**20%** In-class participation and engagement  
**20%** Mini research & opinion assignments  
**20%** Midterm quiz  
**40%** Final research paper & accompanying presentation

**Excellence**  
A 100–93  
A- 92–90

**Good work**  
B+ 89–88  
B 87–83  
B- 82–80

**Satisfactory**  
C+ 79–78  
C 77–73  
C- 72–70

**Somewhat  
unsatisfactory**  
D+ 69–68  
D 67–63  
D- 62–60

**Substantially  
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F 59–0

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**CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS,  
TABLETS, HEADPHONES & MORE**

The use of cell phones, tablets and gaming devices is strictly prohibited. The use of laptops and computers is also prohibited during lectures unless otherwise instructed.

Turn off your phone before entering class. The unauthorized use of a digital media device in class will result in a 5% deduction per instance off of a student's final grade at the end of the quarter. If you receive a call that is of utmost importance, leave the classroom quietly to go somewhere private and note that you'll call the individual back. You do not need permission to leave to do this. Do not answer the phone as you're leaving the classroom.

Headphones re not to be worn or used during class. A 5% deduction per instance off of a student's final grade at the end of the quarter if they do not remove their headphones.

**INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT**

Other forms of inappropriate behavior in class will be determined by the instructor, and will results in a 5% deduction per instance off of a student's final grade at the end of the quarter, the possibility of being asked to leave the class, or possible removal by security. Leaving class due to inappropriate conduct will result in an absence.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Work done for this course must adhere to the DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy, which can be reviewed in the Student Handbook or by visiting <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>

**EMAIL POLICY**

The instructor will respond to email received from students to the best of his ability, although there is no guarantee that this will be done swiftly and with regularity. There is no guarantee that all email received will be responded to. Email received on Saturdays and Sundays will not be reviewed until the following Monday. The best way to ensure response for feedback is to visit during specified office hours during the week.

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### RESOURCES

#### **A short list of recommended texts and resources**

The following texts and resources may be helpful to you as you go through the quarter. We will expand this list each week as needed, but this is a great place to start!

##### **1. Eye Magazine (both printed and online)**

<http://www.eyemagazine.com>

##### **2. Looking Closer: Critical Writings on Graphic Design (book series)**

##### **3. Fresh Dialogue (book series)**

##### **4. Design Observer**

<http://designobserver.com/>

##### **5. the Daily Heller**

<http://imprint.printmag.com/daily-heller/>

##### **6. Typophile**

<http://www.typophile.com/>

##### **7. I Love Typography**

<http://ilovetypography.com>

##### **8. DePaul Graphic Design mailing list**

To sign up, visit <http://mailman.depaul.edu/mailman/listinfo/design>

### COURSE SCHEDULE

#### **The syllabus and schedule are subject to change throughout the quarter.**

For official assignments, criteria, due dates and more, check postings on D2L throughout the quarter.

Students will be made aware of field trip locations outside of the classroom as far ahead of time as possible.

### SCHOOL POLICIES

#### **Online Teaching Evaluation**

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

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### **Email**

Email is the primary means of communication between faculty and students enrolled in this course outside of class time. Students should be sure their email listed under “demographic information” within CampusConnect is correct.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <http://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.

### **Incomplete**

An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final, and approved by the Dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.

### **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