

DePaul University

College of Computing & Digital Media
School of Design, Graphic Design

Syllabus

DMA 402: Intro to Visual Communication Principles

*Always check D2L for the latest version of syllabus.
Syllabus may be readjusted throughout the quarter.
Syllabus last edited Jan 05, 2024.*

Course Info

Winter 2024

Section 801 (in person) & 830 (online)

Course Dates: 01/09/2021-03/12/2021

Tuesday 5:45-9:00pm, 14 E Jackson 210

Final Exam Date: Tuesday, March . 19th from 5:45-9:00pm*

We will not have a final exam, instead there will be a final assignment/project to hand in during finals week. We will use our final meeting time for live group feedback sessions on your final projects via zoom.

Instructor: Kyle Green

Preferred Email: kyle.andrew.green@gmail.com

Depaul Email: kgreen41@cdm.depaul.edu

Zoom Office Hours: Mondays, 8pm-9:30pm (use the office hours_sign-up sheet within the Course Information module to reserve a slot. All meetings must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.)

Important University Dates

Jan 6 – Begin AQ 2021 Classes

Jan 12 – 11:59 PM Deadline to add classes to WQ2024 schedule

Jan 19 – Last day to drop classes with no penalty

Jan 22 – Last day to select pass/fail option

Feb 23 – Last day to withdraw from AQ 2021 Classes

March 30 – AQ 2021 Grades Due

Course Overview

Course Description

This course introduces visual communication principles including, but not limited to, typography, color, movement and composition for print and screen applications. Students will create multiple projects and participate in class critiques to help build industry-specific vocabulary, critical assessment, and familiarity with presenting creative work. Relevant creative methodologies and software used to prepare media for print and digital applications will also be covered. Unlike previous sections of this class we will go more in-depth in learning Adobe Software, this is due to DMA 405 not being offered this quarter.

Course Objectives

- This course will focus on theories of how the mind processes visual information, and practicing the application of your learnings to achieve effective visual communication.
- Practical issues introduced include sketching, iterative process, storyboarding, visual planning, and color systems.
- Theoretical issues include composition (emphasis, rhythm, contrast, unity, balance, scale, hierarchies of information), movement, color, and spatial illusion.
- Become comfortable with the tools and software that designers use.

Learning Outcomes

1. Experience a range of design methods, processes, materials, and contexts.
2. Apply basic elements of visual design including balance, color, dynamics, expression, form, growth, light, movement, sequence, shape, and space.
3. Practice iteration [and/or variation] to arrive at successful design projects.
4. Use visual design terms and formal language to communicate.
5. Analyze the effectiveness of works of art and design, recognizing strengths and citing areas for improvement.
6. Identify or integrate methods, processes, and/or materials that are relevant to project development.
7. Defend work with reason.

Basic Materials & Supplies

- **Laptop, Desktop, or Tablet/iPad;** recommended MacBook Pro or Windows laptop capable of running Adobe CC Software
- **Sketch Book (at least 8.5x11);** or blank computer paper
- **Pencils, variety of pens (black);** your favorite drawing materials
- **Scissors, X-acto knife and blades, cutting mat**
- **Digital Camera/Phone camera** (a basic one is fine)
- **External hard drive/flash drive;** or your preferred back-up method

- **Software:** Adobe Creative Cloud and Zoom (See “Software” section for more info)

Software & Tech

Zoom

This class has both an online section and an in-person section. For the online section we will use Zoom during class hours. I will have an open meeting room during class time so the online section can participate. If you are in the online section you are required to stay in the meeting room during class time unless otherwise stated. We will also use Zoom for office hours for both sections.

Guidelines while on Zoom:

- For the virtual section of this class — during class discussions, lectures, critiques — you are required to have your camera on. During in-class work time you can turn your camera off.
- Please mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
- Feel free to use the chat window to ask questions or leave comments.

Access to Zoom: Please note that students *don't* need Zoom accounts in order to join Zoom meetings. If students would like Pro accounts to host meetings of their own, they can follow these steps.

- Go to depaul.zoom.us and sign in with your Campus Connect credentials.
- Visit zoom.us/download to download the Zoom Client for Meetings. You can also download the mobile and desktop apps from this site.
- When using the apps, log in using your new Username@depaul.edu email address and existing Campus Connect password. Choose the “Sign in with SSO” option and specify the “depaul.zoom.us” domain, if prompted.

Additional Zoom Resources:

[Getting Started with Zoom](#)

[How to Join a Meeting](#)

[DePaul Zoom FAQ](#)

Adobe Creative Cloud

We will be going in depth on several Adobe programs — Illustrator, Photoshop, and InDesign. You will learn the basics of these softwares and how to utilize them to execute the course projects.

Access Adobe CC: [Click Here for Instructions](#)

DePaul provides students free access to Adobe Creative Cloud for their home computers (access will be limited to the duration of the term.) You will need to use your **@depaul.edu** email address to get access to the Creative Cloud at home option. You will be redirected to a Campus Connect login screen--use your Campus Connect credentials to login.

LinkedIn Learning

LinkedIn Learning, free with your DePaul student emails, offers a wealth of extensive tutorials on software. I will be available to answer specific software questions, but please keep in mind that the objective of this course is not to learn Adobe software. If you find yourself stuck or would just like to hone your Adobe CC skills, then take advantage of your free LinkedIn Learning accounts!

[Accessing your DePaul LinkedIn Learning Account](#)

IT Support

For any tech support questions, SoD faculty and students may contact the following email. Staff will handle your questions or direct you to the appropriate person/department.

- **Email:** scaavsupport@depaul.edu.
- **Hours:** Monday- Friday 8:30AM - 8:30PM; Saturday 10AM - 6PM; Sunday 12PM - 6PM

Meetings & Attendance

Class Meetings: *Tuesdays, 5:45-9:00pm*

We will meet in our classroom, 14 E Jackson Center 210, unless otherwise notified.

All materials for this course (which may include lectures, project/exercise briefs, and additional resources) will be provided within weekly modules in the content section on D2L.

Most classes will begin with lectures and discussions, followed by break-out sessions for small group or individual meetings.

Unless previously discussed and agreed upon with me, ***not*** attending class or individual / group meetings will ***negatively impact*** your attendance grade. Leaving class, or signing off Zoom early without a valid reason will also result in a point reduction of your attendance grade.

If you miss one class / meeting for an unexcused reason you will have 10% deducted off from your attendance grade.

If you miss two classes / meetings for an unexcused reason you will have 50% deducted off from your attendance grade.

If you miss three classes / meetings for an unexcused reason you will have 100% deducted off from your attendance grade.

If you miss four classes / meetings for an unexcused reason you will fail the class.

Being late for class will result in a deduction of 5% from your attendance grade each time.

Unless otherwise stated, I ask that you are present in the classroom (or on Zoom) during the full class time (5:45–9pm). If you have an excused reason that you will need to leave class early please let me know before the start of class. If you leave class for an unexcused reason, your attendance grade will be affected. **If you leave before 7:30pm I will deduct 10% from your attendance grade. If you leave anytime after 7:30pm before dismissal I will deduct 5% from your attendance grade.**

If for some reason we need to hold class virtually, we will use Zoom. If this situation occurs links to the class will be posted in the weekly module as well as emailed prior to the class.

If you miss class you are fully responsible to get caught back up on course materials. If you miss class during a feedback or critique session, you will not receive feedback from the instructor via D2L or email. You can sign up for office hours to have a one-on-one feedback session.

Projects & Assignments

Assignments & Exercises

Each week **before class on Tuesday**, a module will be made live on D2L that may include lectures, resources, and weekly assignments and/or exercises related to the provided material, which will be due the **following Tuesday (before the next class)**. The components of these modules will always be introduced and reviewed during class.

Projects

You will be working on projects iteratively (in parts that develop into a whole) as part of your weekly assignments. Time permitting, your weekly assignments will result in three projects:

1. Point, Line & Plane: Object Analysis

The fundamentals of design. In this project, we will look at different process/research methods, practice iteration, and work in black and white to explore and describe an object in point, line, plane, and then a combination of the three.

2. Form in Motion: GIFs

In this project, we will dive into time-based narrative, develop basic storyboards, and explore animation/motion as a system for good design, flow, and communication.

3. Photo Narrative

In this project, we will develop skills and understanding of the basics of photography, storyboarding, and visual narrative. You will build a black-and-white, photographic essay documenting our/your current reality. This is your final project.

Turning in Your Work

- Submission criteria will be defined in each project brief.
- Assignments are due — submitted to D2L — at the date and time noted on each assignment brief. If your work isn't posted in time for critique the assignment will be considered late. (See "Late Work Policy" below for information on late submissions.)
- Some assignments will require you to print out your work. If this is necessary for the project critique it will be noted in the assignment sheet. If you do not have your project printed when class starts during a critique day it will be considered late.
- It is essential that you label any digital files:
LastName-FirstName-AssignmentName_Version#.pdf
- When posting your homework to D2L, **only** upload as PDF files, unless otherwise stated. **Do not post application files such as .ai, .indd, or .psd.**
- 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 was uploaded correctly.
- If all else fails, you may email assignments and leave a comment on D2L stating that you have done so.

Grading

Evaluation

While requirements will vary from project to project, I will be evaluating your work based on five main criteria:

1. Design: Have you applied the concepts and design principles we have been learning in class?
2. Creative Concept & Critical Thinking: Does your design/composition communicate your ideas? Did you put effort into developing your ideas both visually and conceptually? Did you incorporate feedback into your work?
3. Critique & Professionalism: Did you talk/comment during critique? Were you constructive and respectful?
4. Process Work & Effort: Did you push yourself? (strong research, planning, and development throughout each week); and did you push yourself further? (Did you take the critique of your peers into consideration? Did you revise your work when new techniques were learned?)
5. Timeliness & Execution: Did you **read** the instructions and follow them? Did you hand in your work on time? Is your work well-made, with attention paid to craft and detail?

Access Detailed Rubric → [Click Here](#)

I do not look for perfection or polished final projects. I look for students who take risks, keep exploring, try new things, and go back and improve projects after we review them. I want my students to develop a love and a passion for visual design. The course is meant to inspire you to discover design all around you. I expect you to work hard.

Weighted Breakdown

Your work in this class will be graded based on a 0%-100% (F to A) grade scale and weighted as follows:

Class Software Workshops 10%—total class grade

Participation in discussions and critiques 5%—total class grade

Critique is a critical part of the design process and necessary to produce quality work that clearly illustrates your ideas. Being able to critically examine a peer's and your own work, as well as communicate its strengths and weaknesses to fellow designers is beneficial to everyone. In order to practice and develop your ability to critically examine yours and your peer's work, as well as using design lingo to communicate your thoughts, you are expected to participate in critique whether that be a D2L discussion or live group feedback session.

Attendance 15%—total class grade

Projects

Throughout the quarter, you will be working on projects iteratively through your weekly assignments and exercises. Once completed, project submissions will be graded as a whole.

Project 1 30%—total class grade

Part 1—Analysis 5%

Part 2—Visual Research 5%

Part 3—10 Point compositions 5%

Part 4—10 Line compositions 5%

Part 5—10 Plane compositions 5%

Part 6 (Final)—combination of point, line, and plane + compiled PDF of all 40 compositions 75%

Project 2 20%—total class grade

Part 1 — Color 10%

Part 2 — Storyboard 5%

Part 3 — Animation 85%

Project 3 20%—total class grade

Part 1 5%

Part 2 5%

Part 3 90%

Grade Scale

Grades are a reflection of the effort put forth as stated below.

Excellent

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

Incomplete Grades

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. All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptional cases will receive such approval. Information about the Incomplete Grades policy can be found at: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Grading-Policies.aspx>

Late Work Policy

Extensions

Make-Ups/Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis. If a significant life event prevents you from completing an assignment or you have a documented emergency, please reach out to me via email. If you know beforehand that you will not be able to meet a deadline, you should email me 48 hours before work is due. If a sudden emergency crops up overnight, you should email me within 24 hours after the deadline.

Late Work

I accept late work. Turning in a late assignment is far better than not turning it in at all — some points are better than none.

Unexcused late assignments are accepted and will be penalized as follows:

- *Submitted within 2 weeks of the original deadline:* Your grade will receive a 10% deduction.
- *Submitted by Tue, March. 26:* Your grade will receive a 30% deduction.

*It is **absolutely necessary** to email/notify me once you've submitted late work. I do not go back to check past submissions folders once the initial grading period is over. If you do not notify me, I will not see your work, therefore not rectify your grade.*

Back Up

You are responsible for the frequent and methodical back-up of your class work over the course of the quarter. Data loss — from a lost or stolen flash drive, or bad internet — is not typically an excuse for late or missing work.

Should this happen to you, the best course of action is to reach out to discuss your situation and request an extension. You will still be responsible for re-creating any required files that go missing, but your grade will not be penalized. I suggest signing up for Dropbox, using Google Drive, or purchasing an external hard drive for back-up purposes.

Course Schedule:

Changes to Schedule

This is a tentative schedule. We will attempt to follow this schedule as closely as possible, but we may encounter changes and alterations to our original plans. Should this happen, all changes will be addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L, and sent via email.

Weekly Breakdown

Week 01: (Tuesday 1/9 @ 5:45pm)
Intro & Syllabus Review
Lecture: What is Visual Communication?
Lecture: Intro to Project 1: Point, Line & Plane
Workshop: Illustrator Tools 1

Homework:

Point, Line & Plane *Part 1*
Finish Workshop if you did not complete during class

Week 02: (Tuesday 1/16 @ 5:45pm)
Lecture: Point, Line & Plane: Process, Research, Method
Lecture: Gestalt – What is Visual Language?
Workshop: Illustrator Tools 2

Homework:

Point, Line & Plane *Part 2, Part 3* ,
Attendance verification form
Finish Workshop if you did not complete during class

Week 03: (Tuesday 1/23 @ 5:45pm)
Lecture: Point, Line & Plane: Part 4
Class D2L Materials will continue work on Project 01
Workshop: InDesign Tools 1

Homework:

Point, Line & Plane *Part 4*
Finish Workshop if you did not complete during class

Week 04: (Tuesday 1/30 @ 5:45pm)
Lecture: Texture and Pattern
Workshop: TBD

Homework:

Point, Line & Plane: Part 5
Finish Workshop if you did not complete during class

Week 05: (Tuesday 2/6 @ 5:45pm)
Lecture: Layering & Dimensionality (Finalizing your PLP Projects)
Workshop: InDesign Type

Homework:

Point, Line & Plane: Part 6
Finish Workshop if you did not complete during class

Week 06: (Tuesday 2/13 @ 5:45pm)
Full class critique Project 1
Lecture: Intro to Color Theory

Homework:

Project 2 Part 1 — Color Compositions

Week 07: (Tuesday 2/20 @ 5:45pm)
Lecture: Intro to Animation & Time-Based Narrative
Workshop: TBD

Homework:

Project 2 Part 2
Finish Workshop if you did not complete during class

Week 08: (Tuesday 2/27 @ 5:45pm)
Lecture: Project 2 Part 2
Lecture: Project 3 part 1

Homework:

Project 2 Part 3
Project 3 Part 1

Week 09: (Tuesday 3/5 @ 5:45pm)
Lecture: Project 3 part 2
Workshop: Photoshop Tools 1

Homework:

Project 3 Part 2
Finish Workshop if you did not complete during class

Week 10: (Tuesday 2/12 @ 5:45pm)
Lecture: Project 3 part 2
Workshop: Photoshop Tools 2

Homework:

Project 3 Part 3
Finish Workshop if you did not complete during class

Week 11: (Tuesday 3/19 @ 5:45pm)
(Final) No In-person class — zoom meetings

Resources

DePaul Career Center

The DePaul Career Center helps students build confidence, explore possibilities, and develop a powerful personal brand. We offer resume and cover letter review, skills assessments, career exploration and pathway conversations, assistance with internship and job searches, interview preparation, access to alumni mentors, employer insights workshops, career fairs, and many more experiential opportunities to prepare for your future. It's never too early to begin exploring! Start your personal and professional journey here: career.center.depaul.edu.

Policies & Additional Information

Covid Policies on Campus

The health and safety of everyone at DePaul depend on the cooperation of all who come to campus. By taking care of yourself, you protect the entire community. DePaul's COVID-19 response plans are based on the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Chicago Department of Public Health and the university's medical advisor from AMITA Health.

Mandatory protocols must be followed by DePaul students, faculty and staff at all times on both campuses.

<https://resources.depaul.edu/coronavirus/guidance/health-safety-practices/Pages/default.aspx>

Online Course Evaluations

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. Please see:

<https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/Pages/online-teaching-evaluations.aspx> for additional information.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. All students are expected to abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy which prohibits cheating and other misconduct in student coursework. Publicly sharing or posting online any prior or current materials from this course (including exam questions or answers), is considered to be providing unauthorized assistance prohibited by the policy. Both students who share/post and students who access or use such materials are considered to be cheating under the Policy and will be subject to sanctions for violations of Academic Integrity.

More information can be found at

<https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/academic-integrity/Pages/default.aspx>

Posting work on online sites, such as Hero

All students are expected to abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy which prohibits cheating and other misconduct in student coursework. Publicly sharing or posting online any prior or current materials from this course (including exam questions or answers), is considered to be providing unauthorized assistance prohibited by the policy. Both students who share/post and students who access or use such materials are considered to be cheating under the Policy and will be subject to sanctions for violations of Academic Integrity.

Academic Policies

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: <https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Student-Resources/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

Preferred Name & Gender Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by your preferred name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The preferred first name will appear in University-related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at <https://offices.depaul.edu/secretary/policies-procedures/Pages/default.aspx>

Students with Disabilities

Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) enabling them to access accommodations and support services to assist with their success. There are two office locations:

- Loop Campus (312) 362-8002
- Lincoln Park Campus (773) 325-1677
- Email: csd@depaul.edu

Students who register with the Center for Students with Disabilities are also invited to contact Dr. Gergory Moorhead, Director of the Center, privately to discuss how he may assist in facilitating the accommodations to be used in a course. This is best done early in the term. The conversation will remain confidential to the extent possible.

Please see <https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/about/departments/Pages/csd.aspx> for Services and Contact Information.

Class Discussion

Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day's topic. Participation allows the instructor to "hear" the student's voice when grading papers. Second, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the reading assignments. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussions.

Attitude

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking or mocking another's opinion. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom (or Zoom). The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

Civil Discourse

DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.