

COMM 430-302 / DIGITAL DESIGN / FALL 2014

Monday + 7:00pm – 9:30pm + SoC 002

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SoC 220 + Office Hours By Appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on digital design with specific emphasis on the creation, refinement, and publishing (print and digital) of a single visual story. Along the way, we'll address the following topic areas: theories of visual and image-based storytelling, creating visual stories from images, photo enhancement and manipulation, graphic design (layout of text and image) for on-demand print publishing, and contemporary web design options for visual storytelling and promotion. .

REQUIRED TEXTS

Required and suggested readings will be provided by the instructor via the course website.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

Students will need their own external hard drive / thumb drive for transporting files to and from class.

Loyola University provides access to equipment (cameras, etc.) and computer labs. Students are welcome to use their own equipment.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Students will be required to purchase the following "materials" during the course:

- Publication(s) they've created using digital design software, purchased from on-demand publisher.
- Promotional piece(s) they've created using digital design software, purchased from on-demand printer.
- Web Hosting & Domain (*Note: You may already have this, in which case you need not re-purchase.*)

KNOWLEDGE GOALS

This course will introduce students to the following digital design concepts and skills using a project-based approach.

SKILLS + TECHNOLOGY

Still Camera use (emphasis on dSLR)
Lightroom
Photoshop
InDesign
HTML/CSS
Web CMSs (Wordpress, etc.)
Self-Publishing (Blurb + MagCloud, etc.)
Online Print Services (promotional materials, etc.)

CONCEPTS

Single Images vs. Extended Visual Statements
Theories of Visual Storytelling
Editing Photographs for Specific Narrative Goals
Interaction of Text and Image
Principles of Typography, Color, Layout for both Print and Web

POLICIES

Late Work / Lost Work

Bosses, editors, and clients will not tolerate late or lost work: neither will I. Extensions will not be granted. Incompletes will not be assigned. Make-up work will not be assigned unless pre-arranged, or due to an authorized documented absence. If you fear you will miss a deadline, please discuss it with me ASAP. **Backup your files.** If an assignment is lost or you discover a discrepancy later in the semester, email documentation will be required. It is your responsibility to make sure I get your work - it is not my responsibility to tell you your file was corrupted, or your email bounced, or to remind you to hand in work.

Attendance / Lateness

Missed work cannot be made up or excused except in the case of severe illness, death in the family, or religious holiday. These absences must be documented if you'd like to make up missed work. Documentation for a university-authorized absence must be cleared with the professor in advance.

Come to class on time. Coming in late disrupts the class, and you'll likely miss important information. It is your responsibility to ask classmates for announcements you may have missed by arriving late. **Arriving late repeatedly will bring down your participation grade.**

Illness

If you are ill, please do not come to class. Notify me and contact the Wellness Center for advice and get documentation.

Participation

Attendance and lateness policies described above factor into your participation grade, and so does your contribution to the community of learning in our classroom. Your participation in class depends on quantity and quality of participation.

In this class, you'll hear lectures, participate in discussion, and provide feedback to classmates. Your positive and substantive contribution to each of these class elements is expected for a passing grade - doing the bare minimum will earn you a bare minimum grade. **Your physical presence in the room is less than bare minimum participation; participation includes attendance, attention, and attitude as well as substantive contributions.**

Leaving early, texting, checking Facebook, chatting, sleeping, eating meals, and doing other non-class related work are distractions to you, me, and your classmates. If you need to leave class early, please tell me before class starts.

Classroom Citizenship

Students are expected to respect each other. When you enter a classroom, you are a member of a community of learning. Your success depends on your neighbors' success. Treat each other with tolerance and understanding. The people you'll interact with in class are your peers and future colleagues. **Strive to do better on your own, but also strive to help your classmates to elevate the level of conversation and constructive criticism in the classroom.** You are responsible for your own work, but you are also responsible to your teacher and your peers. Your positive substantive participation is a valuable aspect of the class.

Computers in the Classroom

Most class meetings will include a section of lab time where we use the classroom computers to learn software. If you would like to bring your own device (laptop, smartphone, etc.) to take notes, that is acceptable. However, you may need to use specific software (Photoshop, etc.) that is installed on the lab computers.

We'll be relying heavily on web resources to help expand our knowledge of contemporary digital design culture as well as to help us answer questions / troubleshoot software and other tools. This is particularly true with regards to design software: there are many forums, FAQs, tutorials, and other resources online that will help expand your knowledge of these tools. **LEARN TO CONSULT THESE RESOURCES BEFORE YOU ASK FOR HELP.**

A reminder: be respectful with your use of technology. Please do not use valuable class time to send text messages, use headphones to listen to music, watch wacky videos, look at Facebook, check email, chat, etc. Doing so will lower your participation grade severely.

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of the course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. **Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment.** The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g., failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours). This is an academic community; being uninformed or naïve is not an acceptable excuse. It is dishonest to:

- turn in the same work for two classes;
- turn in a paper you have not written yourself; or
- copy from another student or use a "cheat sheet" during an exam.

Grading

The grade given to average work on all assignments is a C. So, **if you just complete the bare minimum for each assignment, expect to earn a C for your work.** Grades of B or A indicate impressive achievement above the average. Grades of A in particular indicate especially exceptional work. Grades below C indicate inadequacies or errors in any or all of the grading criteria. The university grading scale will be used. Percentage grades are not rounded up. An 87.45% is a B+, not an A-.

Students will receive comments and grades for each assignment unless otherwise noted in the syllabus. It is your responsibility to keep track of the grades you earn. I will not send you updates on cumulative grades. I will not send you warnings when you drop below some point value. I will not send you prompts to participate more or to work harder. **The total points for the class and for the assignment are listed in the syllabus so at any point in the semester, you should be able to calculate an approximation of your grade easily.** Students may meet with me during office hours throughout the semester to discuss their grades and comments.

If you would like to discuss a grade on an assignment you must make an appointment to visit me during office hours. Bring the assignment, my comments, and a written explanation of how your work met the requirements of the assignment, and showed impressive achievement above the average. **You have two weeks from the day I return the assignment to dispute my assessment of that work.** After two weeks, I will assume you are satisfied with my assessment, and I will not reconsider the assessment for any reason.

ASSIGNMENTS

Initial Explorations of Skills & Concepts (50 points each / 150 total)

- Folder (Due September 15)
- InDesign File (Due September 29)
- Website (Due October 20)

Final Project Proposal (50 points)

- Brief description of your intended final project (Due October 13)

Works-In-Progress (50 points each / 100 total)

- Print Proof: Publication (Due November 3)
- Website (Due November 17)

Finished Projects (100 points each / 300 total)

- Printed Publication, Printed Postcard, Website (Due December 1)

SCHEDULE

Week 1 – August 25 – COURSE INTRO + VISUAL STORYTELLING / PHOTOGRAPHY

- Digital Design: Course Introduction and Objectives
- Image, Series, Sequence and other theories of visual storytelling
- Exercise: Building a Visual Story
- Examples of Visual Storytelling: Before, During, and After Photography

Week 2 – September 1 - LABOR DAY (NO CLASS MEETING)

Week 3 – September 8 – VISUAL STORYTELLING & PHOTOGRAPHY

- Hands-On: Cameras and How to Use Them
- First Look at Lightroom
- How to Swim in Images
- Making Cuts: Literally & Figuratively

Week 4 – September 15 – GRAPHIC DESIGN

- Visual Storytelling in Print: Text, Image, Text and Image
- Overview of Self Publishing: DIY Books and More
- Hands-On: First Look at InDesign

Week 5 – September 22 – GRAPHIC DESIGN

- Basic Design Principles Reviewed
- Layout for Print in InDesign
- Text & Images in InDesign

Week 6 – September 29 – WEB DESIGN

- Visual Storytelling on the Web
- Hands-On: A Very Basic HTML+ CSS site
- Overview of Contemporary Website Tools

Week 7 – October 6 - MIDSEMESTER BREAK (NO CLASS MEETING)

Week 8 – October 13 – WEB DESIGN

- Web Design Principles: Color, Type, and More
- What Do I Need?: Demystifying Web Hosting, Buying a Domain Name, etc.
- Hands-On: Wordpress

Week 9 – October 20 – BACK TO ... VISUAL STORYTELLING / PHOTOGRAPHY

- Photography Specific Workshop Class
- Re-emphasizing image, series, sequence thinking
- Check-In: Where are you with your visual story?
- Hands-On: Advanced Photo Editing and Enhancement Techniques

Week 10 – October 27 – BACK TO ... GRAPHIC DESIGN

- Graphic Design Specific Workshop Class
- More Examples, Inspiration, Discussion
- Check-In: Where are you with your document design?
- Hands-On: InDesign for Postcard Layout

Week 11 – November 3 – REVIEW & CRITIQUE OF WORK-IN-PROGRESS: PRINTED MATERIALS

Week 12 – November 10 – BACK TO ... WEB DESIGN

- Web Design Specific Workshop Class
- More Examples, Inspiration, Discussion
- Check-In: Where are you with your web site?
- Hands-On: Going Further with Wordpress

Week 13 – November 17 – REVIEW & CRITIQUE OF WORK-IN-PROGRESS: WEBSITE

Week 14 – November 24 – WORKSHOP

Week 15 – December 1 – FINAL PRESENTATIONS