Course Description

Objectives
• To practice effective form analysis, methods of composition and visual organization.
• To begin to understand problem solving and methods of problem solving.
• To further develop methods of problem solving.
• To become proficient with the basic design tools, mediums and craft.
• To research and explore.

Goals
Aesthetic: Composition, form-making and visual organization, color and media
Conceptual: Meaning in words and images, How the piece communicates.
Structure: The underlying structure (visible or invisible) that holds the piece together.
Technique Learning the basic tools, materials, and methods of image making.
Verbal Critiques/Critical Evaluation: Becoming familiar with the vocabulary of design, and developing a "critical eye" that enables you to evaluate the work of your peers, as well as that of professional designers.

Communication
Visual Language (communication) is the basis for design creation. The graphic designer uses type and symbols (imagery) to communicate ideas. Visual organization is initially defined by rules, principles and concepts. A designer must become aware of these in order to interpret the best way to organize visual information. This course is an introduction to visual analysis, where we will study the basis of form-making, composition and problem solving. As a problem solver, the graphic designer must find appropriate solutions for a given problem. There are any number of solutions which the designer, as a creative person, must strive to attain through unlimited research and effort. Finally with the given problem in hand the designer makes a decision, based on the previous experimentation, as to which solution is the most appropriate.

Creativity
Design should be about exploration and experimentation. As a designer you should always strive to think and create in ways that you have not done before. Ideas, forms and solutions should be achieved through challenging yourself to approach a creative process with an open mind. In doing so you learn more about yourself, the process and the world around you. Design is everywhere. Become more aware of what is around you, and begin to look at it critically, asking yourself questions—do I like it/dislike it? Why? What does it communicate? Is the problem solved in a new and creative way? How might I do it differently? etc.

Methods
This class is for exploration and experimentation of problems in search of appropriate solutions. Along with experimentation comes failure, but with failure comes new discoveries.
• Analyze the problem
• Make a list of solutions and produce sketches of all the possible ways in which the problem could be solved, challenging yourself to go beyond what is familiar, obvious or at times comfortable.
• Sketch at least 20 possible solutions.
• Continue to modify and improve at least 5 possible solutions.
• Work and rework chosen solution considering initial goals.
• Finalize the solution technically for presentation.

Reading
It is never too early to start reading about and looking at graphic design. To begin to understand the historical and contemporary movements in design can further your awareness of formal and stylistic methodologies.

Journals/Magazines
ID, Eye, Print, Graphis, How, Communication Arts, Design Issues, Cite, Metropolis, any Art and Architecture, and cultural magazines.

Books
Kimberly Elam, Graphic Translations (required for 2nd half of the semester)
Christian Leborg, Visual Grammar
John Bowers, Intro. to Two-Dimensional Design: Understanding Form and Function
Wucius Wong, Principles of Form and Design
Gavin Ambrose, The Fundamentals of Graphic Design
Gavin Ambrose, The Fundamentals of Typography
Bo Bergström, Essentials of Visual Communication
Xtine Burrough, Digital Foundations, Intro to Media Design
Sharon Poggenpohl, AIGA Press, Graphic Design: A Career Guide and Education Directory
Philip Meggs, The History of Graphic Design
Armin Hofmann, Graphic Design Manual
Johannes Itten, The Elements of Color
Ryan McGinness, Flatnessisgood
Holtzschue + Noriega, Design Fundamentals for the Digital Age
Willi Kunz, Typography: Macro-MicroAesthetics

University of Houston Graphic Communications:

Fundamentals of Graphic Communications : Art 1330
Hagmann

Art 1330

T/TH

Instructor
Sibylle Hagmann
Office Hours
By Appointment
Class website
http://design.uh.edu/hagmann/
Email Contact
shagmann@uh.edu
General Information

Attendance
Policies for classes in the University of Houston Graphic Communications Program apply to this class. Specifically, more than 3 absences by a student during the semester will result in a reduction of your final course grade by one letter. More than 6 absences, unless excused, will result in course failure. Each late arrival to class after three lates will be marked as an absence. Each three early departures of class will also be marked as an absence. If a student arrives late, they are responsible for notifying me of their arrival at the end of class, otherwise they will be marked absent. Students are expected to attend class, show process through sketches, participate in critiques and meet deadlines for assignments. Students are also responsible for finding out about, and making up any assignments missed due to absence or tardiness.

If, during the semester, a student misses class time due to a family emergency, he or she must contact me as soon as possible to receive an excused absence and to make arrangements for missed deadlines or late work.

Students who know they will miss class time due to religious holidays not recognized by the University should inform me one week in advance of the holiday to receive an excused absence and to make arrangements for missed deadlines or late work.

In accordance with the guidelines of the American with Disabilities Act, I will make every effort to reasonably accommodate students who request and require assistance.

Use of personal devices
The use of cell phones, text messaging or other social messaging (facebook etc.), and/or watching videos is prohibited during class and critique time. Please use this time to work on studio projects or work with/discuss course related content with those in the studio.

Grading
Each assignment will be graded accordingly and averaged to one final grade per assignment:
1. Sketches: experimentation and effort
2. Composition/Creativity
3. Craft/Technical skill

Final grade reflects the average of all assignments and:
- Attendance
- Timely completion of design projects
- Class participation: verbal critiques
- Problem solving
- Overall sketch process: experimentation & effort
- Overall creativity and compositions in solutions
- Overall technical skill
- Presentation of final portfolio & sketchbook

Students are expected to complete all assignments and complete all sketches for assigned critiques. All assignments should be completed for the date due. Late assignments will automatically be dropped one full letter grade. Failure to turn in even one assignment can be destructive when that zero is averaged in with your other grades. Failure to submit a portfolio at the end of the semester will result in a grade of F.

Verbal Critiques/Critical Evaluation
Critiques will help you become familiar with the vocabulary of design, and develop a “critical eye” that will enable you to evaluate the work of your peers, as well as that of professional designers. Remember, participation in critiques is part of your grade.

Supplies
Appointment Book/Calendar
3-ring Notebook & Sheet protectors
Portfolio
18” - 24” metal ruler with non-slip backing
X-acto knife/no.11 Blades
Utility Knife
Magic rub/plastic eraser (staedtler)
Rubber cement pick-up eraser
Fine point, medium and large black markers

2 values of gray design markers
Opaque white Plaka (Pelikan)
Black Plaka (Pelikan) or Black Gouache
Fine Brush (00 or 000)
18” 30/60/90 triangle
Technical pens: 000, 0, 1, 2
19” x 24” tracing paper pad
Spray mount or Rubber Cement
Large Roll of Drafting or White artists’ Tape
LerotMax 2000 White Ruling Mechanical Board
or Bristol Board (white) smooth finish
Black Crescent/Matt Board 2000 weight

Recommended
Tool Box
Cutting Board
French Curve and/or Flexible Curve
Scissors
Burnisher
Sketchbook

Vendors
Art Supply
Michael’s Arts and Crafts
Office Max/Depot
Texas Art Supply
Utrecht Art Supplies

Copy Centers
Kinkos
Copy Club
Copy.com
All boards unless otherwise noted are to be presented as indicated in this diagram.

Rendered material is for example rendered 10"x10" on bristol board or white lettramax (always refer to project assignment sheets for size requirement for final material!). Then mounted on black board with a 2" border all around—leaving your final presentation board 14" x 14". All boards are to be covered first with a sheet of tracing paper, and then a cover sheet (find any heavier paper stock – brown paper or heavier vellum is appropriate). First tape the tissue paper all the way across the back, fold to the front and trim neatly to the board size. Do the same with the cover stock, taping it separately to the back (all the way across) then trimming it to the board size and with a two inch piece of tape, tape to back on the bottom center of the board as shown on bottom left.

Make sure the surface of your work is free of any adhesive so that the tissue paper can be lifted easily.

Label the front of the cover stock on the bottom right hand corner

Format for Labeling
John Smith (Name)
Hagmann (Instructor)
Fundamentals (Class Title)
Form (Title of Assignment)

Labeling should be done in ink or thin marker (black).

All work turned in NOT following these guidelines will be returned without a grade.
Production for Final Presentation

1) Choose a final sketch and enlarge (xerox or otherwise) to, for example, 10 x 10". Redraw final sketch on tracing paper and detail all forms, lines, curves and shapes accurately. It may be necessary to enlarge the original letterform to the appropriate size and redraw composition using the letterform.

2) Using the final accurate compositional sketch on tissue paper, pencil or 'lead' the back side around the edges of all the compositional forms/lines etc.

For Pen and Ink on Letramax Board

a) Lightly trace the accurate composition onto the white letramax board using a pencil. Be very accurate and methodical.

b) Use a thin technical pen to outline the forms accurately. For curves use a french curve or flexible curve when necessary, otherwise keep a slow steady consistent gesture with the pen. Avoid over-gripping or tense grip—this creates more wobbles!

c) Use thin paintbrush with plaka or gouache to fill in large areas of positive forms. Care with the consistency of the plaka and gouache—test first to avoid lumpy or overly transparent surfaces.

Be aware that the india ink of the technical pen creates a shiny surface while the plaka and gouache tend to be visually flat. The plaka/gouache fill should be as close to the ink outline as possible to avoid poor visual craft.

d) Erase any pencil lines that are noticeable.

e) Center and mount the 10 x 10" white letramax board onto a 14 x 14" black board*. Spray mount the back of the white letramax with a thin, but even layer of spray mount (Super 77)—mount onto the black board, cover with tracing paper, and burnish well.

For Pantone Paper

a) Lightly trace the accurate composition onto the black pantone paper; and again onto the white letramax board (for placement/position only so you may use less lines).

b) Using your No. 11 xacto knife accurately cut out the form(s) from the black pantone paper. Be very accurate and methodical.

c) Use a thin layer of spray mount or rubber cement or other appropriate glue on the back of the pantone paper forms and mount onto the white letramax board. Use tracing paper or wax paper underneath the pantone paper while you are working it into position.

d) Burnish the pantone paper well.

e) Gently recut any awkward curves on the pantone paper without cutting the white board. Check for craft of lines and details of form.

f) Use a technical pen for any thin lines or forms.

g) Erase any pencil lines that are noticeable.

h) Center and mount the 10 x 10" white letramax board onto a 14 x 14" black board. Spray mount the back of the white letramax with a thin, but even layer of spray mount (Super 77)—mount onto the black board, cover with tracing paper, and burnish well.

i) Follow Format for Presentation handout accordingly.

Tricks

- Cut the letramax board and the black bristol board with a utility knife—use slow, multiple cuts as opposed to attempting to cut it first time. This saves your blade and board.

- Use your xacto knife to gently scrape off any ink lines that have slipped. Avoid removing surface of the board (BE GENTLE).

- Use tissue/tracing paper under your working hand to avoid oils from your hand getting onto the white board.

- Use a rubber cement eraser for problematic spots—otherwise use your staedler (white) eraser. At all times be gentle.

* or board size defined for individual projects