

Art 3333 Advanced Visual Communication Design  
Instructor: Dan May  
[dgmay@saumag.edu](mailto:dgmay@saumag.edu)

#### **CLASS PURPOSE:**

As an advanced studio and lecture class, our aim is multi-faceted. Applying and adding to your existing knowledge of the history of design, the goals of the class are to develop your creative, conceptual, communication and graphic abilities in terms of corporate identity, advertising and marketing in the 21st century. We will explore the arcane and developing world of graphic design employing psychological, sociological and behavioral modification techniques of past and contemporary visual artists, and by dissecting their approach develop our own voice. There will be six projects which make up the lion's share of your grade but there will also be in class exercises which will be graded along with critiques.

We will explore principles of design using advanced techniques in digital and conventional production to produce pieces that engage and stimulate our audiences. Analyzing what processes that were done in the past which work and which approaches that were discarded and by reinventing them attempts to define our design strengths, we will experiment in digital and conventional forms to expand our toolset. You will be required to define and assess in your "production" work phase of each project how it applies to green initiatives. This is expected to evolve in the classroom as the semester progresses as we try to define closed loop, and cradle to cradle production techniques as well as generate portfolio worthy material.

The class is project oriented, and developed to assist professional presentation practices, advertising and marketing, but nothing in this process can succeed if you are not passionate about the work. Projects are designed to maximize creative possibilities, but it is up to the student to be inventive, and go beyond the pedestrian booklet, photo...whatever. Do not confine your solutions to traditional print methods. With the advent of new technologies the scope and direction you take in completing your project should not be limited. In today's design community, digital formats which utilize, everything from blogs, to podcasts, webfilms to social networks, your medium can be as broad as your talents and interests permit.

In the course of the semester, service learning components will be offered as an incentive to your learning experience. Additional points can be acquired in these projects which can be used towards supplementing your grade. Some projects assigned may involve other departments in the University or the community at large. Some projects may even involve national organizations working on brand, design, or awareness assistance projects,

Each assignment has a set of parameters that will be outlined either in class or in a "client brief" that will be posted on the web either on my site or on Blackboard or both, but each project requires research. Client briefs are designed to be open ended to some extent allowing the advanced student more freedom to explore possibilities. Use research as a jumping off point for discovering inventive approaches to solving problems that are presented.

#### **Please refrain from.....**

jumping on the computer and Googling images resulting in aimlessly pushing pixels around on your monitor without:

> defining your target, second : determining objectives, and third : devising multiple conceptual directions associated with your objectives. It is a waste of time.

Your work will be evaluated by your proficiency in the design medium you choose as a vehicle to communicate your work, as well as your communication skills when presenting that work, and the research that supports your final objective. These directives help increase your understanding as to what designers, art directors and creative directors do in order to tweak people's desires. I assess your projects using style, "authenticity," (aka originality) composition, color, texture, line, (rules of design) et al as guidelines for grading. As a designer you are graded on visual aesthetics most of all, but the scholarship and research that you use in completing the work you do can and will be a factor in grading.

#### **Warnings:**

***Please refrain from using any clip art or download copyrighted imagery from Google, Yahoo etc., to use in your work. It can be used as inspiration for your work or it can be derivative of someone else's work, but copying or plagiarism in any fashion is grounds for expulsion. Originality and personal pride in your work are necessary components of any designer/artist.***

If during the course of critique, I have questioned your approach in completing a project, do not take it personally. I am playing devil's advocate. You can convince me of your approach's reasons more effectively if your research is thorough and it demands that a piece be done in a certain fashion. ***Clients often need to be convinced.*** Analytical skills and critical thinking adds to your tool belt. Presentation of your concepts as well as the execution of the materials that accompany your work can swing the balance of your grade. Wow me with your expertise.

***This is a DESIGN course not a computer proficiency course.*** Though proficiency in software may often be necessary, software apps are tools like any other. The real test of the student is their ability to solve problems. If my standards for excellence may appear to be high it is because this is advanced level course with advanced level thinking required. Do not ask me what I want from any given work. Ask yourself if it meets all your objectives, the criteria that was spelled out in the client brief is being met, if it is inventive in its approach, uses good use of design, and you should be fine.

As a reminder, you may use any combination of drawing, painting, craft, printmaking, digital output, phototgraphy and/or computer that you feel is necessary to complete the visual aspect of the projects assigned. A computer is not the only way to make something **work**.

***Here is a breakdown of my evaluative process:***

1. Innovation/creativity
2. Problem solving
3. Concept
4. Composition, color, form, line.
5. Research, technical proficiency, effectiveness, and clarity of message: Communication is a must!
6. Work ethic... which means that the final product will be evaluated in accordance with its exactitude, cleanliness, timeliness, presentation. (as well as your critiquing/presentation skills.)

***Department Goals***

1. Problem Solving: Allowing for the exploration, development, and heightening of individual creativity.
2. Communication: Enable students to effectively communicate visually, verbally, and through written form by focusing on the critical and analytical visual arts skills of their work and the work of others.
3. Historical Perspective: Work with students in developing an informed historical perspective, an appreciation of other cultures, and openness to new ideas through the study of how progressive art movements have influenced successive generations and civilizations.
4. Practical and theoretical knowledge: Provide students with a solid foundation in the visual arts: practical and theoretical knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to make the transition to the professional art environment.

***Materials list?***

***You needn't be an illustrator to take this class, but none the less, drawing is a must.***

Drawing is a method to conceptualize visually what you plan to communicate after your research. Even though you will work on the computer with most of your projects, you must be able to critically analyze work of past practitioners and reinvent them in your own work, so sketch, sketch, sketch before you do anything.

Notebook and Binder for "inspirational materials," research, pdfs downloaded, and handouts.  
Sketch Pad,  
CDs for backing up files,  
flash or thumbnail drive 2-4GB. (minimum)  
Drafting paper,  
Steel ruler,  
French curves,  
Pen and India Ink with a variety of nibs,  
watercolors, markers, compass, Exact-o knife and blades, cutting matt, Black Matte board, T square, Calculator or Proportion Scale, transparent ruler,  
Super B Inkjet Paper (1 carton), specialty papers as needed 13x19 minimum to be trimmed.

Many assignments will require large paper sizes so this is an absolute must to purchase. Try at every opportunity to purchase papers that are FSC or Green Seal Certified.

Materials may be purchased on line at any retailer such as Daniel Smith, Utrecht, Dick Blick et al. or if you prefer, at your local purveyor of Art paraphernalia such as, Hobby Lobby in Texarkana, Michael's, or local art stores. We also have a limited offering at the Art Store in Room 110 in Brinson.

**Printing**

Printing your work is your responsibility. If necessary, proofs of printed work are a necessity to check for color, composition etc. prior to final output. Do not rely on school printers as your personal output device. Printing depending on the size and paper quality can be expensive, so be prepared ! \$1.50/sheet minimum. All work must be presented in its final form on black matte board with 1" border unless otherwise specified.

**Academic Integrity**

The mission of Southern Arkansas University empowers all members of the University community to develop and encourage learning environments that create, expand, acquire, share, evaluate, and communicate knowledge. Academic integrity at SAU is an organizational and individual responsibility to honesty in all learning experiences. Students, faculty, and staff share responsibility for maintaining the highest standards for academic integrity. This policy focuses on the academic integrity in course-related work, its basis and context is applicable to all.

Any act of dishonesty in academic work constitutes academic misconduct and is subject to disciplinary action. Acts of dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism and cheating.

***For detailed information on academic integrity, read pages 26-27 of the SAU 2010-2011 Undergraduate Catalogue. in Relation to Academic Integrity: Papers and Plagiarism***

***Students should be aware of University Policy concerning this.***

***Essentially, if you use a phrase or paragraph of someone else's writing in your own, you must attribute it to that person through some form of citation. To do otherwise is plagiarism.***

**Disability Support Services:**

It is the policy of Southern Arkansas University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law, state law, and the University's commitment to equal educational opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Support Services, which is located in room 216 Reynolds Center, telephone 235-4145.

**Required Text:**

***Graphic Design: A New History***-Erikson

**Deadlines and Attendance:**

**Attendance is mandatory unless prior excuse is made, or a written note for any absence is recorded as outlined by the School's Guidelines. 3 unexcused absences CAN earn you a drop from the class. Absences will reduce your grade. This is not arbitrary. It is my experience that as the term progresses that students who have habitual tardies or absences do not perform well. Cell phones ringing in class get a five point deduction from work produced on the next project.**

Deadlines, deadlines, deadlines. We all hate deadlines. Unfortunately, as it exists in the workplace, so it is here. All deadlines must be met at the time posted. Any work turned in after the deadline will be given an "F." Assignments are subject to change based on progress but are outlined in the syllabus.

**Grades:**

**A = (93-100)**

**B = (92-86)**

**C = (85-76)**

**D = (75-67)**

**F = 66 and below**

**I reserve the right to give a pop quiz on any material assigned to be read that the majority of the class appears to be reticent to discuss in critiquing sessions or in the course of the class period, or if cell phones habitually ring.**

**Service-Learning Bonus:** You may earn a bonus equal to 10 percent of the total points you accumulate in the course by taking part in a service-learning project. The bonus is available only to students with a grade of 70 percent and above on regular coursework. The bonus requires you to participate and complete initiatives using the outline below as a guide.

**Participation in a Service Learning project**

This is a voluntary. No assignments are given, so you must be self motivated. You must document your progress on any projects you undertake and submit periodic progress after you have received a 'go ahead'.

Work provided must be for a charity, non-profit or community group. The work created must be documented throughout the process. Turn in documentation of your work as independent contractor with appropriate verification from authorized bodies that such work was completed.

1. Volunteer service to a local charitable organization -- Qualifying service will include

all opportunities identified by the relevant service organization's director. **(MUST BE DOCUMENTED)**

During the semester, you must keep a "log" describing your activities in support of the project. You must log at least 20 hours of actual service in order to earn the bonus points. At the end of the semester, you must turn in a signed sheet, verifying the 30 hours of service and write a summary reflecting on your experience, (minimum four pages, double spaced). Content of the paper: Paper should describe the project (s); explain what you learned; offer recommendations to improve future project(s), and indicate whether or not you plan to continue with other project(s) after the semester is over.

This opportunity provides a supplemental bonus, equal to 10 percent of the total points you accumulate during the semester. For example, if you accumulate 700 points during the semester, the bonus will be 70 points. (More explanation will be given in class.) Do not assume that the bonus you receive will automatically result in your receiving a higher grade in this course. I will explain how this might happen in class if any of you are confused. (Or you can make an appointment with me and I will give you a more detailed explanation.)

#### **Tentative Schedule:**

##### **Week 1**

First day: Introductions to class. Go over syllabus.

Lecture (a bit)

Review of last semester:

Review and discuss concepts outlined below-

Utopian Manifestos, of 19th century as they relate to design

Modernist Thought

##### **For next class/**

Movements: **DeStijl, Dada, Constructivism, Suprematism, Futurism, Fascism, Communism, Capitalism and their effects on the Arts. Read:**

pp 245-251, 256-270 in the text and on line:

read excerpts from "The Neue Typographie" @ [goodgravydesign.net/](http://goodgravydesign.net/)

Also:

Bring in magazine ads of your own to discuss in class which could be defined in terms of colloquial style. These can be from a magazine source or an online source: aka digital or analog. Be sure you know where it comes from, what it is selling (if anything) and from what time period it originates.

In addition bring to class: Photos of family, or yourself, or some found photos that you can work with in class.

##### **Project 1**

**Week 2 (the New Typography-International Style) The nails emerge in the coffins of Modernism?**

Discuss: from "The Neue Typographie" on line: [goodgravydesign.net](http://goodgravydesign.net/).

People to be covered in class: Jan Tschichold, Kurt Schwitters, Condé Nast, Cipe Pineles, Lester Beall, the WPA, Phillip Johnson, Advertising in pre-war America and the anachronistic, vernacular or colloquial styles.

From photos you have brought in ...Create a colloquially derivative piece using a personally created lettering form.

Using the information we know today about cigarettes and smoking create an 9x12 ad. Be sure to include the logo of the manufacturer of the product you are creating, a photo or illustration of your devising or creation. A paragraph of copy with a call to action in class.

**(due Next class for critique)**

##### **Project 2: "Universality"(due Next class)**

Create an Ad using the phrase as the headline: "The International"

In this project an ad selling an idea supporting a corporate client's image.

Ad size should be **A3** based on the "universal" metric system and the golden proportions.

Style should reflect the "Neue Typographie" outlined in Jan Tschichold's essay, or a designer of the period of modernism. Any objects other than the photographed product that you will be using as the central focus for your piece should be non-representational in form.

This project must use Type forms that are sans serif, as outlined by Jan Tschichold.

For next class read pp.272-top of 278, and then from Degenerate Art on page 283 thru 296.

##### **Week 3 (War Propaganda)**

##### **Project 3: "The WAR is on"**

What is Degenerate?

Using the guidelines of Hitler's Nazi Regime, or Stalin's Suprematists as what is 'degenerate' create a poster which is 'degenerate' in style as War Propaganda that must appear to support a cause...other than War...

such as: "War on Drugs," "War on Poverty" etc. but not a "real" war. Create your slogan, an illustration and a call to action

which subverts the concepts which these totalitarian forms of government professed.

Type in this exercise should be sans serif or HELVETICA BASED ala

the Bauhaus. (The Nazis 'disbanded' the school.)

Size is 18x24. 4 color. Make it appear to be screen printed as closely as you can to simulate the period.

##### **Week 4 (Corporate Control and the rise of Consumerism)**

For Monday Read pp.300-320 in text

Discuss Architecture and changes to the philosophy of Design as a whole.

Discuss the age of television and fast moving consumer goods. Discuss designers

Hermann Zapff, Adrian Frutiger, Josef Müller Brockmann,

Eduard Hoffman, Max Heidingger, Herbert Bayer, Herbert Matters, Saul Bass, Massimo Vignelli, The New York

School, Paul Rand, Stanley Morrison and the new and improved Jan Tschichold and their philosophies.

##### **Project 4: "The New Vernacular" (2 weeks in duration)**

Design a TV AD...using the story board techniques of Saul Bass. Ad should be a PSA : Working title - "for a Civilized Society...you should..."

Come up with the closing statements that will identify the theme.

Bring in sketches, photos, ideas to develop for next class.

##### **Week 5: (Multinational Corporations)**

Read pp. 322-332

Critique PSA Spot you started on last week.

Discuss who your sponsor might be.

How you might create the "pitch"

what would be a possible deliverable.

Analyze evolution of corp. logos

Discuss: Paul Rand, Herbert Bayers, Container Corporation of America

