

Eugene Lang College for Liberal Arts — The New School

JOURNALISM DESIGN TOOLKIT

FALL 2020

Section: A; CRN 8758

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00pm - 5:40pm

September 1 — December 17, 2020

JASON DAS

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Office hours by appointment.

Canvas:

<https://canvas.newschool.edu/courses/1521227>

Zoom:

<https://NewSchool.zoom.us/j/92797564043?pwd=R1dOYzhaZG91bGljMVQ5c3JuK2E2UT09>

This course introduces a core set of technical skills for practicing journalism design. Topics include basics of computer file systems and the internet, creating websites with HTML and CSS, and using the Adobe Suite (InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop) for digital and print design. Students will not only be exposed to software, theory, and techniques; they will establish a foundation to teach themselves to extend their skillsets throughout their careers.

Journalist designers need wide-ranging competence and awareness. Every project can bring new problems and require new solutions. Successful journalism designers remain flexible and master the ability to efficiently research and learn new skills. In this class, we will learn many specific tools reflecting the current landscape. But we are also building skills in research, problem solving, and self-teaching. We will value curiosity and efficiency.

These skills will be useful in your other coursework and in your personal and professional lives.

Regardless of format, journalism design is *functional*. It prioritizes communication and clarity. Making something clear and effective is more important than making something pretty or “on-brand”. And because journalism moves fast, it often prioritizes timeliness over perfection.

Our fundamental focus is the terminology and technology used to achieve quality design. This class exists to complement other classes (such as News Narrative Design, and Journalism Design in Practice) which focus more on the *practice* of journalism design.

This is the first semester this course is being taught fully online. Some alteration and improvisation is to be expected! Thanks for your help.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

In general, our **Tuesday** meetings will introduce new material and feature synchronous in-class discussions. Our **Thursday** meetings will be “lab time” for you to work on your assignments, ask questions, and get individual assistance and feedback.

As the semester progresses, it may be necessary to alter this scheme.

Recorded Zoom sessions will be archived for 30 days.

REQUIREMENTS & ASSIGNMENTS

There are no exams, no midterm, and no final. There will be a variety of assignments and projects due, relevant to the tools and skills learned in class.

Written descriptions of assignments will be provided via Canvas throughout the semester. Late or incomplete assignments will earn partial credit.

During synchronous meetings, be prepared to present your work to the class.

The difficulty of the coursework will depend to some extent on your existing skills and experience.

Note-taking in class is highly recommended. You will be responsible for knowing things mentioned during discussions and presentations.

While it is not the emphasis of this class, take responsibility for your content. Poor-quality words and images undercut your designs and signify general carelessness.

TOOLS

- Any computer is acceptable as long as you can run current versions of the required software.
- We will use **Adobe Creative Suite**, with emphasis on **Photoshop**, **Illustrator**, and **InDesign**.
- Our primary web browser will be **Chrome**. We may also use Safari and Firefox.
- A mobile **iOS** or **Android** device will be useful for some tasks, but is not required.
- We will use a code-friendly **text editor** for **HTML** and **CSS**. You may use the text editor of your choice. (If you are unsure where to start, consider [Atom](#), [Sublime Text](#), or the free tier of [BBEdit](#).)

- Each student will use a free [GitHub](#) account for this course. Please set up an avatar image on Github.
 - We may use **pen/pencil and paper** to plan, wireframe, and brainstorm.
 - We will use **Canvas** for assignments, tracking, peer review, and possibly other things. Please set up an avatar image on Canvas.
 - We will use **Zoom** for synchronous class meetings. Video activation is optional on Zoom, but you must set your name to your real name and set up a placeholder image that includes a clear view of your face.
 - In combination with Canvas, we will use this **Google Drive** folder to share and submit assignments and documents:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10AC2boayFoue4lrZHagt2f1WshsVXE_g
 Please set up an avatar image on your Google Account.
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RECOMMENDED READING

These are all well worth exploring for support and greater context. We may use some of the websites mentioned here in our classwork.

Books:

- [Designing the Editorial Experience](#) by Sue Apfelbaum & Juliette Cezzar
- [The Elements of Typographic Style](#) by Robert Bringhurst
- [Web Typography](#) by Richard Rutter
- [HTML5 for Web Designers](#) by Jeremy Keith
- [CSS3 for Web Designers](#) by Dan Cederholm

Online:

- Journalist's Toolbox [Design/Visual-Journalism](#) links
- [The Elements of Typographic Style Applied to the Web](#)
- [Frontend Focus](#) (mailing list)

- [CSS Tricks](#)
 - [W3Schools](#)
 - [A List Apart](#)
 - Stack Overflow (the [HTML](#) and [CSS](#) tag pages are good places to start)
 - Lena Groeger's [Visual Evidence](#) series
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GRADES

Grades will be based on attendance, participation in class, engagement with synchronous and asynchronous activities, and fulfillment of assignments. They will also take into account effort, improvement, and willingness to learn.

Grade calculation:

Participation/Engagement/Attendance: **25%**

Assignments: **75%**

SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Week 1	Sep 1, Sep 3	Introductions, orientation, and installation.
Week 2	Sep 8, Sep 10	Image basics
Week 3	Sep 15, Sep 17	Photo editing
Week 4	Sep 22, Sep 24	Photo editing
Week 5	Sept 29, Oct 1	Vector images
Week 6	Oct 6, Oct 8	Vector images
Week 7	Oct 13, Oct 15	Intro to coding and markup
Week 8	Oct 20, Oct 22	HTML
Week 9	Oct 27, Oct 29	CSS
Week 10	Nov 3, Nov 5	 Election Special 
Week 11	Nov 10, Nov 12	Webfonts
Week 12	Nov 17, Nov 19	Responsive Web Design
	Nov 24, Nov 26	 Thanksgiving Break 
Week 13	Dec 1, Dec 3	Print
Week 14	Dec 8, Dec 10	Multipage Print
Week 15	Dec 15, Dec 17	Putting it all together

SCHOOL POLICIES

Resources

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

- University Libraries: <http://library.newschool.edu>
- University Learning Center: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center>
- University Disabilities Service:
www.newschool.edu/student-disability-services/

In keeping with the university's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact Student Disability Service (SDS). SDS will conduct an intake and, if appropriate, the Director will provide an academic accommodation notification letter for you to bring to me. At that point, I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course.

- Student Ombuds:
<https://www.newschool.edu/student-advocacy/conflict-resolution/>
The Student Ombuds office provides students assistance in resolving conflicts, disputes or complaints on an informal basis. This office is independent, neutral, and confidential.
- Office of Financial Aid: <https://www.newschool.edu/financial-aid/>
Walk-in hours are Monday–Friday 10:00 a.m.–4:45 p.m at 72 Fifth Ave, 2nd floor.

Eligible students may be considered for different types of financial aid such as scholarships, federal grants, federal work study and federal student loans. To be considered for federal student aid, you will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) available online at fafsa.gov. The FAFSA is available starting October 1. The New School's priority deadline to submit the FAFSA is February 15. The FAFSA needs to be submitted annually.

University, College/School, and Program Policies

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found at <http://www.newschool.edu/policies/>

Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the Learning Center's website: <http://www.newschool.edu/university-learning-center/avoiding-plagiarism.pdf>

Intellectual Property Rights:

<http://www.newschool.edu/provost/accreditation-policies/>

Grade Policies: <http://www.newschool.edu/registrar/academic-policies/>

Student Code of Conduct: <https://www.newschool.edu/student-conduct/>

Attendance

"Absences may justify some grade reduction and a total of four absences mandate a reduction of one letter grade for the course. More than four absences mandate a failing grade for the course, unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as the following:
an extended illness requiring hospitalization or visit to a physician (with documentation); a family emergency, e.g. serious illness (with written explanation); observance of a religious holiday.

The attendance and lateness policies are enforced as of the first day of classes for all registered students. If registered during the first week of the add/drop period, the student is responsible for any missed assignments and coursework.

For significant lateness, the instructor may consider the tardiness as an absence for the day. Students failing a course due to attendance should consult with an academic advisor to discuss options. Divisional and/or departmental/program policies serve as minimal guidelines, but policies may contain additional elements determined by the faculty member.”

Student Course Ratings

During the last two weeks of the semester, students are asked to provide feedback for each of their courses through an online survey. They cannot view grades until providing feedback or officially declining to do so. Course evaluations are a vital space where students can speak about the learning experience. It is an important process which provides valuable data about the successful delivery and support of a course or topic to both the faculty and administrators. Instructors rely on course rating surveys for feedback on the course and teaching methods, so they can understand what aspects of the class are most successful in teaching students, and what aspects might be improved or changed in future. Without this information, it can be difficult for an instructor to reflect upon and improve teaching methods and course design. In addition, program/department chairs and other administrators review course surveys. Instructions are available online at <http://www.newschool.edu/provost/course-evaluations-student-instructions.pdf>.