Guidelines for Sac State GPHD 25—2019/20

This document provides basic guidance for teaching the revised GPHD 25 course at Sacramento State and some helpful information for courses that wish to articulate with it. In its most basic formulation, this revised course increases the instruction of the Adobe Illustrator software and reduces the crafting requirements of the previous studio class. More specifically, previous assignments such as Interval, Pattern, and Gestalt Imagery are modified or replaced to emphasize the instruction of basic Illustrator tools, while covering the concepts and vocabulary established in the previous projects.

Core Concepts Covered:
- Design Process (research, thumbnails to final format, rough to refined)
- The use of Interval, Scales, and Dynamic Measurement Systems
- Pattern, Interrupted Pattern
- The use and properties of Point, Line, and Plane (shape)
- Gestalts: Flow, Equilibrium, Figure Ground, Closure, Similarity, Proximity
- Basic 3-part Color Theory, basic Color Schemes, RGB, CMYK
- Composition (symmetrical, asymmetrical, dynamic versus calm)
- Abstract Messaging through form and composition
- Hand Craft (cutting, pasting, mounting, etc.)
- Digital Craft (aligning, shaping, and connecting elements in Illustrator, printing, bleeds, crop marks, etc.)

Illustrator Proficiencies Taught:
- Use of Art Boards
- Print (bleed, crop marks), Save, Export as a PDF
- Tools (and sub tools): Select, Direct Select, Pen, Type, Line (stroke), Rectangle (circles, ellipses), Rotate, Scale, Transform
- RGB, CMYK, Swatches
- Create and modify guides
- Creating and modifying curves
- Grouping, and Layers (printing, locking, naming, subgrouping, etc)
- Masking
- Pathfinder Menu
- Align and Distribute Menu

Project Information

The following text distinguishes between two kinds of assignments: Sample Projects and Portfolio Projects. Portfolio Projects need to meet specific requirements for content and production in order to fulfill the requirements for the Portfolio Review at Sacramento State. Sample Projects are examples of basic assignments that individual instructors should feel free to modify, combine, or replace as they see fit in order to better cover the necessary concepts and proficiencies.

Project 1 Topic: Dynamic Systems
Objectives:
• Explore intervals, scales, and dynamic measurement systems
• Learn about number systems and scales (additive, multiplicative, Fibonacci Sequence, etc.)
• Learn to work in thumbnails and use process of refinement that decreases the quantity of compositions as refinement increases
• Learn to think of designs individually and as a part of a larger set
• Learn to see repeated lines as tonal values, gradients, receding perspective, curved columns, etc.
• Learn the Illustrator Tools (Select, Direct Select, Rectangle), Stroke, Guides, Art Boards, Saving, Printing, use of Align and Distribute Menus

Sample Project:
Using Adobe Illustrator design three 5" x 5" compositions that use a system of alternating series of black and white vertical lines to accomplish the following tasks:
Composition A : have a series of black and white lines, with one color either increasing or decreasing in width, while the other color stays constant
Composition B : have a series of black and white lines, with one color increasing in width, while the other color decreases in width
Composition C : have a series of black and white lines, with both colors of line either increasing or decreasing in width

Each composition needs to work on its own but also needs to work in a dynamic system with the other two compositions.

Refinement: Can the set of three also form a rudimentary grayscale? Example: one composition is predominately white, one is black and the other is a 50/50 mix.

Project 2 Topic: Patterns and Interrupted Patterns
Objectives:
• Learn how the systematic repetition of forms (patterns) create balance
• Learn how interruptions to patterns create tension / focus
• Investigate how the use of balance and tension create more dynamic systems

Sample Project:
Using Adobe Illustrator design a 5" x 5" composition using a repeating set of vertical black and white lines. The set of lines has to repeat at least once, and each repetition needs to be seen in its entirety. The line widths used should work in some form of a system, but they do not need to be specifically in any specific order (i.e. increasing or decreasing). After designing a pattern, create a second composition from the first that converts a single vertical black or white line to its opposite color as an interruption to that pattern. The choice of line should aim for the most dynamic final composition.

Refinement: What kinds of patterns are most visually interesting? Is it possible for the pattern to work with systems from Project 1?

Project 3 Topic: Gestalts
Objectives:
• Learn the following gestalt principles:
- *figure / ground* - the play between what appears as an object and what appears as the background (positive and negative space).
- *equilibrium or symmetry* - the way forms can have visual weight and balance each other in a composition.
- *proximity* - the way forms are group together strictly based on only their placement near each other.
- *similarity* - the way forms are grouped together strictly based on the qualities that they share.
- *continuity or flow* - the way forms can direct the movement of the eye within a composition

- *closure* - the way discrete visual forms can imply a larger object without an actual visual connection.
- Learn the basics of 3-part Color Theory, basic Color Schemes, RGB, CMYK, Swatches
- Learn how to control color in Illustrator
- Hand Craft (cutting, pasting, mounting, etc. —if mounting)
- Digital Craft (aligning, shaping, and connecting elements in Illustrator, printing, bleeds, crop marks, etc. —if printing)

Sample Project:
Using Adobe Illustrator design six 5" x 5" compositions, each illustrating a different gestalt principle. Each composition should also make use of a separate color scheme. Compositions are designed using geometric forms with the number, kind, and size determined by the student. The size and spacing of visual elements (both positive and negative) should make use of intervals, scales, and dynamic systems as discussed in Projects 1 and 2.

Refinement: What is the best way to make these compositions visually interesting? Can the six compositions have an overarching measurement system? Can they share a single color while still containing the necessary color schemes?

Project 4 Topic: Point, Line, and Plane
Objectives:
- Explore visual elements (point, line, plane)
- Explore commonalities between elements (how point becomes line and plane, how line can mimic point and plane, how plane can simulate point and line)
- Explore composition (symmetrical, asymmetrical, dynamic versus calm)
- The integration of previous topics: interval, scales, dynamic systems, pattern, interrupted pattern, gestalts
- Craft and attention to detail within a digital composition (shaping the ends of line segments, the detaching, touching, overlapping, and bleeding of forms)
- Learn to create dashed lines, to create and modifying curved lines, layers (printing, locking, naming, subgroups, etc), masking, and Pathfinder Menu
- Hand Craft (cutting, pasting, mounting, etc. —if mounting)

• Digital Craft (aligning, shaping, and connecting elements in Illustrator, printing, bleeds, crop marks, etc. —if printing)

Sample Project:
Using Adobe Illustrator, create a series of four 5" x 5" dynamic visual compositions. Three of these compositions focus on one of the basic visual elements (point, line, and plane) while the fourth makes use of all three. At the instructor's discretion these compositions can be based off of (found or student taken) architectural images, images of geometric objects, or just be abstract designs of the student's own experimentation. Any images used should be a starting point for an abstract exploration of composition and visual forms.
- Composition A is with points.
- Composition B is with lines.
- Composition C is with planes.
- Composition D is a combination with points, lines, and planes.

Helpful Parameters:
Points should be circular (not elliptical) in shape. For Composition A, the size of points should not exceed 2cm and all the forms should be black (not white). Points should not touch or overlap, but are allowed to bleed beyond the edge of the composition.

Lines should have parallel sides along their length, but the ends can (and should) be shaped/angled. They can be curved or straight, but should avoid being thicker then 10pts. Multiple lines can touch/cross. Lines can be dashed.

Planes can make use of shapes in both solid black and white but should avoid outlines. Shapes can be complex or simple in nature, and overlap, but should not be so small or so narrow as to be indistinguishable from points or lines.

Refinement: Can all four designs have a unifying system?

Project 5 Topic: Messaging Compositions
Objectives:
• Learn to research concepts
• Learn to communicate ideas through abstract forms

- Learn to create compositions that are engaging and communicative
- The integration of previous topics: interval, scales, dynamic systems, pattern, interrupted pattern, gestalts, elemental properties
- Increased proficiency with Adobe Illustrator
- Hand Craft (cutting, pasting, mounting, etc.)
- Digital Craft (aligning, shaping, and connecting elements in Illustrator, printing, bleeds, crop marks, etc.)

Portfolio Project:
Using Adobe Illustrator design four 5" x 5" compositions, each communicating a different idea or concept. The visual elements of these designs is limited to the use of black and white abstract vector forms (points, lines, shapes, etc.) and should avoid realistic imagery whether raster- or vector-based. Designs should not make use of any filters or other visual treatments that smudge, blur, or otherwise visually distress the forms.

Ideas and concepts to be communicated can be chosen by any combination of the student and instructor (at the instructor's discretion), and should be a single word or short phrase.

Refinement: How visually interesting can these compositions be while still communicating the necessary idea?

Project 6 Topic: Abstract Composition
Objectives:
- An examination of what make a composition visually engaging
- The integration of previous topics: interval, scales, dynamic systems, pattern, interrupted pattern, gestalts, elemental properties
- Increased proficiency with Adobe Illustrator
- Hand Craft (cutting, pasting, mounting, etc.)
- Digital Craft (aligning, shaping, and connecting elements in Illustrator, printing, bleeds, crop marks, etc.)

Portfolio Project:
Using Adobe Illustrator design a single visually engaging 8" x 8" abstract composition. The compositional elements of this design are limited to the use of black and white abstract vector forms (points, lines, shapes), and

should avoid realistic imagery whether raster- or vector-based. Designs should not make use of any filters or other visual treatments that smudge, blur, or otherwise visually distress the forms.

Students should feel free to sample or combine previous projects as a starting point for this design. At the instructor's discretion this composition can be based off of a student taken image (architectural or geometric object recommended), but should appear as an abstraction in its final form.

Sample Schedule

Week	Project	Duration	Due date
1th–4th	**Pr-1 and 2**	4 weeks	4th week
5th–6th	**Pr-3**	2 weeks	6th week
7th–10th	**Pr-4**	4 weeks	10th week
8th–14th	**Pr-5 and 6**	7 weeks	14th week
15th–Finals	Mounting Final Class Projects*	1+ weeks	Finals Week

* Likely Projects 5 and 6, but could be any combination of projects at the instructor's discretion.