**USC Jimmy Iovine   
and Andre Young Academy**

### Arts, Technology and the Business of Innovation

**USC Gayle Garner Roski School of   
Fine Arts**

**Course ACAD177 Digital Toolbox 1** (2units/8 weeks)

**Fall – M/W – 10:30am-11:50pm – (Aug 22 – Dec 12)**

**Location:** The Garage 404

**Instructor:** Steve Child

**Office and Mailbox:** Watt Hall 104

**Contact Info:** [child@usc.edu](mailto:child@usc.edu) Roski Office 213-740-2787

**IT Help:**ACAD IT **-** Tim Chen

**Contact Info:** timmyc@usc.edu

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**Course Description**

**Digital Toolbox –Visual Design**

This class will explore the tools and uses of Adobe Creative Suite and it’s the major software programs commonly used by designers - Photoshop, InDesign and Illustrator. Adobe Creative Suite is considered the industry standard graphics package and used in a variety of ways including image manipulation, page layout, web design, and computer illustration. Integration with other software allows designers to produce extraordinary graphics for print, video, web, tablets and mobile devices. This introductory class will give a general overview of these three programs and a solid foundation in digital design tools. The primary objective of the class is to provide students with a working knowledge of the software programs and their application. Instruction includes homework assignments, class lectures, studio exercises and quizzes. Students will be assessed on their participation in class, completed exercises and projects as well as attendance.

**Learning Objectives**

1. To raise awareness of digital design tools and their implementation  
2. To develop perceptual skills in design  
3. To raise the awareness of the computer and various peripherals as the tools for designers

INFORMATION TO BE COVERED INCLUDES:

• Adobe Creative Suite –  
 Introduction and overview of PhotoShop, InDesign, and Illustrator  
• Application of all three software programs in conjunction with one another  
• Scanning and Digital Imaging including digital sketching and rapid visualization techniques  
• Printing and various forms of output (preparing documents for output, file management and storage)

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Co-Requisite/Concurrent Enrollment:**  None

**Course Notes**

Overview: Students are responsible for all assignments, including homework, in-class work, critiques, presentations, demos, readings, process and archiving work on removable media. ACAD 177 Digital Toolbox 1 is a studio-based class, it is crucial for students to attend class regularly since information exchanged in a group discussion or setting may not imparted through handouts or notes. Students must attend class to succeed in the course. Any more than 3 absences will impact your final grade, more than 5 and the student may fail the course. It is the students responsibility to obtain missed work and information missed if absent.

Course documents and information will be posted on Blackboard along with other key course documents such as the syllabus, class schedule and assignment due dates. Please be aware that any changes made to the course schedule over the semester and will be noted during class as well as on Blackboard.

**Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**

Regular access to computer and editing software

**Statement for Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructor (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP:

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\_index.html,

(213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

**Statement on Academic Integrity**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, ([www.usc.edu/scampus](http://www.usc.edu/scampus) or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

**Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis**

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

**Required Supplies, Readings and Supplementary Materials**

SUPPLIES

• Regular access to Computer and Color Printing

• Notebook/Sketchbook

• USB Portable storage device/flash drive or other digital storage devices (flash drives, external storage   
devices, or CDs) It is the students responsibility to BACK EVERYTHING UP, losing work is not an acceptable excuse for missing work. Keep everything you do including sketches and research (process). It cannot be emphasized enough that you should have a reliable backup arrangement. You should at all times have two copies of your digital files at two different locations (e.g., one copy on your flash drive that you carry around, another copy on your computer or another flash drive at home).

RESOURCES

We will not be able to cover every single feature of Photoshop, InDesign and Illustrator. Often features and techniques covered are forgotten if not regularly used. Exercise and assignments are designed to cover crucial concepts. Further in-depth information is covered through Lyndia.com. The class demos and lectures will explain general concepts and techniques but the best way to fully utilize the software is to actively use them in your projects outside of the class. You are expected to deepen your knowledge of the tools on your own. It is very important that you have resources available that will answer your questions outside of class. There are many diverse ways to learn a new software application. Some people do so by having access to a book or viewing step-by-step instructions. Others like to watch tutorial videos, browse websites or the Adobe help files. The following are a few suggestions to turn for help:

Books and Resources (tablet versions are also available on most)  
Adobe Classroom in a Book by The Adobe Creative Team, Adobe Press - Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign versions are available in CS 6 and CC (iCloud)

Illustrator CS6 Visual QuickStart Guide by Lourekas and Weinmann, Peachpit Press  
Photoshop CS6 Visual QuickStart Guide by Lourekas and Weinmann, Peachpit Press  
InDesign CS6 Visual QuickStart Guide by Lourekas and Weinmann, Peachpit Press

Online Resources  
lynda.com – USC students have free access to the tutorials on this site through your USC library account.   
youtube.com – Tons of free tutorial videos. Some arguably better than others. http://www.adobe.com/support/illustrator  
http://www.adobe.com/support/indesign  
http://tv.adobe.com

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

• ASSIGNMENTS: Deadlines are serious! Assignments should be done on time at the beginning of class   
presented properly. You will be graded down a full grade for each class the work is turned in late.

• PRESENTATION: Final assignments should be accompanied with process notes and sketches. Everything should be professionally presented - labeled with your name and contact information on the back. Late assignments will be graded down - a letter grade for each day it is turned in late.

• CRITIQUES/ PARTICIPATION: The purpose of a critique is to provide feedback to a student. Positive criticism and negative criticism are both useful tools in helping us further understand concepts and the visual language. Critiques prove useful in helping us see alternative ways to improve a design solution. You are expected to participate and offer constructive help in the critiques.

• UNDERSTANDING: The tools and techniques discussed in class will be done through demonstrations. Your attentiveness and understanding are very important. To master these programs involves practice and concentration. The understanding should reveal itself in finished exercises projects.

• ABILITY/ CRAFTSMANSHIP: You will be graded on your skillfulness to bring your project’s concepts successfully to life through the visual language. Craftsmanship is an important consideration in all projects. How well you execute your solution will be considered. The ability to produce professional work often can make or break the success of a design.

**Grading Breakdown**

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| **Assignment** | **Percentage** | **Total Points** |
| Homework assignments | 75% | 75 |
| Class participation | 10% | 10 |
| Attendance |  | - grade after 3rd absence |
| Presentation | 15% | 15 |
| FINAL GRADE | 100% = A= 4.0 | 100 = A = 4.0 |

**Additional Policies**

Late assignments, tardiness and absences will have an affect on Final grades for the course as follows.

Late assignments: - 10% of allowed points per each day that it is late

Tardiness: 2 Tardy = 1 Absence

After 3 Absences, a whole grade will deducted per absence from the final grade

**Assignment Submission Policy**

Assignments given will be critiqued during normal class times. Student must come in prepared to present their work and give input to other students’ projects during critiques. When an assignment is due, the project must be clearly labeled and left with the instructor. Sketchbooks will be checked, in class, at scheduled times. Projects not presented during critiques or turned in are considered late and will be penalized as described above. It is the student’s responsibility to get assignments to the instructor if the student is absent. Digital work may be submitted via email, details will be clearly given when assignments are given.

**Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

**WEEK ONE** INTRODUCTION & MAC BASICS  
 Syllabus and Class Introductions  
 Mac Basics + Navigation + Introduction to Adobe Creative Suite

Pixel vs. Vector Artwork  
Resolution and File Formats

Kindergarten and Modern Art

**WEEK TWO** ILLUSTRATOR

Creating and Transforming Objects + Arrangement

Basic Paths + Fill/Stroke  
 Guides + Grid + Rulers

Geometry – Symmetry - Asymmetry

**WEEK THREE** ILLUSTRATOR  
 Text Tool + Clipping and Opacity Masks  
 Layers and Templates

Advanced Paths

Harmonies in Nature, Art, and Architecture

**WEEK FOUR** PHOTOSHOP  
 Resolution + Cropping

Color Modes and Management

Scanning and Basic Color Correction  
 Basic and Advanced Selection Tools

**WEEK FIVE** PHOTOSHOP  
 Layers and Adjustments  
 Masking and Compositing  
 Advanced Image Correction

Creative Problem Solving Methods

**WEEK SIX** INDESIGN  
 Character and Paragraphs  
 Importing Images

Pages + Masters + Styles

**WEEK SEVEN** INDESIGN   
 Integrating Creative Suite Programs

Preflight Documents and Printing  
 Importing, Placing, and Drag + Drop Files

**WEEK EIGHT** INDESIGN | ILLUSTRATOR | PHOTOSHOP - FINAL PROJECT | EXAM