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## Course Outline for VCOM 50

### GRAPHIC DESIGN/DIGITAL MEDIA FUNDAMENTALS

Effective: Fall 2017

#### I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

VCOM 50 — GRAPHIC DESIGN/DIGITAL MEDIA FUNDAMENTALS — 3.00 units

Introduction to Digital Art and Design Media and their use in the vocations of Graphic Design, Web and Device Design, Information Design, and Digital Art and Photography. An exploration of the methods of conceptual development of visual content and the language of design to direct the use of these digital tools at basic technical level to bring this content to completion in print or on screen.

1.00 Units Lecture 2.00 Units Lab

#### Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

#### Discipline:

	<b>MIN</b>
<b>Lecture Hours:</b>	18.00
<b>Lab Hours:</b>	108.00
<b>Total Hours:</b>	126.00

#### II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

#### III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

#### IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

**Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:**

- A. Create digital compositions that use the primary design principles of unity, variety, hierarchy (dominance), the supporting principles of scale, balance, rhythm, repetition, economy, and proximity; and the plastic elements of design as compositional content—i.e. shape, space, line, size, color, texture, and type
- B. Create Illustrator and Photoshop documents at the most basic level;
- C. Write and speak using design terminology.
- D. Brainstorm ideas for design by building image and word maps, and creating hand sketches and mockups of concepts based on brainstorm ideas
- E. Identify the wide variety of vocational options in the visual communications field
- F. Apply the elements and principles of design in finished digital images and time-based works
- G. Create a portfolio of work demonstrating formal, conceptual, and technical development
- H. Produce digital images and time-based work through various digital media input and output methods using vector or raster-based software
- I. Examine and describe contemporary approaches, language, aesthetics and emerging media in digital art
- J. Safely handle and maintain digital imaging hardware and materials
- K. Evaluate and critique digital images and time-based works utilizing relevant terminology and concepts

#### V. CONTENT:

- A. Elements and principles of design as they relate to digital media.
- B. Concept development as it relates to digital and time-based art.
- C. The use of technology to create art through various digital media input and output methods.
- D. Principles and uses of vector and raster-based software in the creation of digital art.
- E. Characteristics of color in additive and subtractive color systems.
- F. History, contemporary trends, language, aesthetics and emerging media as they relate to digital art.
- G. Group and individual critiques of digital images utilizing relevant terminology and concepts.
- H. Getting started in visual communications
  1. Vocational/academic opportunities
- I. The creative process in digital design
  1. Comprehend the client brief (project/assignment)
  2. Conceptualize solution(s)
    - a. Brainstorm ideas
    - b. Create image and text maps
    - c. Sketch concepts by hand and on the computer
  3. Choose format (dimension and orientation of document)
  4. Create mockup
  5. Begin design work

- a. Launch appropriate design or content creation application(s) and create new electronic document(s).
  - b. Save and back up work (ongoing).
  - c. Translate hand-drawn sketch(es) and mockup to the computer.
  - d. Develop and refine concepts.
  - e. Obtain feedback.
- 6. Complete Phase One of design process
  - a. Present Work orally and visually (repeatable).
  - b. Print work or save for screen/web (repeatable).
  - c. Prepare for oral and visual presentation (repeatable).
  - d. Matte work if appropriate (repeatable).
  - e. Experience peer and/or client feedback and/or critique (repeatable).
  - f. Revise oral/visual presentation (repeatable).
  - g. Listen to and understand feedback (repeatable).
- 7. Refine design within limits specified by feedback (repeatable).
- 8. Complete Phase Two of design process.
  - a. Complete and back up final version of work.
  - b. Hand in work to client or instructor (remount if appropriate).
- J. Concentrating on the conceptualization process for design
  - 1. Oral and written language as it relates to conceptual process
  - 2. Image and word maps in relationship to the design process
  - 3. Hand-drawn sketches and mock-ups
  - 4. Transferring sketches to the computer
- K. Color Theory as applied to digital design
  - 1. Additive (on-screen) color and subtractive (printed) color
  - 2. Color wheels and color grouping
  - 3. Using print and on-screen color palettes in digital systems
  - 4. Creating custom colors in digital systems
  - 5. Explore subjective elements of color use to develop a personal color sense
- L. Learning design as a visual language
  - 1. Developing a visual vocabulary is like learning a new language.
  - 2. Study elements individually at first.
  - 3. Combine elements in more complex ways.
  - 4. Building visual competence and applying it to creating a design vocabulary
    - a. Mindful observance in daily life.
    - b. Study accepted technical authorities in books or on-screen.
    - c. Go online to design-related sites.
    - d. Study the work of contemporary designers and design through history.
    - e. Visual language is complex and fluid.
      - 1. Influenced by cultural, social, and technological change
      - 2. Using it is an ongoing learning process
      - 3. Principles and elements do not change.
      - 4. Gaining a working knowledge leads to possessing the means to powerful communication.
- M. Fundamental design principles that affect the composition as a whole
  - 1. Unity
    - a. An overriding principle
    - b. Served by all other principles
    - c. Controls variety
  - 2. Variety
    - a. Creates visual interest
    - b. Balance of visual contrasts
    - c. Combination of elements
  - 3. Hierarchy—an arranged order
    - a. Principle functions of hierarchy
      - 1. Dominance—influence of one element over another
    - b. Emphasis—stressing one element over another
  - 4. Proportion
    - a. Size relationship
    - b. Outer dimensions have a relationship to internal divisions and alignments.
- N. Support principles—affect the interaction among elements
  - 1. Scale
    - a. Size comparison of internal parts
    - b. Comparison based on a known constant such as human scale
    - c. Helps establish hierarchy
  - 2. Balance—Visual distribution of elements
    - a. Symmetry
    - b. Asymmetry
    - c. Physical balance
    - d. Radial symmetry
  - 3. Rhythm
    - a. Alternating occurrence of form and space
    - b. Creates eye movement
  - 4. Repetition
    - a. Regular pattern of elements
    - b. Principle function of repetition—pattern (configuration of distributed elements)
  - 5. Proximity
    - a. Relative position of elements
    - b. Creates visual tension
- O. Plastic elements of design used in visual communications
  - 1. Shape—Figure or mass; form is shape with volume:
    - a. Geometric
    - b. Organic
  - 2. Space—Area activated by visual elements
    - a. Figure/Ground
    - b. Form/Counterform
    - c. Positive/Negative
  - 3. Line—Moving path of a point
    - a. Line as type
    - b. Line as edge
    - c. Line implied
  - 4. Size (Format)—Physical dimensions

- a. Serves scale and proportion
  - b. Size is contextual/relative
- 5. Color—Hues found in light and pigment
  - a. Convey mood
  - b. Enhance pictorial space
  - c. Heighten emotion
  - d. Transmit cultural meaning
- 6. Texture—Quality and characteristic of surface
  - a. Tactile texture
  - b. Visual texture
- 7. Typography—Letter and word forms
  - a. Line
  - b. Texture
  - c. Shape
- P. A guide to presentation, critique or feedback in design
  - 1. Strategy and Concept Development
    - a. What is the purpose of the design?
    - b. What information must be communicated?
    - c. Does the design meet the objectives?
    - d. What is the design concept?
    - e. Does the design concept fit the strategy?
  - 2. Design
    - a. Did the designer use principles of graphic space such as balance, emphasis, rhythm and unity?
    - b. Did the designer experiment? Did the designer take a creative leap or produce a competent piece?
    - c. What visuals were used and why?
    - d. What point of view was expressed, if any?
    - e. What creative approaches were employed?
    - f. Is the design solution (e.g., design, color, type, style, personality) appropriate for the client's product/service? Can you suggest improvement(s) to the next iteration?
  - 3. Craft
    - a. Did the techniques and materials used best represent the design concept?
    - b. Is it well-crafted?
    - c. It is presented professionally and appropriately?
- Q. Using studio hardware, software
  - 1. Using Illustrator and Photoshop at the basic level
    - a. Introduction of technical methods needed to achieve success in projects (ongoing throughout semester)
    - b. The Adobe interface: similarities across the Suite
  - 2. Introduction to Adobe Bridge
  - 3. How/Why to drop and drag items, place items
- R. File management to industry standard
  - 1. Naming conventions
  - 2. Filing conventions
  - 3. Save and Back up documents
- S. Craftsmanship in solution and presentation
  - 1. Finalizing Work Product
  - 2. Mounting
  - 3. Printing
  - 4. On-Screen Images
  - 5. Verbal presentation skills

## VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** - History of design from original printed work in China through the western development of movable type to contemporary design for web and device based publication.
- B. **Demonstration** - Demonstrations of design techniques using Adobe CS and other software
- C. **Projects** - Assignments focusing on the conceptual development in project-based digital images and time-based works
- D. **Lab** - Create art through various digital media input and output methods using vector or raster-based software.
- E. **Critique** - Group and individual critiques in oral and written formats
- F. **Classroom Activity** - Viewing examples of student and professional work. Practical exercises on and off the computer. Exercise in brainstorming and conceptual sketching. Appropriate material and relevant software exploration. Computer lab time with instructor and cooperative peer support.

## VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Create 6 Black & White compositions, each consisting of only four squares or rectangles within a supplied template, and each descriptive of one of six supplied words.
- B. Using supplied "found imagery" and template, re-imagine the old nursery rhyme "Jack and Jill" in a six panel composition.
- C. Using six supplied templates with font-specific alphabets, create compositions of only the letters, numerals, and punctuation in each specified alphabet to create six compositions, each exemplifying the meaning or concept of six given words.
- D. For the final project, create a smart phone "app": define a need or purpose, develop five to six "content" areas that will become "pages" in the "app", create the app logo, design the look and feel of the content pages, transfer all designs to a provided template.

## VIII. EVALUATION:

### A. **Methods**

- 1. Exams/Tests
- 2. Papers
- 3. Oral Presentation
- 4. Projects
- 5. Class Participation
- 6. Class Work
- 7. Home Work
- 8. Lab Activities

### B. **Frequency**

- 1. Exams/Tests as needed
- 2. Papers/written assignments as needed
- 3. Oral presentations and projects for midterm and final exam projects
- 4. Class Participation weekly
- 5. Classwork/Lab Activity Weekly

6. Homework as needed
7. Mid-term project approximately 2/3rds through the semester
8. Final project due on the day of finals

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. John Bowers *Introduction to Graphic Design Methodologies and Processes: Understanding Theory and Application*. 1 ed., Wiley, 2011.
2. *How to Use Graphic Design to Sell Things, Explain Things, Make Things Look Better, Make People Laugh*. 1 ed., Harper Design, 2015.
3. *Graphic Design: The New Basics*. 2 ed., Princeton Architectural Press, 2015.
4. Arntson, Amy. *Digital Design Basics*. 1 ed., Cengage Learning, 2005.
5. Stone, Jim, and Barbara London. *A Short Course in Photography*. 8 ed., Pearson, 2011.
6. Online resources
  1. Instructor videos on class web site
  2. Instructor tutorials on class web site
  3. [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com) (published by Adobe Corporation)
  4. online HELP in all applications

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. Sketchbook
- B. X-acto Knife
- C. Metal ruler/straight edge
- D. Drawing Pencils: B, HB, H
- E. Kneaded eraser
- F. Sharpie pens or equivalent
- G. VCOM PRINT CARD(s)