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Course Outline for VCOM 50

VISUAL COM/PROCESS OF DESIGN

Effective: Fall 2009

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

VCOM 50 — VISUAL COM/PROCESS OF DESIGN — 3.00 units

Introduction to the vocation of visual communication and the creative processes, methods and tools used in developing concepts and final designs for print or web. Emphasis is placed on exploring the conceptual design process, learning the language of design, and basic level technical skills and techniques used across industry standard software, cross-platform operating systems, and hardware.

2.00 Units Lecture 1.00 Units Studio Lab

Prerequisite

VCOM 48 - Intro to a Design Studio

Grading Methods:

Discipline:

	<u>MIN</u>
Lecture Hours:	36.00
Studio Lab Hours:	72.00
Total Hours:	36.00

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

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering the course a student should be able to:

A. VCOM48

1. Turn on and turn off computers in a design studio lab;
2. Access and navigate the computer desktop and server, cross-platform, at the most basic level;

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

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

- A. Identify the wide variety of vocational options in the visual communications field;
- B. Brainstorm ideas for design by building image and word maps, and creating hand sketches and mockups of concepts based on brainstorm ideas;
- C. Write and speak using design terminology at the most basic level;
- D. 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—at the most basic level;
- E. Demonstrate beginning development of appropriate solution and basic level craftsmanship in presentation;
- F. Create Illustrator CS2 or Photoshop CS2 documents at the most basic level;
- G. Perform file management tasks with increased facility.

V. CONTENT:

- A. Getting started in visual communications
 1. Vocational/academic opportunities
- B. 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 application(s) in Adobe Creative Suite CS2 and make 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 work corresponding to 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).
- C. 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
- D. Learning design as a visual language
 - 1. Developing a visual vocabulary is like learning a new language.
 - 2. Study elements individually at first.
 - 3. Gradually learn to combine elements in more complex ways.
 - 4. Learning the design visual vocabulary.
 - a. Be observant.
 - b. Read design-related books and magazines.
 - c. Go online to design-related sites.
 - d. Study the work of contemporary designers and design through the 20th century.
 - 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.
- E. 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.
- F. 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
- G. 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
- H. 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?
- I. 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
- J. Review from VCOM X: file management to industry standard
 1. Naming conventions
 2. Filing conventions
 3. Save and Back up documents
- K. 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** -
- B. Practical exercises on and off the computer
- C. **Demonstration** -
- D. Computer lab time with instructor and cooperative peer support
- E. Exercises in brainstorming and conceptual sketching
- F. Appropriate materials and relevant software exploration
- G. Viewing examples of student and professional work

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Written assignment and hands-on project in two parts: Unity and Variety 1. Part One: Written assignment a. Refer to image 1, chapter 1 of required textbook, Exploring the Elements of Design. Observe the items in the image, and carefully read the caption. b. Conduct research to find another set of merchandise that is unified in overall look and feel, but that uses variety to make each item unique as is true in the book's example. c. Write a minimum one paragraph description of how the designer of your items created a sense of overall unity in design. How is the logo created and used? How does the design vary from one item to another? Which principles of design are utilized to achieve effects? How are the visual contrasts balanced? 2. Part Two: Hands-on project a. Create a set of no less than 5 digital compositions that together embody the design principle of "unity and variety". Choose as many elements of design and use as many design principles as you need to accomplish the task. Print and mount all of your compositions and be prepared for critique by writing a short paragraph that describes your conceptual process for achieving unity and variety. How does this assignment translate to the real world? For what sorts of client needs could you use this conceptual approach? B. Hands-on project: Working with abstract shapes in symmetrical compositions 1. Using only these 5 shapes, hand sketch two different symmetrical compositions in a square format 6" x 6". a. Use ALL 5 shapes in each composition, at least once. b. Repeat shapes as often as you like in each composition, but don't add any new shapes. c. Don't transform the shapes in any way, except to resize them uniformly (scaling up or down). 2. Using Illustrator or Photoshop CS2, create 2 documents, each 6" square. 3. Recreate each of your hand-drawn compositions in these files. 4. Using a similar color palette for both compositions, fill all shapes. 5. Save these compositions as "yourlastname_color1" and "2" respectively with correct extension. 6. Return to each saved composition. Make size changes to shapes in one document, and use grey scale value changes in the other. Rename and save these as "yourlastname_altered1" and "2" respectively with correct extension. 7. Back up documents on server and removable media. 8. Print all documents and mount on a matte board per handout instructions. 9. Prepare to discuss the following by having written notes prepared for an oral presentation: a. Compare and contrast how your first set of compositions relates to the other vis-a-vis Format? Color? Shape? Is one solution stronger? Why? What elements stand out more despite being colored in a similar palette? Why? b. In viewing the second set of compositions as compared to the first, how does varying even one element in otherwise identical compositions change the viewers' perspective? c. How does the use of symmetry for format and solution effect the overall composition and its elements? What mood is created? What message is sent? d. How does this assignment translate to the real world? For what sorts of client needs could you use this conceptual approach? C. Hands-on Project: Final exam 1. Using InDesign produce a 4-page newsletter (finished size - 8.5" x 11", two-folds) using documents and software skills from previous assignments. Minimum requirements: create and use the following: a. 3 Word documents (filler text OK), single column, word count: minimum 500 b. 3-cmyk native Photoshop CS2 images c. 3-cmyk native Illustrator CS2 images d. Use image or word map to create concept sketches. e. Design and create full-size layout mock up. f. Create native InDesign file based on mockup. g. Using InDesign: drop and drag images and text into layout. h. Size text and images based on mock up. i. In one text box: create 3 text columns with extra text flowing to a linked second page. j. Apply color to one piece of text, one text frame. k. Save native file on server and removable n

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. Methods

1. Exams/Tests
2. Papers
3. Projects
4. Lab Activities
5. Class Performance
6. Other:
 - a. Methods:
 1. Written assignments
 2. Observation through hands-on lab work
 3. Tests: Mid-term and final exam projects
 4. Critical analysis of assigned work
 5. Problem-solving performance exercises or projects including presentation, discussion and critique sessions
 6. Review and evaluate student's assigned projects, their comprehension and application of the terms and concepts listed above

B. Frequency

1. Frequency:
 - a. Weekly lab sessions
 - b. Weekly exercises
 - c. 5-10 brainstorm and design projects
 - d. Mid-term exam: large project
 - e. Final exam: culminating project
2. Examples:
 - a. Written exercise assignment: Identify and describe 5 of the wide variety of vocational options in the visual communications field.
 - b. Hands-on exercise: Brainstorm ideas to redesign the VCOM web site using image and word maps.
 - c. Final Project: Create an abstract vertical or horizontal 5" x 7" composition showing all stages of work from concept through completion.
 - d. Your composition must include
 1. all the following design principles: unity, variety, hierarchy (dominance), and proportion;
 2. at least 3 of the following supporting principles: scale, balance, rhythm, repetition, economy, and proximity;
 3. and must incorporate 3 of the following plastic elements - line, shape, color, texture, and typography;
 4. mount your composition on matte board minimum size 8": x 10";
 5. prepare a formal 2-minute presentation for critique;
 6. prepare notes suitable to participate in critique and feedback sessions.

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Wilde, Judith, and Richard Wilde *Visual Literacy: A Conceptual Approach to Graphic Problem Solving.*, Watson-Guptill, 2000.
2. Evans, Poppy, and Mark Thomas *Exploring the Elements of Design.* 2nd Rev ed., Delmar Cengage Learning, 2007.
3. Online resources
 1. www.adobe.com (published by Adobe Corporation)
 2. online HELP in all applications

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. Required list of supplies to complete all of the assigned studies.