Course Outline for VCOM 56

DESIGN CONCEPTS I

Effective: Fall 2009

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:
VCOM 56 — DESIGN CONCEPTS I — 3.00 units

Design and skills development course exploring the creative processes, methods, strategies and tools used in developing concepts and final designs in any visual field including the basic elements of design: line, texture, value, shape, color, light, and spatial concepts Emphasis is placed on experience applying design principles and conventions to create 2-dimensional work. Use of computers as digital design tool along with basic manual techniques relating to effective preparation, presentation, craftsmanship and professionalism in presentation.

2.00 Units Lecture 1.00 Units Studio Lab

Strongly Recommended
GDDM 51 - Color Theory for Design
and

GDDM 52 - Introduction to Typography
and

GDDM 53 - Photoshop I
or

VCOM 54 - Illustrator I for Design

Grading Methods:
Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

	MIN
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 this course, it is strongly recommended that the student should be able to:

A. GDDM51
B. GDDM52
C. GDDM53
D. VCOM54
    1. Work in the Illustrator interface at the most basic level with facility;
    2. Manage new and existing Illustrator documents: set-up/launch, retrieve, save for print and screen, cross-platform;

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:
Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

A. Brainstorm design concepts for any visual field end-use with greater facility;
B. Follow the creative process when designing for any media or visual field;
C. Use all three types of composition: symmetrical, asymmetrical and radial as appropriate;
D. Apply design principles and conventions to create 2- and 3-dimensional design work from concept through completion, with disciplined control and craftsmanship;
E. Use essential aesthetic considerations when designing for any visual field;
F. Create the illusion of 3-dimensional content in a 2-dimensional work space;
G. Speak and write with professional vocabulary terms in relationship to creative work (known as "the language of design");
H. Identify the practical problems and concerns facing the designer and the visual communications industry as a whole, and devise strategies to use when facing multi-faceted design challenges;
I. Demonstrate ability to use a design computer application to accomplish design tasks at the basic level.

V. CONTENT:
   A. Review and Build Knowledge
      1. The creative process in design
         a. Comprehend the client brief (project/assignment)
         b. Conceptualize solution(s)
         c. Choose format
         d. Create hand sketch and mockup
         e. Phase One: Begin design work
         f. Complete Phase One: Presentation of Concept(s)
         g. Refine design work corresponding to feedback (repeatable)
         h. Complete Phase Two (Completion of Concepts(s)
      2. Types of composition
         a. Symmetrical
         b. Asymmetrical
         c. Radial balance
      3. Considerations in Composition
         a. Unity
         b. Variety
         c. Proportion
         d. Hierarchy
      4. The Plastic Elements
         a. Line—outline, contour, quality, weight
         b. Shape (including positive and negative)
         c. Value
         d. Texture
         e. Space—picture plane, format, focal point
         f. Type
   B. Creating the Visual Illusion of 3-Dimensions in a 2-Dimensional Space
      1. Foreshortening—the illusion created on a flat surface in which figures and objects appear to recede or project sharply into space
      2. Use of line: for direction, decoration, mood, connect and/or divide
      3. Use of type: as shape, as powerful communicative tool
      4. Use of shape: as block of color or value, as imported and/or photographic image
      5. Use of texture: as an element in creating contrasts of structure and/or space
      6. Use of value: grayscale, black and white
      7. Use of color: hue, value, and intensity; contrasts of hue, value, cool and warm, complementary, simultaneous contrast, intensity, and extension
      8. Emphasizing and de-emphasizing three-dimensional forms with color; to create a mood/emotion
      9. Use of balance: symmetry/asymmetry
      10. Relationship of positive and negative shapes
      11. Illusion of space with and without use of perspective (line only, shape, and value)
      12. Rhythm in pattern and shape (progressive, alternating, flowing, repetitive)
      13. Emphasis and/or exaggeration to achieve unity
   C. Review: Using Studio Hardware, Software
      1. Introduction of digital software methods and techniques needed to achieve success in projects (ongoing throughout semester)
      2. Techniques in Adobe Creative Suite applications: Illustrator and Photoshop at the basic level (ongoing as needed)
   D. Overview: Practical Problems Facing the Designer
      1. "Brain drain"—My creative juices have dried up.
      2. Checking your ego at the door
      3. Projecting authority during presentation
      4. LISTENING to, hearing, and acting on feedback
      5. PRACTICE and perseverance
      6. Meeting deadlines
      7. Being a life-long learner
   E. Review and build: 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 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?

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:
   A. Assigned exercises in visual design skills and applications and large applied projects
   B. Lecture, discussion and demonstration on project-related topics
   C. Examples of student and professional work
   D. **Field Trips** - to industry seminars, conventions and conferences if available
   E. Computer lab time with direct instructor and cooperative peer support
   F. Student critique sessions
   G. Appropriate materials and relevant software exploration

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:
   A. Hands-On Project: Visual Storytelling—This assignment requires you to tell a visual story in three panels. You are limited only by the criteria stated below. 1. Choose a Theme: Design three 5" x 7" asymmetrical compositions that have a realistic theme and that when viewed together, tell a visual story across three panels. Each composition must have thematic and

design elements that relate to each other. For example: if your theme is "A Cat's Tale," the following could be a story in 3 compositions based on that theme: 1. cat on a rug looks up and sees a fishbowl on a table; 2. cat is on the table hovering over the fishbowl; 3. cat is on the rug eating the fish. 2. Research the Theme: Bring in photos, pictures, and/or sketches to inform your work. You can use Illlustrator or Photoshop or both. Hand-sketch compositions first. A sketch can be abstract even if the theme is realistic. 3. Composition: Each 5" x 7" panel must be a complete asymmetrical composition and when pieced together, all three panels should form a cohesive visual whole. The panels may be presented in vertical or horizontal orientation depending on your story. 4. Rendering Style: In each composition use similar rendering techniques; use the same look and feel of shape, color value (grey scale) and line elements throughout. 5. Design Elements: Incorporate as many design elements as necessary to achieve an interesting, strong, asymmetrical design—e.g., line, shape, color, texture—DO NOT USE ANY TYPE or LETTERING. 6. Color: Work in two phases a. Phase One: Use B&W and/or the grey scale only. b. Phase Two: Spot Color—Add dramatic color for dynamic effect. In each composition use one strong contrasting color for emphasis to "drive the story". This color must be 100% value (no tint or gradient) and must be the same color in each panel. This color can be applied only ONCE in ONE SHAPE in EACH panel. 7. Presentation Preparation: Turn in all three 5" x 7" compositions on 1 black matte board that measures 9" x 19" as well as an electronic matte board and files optimized for the web. The panels may be mounted in vertical or horizontal orientation depending on your story. 8. Additional Challenge: Create a fourth panel: 5" square with an asymmetrical composition that completes your story, with one "spot" color as above. Mount all 4 panels so that together they form a dynamic composition on a black matte board. Determine dimensions of board to fit your concept. 9. Present work: Participate in presentation and critique session B. Hands-on Assignment: Contrast Studies 1. Choose 3 sets of words from the following list of complement descriptions and using a dictionary define them. a. negative/positive b. jagged/straight c. geometric/organic d. serene/chaotic e. rough/smooth f. random/orderly g. saturated/pastel h. static/kinetic i. monumental/diminutive 2. Design two contrasting compositions for each set of complement words you chose. 3. Strive for economy in the compositions, using REALISM in at least one set (the others can be accomplished using simple geometric and non-objective shapes and lines.) 4. Use a format that is 4" x 4" for each composition. 5. Print and flush mount on individual boards with no borders. 6. Presentation: Develop a 2-minute presentation that covers the development process you used to arrive at one set of compositions. Lead Q & A and feedback.

VIII. EVALUATION:
  A. **Methods**
    1. Exams/Tests
    2. Research Projects
    3. Papers
    4. Oral Presentation
    5. Projects
    6. Lab Activities
    7. Other:
      a. Methods:
        1. Practical studio assignments, oral discussion and critique, written assignments and final project exams, formal research, studio lab observation, peer and self review
  B. **Frequency**
    1. Frequency
      a. Weekly and biweekly exercises
      b. Bi-weekly projects and presentation, oral and visual
      c. One midterm and one final project including presentation and critique
    2. Examples
      a. Hands-on project
        1. Brainstorm ideas for new Design Shop print materials and web site.
      b. Oral and hands-on assignment
        1. Discuss and identify how and which aesthetic considerations and design principles you used when designing concepts for new Design Shop print materials and website.
      c. In discussion, critique and written assignments
        1. Demonstrate increased ability to use professional vocabulary terminology in relationship to creative work.
      d. Research and written assignment
        1. Identify three practical problems and concerns facing the designer and the visual communications industry as a whole, and devise conceptual and technical strategies to use when facing these challenges.
      e. Review and evaluate student's assigned projects, their comprehension and application of the terms and concepts listed above

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:
    1. Botello, Chris *Adobe Illustrator CS3 Revealed.*, Delmar Cengage Learning, 2007.
    2. Evans, Poppy and Mark Thomas *Exploring the Elements of Design.* 2nd Rev ed., Delmar Cengage Learning, 2007.
    3. Peterson, Bryan *Design Basics for Creative Results.* 2nd Rev ed., F&W Media, 2003.
    4. Reding, Elizabeth Eisner *Adobe Photoshop CS3 Revealed.*, Delmar Cengage Learning, 2007.
    5. Online resources such as: www.designexploration.com, www.adobe.com
    6. Online and traditional periodicals such as: How, Print, Publish, ID
    7. Online Help in all applications
    8. Online design sites as appropriate

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:
  A. Required list of supplies to complete all of the assigned studies