



**PR 486: Introduction to Digital Design
Tools
2 Units**

Summer 2017 – Tues/Thu – 6-8:05 p.m.

Section: 050-21045R

Location: ANN 209

Instructor: Jenn de la Fuente

Office: ANN 204A

Office Hours: By appointment only.

Contact Info: jdelafue@usc.edu, cell (916) 538-2133

(Please do not call or text my cell phone on weekends or late at night.)

I. Course Description

It's increasingly important that public relations professionals not only be good at writing for an array of audiences, but also have an understanding of basic design principles and a fluency in digital design tools, such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Adobe InDesign. While many organizations may employ outside designers, or have an art department of their own, sometimes the task of creating smaller design collateral, such as postcards, Infographics or posters, falls to the PR practitioner. For many smaller firms, an art department or contract design help may not be available, so it is even more imperative to have a basic understanding of how to design collateral and execute these designs in the above programs. These are also important skills to have when communicating with an art department or outside designer, so you can clearly and effectively work with these parties and understand their needs.

II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment

There are two main learning objectives in this class: Learning the foundation for good design practice, and developing a basic proficiency in Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign. This class will allow you to exercise a lot of creativity as well in the assignments. You will have to come up with your own design concepts and execute them. Each of the assignments will measure:

- Your ability to present a concept for a project. Public relations is all about devising ideas on how to promote a brand, a product, an issue or idea, and your ability to not only develop a concept but also to explain how and why it is appropriate for your target audience(s) is key in the industry.
- Your ability to execute a design idea. Is your design appropriate for the audience? Is it aesthetically sound? Can you explain why you made the design choices you did?
- Your ability to use the design programs that are industry standards: Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign... You should be able to create basic collateral using any of these programs by the end of this class.
- Your ability to present your final idea to your peers. This will prepare you for client presentations, fielding questions asking why certain design or collateral decisions were made, and being able to explain your concept from beginning to how it was executed.

III. Description of Assignments

All the assignments in this class will follow a semester-long theme: your own record company. Students will think of a concept -- including a name -- for their own company, and create collateral throughout the semester for this company.

Assignments are as follows:

- **Company pitch:** Students must devise a name for their own record company and decide what the theme and musical vibe for this company will be. For example, what genre of music would this company promote, and what are some examples of artists that would be represented by this record company? What is the target audience and demographic? What kind of look and feel does the student envision for this company?
- **Basic branding and business card:** Students will create a basic logo (can be type-based) for the record company. What color schemes and fonts will be used for collateral and why? Students will also design a business card (two-sided) for the company.
- **Promotional poster:** It's time to promote your record company with a poster. Imagine it will be plastered on the street, at music venues, at coffee shops, at record stores, or wherever it can get put up. How will the student quickly grab the attention of people and get them interested in your record company?
- **Final project - CD/package giveaway:** Students will create a final booklet (similar to the liner notes you find in CD cases) and a promotional item to give away to inform people about their record company. Students must write all the copy for the liner notes and design it. Students will also design a CD case or other promotional packaging for a sampler of music that the record company will promote. (Note: the package doesn't have to be for a CD -- sometimes it can contain a USB drive or a digital music sampler. It depends on how creative the student wants to be!)

IV. Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

| Assignment | % of Grade |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Record company pitch | 15% |
| Branding / Business Card | 25% |
| Poster | 25% |
| Final Project | 35% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

b. Grading Scale

The following scale will be used for this course:

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|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 95 to 100: A | 70 to less than 75: C+ | 45 to less than 50: D- |
| 90 to less than 95: A- | 65 to less than 70: C | 0 to less than 45: F |
| 85 to less than 90: B+ | 60 to less than 65: C- | |
| 80 to less than 85: B | 55 to less than 60: D+ | |
| 75 to less than 80: B- | 50 to less than 55: D | |

c. Grading Standards

"A" projects have writing near professional quality; one or no mistakes; clearly proofread and edited material. All required elements included. Excellent organization and flow; original thinking. Showed creativity in concept and great design sense and needs little revision. High end of scale: publishable today as is. Physical product shows a high degree of craftsmanship: straight-cut edges, no smudges or unnecessary creases, high print quality and construction. Could be mass-produced as is.

"B" projects have two to five spelling, grammar or AP Style mistakes. One or more required elements missing or poorly displayed (i.e., boring headline; confusing design, misplaced elements, etc.). Shows potential. Some creativity shown. Publishable with medium editing. Physical product may have minor flaws, such as uneven cutting on the edges, one or two crooked elements, small printing imperfections/smudges/blotches, uneven color.

"C" projects have more than five errors (spelling, grammar, AP style). Poorly edited and/or proofread. Hackneyed elements such as trite headline or clichés. Passive rather than active verbs become the norm. Little or no creativity shown. Mediocre concept or no real design concept at all. Publishable with major editing. Physical product is of mediocre quality and may be printed on low-quality stock. Physical product has major flaws, such as discoloration, fading, poorly cut edges, obviously crooked elements, obvious printing imperfections and smudges and appears hastily constructed without any attention to craftsmanship.

"D" projects have more than 10 errors (spelling, grammar). Needs to be completely rewritten. Poorly organized with little or no understanding of journalistic style and design standards. Needs to work with writing coach. No coherent or discernible design concept, no thought given to what design elements were used, such as color or typeface. Unable to explain design choices. Physical product needs to be completely reprinted and reconstructed.

"F" projects are not rewritable, printed in an unacceptable fashion, late or not turned in.

V. Assignment Submission Policy

A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be dropped one grade. Assignments that are two weeks late will be dropped two grades. No late assignments will be accepted after two weeks.

B. Assignments must be submitted via email or Dropbox. For the business card, poster, and final project, you will turn in BOTH a digital version of your project, and a physical copy of your project. Exact printing specifications will be provided for each project. Your instructor will provide instructions on how to submit your files via Dropbox for projects that are too large to send via email. Digital versions are due before the class date specified; you must bring your printed version to class and turn it in during class. **BOTH THE PHYSICAL VERSION AND DIGITAL VERSION MUST BE TURNED IN BEFORE THE SPECIFIED DUE DATE TO BE CONSIDERED ON TIME.** If either portion is turned in late, the entire assignment is considered late.

VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

You can find tutorials for the Adobe programs here. Feel free to practice all you want!

Photoshop: <https://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/tutorials.html>

Illustrator: <https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/tutorials.html>

InDesign: <https://helpx.adobe.com/indesign/tutorials.html>

VII. Laptop Policy

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the **Annenberg Virtual Commons** for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's **Information Technology Services** website.

You will also need to have access to the Adobe Creative Suite, which is available to all Annenberg students. If you are not already an Annenberg student, you will need to obtain a license key through Annenberg Technical Operations for this class. You can request a license key through this form:

https://docs.google.com/a/usc.edu/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc53HWfEvpdBesMqXUMRBX7GDdZAr3Vg2x13ksHHcReYykR_w/viewform?c=0&w=1

If you have problems with downloading programs from the Adobe suite, or have license issues, refer to this site:

<http://www.annenbergdl.org/adobe/>

Add/Drop Dates for Session 050 (6 weeks: 5/17/17 – 6/27/17)

Friday, May 24: Last day to register and add classes for Session 050

Friday, May 24: Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund for Session 050

Friday, June 2: Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 050

Friday, June 19: Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 050

VIII. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Important note to students: *Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.*

| | Topics/Daily Activities | Readings and Homework | Deliverable/Due Dates |
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| Week 1 Dates: 5/18 | Introductions, explanation of syllabus and class requirements. Basic design concepts: What makes good design? Identity basics: How to think about creating simple logo/word mark. The importance of sketching. | Design slides / handouts. Start thinking of your record company name and concept. | Make sure you have Adobe Creative Suite installed. If you are not an Annenberg student, contact TechOps and at least have the 30-day trial installed. Please have this done by 5/23 at the latest. |
| Week 2 Dates: 5/23 & 5/25 | Give a brief oral presentation about your record company and what it's all about. Photoshop basics: creating documents, | Photoshop cheat sheet handout. Become familiar with what the Photoshop tools do and some handy keyboard shortcuts. | Record company pitch due before class on 5/23. Turn in a Word doc/Google doc before 5 p.m. on 5/23. |

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| | <p>setting up grids, working with fonts. Using provided templates.</p> <p>Resolution and why it's important.</p> <p>Importing images and using images and where to find stock images/proper image usage. Basic photo adjustments and layers.</p> <p>Saving and exporting your work to the proper formats.</p> | <p>Start sketching some ideas for your logo and think about colors and typefaces.</p> | |
| <p>Week 3 Dates: 5/30 & 6/1</p> | <p>Illustrator basics: creating documents, learning the important tools, creating basic shapes. The pen tool and combining basic shapes to create more complex shapes. An explanation of vector vs. raster.</p> <p>If you can't draw a logo, what are your alternatives (such as Google tools or finding stock vectors). If you prefer to draw on paper, how can you transfer your drawings for use in Illustrator?</p> <p>On 6/1, you'll give a brief oral presentation and show your branding work and business card in class. Be prepared to explain your color choices, font choices and why you decided to</p> | <p>Illustrator cheat sheet handout.</p> <p>Illustrator logo tutorial. https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/how-to/logo-design.html?playlist=/cc/v1/collection/product/illustrator/segment/designer/explevel/beginner/applaunch/orientation/collection.ccx.js</p> <p>Illustrator pen tutorial/handout. Not due in class, but do it for practice.</p> <p>Handout explaining how you will format your branding/business card project.</p> | <p>Branding and business card due 6/1. Turn in digital elements via Dropbox by 5 p.m. on 6/1. Bring mounted logo, basic style guide, and business card to class for presentation.</p> |

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| | create the logo you created. | | |
| Week 4 Dates: 6/6 & 6/8 | <p>Illustrator skills continued (if necessary).</p> <p>Poster design: What works? What doesn't? What elements do you need to have in order to make an effective poster?</p> <p>InDesign basics: Setting up a document and grids, and important tools. Importing Photoshop and Illustrator assets, and importing images.</p> <p>Learning which tool is best for the job: Photoshop, Illustrator, or InDesign. You could design your final poster using any of the above, but there are pros and cons to each program. Knowing these pros and cons may help you decide which program would be easiest to you use for your poster project.</p> | <p>InDesign handouts</p> <p>Start thinking about your poster concept and what assets you need to put it together (for instance, photos or drawings)</p> <p>Handout explaining printing and sizing guidelines for poster</p> | |
| Week 5 Dates: 6/13 & 6/15 | <p>Oral presentation about your poster and why you designed it the way you did.</p> <p>InDesign continued. Importing large chunks of text. Text wraps and more complex layouts.</p> | <p>Start thinking about what you will do for your final project. What kind of information has to go into your liner notes/booklet? Will you design a CD case or something to hold a digital version of your music? Will you brand a thumb drive instead?</p> | <p>Poster due before class on 6/13. Turn in digital version on Dropbox by 5 p.m. on 6/13. Bring printed poster to class. (Does not need to be mounted on museum board, but it's helpful to keep it from getting creased or damaged!)</p> |

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| | Editing assets that you imported from Photoshop or Illustrator. Basic book design. Pamphlet design (or something that has to be folded a specific way, like an accordion). | What other things might you include in your promo package (for instance, stickers, small giveaways, postcards)? How will you package your promotional giveaway? (Remember, it should be a reasonable size so people can walk away with it easily.) | |
| Week 6 Dates: 6/20 & 6/22 | <p>Layouts in InDesign, continued (if necessary).</p> <p>Working with a professional printer/printing company for complex projects / packaging. How to properly package all your digital assets so they can be turned in correctly and printed correctly if you had to give them to a printer for a large run. Printing and packaging resources for other materials (like stickers, t-shirts, and other promotional items).</p> | <p>Showing your instructor sketches or early digital versions of your final project is encouraged. It will only make your final project better!</p> <p>Handout explaining how you will need to package your digital assets for final project and printing guidelines.</p> | Brief description of your final project due before class on 6/20. You can send this in an email, it's not a formal assignment. Tell your instructor what kind of packaging you intend to create, what format your liner notes will be (book or giant folded accordion), and what you will include in your package (such as a CD or flash drive, and anything extra you plan to create). |
| Week 7 Dates: 6/27 | <p>Beyond class: Showing your work. Working with designers and the importance of communication when it comes to explaining concepts and what you want for larger branding and design projects.</p> <p>Oral presentation of final projects.</p> | | Digital version of final project due by 5 p.m. on 6/27. Project must be properly packaged (fonts, assets, etc.) as a zip file and uploaded to Dropbox. Final constructed project must be brought to class on the final day for presentation. |

IX. Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

If you must miss a class, please give ample notice to your instructor via email. You will be responsible for catching up on any missed material and make any arrangements you need to catch up in class.

No late assignments will be accepted unless you have a medical emergency or other excused absence. Documentation for any excused absence must be provided.

Please make sure to check your USC email regularly. It will be the primary means of communication between you and your instructor. If you have any questions, please feel free to email your instructor or come speak to your instructor before or after class, or make an appointment.

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism

Presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words - is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* (<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct (<http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>).

USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

"Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an 'F' on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators."

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

b. Support Systems

Equity and Diversity

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* (<http://equity.usc.edu/>) or to the *Department of Public Safety* (<http://dps.usc.edu/contact/report/>). This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community - such as a friend, classmate, adviser, or faculty member - can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The *Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services* (<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>) provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage (<https://sarc.usc.edu/>) describes reporting options and other resources.

Support with Scholarly Writing

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your adviser or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* (<http://ali.usc.edu/>) which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs (<http://dsp.usc.edu/>) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.

Students requesting test-related accommodations will need to share and discuss their DSP recommended accommodation letter/s with their faculty and/or appropriate departmental contact person at least three weeks before the date the accommodations will be needed. Additional time may be needed for final exams. Reasonable exceptions will be considered during the first three weeks of the semester as well as for temporary injuries and for students recently diagnosed. Please note that a reasonable period of time is still required for DSP to review documentation and to make a determination whether a requested accommodation will be appropriate.

Stress Management

Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services Office at (213) 740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge.

Emergency Information

If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* (<http://emergency.usc.edu/>) will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

X. About Your Instructor

Jenn de la Fuente is a web developer with a graphic design background. She has run her own business, Rosebud Designs, since 2009 and developed a variety of print and web collateral for a range of clients, from nonprofits to small businesses. Her specialty is creating custom WordPress websites, and she has teamed up with other design firms and design businesses to create solutions for clients such as Rancho La Puerta, Heal the Bay, 826 Los Angeles, and 826 National. Before starting her business, Jenn worked in sports journalism as a reporter, copy editor, page designer, and web producer for a variety of newspapers: the Orange County Register, The News Journal (Wilmington, Delaware), and The Sacramento Bee. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Print Journalism from USC Annenberg, graduating in 2000, and has taught at Annenberg since 2014. She is an avid sports fan, longtime Trojan football season ticket-holder, a huge L.A. Kings fan, as well as a hockey player and curler.