

Visual Design Concepts

Parsons School of Design
Art, Media & Technology
PSAM 5856; CRN 3386
Fall 2018

07:00 pm - 9:40 pm, Thursday
2 W 13th 703

Soomi Lee
soomi.lee@newschool.edu
Office hours by appointment

Course Description

Visual Design Concepts is a course dedicated to the connections between visual communication (image, type, composition), digital media and methods of making. The course focuses on the principles of visual communication and the ways they can be applied within digital media, whether the work is narrative, interactive, or computation-based. As a course in design process, there will be an emphasis on different methods for working, including concept development through iteration. We will cover fundamental principles of visual design including composition, color, typography, layout, style, tools and materials, organizing information, type as form, word and communication. This is not a software-specific class, but students are expected to develop projects through applications or programming languages of their choice.

Learning Outcomes

By the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Be able to analyze existing projects and learn design principles and visual communication strategies from doing so.
2. Establish a design practice with a foundation for developing concepts and understanding aesthetics.
3. Create appealing graphical representation for efficient communication.
4. Explore new possibilities of the role of visual design in a project: especially when visual design goes beyond 2D.
5. Develop a foundation for articulate and productive critique.

Course Structure and Components

The first few weeks of classes will focus on creating appealing graphical representation of efficient communication and understand how to create consistent visual representation on static media. Students will be introduced to graphic design principles and put it to practice by creating their personal branding and style guide.

The next weeks will focus on communication and interface design for digital screens, through the design process of brainstorming, prototyping, testing, and evaluating. Students will learn to design within a group, effectively sharing ideas and creating guides and references for uniform designs.

Students are required to share their work to a Google Drive, including:

- The outcome of any in class assignments, as requested by the instructor
- References to resources or precedents thought to benefit the entire class

Class time will be mostly focused workshops to develop and present students' ideas, and to critique those of others. There will be considerable focus on peer to peer critique.

Assessable Tasks

Project 1 - Personal branding: Student will create a visual design plan for their personal business card, resume and portfolio website.

Project 2 - Redesign an app or website (Group project): In groups of 2-3, students will redesign an existing app or website of their choice, using a human centered design process

Final Project : Students are free to choose what they would deliver for the final project depending on their interest.

Evaluation and Final Grade Calculation

Participation/Attendance	20%
Weekly Assignments	35%
Project 1: Personal branding	15%
Project 2: Group Project	10%
Final: Student choice (using design methods learned in class)	20%
Total	100%

Course Outline

Week	Date	In Class:	Homework:
Week 1	08.30.2018	Intros + Syllabus; Finding inspiration	
Week 2	09.06.2018	Line, Color, Shape, Composition, Typography	Find design inspiration and references. Get ready to share sources and why you like them

Week 3	09.13.2018	Typography cont. + Art of Critique	Design your own business card
Week 4	09.20.2018	Visual Branding + Creating Style Guides	Create a your own style guide
Week 5	09.27.2018	Information Architecture + In Class Workshop	Design your professional resume
Week 6	10.04.2018	Personal Branding Presentations + Mid Term Evaluations	
Week 7	10.11.2018	Human Centered Design + User Interface Design Intro	Create groups of 2-3, find an existing website or app. Create 2-3 user personas that use this app or website
Week 8	10.18.2018	Wireframes + Paper Prototypes	Create a wireframe/ paper prototype
Week 9	10.25.2018	User testing + Evaluating workshop	3-5 user tests, evaluate and redesign
Week 10	11.01.2018	High Fidelity Prototypes	Design a high fidelity prototype
Week 11	11.08.2018	Group Project Presentations	
Week 12	11.15.2018	Final Project Intro + Graphics Lab tour?	Set goals for final project
Week 13	11.22.2018	Thanksgiving	No class
Week 14	11.29.2018	Individual Meetings	
Week 15	12.06.2018	In Class Workshop + Course Evaluations	
Week 16	12.13.2018	Final Presentations	

Resources

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

The University (and associated) Libraries: <http://library.newschool.edu>

The University Learning Center: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center>

University Disabilities Service: www.newschool.edu/student-disability-services/

In keeping with the university's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact Student Disability Service (SDS). SDS will conduct an intake and, if appropriate, the Director will provide an academic accommodation notification letter for you to bring to me. At that point, I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course.

Making Center

The Making Center is a constellation of shops, labs, and open workspaces that are situated across the New School to help students express their ideas in a variety of materials and methods. We have resources to help support woodworking, metalworking, ceramics and pottery work, photography and film, textiles, printmaking, 3D printing, manual and CNC machining, and more. A staff of technicians and student workers provide expertise and maintain the different shops and labs. Safety is a primary concern, so each area has policies for access, training, and etiquette that students and faculty should be familiar with. Many areas require specific orientations or trainings before access is granted. Detailed information about the resources available, as well as schedules, trainings, and policies can be found at resources.parsons.edu.

Graduate Grade Descriptions

A Work of exceptional quality

A- Work of high quality

B+ Very good work

B Good work; satisfies course requirements

Satisfactory completion of a course is considered to be a grade of B or higher.

B- Below-average work

C+ Less than adequate work

C Well below average work

C- Poor work; lowest possible passing grade

F Failure

GM Grade missing for an individual

Grades of D are not used in graduate level courses.

Grade of W

The grade of W may be issued by the Office of the Registrar to a student who officially withdraws from a course within the applicable deadline. There is no academic penalty, but the grade will appear on the

student transcript. A grade of W may also be issued by an instructor to a graduate student (except at Parsons and Mannes) who has not completed course requirements nor arranged for an Incomplete.

Grade of Z

The grade of Z is issued by an instructor to a student who has not attended or not completed all required work in a course but did not officially withdraw before the withdrawal deadline. It differs from an "F," which would indicate that the student technically completed requirements but that the level of work did not qualify for a passing grade.

Grades of Incomplete

The grade of I, or temporary incomplete, may be granted to a student under unusual and extenuating circumstances, such as when the student's academic life is interrupted by a medical or personal emergency. This mark is not given automatically but only upon the student's request and at the discretion of the instructor. A Request for Incomplete form must be completed and signed by student and instructor. The time allowed for completion of the work and removal of the "I" mark will be set by the instructor with the following limitations:

Graduate students: Work must be completed no later than one year following the end of the class. Grades of "I" not revised in the prescribed time will be recorded as a final grade of "N" by the Registrar's Office.

College, School, Program and Class Policies

A comprehensive overview of policy may be found under [Policies: A to Z](#). Students are also encouraged to consult the [Academic Catalog for Parsons](#).

Canvas

Use of Canvas may be an important resource for this class. Students should check it for announcements before coming to class each week.

Electronic Devices

The use of electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops, cameras, etc.) is permitted when the device is being used in relation to the course's work. All other uses are prohibited in the classroom and devices should be turned off before class starts.

Responsibility

Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent. Late assignments, failure to complete the assignments for class discussion and/or critique, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions, presentations and/or critiques will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

Active Participation and Attendance

Class participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, assignments, projects, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, active participation in group work, and coming to class regularly and on time.

Parsons' attendance guidelines were developed to encourage students' success in all aspects of their academic programs. Full participation is essential to the successful completion of coursework and enhances the quality of the educational experience for all, particularly in courses where group work is

integral; thus, Parsons promotes high levels of attendance. Students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly and in compliance with the standards stated in this course syllabus.

While attendance is just one aspect of active participation, absence from a significant portion of class time may prevent the successful attainment of course objectives. A significant portion of class time is generally defined as the equivalent of three weeks, or 20%, of class time. Lateness or early departure from class may be recorded as one full absence. Students may be asked to withdraw from a course if habitual absenteeism or tardiness has a negative impact on the class environment.

I will assess each student's performance against all of the assessment criteria in determining your final grade.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found on the university website under [Policies: A to Z](#). Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the [Learning Center's website](#).

The New School views "academic honesty and integrity" as the duty of every member of an academic community to claim authorship for his or her own work and only for that work, and to recognize the contributions of others accurately and completely. This obligation is fundamental to the integrity of intellectual debate, and creative and academic pursuits. Academic honesty and integrity includes accurate use of quotations, as well as appropriate and explicit citation of sources in instances of paraphrasing and describing ideas, or reporting on research findings or any aspect of the work of others (including that of faculty members and other students). Academic dishonesty results from infractions of this "accurate use". The standards of academic honesty and integrity, and citation of sources, apply to all forms of academic work, including submissions of drafts of final papers or projects. All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the standards of academic honesty and integrity. Please see the complete policy in the Parsons Catalog.

Intellectual Property Rights

The New School (the "university") seeks to encourage creativity and invention among its faculty members and students. In doing so, the University affirms its traditional commitment to the personal ownership by its faculty members and students of Intellectual Property Rights in works they create. The complete policy governing Intellectual Property Rights may be seen on the [university website, on the Provost's page](#).