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Design Studio 1

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# Syllabus

## Design Studio 1 syllabus

31 August 2016

/dev/2016/08/31/ds1syllabus.html

### Design Studio 1

Rhode Island School of Design

Graphic Design, GRAPH-3210 req

Fall 2016, Tuesdays, 1:10 – 6:10pm

Graphic design occupies an ever-expanding, ever-redefined territory at the intersection of verbal and visual languages. Its media spans everything from websites to postcards, film to signage, typefaces to billboards. Its methods make use of both sides of the brain: pairing logic, critical analysis, research, and planning with intuitive search, mark-making and visual expression. Graphic designers are inquirers, observers, poets, editors, curators, analysts, researchers, commentators, and critics.

Rather than attempt to codify this expansive landscape, or to delineate a sequential path through it, this course takes this ambiguity as license for experimentation, discovery, and play. You will encounter and engage the tools, materials, and processes of graphic design in functional context, as means to self-directed ends.

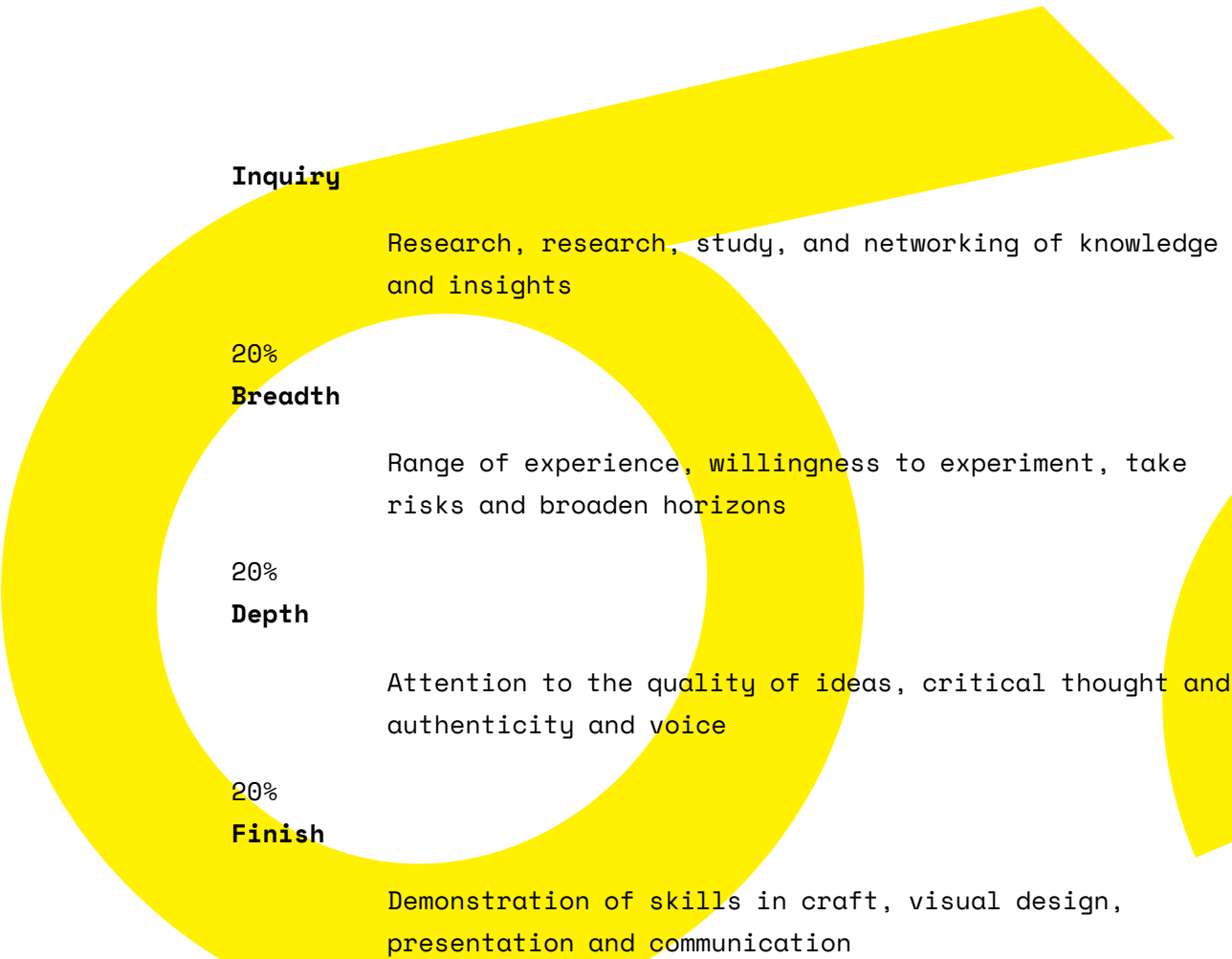
The emphasis will be on methodologies of making – observation, analysis, ideation, translation, curation, research – and on developing a personal voice and approach.

Design Studio will take the form of a series of question-based units, each initiated by a faculty member and contextualized by a presentation, event, or workshop. Units may span the entire term, a few weeks, or a single class period. Design Studio is a fast-paced course that necessitates a self-directed, open-ended, experimental and playful mindset. Units will not define outcomes or prescribe processes, but rather will aim to inspire lines of

Design Studio 2016–18

04	Oct 04	Unit 2 continues
05	Oct 11	Unit 2 finish
		Unit 3 Begins (John)
06	Oct 18	Unit 3 continues
07	Oct 25	Unit 3 finish
		Unit 4 Begins (Tom W.)
08	Nov 01	Unit 4 continues
09	Nov 08	Unit 4 finish
		Unit 5 Begins (James)
10	Nov 15	Unit 5 continues
		Gobble gobble
11	Nov 29	Unit 5 finish
12	Dec 06	TBD
13	Dec 13	Review Day

Course website <http://ds1618.risd.gd>



**Attendance**

Students should arrive on time and prepared for each class. Three unexcused absences will result in failure of the course.

**Etiquette**

Please turn off all cell phones – no txtng or emailing during class. Consider taking notes with pencil and paper, it has been shown to help you remember – and unexpected doodles may occur.

**Schedule**

Week	Date	
01	Sep 13	Course Overview Unit 1 Begins (Keetra)
02	Sep 20	Unit 1 continues
03	Sep 27	Unit 1 finish Unit 2 Begins (Tom O.)

enquiry, challenging students to explore unfamiliar subject matter, tools, media, and processes by their own initiative.

**DS1 Overview**

Something specific to DS1.

**DS1 Units**

Unit 01: Keetra Dean Dixon

**What do you value in what you see – and how can you communicate it to those who weren't there?**

Designers often work with unfamiliar content, environments and contexts. An essential skill for the designer is to make sense of what she sees, and then communicate it clearly back to others. How do you distill or find meaning in what is already there? And how can you make use of it? Placed within the context of a design process, this is defined as observational research, assessing what is before anything is to be done.

Unit 02: Tom Ockerse

**How can you alter an existing space to create narrative?**

Although graphic design exists in a multitude of places, spaces, and surfaces, it is often considered to be mostly a two-dimensional enterprise. But in fact our work is often multi-dimensional dealing with everything from space-making, wayfinding, and system design to exhibit design, information environments, and complex networks and interfaces. Here you will play with various materials, forms, scales, and associations as you introduce design into chosen or designated spaces/places.

Unit 03 John Caserta

**How can the graphic medium enhance and enrich the verbal message?**

In our engagement with the world around us, and our routine to make sense out of complexity, we take for granted the perceptual principles this interaction involves. We will look into the power of graphic design to discover how an abstract (non-visual) object like a “word” (a verbal means to represent an idea) can be

enriched significantly toward a deep sense of poetic insight due to its graphic/visual delivery, and thus provide a lasting impression of value for the ideas it holds.

Unit 04 Thomas Wedell

#### **How can collaboration be a catalyst for making?**

Collaboration is important across many fields of creative work and the discoveries made through it can be invaluable. This unit promotes methods that emphasize teamwork, spontaneity and responsiveness. You will see how methods of shared creativity can produce a form of knowledge that is experiential and intuitive. Beginning with a collaborative writing process, students will start to recognize emerging relationships upon which to build work, and from which to proceed into unexpected territory.

Unit 05 James Goggin

#### **How can time be communicated?**

One of the main concepts necessary to understanding the design process is the use of time. In our discipline, time plays an even bigger role—not only in how we engage in the design of an exhibit or screen based project, but also in the considerations we must build into two-dimensional “fixed” surfaces, such as signs, books, posters, and charts. Today’s designer must learn to master pacing. How a viewer encounters a sequence of events, and the pace that those events are viewed, forms one of the basic elements of communication.

#### **Sections**

01 [John Caserta](http://johncaserta.com) [http://johncaserta.com](mailto:jcaserta@risd.edu) jcaserta@risd.edu

Room 210

02 [Tom Ockerse](http://www.risd.edu/academics/graphic-design/faculty/thomas-ockerse/) [http://www.risd.edu/academics/graphic-design/faculty/thomas-ockerse/](mailto:tockerse@risd.edu)  
tockerse@risd.edu

Room 208

03 [James Goggin](http://practise.co.uk) [http://practise.co.uk](mailto:jgoggin@risd.edu) jgoggin@risd.edu

Room 211

03 [Keetra Dean Dixon](http://fromkeetra.com/) [http://fromkeetra.com/](mailto:kdixon01@risd.edu) kdixon01@risd.edu

Room 212

05 [Thomas Wedell](http://skolos-wedell.com) [http://skolos-wedell.com](mailto:twedell@risd.edu) twedell@risd.edu

Room 209

#### **Objectives**

1. Develop habits for self-directed research and inquiry
2. Develop critical thinking skills
3. Develop rhetorical, communication and presentation skills
4. Encourage a pluralistic approach to design problems
5. Encourage work with emerging media
6. Address and participate in contemporary social and cultural issues (in design)
7. Place present day challenges within historical context

#### **Semester-long Deliverables**

Sketchbook

Research/Inspiration Blog (i.e. tumblr) to communicate ongoing findings for projects.

Reflective Notes as insights or awareness on a curiosity, excitement, or experience.

#### **Grading**

Grades in D.S. do not emphasize end products, but the necessary work that leads to successful end products. Evidence of the below are visible in process blog, sketchbook, completion of units as directed by the faculty:

20%

#### **Contribution**

Attendance, participation, motivation and personal commitment

20%