GEORGE
MASON
UNIVERSITY

COURSE SYLLABUS

Professor:	Iris Sanchez
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Office Hours:	by appointment (M/W)

COURSE TITLE: **Graphic Design Methods and Principles**
COURSE NUMBER: **AVT311**

DAY/TIME: **Section 002, Monday & Wednesday 1:30-4:10 pm; Room 1022**

SESSION/YEAR: **Spring 2017**

COURSE DESCRIPTION: AVT 311 Graphic Design Methods and Principles (4) emphasizes developing multiple design solutions that require research as to the demographics, history, and/or culture surrounding a project. This class further develops skills in design and typography, introduces conceptual problem solving, audience considerations, and the tools that designers must use to develop effective visual communication solutions. An emphasis is placed on the design methodology.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Develop visual sensitivity and competency in graphic communications by following a disciplined design methodology
- Define problems, research, conceptualize, establish priorities, and develop graphic alternatives
- Introduce students to design history, perceptual psychology, and information design
- Further develop computer design skills in page layout and image creation programs
- Develop the ability to effectively communicate design concepts visually as well as verbally

REQUIRED TEXT: Samara, Timothy *Design Elements: A Graphic Style Manual*

CONTENT: Through lecture, studio, and critique, students will design a series of projects developed from rough schematic level to final mounted presentation. The learning objectives are achieved through a series of sequential projects. We will build on concepts learned in the initial content areas and apply them in subsequent projects. Students will provide a solution to the visual communication problem, and keep record of the process, conceptual development, and exploration of ideas that lead to the solution.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS: In professional practice, graphic designers solve client problems that often have tight time requirements. Our projects will also have deadlines to hit so you can get a feel for the pace set in professional practice. You will be given as much time as possible to work during the studio, but discussion and critiques will consume a significant amount of the time. The time spent in the studio may only be a fraction of the time that is necessary to complete the projects successfully so be prepared to make headway outside of the classroom. The primary objective of the course is to provide creative solutions to design problems, not to learn design software from the beginning. You should have basic skills in design software and use it as a design tool with certain proficiency.

DESIGN PROCESS:

You will be following the recommended design process as outlined in the Project Statement. In many cases, you will follow specific methodologies, as they are known to increase ideas and enhance production efficiency. Evaluation of your design process will always factor heavily in the final project grade. This evaluation includes your ability to meet interim deadlines, to present the required quantity of sketches and to participate in critiques. The process of design is critical. The best final solutions come from practicing a methodology that can be repeated for a variety of design problems. You will be examining and cataloging your process for all of the projects during the semester. The process includes library research, word lists, thumbnail sketches, collected imagery, and objects. You are required to present many ideas for the critique and develop a final solution based on these ideas and their revision and refinement.

Process Documentation and Notebook

Students are required to keep well-organized, well-presented documentations of your design/learning experience (research, idea generation, and refinement) in this class. These documentations should be arranged in chronological order. You will have to submit your process with the final design of each project on Pinterest.com. You will have to choose your best-documented process to put into a process book for your final review. You will also be required to keep a sketchbook, which will also be used to document your process.

- Your Pinterest boards should contain project spec sheets, notes, research, design exploration (including sketches) and final solutions of all class projects.
- Your Pinterest account must be well documented. You should include a heading/subheading, and a description.
- Your process Pinterest account and book will count toward a significant part of your final grade.

Take your design process seriously. Use your process boards to help you advance from one idea to another. Use your notebooks to not only record what you are doing, but to maintain a dialogue with yourself, identify why you are making the design decisions you are making. Keep your notebooks current as you progress through each project. Students have often mistakenly believed that they could finish their project first, and organize and assemble their process books later. This is a daunting task to do shortly before a deadline. Your work will suffer if you do not follow the design process.

Performance Requirements, Critiques, and Class Participation

Due to the dynamics of the course your attendance, participation and punctuality are critical to your successful completion of the class. You must be on time—and prepared—with no exceptions. Not being properly prepared with required assignments is considered an absence from the class. Final projects are due at the beginning of class. Projects turned after the start of class are automatically reduced 1/2 letter grade. Late projects will be docked **1 LETTER GRADE PER DAY**. If compelled to miss a class, you must email/ask me with an acceptable explanation within 12 hours to be excused. If absent, you are responsible for materials covered in class. Please "buddy-up" with a classmate for this information. Two un-excused absences will gravely effect successful completion of the course. Excessive tardiness will also affect your final grade (3 unexcused late arrivals equals an unexcused absence). Personal communication devices must be turned to "silent mode" and put away. Please read the **Participation** section for more detail.

Final critiques may last one or two class periods. Be prepared to participate in the entire final critique. Individual and group critiques will be held at each stage of a project. Students who fail to have adequate work to present will lose a valuable opportunity to learn, which will also directly affect their grades. Students must be prepared for class to be counted as present, i.e. having all necessary supplies and computer files, and process notebook with you. Critiques are an important opportunity to shape verbal skills. Designers in professional practice need to be able to convey ideas to clients, ask relevant questions, and understand client concerns.

MATERIALS:

Please have the following materials handy at all times:
- Removable media for storage and archiving work (flash drive or external hard drive)
- Paper and pens/pencils for notes and sketching
- Sketchbook and Binder (for handouts)
- Mounting board
- Large black portfolio for housing final projects for review
- Paper adhesive such as Spray Mount, Studio Tac or Rubber Cement
- Cutting Mat, Xacto knife with sharp blades (extra blades as well)

LAB POLICIES: No food or drinks allowed in any AVT Computer lab

OTHER INFORMATION:

Do I need to buy the software?
Buying the software for your own computer is encouraged but not required, as it is much easier to work on your projects on your own computer, use your own fonts, color palettes, etc. Keep in mind that you will need to work on assignments, homework and projects outside of class. Therefore, buying the software is highly recommended.

Patriot Computers sells Adobe software at the (cheaper) academic price. The Creative Cloud subscription, while good for only a year, will probably be the most cost-effective for you, especially if you are planning on taking more graphic design classes.

You should also know that there is a computer lab at the top of the stairs on the second floor of the School of Art building that you are free to use on a first-come first-served basis. Plan your time carefully as the lab gets full during busy periods, especially around exam time!

Note: If you buy Adobe Creative Cloud on your computer and need to also work on any machine with Adobe CS6, you will need to "save down" your work to a CS6-friendly version. The procedure to do this is different in each program.

Can I use my PC?
Yes, you may purchase a PC version of the Adobe software to work on your own.

Required materials?
Please make sure you have all necessary material before arriving to class. Be prepared.

Can I install fonts on the classroom machines?
No.

How do I save my work on the classroom machines?
Do NOT keep your work stored on the classroom computers, as they are cleaned periodically and there is no guarantee that your work will still be there for the next class. Keep your work on a flash drive or an online service such as Google Drive or Dropbox. I recommend using at least two methods for backing up purposes. Emailing files to yourself is highly **discouraged**.

I need to miss class, am I going to miss anything important?
Yes. If you have to miss class or come in late, you are responsible for reviewing the materials for what you missed. Please send me an email before the start of class!

How do I turn in work?
Assignments/Exercises/Projects will be posted onto Blackboard. To submit work for full credit, you will need to upload your original file (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign) as well as an exported PDF (Portable Document Format) copy of all work onto the computer. I will go over this when things are due.

NEVER rely on emailing your work and then downloading. If this does not work and you do not have your work at the start of your class, you receive a zero for homework.

What's a critique and what do I have to do?
On days when assignments are due you are required to bring in your project (the native file format and a pdf version as well).

We will look at your work and point out what makes your work a success and what needs more work. Please be ready to present your work to the class.

No Prints on critique.

When are Prints due? How do I print my work?
I will announce when prints are due. The School of Art has a Print Studio (down the hall) that is available for you to print your work, however they need 48 hours lead time in order to print your work, so please keep this is mind when you are on a deadline. You are responsible for printing your own work and bringing it to class on the START of the appointed day.

What do I have to do to get a good grade?
In order to get a good grade, you need to show up to every class on time. Students are required to attend all class meetings, to arrive on time, and to stay for the duration of the class period.

Students are required to notify the professor by email if they will be absent. Students are required to send the professor their George Mason email address so that the professor is able to contact them.

Attendance/Participation is 20% of your entire class grade. You will receive the total of 20% toward the final grade if you are in class for each scheduled session and have participated in all class work. Lack of participation during any class will reduce this 20% portion of your total class grade proportionally. Failure to participate in **FOUR** of the scheduled classes will result in loss of 20% of your total grade. For each absence, a student will lose 5% of their final grade. An absence may be excused (to avoid drop of participation grade), at the discretion of the professor, if a student has an extenuating circumstance that caused the absence, such as an illness, hospitalization, etc. In such a case, the student must provide proper documentation, such as a doctor's note, etc. in order to be excused.

Furthermore, arriving more than 15 minutes late on 3 separate occasions (unexcused) for class, or leaving before the end of class, will result in a loss of 5% from their final grade (considered 1 absence).

It is a student's responsibility to make up any missed information due to absences. Any of the following constitutes a loss of 5% for attendance/participation for the class session*:
1. Arriving more than 15 minutes late to class
2. Leaving before the end of class
3. Not being in class to participate
4. Taking breaks passed the time indicated by the professor
5. Cell phone ringing in class without prior authorization by the professor
6. Inappropriate behavior and/or lack of participation in class activities, to be determined by the professor. Students in violation of the student code of conduct in the student handbook will be asked to leave the class.

*Note: deduction of 5% will only be applied after 3 occurrences.

Following Directions
Please make sure that you follow the instructions on assignments/exercise/projects – read directions carefully.

Throughout the semester you will complete 3 projects, 1 final project, exercises, process boards and your final portfolio. The exercises in class are to orient you to the tools and techniques used to create your projects. Projects will need to be submitted electronically in two versions: an original file (formats: .ai, indd, .psd) plus an exported PDF version all compressed into a zipped file. I need PDF versions in case you use fonts and/or images that I cannot access from my machine.

All exercises/process boards/projects are due before class begins on the specified deadline in order to be critiqued during class.

What if I have questions?
Questions are encouraged! You can ask me in person or via email. Don't EVER assume anything. Clarify it with me. Give me 24-48 hours to reply. When emailing me please write your name, the class and the section you are in on the subject line. You may email me at the Gmail account as well.

GRADING:

There will be a total of 5 grading opportunities:

Attendance/Participation (20%)

Exercises/Process Boards (10%)

Projects #1 –#3 (15% each)

Final Semester Project (20%)

Portfolio Review (5%)

Projects

Students will receive a handout for each assigned project, and must hold onto this as it will explain the expectations and specs for each. All work that is incomplete or does not follow specs will be counted as late and treated as such. Each project will be judged on the following criteria:

- *Deadlines (10%):* Has the student met all deadlines for each stage of the project? Were projects complete, on their due date and on time?
- *Process/Sketches (Pinterest Board) (10%):* Is there evidence of strong research and development? Keep in mind that you must present a thorough well-thought out Pinterest Board with all of your research, mood board, sketches, inspiration, etc.
- *Participation (10%):* Has the student contributed positively to class discussions and critiques on a regular basis? Was their feedback constructive and respectful of other classmates? Did the student pay attention during class lectures and discussions? Was the student's behavior in class professional and respectful?
- *Specs (10%):* Did the student follow the specified instructions for each project? Were the specified materials and sizes used?
- *Concept (10%):* Is the concept well thought out and developed?
- *Execution (50%):* Is the technique strong? Were the required skills learned? Do the aesthetics support the concept? Is the craftsmanship flawless?

LATE WORK:

Late projects will be docked **1 LETTER GRADE PER DAY**. Same goes for the exercise and process boards. If you are going to be absent on a day a project is due please make sure that you submit your final project via email using Google Drive or Dropbox before the project is due. Note that you will have points deducted for not being present. (Any deviation from this policy will be <u>extremely</u> rare and at the discretion of the professor).

Computer crashes, failure of backing up work, forgetting work at home, not finishing on time, files erased from lab computers, and other excuses will not be accepted. If you are facing an emergency and are unavailable to be in class, you are responsible of notifying the professor prior to the class time (in person, by phone, or email) in order to discuss a possible alternate arrangement. Students must take full responsibility for their work and deadlines.

Deadlines and submission of work
Projects, Exercises and Mood Boards are due before the beginning of class unless otherwise indicated.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Project 1: Object Semantics — Ad Series // Weeks 1–4

An object of your choice will be studied. A composition depicting the graphic qualities of the object will be developed. Copy will be developed. Students will design a series of three advertisements. **Deliverables:** Design brief, Photography, Collection of imagery, Process board, Three compositions.

Project 2: Type, Image, and Design History — Three Book Covers // Weeks 3 – 6

Students will design three book covers at 7 x 9 inches. Each book cover can be a variation from one chosen designer with one quote incorporated on the cover or three different designers with different quotes. Each cover will have a different design constraint: type only, type dominant, image dominate. A common grid will be employed for each design.
Deliverables: Research on your chosen designer, Design brief, Image collection, Process board, Three book covers (complete book cover jackets).

Project 3: Infographic Poster/GMU Poster — The Examination and Organization of Information // Weeks 6–9
Students will design an infographic poster at 11 x 17 inches. This inforgraphic will require the student to collect information and organize it in a way that is visually powerful and appealing. All imagery used must be illustrated or adapted. **Deliverables:** Audience assessment, Design brief, Process board, Poster, and other materials as assigned.

Final Semester Project: It's all in the bag! Corporate Campaign // Weeks 7 – 14

Students will randomly choose one of five names. Students will decide what the company sells or does. From here, students will design a logo, letterhead, business card, homepage or app screen, and an 8-page brochure. Students then need to decide, depending on the type of company, one more piece to design (packaging, animation, exhibit booth, giveaway). **Deliverables:** Process Board, Design brief, Letterhead, Logo, Business Cards, Brochure, Homepage/App screen, and Selected item.

Portfolio Review // Final Exam Day

Students will schedule a time slot for a final review of their process boards and book, as well as, your final projects.
Deliverables: Process boards and book and Project PDFs on a USB Drive.

UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL OF ART POLICIES:

In accordance with George Mason University policy, turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY AND LEARNING DIFFERENCES:

If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

TECHNOLOGY:

In accordance with George Mason University policy, please silence all cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY:

This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

STATEMENTS ON ETHICS IN TEACHING AND PRACTICING ART AND DESIGN:

As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

OPEN STUDIO HOURS:

SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

ArtsBus:

Dates for Spring 2017: February 18th, March 25th, April 18th

**ArtsBus CREDITS
AND POLICIES:**

Each student must have up to 5 AVT 300/Artsbus credits before graduation. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment.

If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please go to the ArtsBus website: http://artsbus.gmu.edu "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.

Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need Artsbus credit BUT may need to go on the Artsbus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center of the Arts. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.

**VISUAL VOICES
LECTURE SERIES:**

Dates for Spring 2017: January 26th, February 9th, March 9th, March 23rd, March 30th

Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater: http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/

MASONLIVE/EMAIL:

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY
ABSENSES AND TARDINESS:**

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

HONOR CODE:

Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously. No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, A Writer's Reference.) The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, "When in doubt, cite."

Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

WRITING CENTER: Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

The Collaborative Learning Hub Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ittraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY DATES:

January 1 Day of Week	*Sunday*
Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 16
First day of classes; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Mon Jan 23
Last day to add classes—all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Mon Jan 30
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Mon Feb 13
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	Fri Feb 24
Immunization Record Deadline	Wed Mar 1
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 20 – Fri Mar 24
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	Mon Feb 27 – Fri Mar 31
Spring Break	Mon Mar 13 – Sun Mar 19
Incomplete work from Fall 2016 due to Instructor	**Fri March 31**
Incomplete grade changes from Fall 2016 due to Registrar	**Fri April 7**
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline	Fri May 5
Last day of classes	Sat May 6
Reading Days Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	Mon May 8 – Tue May 9
Exam Period (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 10 – Wed May 17
Commencement and Degree Conferral Date	May 20

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the SOA office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed) , LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.