

TYPOGRAPHY TWO | ART 354

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Typographic communication can inform, educate, persuade and entertain. The course focuses on creating and structuring typographic form according to information hierarchies, user needs, and multiple modalities of visual representation. The term focuses on theory and visual experimentation—enhancing typographic understanding and skills by exploring concept, medium, process, research, material and presentation. The final project addresses typographic identity and typographic communication systems.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Course projects enhance student's ability to develop meaningful and systematic approaches to creating and structuring typographic form. At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Employ typography to address a clearly stated aesthetic and/or communicative purpose.
- Comprehend the importance of typographic decision-making in the creation of meaningful messages and in the clarification and organization of information.
- Comprehend that successful typographic solutions address reader/user, message, content, and context.
- Comprehend that typography and visual communication is dependent upon the physical, social and cultural context of the message conveyed.
- Analyze and create strategies for solving ANALYTICAL*, CONCEPTUAL† and EXPRESSIVE‡ typographic problems.
- Create typographic grid and hierarchy systems to organize multiple levels of information.
- Demonstrate an expert level of typographic craftsmanship (e.g. alphabetic characters, footnotes, running headers/footers, folios, etc).
- Demonstrate skillful use of page layout program

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Adapted from
"Approaches to
Design" by Phil
Baines & Andrew
Haslam from
their book *Type &
Typography*.

*ANALYTICAL APPROACHES are well suited to the presentation of complex information. As a class we will work toward enhancing our methods for planning, organizing and executing multi-level, multi-page, (complex) typographic problems. Designers are often called upon to create and apply typographic systems to charts, tables, diagrams, maps, books, magazines, catalogs, and corporate identities. We will work thoughtfully to generate solutions that address, engage, inform and "speak" to our audience.

†CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES focus on finding the 'big idea' that captures and communicates the message. Ideas are essential. Conceptual design is used heavily by advertising, promotion, branding and cartoons. This approach makes use of visual rhetorical devices such as metaphor, simile, pun, paradox and pastiche as well cliché and allegories. Important to creating this type of work is an understanding of using image and text connotatively and being able to reduce, clarify and simplify to create the maximum impact.

‡EXPRESSIVE APPROACHES touch our hearts and emotions. This approach can yield impressionistic, poetic, lyrical and textural works often relying on symbolism, color and mark-making.

GRADING

Participation (class/small group critiques and discussions and weekly flickr) and attitude = 5%

Worksheets, Reading Notes, and Midterm Quizzes = 10%

Projects + Exercises = 65%

Process (flickr postings, in-progress work, worksheets, research and weekly critiques) = 20%

CLASS POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

As in your careers, you are expected to be on time and present during all class meetings. Arriving late, leaving early or failing to attend class will adversely affect your final grade. **3 absences are allowed for illness or personal circumstance – after 3 absences each absence drops your grade by one-third a letter grade [for example a B+ becomes a Bs]**. Three late arrivals/early departures = 1 absence. *Late arrivals: it is the student's responsibility to make certain that I have changed your attendance record from an absence to a tardy – please do so ONLY at the end of class.*

TIME MANAGEMENT / DEADLINES / LATE PROJECTS

Missing deadlines in your professional practice will lose you clients and credibility. Students are expected to manage time and meet deadlines in a professional manner. **Late projects must be turned in by the next class period and will be reduced by one letter grade. Projects one week late will be reduced by 50%. Projects will NOT be accepted after one week late.**

CRITIQUES / PROCESS / PARTICIPATION

The critique process facilitates the development and improvement of design solutions. Consistent participation in conversation is critical to creative growth. *Being unprepared for critiques will adversely affect your grade. In-class critique process grades cannot be "made-up" – exceptions are only made for serious illness (doctor's note required) or serious family emergency.*

REQUIRED TURN-IN FORMAT POLICY / REQUIRED SOFTWARE

All work must be delivered digitally as well as in 2-d format. Pdf format is required of flat pieces. Digital photographs (portfolio quality) is required of folded or bound pieces. **All multiple page print work is to be assembled and correctly completed in a page layout program.** InDesign is preferred.

FLICKR PAGE POSTINGS + YAHOO GROUP REQUIRED

Weekly postings to flickr are required. Process steps and final projects postings required.

FLICKR!

READINGS, MIDTERM QUIZZES

Students are expected to complete 2 sets of worksheets and readings in preparation for midterm and final exams. Midterm worksheets are due day of midterm exam. Final exam and second set of worksheets is a type setting problem and is due during exam week.

REQUIRED TEXT (AVAILABLE IN PSU BOOKSTORE)

The Elements of Typographic Style, Robert Bringhurst, Publisher: Hartley & Marks.
and (on the art server) *typelesson.pdf* (useful for typesetting extra credit final exam)

SUGGESTED TEXTS (AVAILABLE IN PSU BOOKSTORE)

c/id Visual Identity and Branding for the Arts, Angus Hyland and Emily King
Guerilla Advertising Unconventional Brand Communication, Gavin Lucas and Michael Dorrian

EXPERIMENTING WITH TYPOGRAPHY

This course addresses both theory and practice of visual communication and typography. The emphasis is on experimentation with and creation of typographic identities, messages and systems. The first project of this course focuses on exploring typography, language, meaning, message and medium. Students develop inventive solutions that explore how typographic treatment and context affect meaning and message. Consider our projects as—a typographic journey—designed to promote exploration and build strategy and execution skills that will be applied in the final project.

Go out on a limb. Experiment.

Explore new forms.

Take new paths. Break old habits.

Move your audience to think, laugh, smile and cry. **Be fearless.**

The most important “rule” is to make work, make a lot of work—this allows for the luxury of failure, failure is expected when experimenting—in fact its the key to finding success.

In addition to the class rule stated above...

Successful solutions (concepts and ideas)...

- are innovative, memorable (reflective and/or experiential), original
- are highly communicative.
- demonstrate risk-taking, mature thinking and a highly developed imagination.
- demonstrate ability and risk-taking in devising experiential and reflective artifacts / experiences
- demonstrate innovation in the construction of meaningful typographic messages and narratives (— innovation demonstrated in strategy, formats, media placement and how message interacts with its environment.)
- employ creative thinking to create solutions that move the viewer (to think, smile, laugh, cry...)

Successful process explores multiple concepts, approaches and strategies.

ASSIGNMENT

**TYPOGRAPHIC EXPERIMENT PART ONE:
TYPE ONLY COMPOSITIONS
EXPLORING LANGUAGE + CREATIVE WRITING**

PART ONE

Choose one of the following themes:
"dance" or "physical movement" or
"the power of words" or "language" or "literature"
theater or film or visual art or
music or sound or symphony or opera
or sustainability or green design or sustainable design
or send the world / people an uplifting message :)

Create a series of compositions using type (only),
color, and texture. NO IMAGES.

Size: Choose from the following proportions:
square, billboard, golden section (landscape or por-
trait). Sizes NOT be smaller than 8 x 8 or 5 x 7 inches.
Scale is highly encouraged.

Treating the type/composition: Experiment with
type forms (e.g. typefaces, letterpress, hand-drawn
type, stencil). Experiment with different materials (e.g.
paper, paint, ink, wood, metal, cloth, glass, digital
screen, wall). Experiment with dimension, size and
medium (e.g. computer, silkscreen, photography [text
drawn into sand or with chocolate sauce], etc). Care-
fully consider how the form (typefaces/design) and
visual treatments/medium alter, enhance, clarify or
obfuscate the message.

Choose your words thoughtfully: Be conscious of
words that are cliché and words that have been over-
seen and overused. Remember your job is to intrigue
and reach your audience—to have your message be
remembered. Create a memorable experience and/or
artifact. Take risks! Move your audience!

Composition #1: Find (or write) the most powerful
language to express your theme. Suggestion:
keep it simple—a word, a few words, a phrase...
Treat the type so that the meaning is enhanced
and words can be read. WORDS MAKE THE
MEANING. IDEA FOR MESSAGE MAKES THE
MEANING. Touch the viewers hearts and minds
with words. Credit author if it is not you.

Composition #2: Follow #1 again but with new
word/s and new visual treatment.

Composition #3: Now do something completely
different—step outside of yourself and how you
usually approach problems—the focus can be on
form and feel or idea first or words, words, words
but the approach, style and concept should be
different from your usual way of approaching
problems. If you are having trouble broadening
your approach—look for strong examples of work
that fall outside of your ways of thinking, working
and visual style. Have fun with it!

good luck !

Bob

TYPOGRAPHIC EXPERIMENT PART 2

Put your strongest type experiment "in situation" (or "in context"). You may need to adapt or alter your experiment to fit a creative idea.

Using your strongest solution from part one, three different formats/media(e.g. print, environment, guerilla/non-trad, poster, bag, package, object/product design, business card, billboard, sidewalk chalk stencil, poster, projection, web, tv, short motion piece [story boarded is ok]).

One must be a non-traditional approach. *Focus on creating a memorable and moving experience for your audience.* Use Norman's **Reflective Cognition** and *Andrew Blauvelt's readings and RCA's program for reference:*

<http://www.designobserver.com/archives/entry.html?id=38845>

<http://blogs.walkerart.org/design/2008/11/10/towards-relational-design/>

<http://www.interaction.rca.ac.uk/>

Develop ways to create/format your message that can be altered, changed or responded to by your audience.

Again as with part one, typographic experimentation is expected (e.g. typefaces, letterpress, hand-drawn type, stencil). Experiment with different materials (e.g. paper, paint, ink, wood, metal, cloth, glass, digital screen, wall). Experiment with dimension (two or three—e.g. box, bag, package, object, screen), size (e.g. poster, billboard, card), and

medium (e.g. computer, silkscreen, photography [text drawn into sand or with chocolate sauce], etc). Experiment with location / situation / context. Carefully consider how the form (typefaces/design) and visual treatments/medium alter, enhance, clarify the message.

From part one: choose your words thoughtfully: Be conscious of words that are cliché and words that have been overseen and overused. Remember your job is to intrigue and reach your audience—to have your message be remembered. Create a memorable experience and/or artifact. Take risks! Move your audience!

Remember your job is to intrigue and reach your audience—to have your message be remembered. Create a memorable experience and/or artifact. Take risks! Touch hearts and minds!

In making choices about treatment, media and placement consider your message, strategy and channel of communication creatively. Be prepared to present the answers in class: Who am I speaking to / who is my audience? What is my message? How will my message best mediated with the minimum amount of "noise" or interference ("Process School")? What form should it take? Where should it be placed? How should my audience come into contact with it? Is the way you treat the text adding another level of meaning or adding interference? What meanings might be created by the viewer? ("Semiotics School") How effective is my solution? How can I improve it?

Inspiration /Research /Reference

designers

www.bantjes.com (Marian Bantjes)
www.hillmancurtis.com/hc_web/film_video.shtml
(look at Stefan Sagmeister and Paula Scher)
www.frostdesign.com.au/v2/
www.typografika.com (Erik Brandt)
modern typography.com/index.html

design blogs

commandsave.com (our blog!!)
itsnicethat.com
fffound.com
swiss-miss.com
notcot.org
dontforgettoflush.com
debbiemillman.blogspot.com
thestylepress.net
vwork.com (V V O R K)

cpluv.com
redesigners.org
createmake.com
manystuff.org

ideas for non-trad and objects+

www.dezeen.com/category/design-news/
www.formfiftyfive.com/
www.dontforgettoflush.com/
www.apartmenttherapy.com

also (!) of interest (type in motion-)

www.designersarewankers.com/profiles/
designobserver.com and www.aiga.org
artculture.com/art-design-features/animated-typography-motion-videos
yuxt.com/artist/typography_in_music_videos
www.mefedia.com/tags/typography/