

Intro to Computer Art 124 Fall 2009

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a foundation in the primary computer hardware and software used in visual communication. The course will include fundamental design and advertising techniques, as well as practical/real world projects - magazine covers, newsletters, etc. - for a broad understanding and use of electronic and print media. Will cover: History, digital scanning, internet/web, as well as presentation (digital PDF), manipulation (Adobe Photoshop) and layout software (Adobe Indesign)

GENERAL GOALS

- Introduce a basic understanding of the development and broad definition of the terms 'desktop publishing', 'computer art' and 'digital media'.
- Introduce basic concepts and design principles used in communication.
- Introduce a basic electronic design process that includes software and equipment for input and output methods - "screen to print" or "closing the loop"
- Familiarize students with basic equipment, hardware and software for an electronic foundation
- Give students an opportunity to develop and explore the benefits of being informed, skilled, observant practitioners of design.
- Prepare students for Graphic Design 1
- Structure: - "Hands On" lecture, demonstration, assignments, studio practice.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class assignments must be completed on time and be submitted for a grade and a class critique when appropriate.

Project critiques will occur regularly and you are expected to participate fully. They are especially important in a studio context and are the equivalent of an exam. You must attend with your completed projects. Failure to do so will result in an F grade for that project, and late submissions will be graded lower.

Attendance & punctuality is mandatory for ALL classes. Regular attendance and punctuality are vital to this process. You must be on time- lateness is disruptive, will affect your grades, and will be counted as an absence after 20 minutes.

Absences: 3 absences of any kind is the maximum allowed without consequence. Any additional absences will affect your grade and if you reach 5 you will automatically receive an F. Plan your time accordingly. If you miss a class, you are responsible for contacting the instructor as soon as possible to find out how you can make up the class work.

Materials: Please bring in a "Flash" drive (\$8-\$20) to each class, and notebook for note taking.

No Cell phones, iPods or personal audio devices are allowed to be used in-class.

One central player may be allowed if appropriate.

No computer applications, e-mail or other programs other than those required for class are allowed to be open on your computer during class time without teacher's permission. No exceptions.

Failure to observe these basic studio rules will affect your grade, and repeated offenders will be asked to leave the lab.

Intro to Computer Art 124 Fall 2009

UPON COMPLETION OF COURSE:

- Show in Portfolio form - technical skills/proficiency in the use of software covered.
- Show in Portfolio form - an understanding of design concepts and principles covered.
- Show in assignment and portfolio - creative solutions to given challenges.

REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETION

Satisfactory by definition:

- Timely completion of all assignments projects
- Midterm project and Final project
- Attendance - in accord with College and Department Policy

GRADES

For an above average grade: Additional time, effort, and enthusiasm in and out of class are necessary for an above average grade. Students who listen, ask questions, work hard, take risks, explore concepts & media, and actively engage in constructive criticism and an exchange of ideas will benefit most from this class and earn an above average grade.

Mid-semester & Final Grades for this class will be based on the following;

- 70% Quality of assignments overall and evidence of improved technical & creative skills
- 20% Participation in critiques & group discussions; general attitude, energy, & enthusiasm in and out of class; attendance & punctuality
- 10% Midterm quiz and final project

LETTER GRADES

- A for work of consistent excellence showing significant growth
- B for work of very good quality
- C for work meeting the average expectations of the class requirements
- D for unsatisfactory work and/ or attendance problems
- F Unsatisfactory work and/ or excessive absences

Intro to Computer Art 124 Fall 2009

OUTLINE / INTRODUCTION

- Questionnaire - class participants Introduction
- Overview of equipment in the Lab (scanner, printers, computers, internet, etc.); what they do and how they work together in desktop publishing and digital art.
- The structure of the course “Hands -On” (lecture, demo., assign., studio, critique, - mid & final projects and portfolio of course work)
- Text / materials (folder, 3 ring binder storage device: memory/flash drive, etc.)
- Brief intro. and discussion on the variations of Computer Art: digital photography, graphic sign (print work from postage stamps to books, web design (websites, blogs, social networks), logo design, illustration, animation and motion graphics

SYLLABUS

SECTION ONE: IMAGE (Rasterized or Bitmapped Graphics) (Photoshop)

- Photoshop and Image manipulation
- Input (scanning and digital cameras)
- Output (printing and displays)
- Selections, tools, cut, copy, paste
- Layers
- Filters
- Resolution, file formats

SECTION TWO: COLOR

(Photoshop)

- Tonal and color correction (Levels, Curves)
- Hue, Saturation and other “adjustments”
- Swatches and RGB

(InDesign)

- Swatches and CMYK
- Pantone and other color systems
- Tints and shades

SECTION THREE: TYPE (Photoshop and InDesign)

- Fonts and Font families
- Leading and other basic typographic terms
- Using the type tools in Adobe software
- Font as form and shape

Intro to Computer Art 124 Fall 2009

SECTION FOUR: FORM and SPACE (Vector Graphics) (Photoshop)

- Vector Graphics
- Pen Tool
- Vector Shapes
- Shape and negative space

SECTION FIVE: PAGE LAYOUT (InDesign)

- Negative space and Typography
- Architecture of books and magazine pages
- Grid systems
- Gestalt: seeing the page as a whole, using design to communicate a message
- Pre-flighting files (preparing files for output)
- Service bureau (papers, printable material etc.)

FINAL PORTFOLIO AND PRESENTATION:

- Each student will be responsible for creating an Interactive PDF in InDesign that includes a comprehensive record of all assignments and projects is submitted for a mandatory review at the end of the semester with the instructor. This is due at a date TBD at the end of semester in lieu of a final exam