Course information & syllabus ART 2413 Typography I

Course description

This course will emphasize the design of projects that address the investigation of letterforms and their characteristics, spacing, leading, type selection, layout alternatives, type specification and copyfitting, terminology, measuring systems, and the use of typography as a communication medium.

Instructor contact info

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Resources

Design
TheIdeaKit
Essays
Resources

For readings, magazines, websites, and books: www.jamesrobertwatson.com
Type: Design, Color, Character & Use, Michael Beaumont
Typographic Design: Form and Communication, Rob Carter, Ben Day, Philip Meggs
Creative Typography, Marion March
An Introduction to Typography, Terry Jeavons & Michael Beaumont
Herb Lubalin, Gertrude Snyder & Alan Peckolick
CA, Print, Before & After, How Magazine

Course objectives

To help students grow as decision makers, creative problem solvers, and persuasive communicators; Typography 1 will encourage students to:
• open their minds to see and think in new ways.
• practice asking the right questions.
• improve self-confidence and assertiveness.
• practice clear communication of message content.
• encourage a discerning awareness and recognition of the structure and shape of letterforms.
• promote experimentation and creative manipulation of letterforms and typography.
• effectively communicate ideas through typography.
• understand relationships among letterforms, text, typefaces, symbols and other imagery.
• refine layout and composition skills.
• meet deadlines.
• develop valid and persuasive rationale.
• make effective oral and written presentations.
• build a body of impressive design work.
• practice performing with professional behavior.

Course information

Course Format

Studio based projects with interim and final critiques, in-class exercises, and tests will be included. It is up to the student to achieve fluency in computer use.

Class attendance

Attendance will not be taken, but missing a class will limit information and input from the instructor and the other students and often result in an earned grade of zero for that day's assignment.

Oral communication

Instances of ignorant vernacular (*whatever, uhm, like, ya know what I'm sayin?* etc.) will result in interrupted correction and repetition of message and possible loss of participation points.

Plagiarism

If it's not your idea, you can't use it. If a designer copies anyone's ideas, designs or writings and tries to pass it off as his/her original work the designer will receive a zero for the assignment or project.

Meeting deadlines

Each project and class assignment must be turned in by its deadline - usually at the beginning of class. A grade of zero will be earned for late work unless arrangements have been made *in advance* by phone, text, or email. Reread the previous two sentences and make sure you understand the consequences. Consider that you and I have a business appointment each Monday and Wensday at 3:30 - if you're going to be late, notify me *before* our scheduled meeting.

Project specs

It is the designer's responsibility to understand project specs and deadlines. *You didn't tell us* isn't a valid excuse.

Making excuses

These excuses are unacceptable: *the printer wasn't working, I lost my file, left it at home, woke up late, that's the way the computer set it, car wouldn't start, I didn't have enough time*. The only valid excuses are *I didn't think about it* and *I didn't plan ahead.*

How to earn an A

Attend class regularly and on time, meet deadlines, take thorough notes, conduct thorough research, manage time efficiently, do more than is asked for, participate in discussions and critiques, show strong sense of design, and do not settle for 'good enough'.

Course topics
- Typography discussion and samples
- Categories of type families
- Typeface terms
- Parts of a letter
- Character manipulation
- Layout designations
- Units of measurements
- Formats to set body copy
- Formats to capitalize display type
- Lettering and inking
- Kerning, word spacing, and leading
- Greeking
- Font selection
- Letterform relationships
- Ambigrams
- Improving comprehension

Grading and evaluation

Course grade Average of points earned:
50% Major projects and tests
30% Minor projects, class exercises, participation
20% Weekly activities, mind games/puzzles

Grading criteria
Work will be graded on a scale of 0 to 100 with 75
as the average. Points are rewarded as follows:
80 - 99 exceeds criteria and shows initiative.
70 - 79 meets the project specs and criteria.
 1 - 69 does not meet specs nor basic criteria.
     0 not turned in by deadline.

Grading scale Points to letter grades:
90 - 100 = A (89.5 +)
80 - 90 = B (79.5 - 89.4)
70 - 80 = C (69.5 - 79.4)
60 - 70 = D (59.5 - 69.4)
 0 - 60 = F (0 - 59.4)

Course project options

Weekly assignments
Each week at 3:30 we will discuss participation
in and responses to each of the following:
- Web essays: from www.jamesrobertwatson.com
- Neurobics: get out of your rut, broaden horizons
- Design critique: notice, see, observe, make better

Miscellaneous surprises
Serendipitous short turn-around assignments

Self-assessment
Personal assessment: goals, dreams, passions

Process book
Develop and maintain a journal of the design process

Logo/Identity and Stationery package
Variety of effective marks, each to convey a strong,
memorable, and appropriate brand identity

Find the typos project
Find examples of poor typographic decisions

Typography Sampler
Find samples of type terms and manipulation

Examples in Environment
Find samples of letterforms in nature

Typo sampler
Analyze, critique, and improve the world of type

Lettering & Spacing
Practice optical spacing

Geometric Alphabet
Use lines and arcs to clearly communicate letterforms

Letterform relationships
Explore connections, similarities, and disparities

WordPix
Typographic illustration of a word or phrase

New alphabetic character
Create the 27th character in the alphabet

Ambigram
Develop a word to be read in more than one way

Type self-portrait
Create an image using only alphabetic characters

Type quote poster
Research words of type wisdom and design a poster