

Design

F O R P R I N T

COMM 362, SPRING SEMESTER 2009. INSTRUCTOR: ROSS COLLINS, PH.D.

THE SYLLABUS

COM 362: WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Q AND A: YOUR COURSE KNOWLEDGE

HANDY CALENDAR: SNIP N' SAVE

DESIGN

F O R P R I N T

COMM 362: What's in it for me?

Is it “desktop publishing?” Bit of an old-fashioned term nowadays. The world of professional design for publication reaches so widely beyond one person’s desktop that what we do is perhaps better called digital publishing. This course is designed to offer an introduction to that world. You’ll learn some theory behind visual perception and design (and some rules seldom broken), publishing terminology, designer workflow, and software. Enough—we hope—to produce simple publications at a respectably professional level.

Course objectives:

- Understanding of basic design history, psychology and theory.
- Knowledge of design and printing terms and techniques.
 - Ability to recognize and create high-quality page designs for a variety of publications.
 - Ability to manipulate publications using computerized pagination tools.

Note that only the last of these objectives is primarily skill-based. Skill in “desktop publishing” is only part of what a designer needs to know to create publications reaching a presentable standard. Without knowledge of

Syllabus: COMM 362,
Design for Print, Spring 2009.
North Dakota State University, Fargo.

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Required text: Lisa Graham, *Basics of Design. Layout & Typography for Beginners*. 2nd edition, 2005.

design fundamentals, and without the creative spark that goes beyond classroom learning, what you’ll get out of the machine won’t communicate very well.

What this course is not:

✗ A course for artists using illustrator software. We may work a little with drawing software, but you are neither expected to know nor taught graphic illustration.

✗ Exclusively software skills development. Buy a how-to book. (Hey! Buy one anyway!)

✗ Design for the web. Some of the design principles can be adapted to the web, but web design is beyond scope of the class.

What you’ll need:

In addition to the required text, you’ll need:

- Flash/jump drive or other way to save your work.

Disabilities notice: If you need special accommodations for learning or have special needs, please let the instructor know as soon as possible.

Alternative forms: This syllabus, along with other material of interest to students, is available on line at the web address above.

The course concisely

A brief Q and A

Students often register for a new course with trepidation: what will I learn? How will I be graded? Will I do well? Instructor Ross Collins answers a few of our most common questions in the brief interview below.

Q. What is your attendance policy?

A. I believe students have the right to make their own decisions regarding class attendance. I don’t take roll. But I do have to warn students that my lectures are designed to supplement the text, and not to rephrase material they can read for themselves. Exams will be based on both lectures and text.

Oh, I almost forgot to mention: we also will have a number of in-class assignments. To give students the feeling of working under tight deadlines, some of these exercises will be due at the end of the class period. If you’re absent, you can’t make up the work!

Q. That sounds pretty tough.

A. Okay, I’ll cut some slack: students who have to skip class for a good reason will have a cushion of two free skip days. In-class work missed those days won’t be

counted on the final grade. Think of it as a bank account of skip days for emergencies. All out-of-class assignments will still be due, however. Because professional designers must keep deadlines, late assignments will suffer lower grades.

Q. How will you compute final grades?

A. Grading will be based on a standard point-count.

Tentative highest possible point totals for this course:

Mid-semester exam, 200 pts.

Final exam, 300 pts.

Class exercises, 300 pts.

Other in-class assignments, 100 pts.

Total: 900 pts.

The total number may change slightly, depending on the eventual number of assignments completed during the semester. Standard grade percentages:

90-100=A

80-89=B

70-79=C

60-69=D

Below 60=F

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Design for Print, Spring Semester 2009

Week One (Jan. 12-16)

Introduction to design. Text chapter 1.

Week Two (Jan 19-23; Monday is Martin Luther King Jr. Day, no classes)

Design history and psychology. Intro to computerized pagination software (InDesign).

Week Three (Jan. 26-30)

Psychology, InDesign cont. Begin typography. Text chapter 10.

Week Four (Feb. 2-6)

Typography. InDesign cont. Text chapter 11, 12, and glossary. *Note: I will be in London this week working on a student exchange program with Thames Valley University, but will find substitutes for this week's class.*

Week Five (Feb. 9-13)

Typography, grids, emphasis, contrast. InDesign exercise. Text chapters 2-3.

Week Six (Feb. 16-20)

Grids, cont., file formats, page design, balance. InDesign exercise. Text chapter 4.

Week Seven (Feb. 23-27)

Magazine design and planning, balance and alignment. Text chapter 5.

Week Eight (March 2-6)

Repetition and flow, newspaper design. Text chapters 6-7. Review for midterm; **midterm exam on Friday.**

More to Read

Recommended: David Bergsland, *Publishing with InDesign*. 2001. (Essential if you want a comprehensive understanding of the digital publishing world.)

Other good reading:

Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*. 1972. (A classic.)

Paul Martin Lester, *Visual Communication. Images with Messages*. 4th ed., 2006. (Beefy supplemental text by prominent vis comm academic.)

Donis A. Dondis, *A Primer of Visual Literacy*. 1984. (Oldish, but no one explains it more elegantly.)

Elaine Weinmann and Peter Louekas, *Photoshop for Windows & Macintosh*. 2005. (This is part of the Visual Quickstart series by Peachpit Press, perfect for graphic designers who tend to learn visually.)

Week Nine (March 9-13)

Working with images. Begin Photoshop; study self-guided tutorial on class web site. Text chapter 8.

Week Ten (March 23-27; March 16-20 is spring break, no classes)

Working with photos, cont. Preflighting and links. Begin color theory. Text chapter 9.

Week Eleven (March 30-April 3) Color theory, printing and binding. Continue Photoshop.

Week Twelve (April 6-10; April 10-13 is Easter break, no classes)

Judging design. Working with printers, choosing paper stock.

Week Thirteen (April 13-17)

Working with signatures. Advanced magazine exercise. Text chapter 12.

Week Fourteen (April 20-24)

Magazine exercise cont., Photoshop cont.

Week Fifteen (April 27-May 1)

Spot and process color; Begin "capstone" project. Text chapter 13.

Week Sixteen (May 4-8)

Conclude final project. Last day of class is Friday, May 8.

Final exam: 10:30 a.m. Monday, May 11.

We shouldn't have to remind you that...

Work in this course must adhere to the NDSU Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct. This addresses cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or facilitating dishonesty. Instructors have the right to respond to a student's dishonesty by failing the student for the particular assignment or test, or even the entire course, or recommend the student drop the course.

Visit the class web site!

- Class materials
- Insider info for students, travel, history
- Announcements
- Class bulletin board
- Tutorials
- www.ndsu.edu/communication/collins