Graphic Design for Media
Stephen F. Austin State University | Spring 2024
MWF 11-11:50 a.m. | BO202

Instructor: Cassandra Hayes, Ph.D., M.F.A. (Dr. Hayes)
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Available for office hours Mondays & Wednesdays noon-2pm; Fridays noon-1pm
    OR by appointment (virtual or in person): https://cassandra-12.youcanbook.me/

Catalog Description
This course focuses on the study, development and application of graphic design for multiple media outlets, such as web, advertising, magazine, and newspaper through the learning of various design programs and concepts.

Course Description
Your world is designed, whether you know how to articulate its designs or not. In this course, you will learn the basics of visual literacy, able to not only analyze images but also to create them from scratch using industry-standard software. On your own, you will create compelling designs using visual language to communicate your ideas. With a group, you will create the visuals for a promotional or advertising campaign. By the end of the course, you will be empowered to think about design as you encounter it throughout the media, both as a professional and as a person.

Course Format & Required Materials
Regular participation and attendance is mandatory for this course. You are required to use industry-standard professional software to complete your designs in the course. In addition, you will need one sketchbook of some form for in-class activities and planning your designs.

Required materials include:

- Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, and InDesign (available via SFA and in BO 202 lab)
- One sketch book appropriate for quick studies—does not have to be expensive
- A pencil or something else to write/draw with
- *Abstract: The Art of Design* (available on Netflix)

Suggested readings include:

- *Graphic Design School: The Principles and Practice of Graphic Design* by David Dabner, Sandra Stewart, and Abbie Vickress
- *Designing Brand Identity* by Alina Wheeler
- *The Non-Designer’s Design Book* by Robin Williams
- *Design is Storytelling* by Ellen Lupton
- *Thinking with Type* by Ellen Lupton
Active communication is key to your success in this course: reach out to me, your peers, on campus resources, or consult additional resources I provide for help completing assignments. Although succeeding in the course remains your responsibility, I want to set you up to succeed—do not hesitate to reach out for help, writing feedback, clarification, etc.

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate the ability to write effectively across a variety of platforms appropriate to the discipline.
2. Gather, analyze, organize and synthesize discipline-appropriate research and communication information about it.
3. Understand the role of public relations and media in society.
4. Comprehend the legal and ethical principles relating to public relations.
5. Demonstrate the application of media technology, terminology and techniques outside of classroom hours.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate an understanding of visual communication techniques.
2. Understand and analyze the role of visual communication in media industries.
3. Collaborate with peers to produce creative and professional projects.
4. Demonstrate the ability to produce deliverables unified with a brand identity.
5. Critically engage with visual communication in present and future media.

Assignments and Grading Scale

Points Breakdown
Total points 1000, broken down as follows:

- Attendance/Participation (200 points)
  - Engaging in class (100 points)
  - Sketchbook (100 points)
- Independent Assignments (150 points)
  - Logos (50 points)
  - Sports Post or Album Cover (50 points)
  - Typographic Art (50 points)
- Independent Projects (225 points)
  - Movie Poster (75 points)
  - Social Media GIF (75 points)
  - Magazine Layout (75 points)
- Group Project (225 points) [Keystone Event—cannot be missed]
  - Team Contribution (75 points)
  - Design Contribution (75 points)
- Presentation Contribution (75 points)
- Personal Portfolio (200 points)

**Grading Scale**
Your final course grade will be comprised of a weighted average, using the following grading scale. Grades are not rounded up.

**A** = 90% - 100% *Excellent. (900-1000 points)*
Mastery of the assignment/concepts at the highest level of attainment.

**B** = 80% - 89.9% *Good. (800-899 points)*
Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment.

**C** = 70% - 79.9% *Average. (700-799 points)*
An acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment.

**D** = 60% - 69.9% *Inferior. (600-699 points)*
A marginal performance; a minimal passing level of attainment.

**F** = 0% - 59.9% *Failure. (0-599 points)*
Unacceptable performance revealing almost no understanding of content.

**Attendance/Participation**
Attendance is mandatory for this course, as much of class time will be dedicated to crafting your assignments and projects and working within your group toward your final project. Engagement via activities is required to earn attendance points. Many activities will involve learning software techniques, sketching ideas, imitating graphics, and taking notes about course content. In addition, you must fill one sketchbook by the end of the semester. You will turn in the sketchbook on the last class day. The sketchbook should include notes, terms from the course, information and ideas from the Abstract videos watched in class, practice sketches, in class activity outcomes, etc. All pages must be filled.

**Independent Assignments**
Assignments will be assigned throughout the first half of the course, as you learn and practice basic skills in Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, and InDesign.

- **Logos**: You will redesign a logo for a brand in four different color schemes.
- **Sports Post OR Album Cover**: You will craft an engaging promotional social media post for a sports team or player of your choice OR you will create an album cover for a musician of your choice. You must use Photoshop for this assignment.
- **Typographic Art**: You will use text, fonts, grids, and frames in InDesign to craft an artistic design through type.

**Independent Projects**
Projects will be assigned to evaluate your use of Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, and InDesign as well as your basic understanding of design concepts. Projects should be more involved and detailed than assignments.
• Movie Poster: You will illustrate a vector-based movie poster for the movie of your choice.
• Social Media GIF: You will use create a compelling animation appropriate for a brand’s social media account.
• Magazine Layout: You will recreate a layout for a magazine of your choice.

Group Project
Your most involved assignment of the course involves you and a group of 3-4 people developing the visuals for a speculative media brand’s advertising campaign. “Speculative” means imaginary and fictional, yet grounded in a sense of the possible. The brand, company, and products may speculate a future or may simply present alternate versions of media products that exist.

The visuals must include (a) a strategic message, (b) a comprehensive brand guide, (c) at least three social media graphics for a platform of your choice, (d) at least one poster/flyer, and (e) at least one other graphic of your choice. Fifty extra points will be given if a physical, 3D design is also included. At the end of the semester, you will present your deliverables and brand to the class.

To earn credit, you must complete three milestones:

• Team Contribution: You must be either Project Manager, Quality Supervisor, Creative Director, or Design Analyst (optional) within your team. Project Managers keep teams on track by providing structure and deadlines. Quality Supervisor ensures that the deliverables of the team are quality and appropriate for the brand, strategy, and assigned project. Creative Director is responsible for the creative message decisions of the campaign. Design Analyst performs research functions for the campaign.
• Design Contribution: You must be responsible for creating at least one of the graphics for the assignment. Although you may carry out the actual design in the software, you will rely on your group for guidance on what the graphic should look like.
• Presentation Contribution: You must play at least some role in the presentation of your campaign.

Personal Portfolio
Using InDesign and potentially other programs of your choice, create a portfolio that showcases your work and development as a designer over the semester. The portfolio should include all your independent assignments and projects as well as your design contribution from the group project. You must articulate a justification for your creative choices for at least one of your designs. The last week of class, we will present your portfolios to the class and/or in some public format.

**All design projects must be turned in as a JPEG, PNG, or PDF.** I reserve the right to request to see any of your working files throughout the course, such as your Illustrator, Photoshop, and InDesign files. Plagiarism with visuals is possible and is expressly forbidden in this course.

Course and Campus Policies
Late Work
No late work is accepted for this course. However, for one assignment excluding the final portfolio, you may revise and resubmit your work for an updated grade of up to the full points for the assignment. The revise and resubmit option expires on the last regular class day of the course.

Extra Credit
As detailed above, up to 50 extra credit points is possible through completing a physical, 3D design in conjunction with your group project. In addition, please turn in a brief statement about what YOU did to contribute to the 3D design. Points will be earned according to the nature of your contribution.

Questions about Grades
I welcome questions about grades, so please reach out if you would like clarification. However, I ask that you wait for 24 hours after receiving your grade before talking with me about it. This “cool off” period is required before I will meet with you. Afterwards, you have a week to talk with me about the grade; after a week, I will consider the issue closed. All discussions of grades must take place via videoconference or, depending on our situation, in person.

Generative-AI Tools (such as Chat-GPT)
I do not mind if you use AI tools such as Chat GPT to provide structure or basic editing/proofreading for your writing. However, you must NOT use these tools to generate ideas with no reflection or direction from your own mind and you may NOT use these tools to draft a document. I want YOUR ideas and YOUR voice in your work in this class. Producing unoriginal work will result in a 0 on the assignment. A good rule of thumb is to be transparent about your use of AI tools.

Institution Absences (HOP 04-110)
An Institutional Absence may be granted to a student who participates as a representative of the University in academic (including research), extra- or cocurricular, or athletic activities. Students will be excused for institutional purposes from otherwise required academic activity only when a valid Institutional Absence is approved by the appropriate administrative unit or official and the documentation of approval is provided to the faculty member at least five (5) days in advance.

Institutional absences will not be approved for keystone events, defined as: a special or unique assignment, test, project, experience, or other academic exercise identified by the Faculty member as critical for successful completion of standards of the class and unable to be missed. These events must be identified on the syllabus at the beginning of the semester and communicated to the students. Events added to the syllabus at a later date will not qualify for Keystone Event status. Keystone Events where the date/time is changed will no longer be considered a Keystone Event. Students should make themselves aware of any Keystone Events identified in the syllabus to ensure there are no conflicts.
For keystone events where the assignment dates vary, it is incumbent upon the students to work with their faculty member to not select a conflicting date.

More information on Institutional Absences, including how to apply, can be found at https://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents/student-resources/institutional-absences.

**Academic Integrity (4.1)**

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5)**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework
because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.

Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Student Wellness and Well-Being
SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:
The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
936.468.1041

The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

Crisis Resources:
- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741
Course Schedule  
(subject to change)

**Due dates bolded and in red.**

*Required Abstract: The Art of Design viewing indicated by bold, blue, and italics.*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date &amp; Topics</th>
<th>To Do</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1—Visual Communication Basics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td><strong>Read Course Syllabus</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Fri., Jan. 19—Introduction to Course</td>
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<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
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<td>• Mon., Jan. 22—Elements of Design</td>
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<td>• Wed., Jan. 24—Principles of Design</td>
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<td>• Fri., Jan. 26—Abstract S1 E6 Paula Scher: Graphic Design</td>
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<td><strong>Module 2—Intro to Adobe Programs</strong></td>
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<td>Week 3—Illustrator</td>
<td><strong>Watch by Mon., Jan 29: Abstract S1 E1 Christoph Niemann: Illustration</strong></td>
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<td>• Mon., Jan. 29—Illustrator Walkthrough</td>
<td>Logos Due Friday, Feb. 2 at 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>• Wed., Jan. 31—Illustrator Practice</td>
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<td>• Fri., Feb. 2—Logos Work</td>
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<td><strong>Week 4—Photoshop</strong></td>
<td><strong>Social Media Sports Post or Album Cover Due Friday, Feb. 9 at 11:59 p.m.</strong></td>
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<td>• Mon., Feb. 5—Photoshop Walkthrough</td>
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<td>• Wed., Feb. 7—Photoshop Practice</td>
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<td>• Fri., Feb. 9—Social Media Sports Post or Album Cover Work</td>
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<td><strong>Week 5—InDesign</strong></td>
<td><strong>Typographic Art Due Friday, Feb. 16 at 11:59 p.m.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mon., Feb. 12—Abstract S2 E6 Jonathan Hoefler: Typeface Design</td>
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<td>• Wed., Feb. 14—InDesign Walkthrough/Practice</td>
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<td>• Fri., Feb. 16—Typographic Art Work</td>
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<td><strong>Module 3—Strategic Design for Media</strong></td>
<td><strong>Watch by Mon., Feb. 19: Abstract S2 E3 Ruth Carter: Costume Design</strong></td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>• Mon., Feb. 19—Design History and Eras</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
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<td>Mon., Feb. 26—Design Styles Practice Cont’d</td>
<td>Mon., March 4—Brand Design</td>
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<td>Wed., Feb. 28—Movie Poster Work</td>
<td>Wed., March 6—Brand Design Practice</td>
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<td>Fri., March 1—Movie Poster Work Cont’d</td>
<td>Fri., March 8—Social Media GIF Work</td>
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<td>Movie Poster Due Friday, March 1 at 11:59 p.m.</td>
<td>Watch by Mon., March 4: Abstract S1 E5 Ralph Gilles: Automotive Design</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>Mon., March 18—Design Practice/Imitation</td>
<td>Mon., March 25—Magazine Layout Work</td>
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<td>Wed., March 20—Social Media GIF Work</td>
<td>Wed., March 27—Magazine Layout Work Cont’d</td>
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<td>Fri., March 22—Social Media GIF Work Cont’d</td>
<td>Fri., March 29—Easter Holiday No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Media GIF Due Friday, March 22 at 11:59 p.m.</td>
<td>Watch by Mon., March 25: Abstract S1 E8 Ilse Crawford: Interior Design</td>
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<td>Watch by Mon., March 18: Abstract S2 E4 Cas Holman: Design for Play</td>
<td>Magazine Layout Due Thurs., March 28 at 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>Mon., April 8—Design Practice/Imitation</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Watch by Mon., April 15: Abstract S1 E2 Tinker Hatfield: Footwear Design</td>
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<td>Mon., April 15—Design Practice/Imitation</td>
<td>Design Contribution Due</td>
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<td>Wed., April 17—Design Contribution Work</td>
<td>Friday, April 19 at 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>Fri., April 19—Design Contribution Work Cont’d</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 14</th>
<th>Watch by Mon., March 18: Abstract S2 E1 Olafur Eliasson: The Design of Art</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon., April 22—Design Practice/Imitation</td>
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<td>Wed., April 24—Group Presentations</td>
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<td>Fri., April 26—Group Presentations Cont’d</td>
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| Module 5—Wrapping Up                                                   |                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|                                                                          |
| Week 15                                                                |                                                                          |
| Mon., April 29—Portfolio Work                                           |                                                                          |
| Wed., May 1—Portfolio Presentations/Celebration                        | Sketchbook Due Wed., May 1 in class                                      |
| Fri., May 3—Portfolio Presentations/Celebration Cont’d                  | Extra Credit (Optional) Due                                              |
|                                                                        | Friday, May 3 at 11:59 p.m.                                              |

**Final Portfolio Due Wednesday, May 8 at 11:59pm**—NO Grace Period