

## FUNDAMENTALS OF GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION

ART 1330 SECTION 04059

**Instructor:** Kathy Kelley **Time:** MW 11:00–2:00 **Location:** 304 Fine Arts Building  
**Office:** 326 Fine Arts Building **Web:** www.kkelley.net/fund **Hours:** By appointment **T:** 713 552 1334 **E:** kkelley@houston.rr.com

### Course Description

#### Objectives

- To practice effective form analysis, methods of composition and visual organization.
- To begin to understand problem solving and methods of problem solving.
- To further develop methods of problem solving.
- To become proficient with the basic design tools, mediums and craft.
- To research and explore.

#### Goals

**Aesthetic:** Composition, form-making and visual organization, color and media.

**Conceptual:** Meaning in words and images, how the piece communicates.

**Structure:** The underlying structure (visible or invisible) that holds the piece together.

**Technique:** Learning the basic tools, materials, and methods of image making.

#### Verbal Critiques/Critical Evaluation:

Becoming familiar with the vocabulary of design, and developing a “critical eye” that enables you to evaluate the work of your peers, as well as that of professional designers.

#### Communication

Visual Language (communication) is the basis for design creation. The graphic designer uses type and symbols (imagery) to communicate ideas. Visual organization is initially defined by rules, principles and concepts. A designer must become aware of these in order to interpret the best way to organize visual information. This course is an introduction to visual analysis, where we will study the basis of form-making, composition and problem solving. As a problem solver, the graphic designer must find appropriate solutions for a given problem. There are any number of solutions which the designer, as a creative person, must strive to attain

through unlimited research and effort.

Finally with the given problem in hand the designer makes a decision, based on the previous experimentation, as to which solution is the most appropriate.

#### Creativity

Design should be about exploration and experimentation. As a designer you should always strive to think and create in ways that you have not done before. Ideas, forms and solutions should be achieved through challenging yourself to approach a creative process with an open mind. In doing so you learn more about yourself, the process and the world around you. Design is everywhere. Become more aware of what is around you, and begin to look at it critically, asking yourself questions—do I like it/hate it? Why? What does it communicate? Is the problem solved in a new and creative way? How might I do it differently? etc.

#### Methods

This class is for exploration and experimentation of problems in search of appropriate solutions. Along with experimentation comes failure, but with failure comes new discoveries.

- Analyze the problem
- Make a list of solutions and produce sketches of all the possible ways in which the problem could be solved, challenging yourself to go beyond what is familiar, obvious or at times comfortable.
- Sketch at least 20 possible solutions.
- Continue to modify and improve at least five possible solutions.
- Work and rework chosen solution considering initial goals.
- Finalize the solution technically for presentation.

#### Reading

It is never too early to start reading about and looking at graphic design. To begin to understand the historical and contemporary movements in design can further your awareness of formal and stylistic methodologies.

#### Journals/Magazines

*ID, Eye, Print, Graphis, How, Communication Arts, Emigre, Design Issues, Cite, Metropolis, any Art and Architecture, and cultural magazines.*

#### Books

Sharon Poggenpohl, AIGA Press, *Graphic Design: A Career Guide and Education Directory*

Philip Meggs, *The History of Graphic Design*

Armin Hoffmin, *Graphic Design Manual*

Johannes Itten, *The Elements of Color*

Ryan McGinness, *Flatness is Good*

Holtzschue + Noriega, *Design Fundamentals for the Digital Age*

John Bowers, *Intro. to Two-Dimensional Design*

Willi Kunz, *Typography: Macro-MicroAesthetics*

#### Design Organizations

AIGA, American Institute of Graphic Arts  
www.aiga.org  
www.aigahouston.org

AIGA University of Houston Student Chapter  
faculty sponsor: Sibylle Hagmann  
hagmann@kontour.com  
student representative: Caleb Joyce  
calebjoyce@yahoo.com

ADCH, Art Directors Club of Houston  
www.adch.org

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### General Information

#### Attendance

Policies for classes in the University of Houston Graphic Communications Program apply to this class. Specifically, more than **3 absences**, unless excused\*, by a student during the semester will result in a reduction of their final course grade by one letter. More than 6 absences, will result in course failure. Each **late arrival to class after 3 lates will be marked as an absence.** If a student arrives late, they are responsible for notifying me of this at the end of class, otherwise they will be marked absent.

Students are expected to attend class, show process through sketches, participate in critiques and meet deadlines for assignments. Students are also responsible for finding out about, and making up any assignments missed due to absence or tardiness. All assignments should be completed for the date due. **Late assignments will automatically be dropped one full letter grade.** Failure to turn in even one assignment can be destructive when that zero is averaged in with your other grades. **Failure to submit a portfolio at the end of the semester will result in a grade of F.**

If, during the semester, a student misses class time due to a family emergency or severe illness (death, unforeseen hospitalizations or other traumatic life events), he or she must contact me as soon as possible to receive an \*excused absence and to make arrangements for missed deadlines or late work. Please note, common illnesses such as the flu, colds, and stomach viruses do not warrant an excused absence.

Students who know they will miss class time due to religious holidays not recognized by the University should inform me one week in advance of the holiday to receive an \*excused absence and to make arrangements for missed or late work.

#### Special Needs

In accordance with the guidelines of the American with Disabilities Act, I will make every effort to reasonably accommodate students who request and require assistance. Please notify me of how I may be of assistance privately after the first class or by email the first week of school.

#### Grading

Each project will be graded accordingly and averaged into one final grade per assignment

- Sketches: experimentation, progress and effort
- Composition/Creativity: how creatively is the project solved, multiple ideas and solutions
- Craft/Technical skill: clean presentation boards, well-drawn shapes and lines
- Class Participation: contribution to class discussions and critiques

Final grade is the average of all assignments and:

- Attendance
- Timely completion of design projects
- Problem solving
- Overall process: how you approach projects
- Presentation of final portfolio and sketchbooks

Students are expected to complete all assignments and complete all sketches for assigned critiques on time. All assignments should be completed and turned in by the project due date.

#### **There are no late projects.**

Failure to complete even one assignment can be destructive when that zero is averaged in with your other grades. **Failure to submit a portfolio at the end of the semester will result in a grade of F.**

#### Verbal Critiques/Critical Evaluation

Critiques will help you become familiar with the vocabulary of design, and develop a "critical eye" that will enable you to evaluate the work of your peers, as well as that of professional designers. Remember, participation in critiques is part of your grade.

#### Supplies

19 x 24" Tracing paper  
18–24" Metal ruler with non-slip back  
T-Square  
90 degree triangle (metal or plastic)  
X-acto knife/no. 11 blades  
Utility knife (with a retractable blade)  
Staedtler white Mars eraser for paper  
Pencils + portable sharpener  
Black markers: fine, med, and large  
Technical Pens: 0, and 1 nibs **OR**  
Very fine black markers  
Black Gouache  
Paint Brushes fine and med.  
Plastic inking template with circles  
Spray mount  
Rubber cement pick-up  
White artist tape  
White Bristol board, smooth finish (drawing)  
Black Letramax 2000 board (mounting)  
8½" x 11" Envelopes  
Large portfolio case (paper is OK)  
Toolbox for supplies  
Gouache color set (Project 6) **OR**  
Acrylic paint (Project 6)

#### Recommended

Rubber cutting board or matt  
Scissors  
Burnisher  
Proportional Wheel

#### Vendors

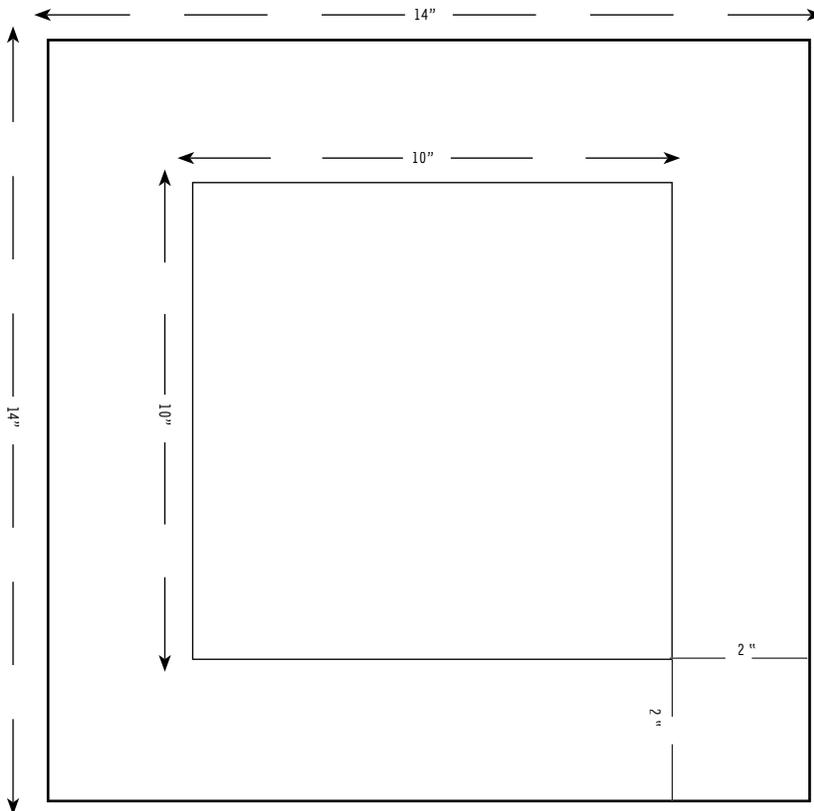
Art Supply  
Michael's Arts and Crafts  
Office Max/Depot  
Texas Art Supply  
Utrecht Art Supplies

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## Format for Presentation



All boards unless otherwise noted are to be presented as indicated in this diagram.

### Example of a 10 x 10" final comp size

Rendered material will be 10" x 10" on white bristol board. This board will be mounted on black Letramax board with a 2" border all around—leaving your final presentation board 14" x 14". All boards are to be covered first with a sheet of tracing paper, and a then cover sheet (find any heavier paper stock - brown paper or heavier vellum is appropriate). First tape the tracing paper all the way across the back with white artist tape, fold to the front and trim neatly to the board size. Do the same with the cover stock, taping it separately to the back (all the way across) then trimming it to the board size and with a two inch piece of tape, tape to back on the bottom center of the board as shown on bottom left.

Make sure the surface of your work is free of any adhesive so that the tissue paper can be lifted easily.

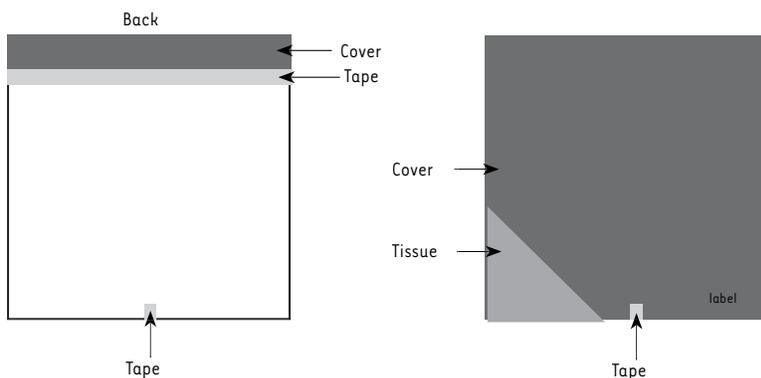
Label the front of the cover stock on the bottom right hand corner.

### Format for Labeling

Jane Smith (Name)  
Kelley (Instructor)  
Fundamentals (Class Title)  
Project 1 (Title of Assignment)

Labeling should be done in ink or thin marker (black).

**All work that DOES NOT follow these guidelines will be returned WITHOUT A GRADE.**

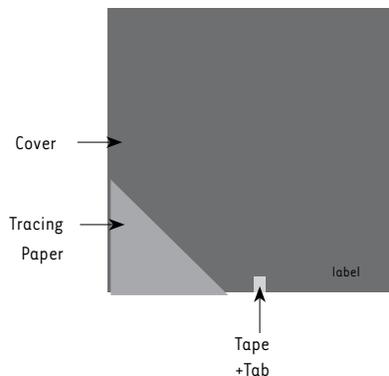
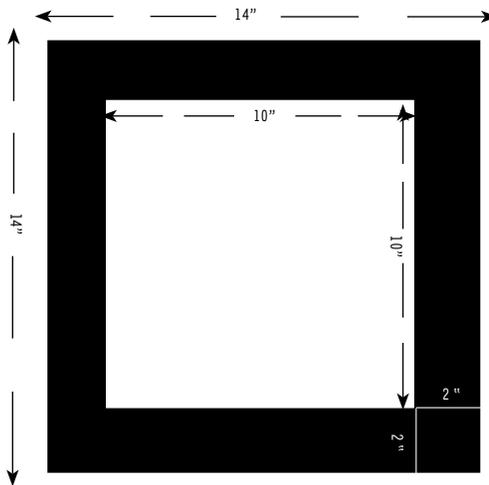


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### Production for Final Presentation



### Tricks

- Cut the letramax board and the black bristol board with a utility knife—use slow, multiple cuts as opposed to attempting to cut it first time. This saves your blade and board.
- Use your xacto knife to gently scrape off any ink lines that have slipped. Avoid removing surface of the board (BE GENTLE).
- Use tissue/tracing paper under your working hand to avoid oils from your hand getting on the white board.
- Use a rubber cement eraser for problematic spots—otherwise use your staedler (white) eraser. At all times be gentle.

### To Transfer Sketches to Letramax Board

- 1) Choose a final sketch and enlarge (xerox or otherwise) to 10 x 10". Redraw final sketch on tracing paper and detail all forms, lines, curves and shapes accurately. It may be necessary to enlarge the original letterform to the appropriate size and redraw composition using the letterform.
- 2) Using the final accurate compositional sketch on tissue paper, pencil or 'lead' the back side around the edges of all the compositional forms/lines etc. Next, place the sketch facing up on the letramax so that the pencil lines contact the letramax surface. Burnish the tissue paper sketch onto the letramax to transfer the tracing.

### To Ink a Shape on Letramax Board

- 3) Lightly trace the accurate composition onto the white letramax board using a pencil. Be very accurate and methodical.
- 4) Use a thin technical pen to outline the forms accurately. For curves use a french curve or flexible curve when necessary, otherwise keep a slow steady consistent gesture with the pen. Avoid over-gripping or tense grip—this creates more wobbles!
- 5) Use thin paintbrush with gouache to fill in large areas of positive forms. Take care with the consistency of the gouache—test first to avoid lumpy or overly transparent surfaces. Be aware that the india ink of the technical pen creates a shiny surface while the gouache tends to be visually flat. The gouache fill should be as close to the ink outline as possible to avoid poor visual craft.
- 6) Erase any pencil lines that are noticeable.
- 7) Center and mount the 10 x 10" white letramax board onto a 14 x 14" black board. Spray mount the back of the white letramax with a thin, but even layer of spray mount (Super 77)—mount onto the black board, cover with tracing paper, and burnish well.

- 8) Follow Format for Presentation handout accordingly.

### For Pantone Paper

- 1) Lightly trace the accurate composition onto the black pantone paper; and again onto the white letramax board (for placement/ position only so you may use less lines)
- 2) Using your No. 11 xacto knife accurately cut out the form(s) from the black pantone paper. Be very accurate and methodical.
- 3) Use a thin layer of spray mount or rubber cement or other appropriate glue on the back of the pantone paper forms and mount onto the white letramax board. Use tracing paper or wax paper underneath the pantone paper while you are working it into position.
- 4) Burnish the pantone paper well.
- 5) Gently recut any awkward curves on the pantone paper without cutting the white board. Check for craft of lines and details of form.
- 6) Use a technical pen for any thin lines or forms.
- 7) Erase any pencil lines that are noticeable.
- 8) Center and mount the 10 x 10" white letramax board onto a 14 x 14" black board. Spray mount the back of the white letramax with a thin, but even layer of spray mount (Super 77)—mount onto the black board, cover with tracing paper, and burnish well.
- 9) Follow Format for Presentation handout accordingly.

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### Fundamental Graphic Communications Fall 2005 Portfolio Requirements

**Date:** May 1, 2006

**Meeting Time:** 11:30 am

Mandatory attendance  
We will meet and briefly review  
project 6 and discuss the semester.

#### Portfolio

All work must be clearly labeled  
and contained in **Presentation:** a  
portfolio case. No loose work will  
be accepted. Label the outside of  
the portfolio with your name.  
Redos must be accompanied by  
the first version of the project.

Failure to turn in a final portfolio  
will result in course failure.

#### Portfolio Pick-up:

All work should be picked up  
Day TBA  
Time TBA  
8:30 am–4:30 pm

Note: Do not attempt to pick up  
your portfolio prior to this time.  
The classroom will be locked.

#### Place in portfolio

1. This checklist of all projects with any  
redos marked clearly. Use the list to the  
right and mark on it.

2. Evaluation: Write an evaluation of your  
progress through the semester, as well as  
your efforts and results. Give yourself a  
grade for the semester.

**Your Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Due on Portfolio Day:** May 1, 2006

\_\_\_ **Project 1: Perception & Gestalt (four 6 x 6" comps)**

- \_\_\_ Redo all four comps
- \_\_\_ Redo \_\_\_\_\_ comps

\_\_\_ **Project 2: Form Interrelationships (two 6 x 6" comps)**

- \_\_\_ Redo two comps
- \_\_\_ Redo one comp

\_\_\_ **Project 3: Type as Form (two 10 x 10" comps)**

- \_\_\_ Redo two comps
- \_\_\_ Redo one comp

\_\_\_ **Project 4: Form and Structure (one 10 x 10" comp)**

- \_\_\_ Redo one comp

\_\_\_ **Project 5: Part 1: Representational Form (four image stylizations)**

- \_\_\_ Redo all four stylizations
- \_\_\_ Redo \_\_\_\_\_stylizations

\_\_\_ **Project 5: Part 2: Representational Form (one 5 x 15" comp)**

- \_\_\_ Redo one comp

\_\_\_ **Project 6: Text and Image (one 8 x 22" comp)**

#### Double Check

- \_\_\_ All redos marked clearly on this checklist
- \_\_\_ All projects and portfolio labeled with name
- \_\_\_ Evaluation with name placed in portfolio
- \_\_\_ This checklist with name placed in portfolio



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+ DUE

Define in your own words the following terms. You may type your answer or use nice/ legible handwriting.

**Abstraction**

**Composition**

**Discipline**

**Technique**

**Craft**

**Organization**

**Structure**

**Concept**

**Aesthetic**

+ DUE

Bring in 1 (one) Black and White image/example of an abstract painting or abstract design that you find in a book, magazine or on the internet. This image may be a photocopy or print out. (NO COLOR) You may photocopy a color image so it is B&W. The image should be **no smaller** than 6 inches by 6 inches.

+ DUE

Bring supplies necessary to work on first project, here is what you need:

19 x 24" Tracing paper pad (for sketching)  
18–24" Metal ruler with non-slip back  
T-Square  
90 degree triangle (metal or plastic)  
X-acto knife/no. 11 blades  
Utility knife (with a retractable blade)  
Staedtler white Mars eraser for paper  
Pencils + portable sharpener  
Black markers: fine, med, and large  
Technical Pens: 0, & 1 nibs or Very fine black markers  
Black Gouache  
Paint Brushes fine and medium  
Plastic inking template with a variety of circles  
Spray mount or rubber cement  
Rubber cement pick-up  
White artist tape  
White Bristol board, smooth finish (for drawing)  
Black Letra Max 2000 board (for mounting)  
8.5 x 11 or 9 x 12 envelope  
Large portfolio case (paper is OK)  
Tool box for supplies