

Rhode Island School of Design

Introduction to Graphic Design

GRAPH-W336-01

Wintersession 2021
Online

Mon, Tues, and
alternate Weds:
1 – 6 pm

INSTRUCTOR

Adam Fein
afein@risd.edu

Office Hours
Fri: 3 pm & 7 pm
[Sign up](#)

PLATFORMS

[Canvas](#)

[Slack](#)

[Zoom](#)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This making-focused course will teach foundational graphic design software, skills, and concepts. Students will become familiar with in Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign through in-class exercises. Readings and lectures supplement hands-on learning, introducing history, modern issues, and contemporary practitioner, as well as core concepts like layout, typography, and color theory. Students will complete four projects: a logo, a poster, a booklet, and a visual identity system. At the conclusion of the semester, students will be positioned for advanced study in graphic design or sufficiently equipped to design materials that support their professional and academic careers in other fields.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To introduce you to the field of graphic design, its history and contemporary practice.
- To develop a fluency with the tools of graphic design and learn the Adobe Creative Suite so that you can feel confident in your capacity to use them during and after this class.
- To learn how type and image can be used to communicate abstract ideas as well as complex information.
- To learn how to develop a design process rooted in strong ideas, using sketching and iterations to arrive at a well-researched final design.
- To cultivate curiosity and excitement about the field of graphic design and its possibilities for you.
- To work hard, take risks, have fun, and create excellent graphic design work.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

This is an online studio course with lectures, tutorials, and exercises, supplemented with optional short readings that provide historical context.

This course balances in-person (synchronous) and not in-person (asynchronous) activities. Synchronous elements include student presentations and critique. Asynchronous elements include lecture and tutorials.

Students will complete four projects, corresponding to the software and graphic design skills learned each week. Every project will end with an open critique. The final project will consist of designing a visual identity system. The student will receive small group and individual feedback as they progress on projects.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Students are required to attend class regularly and on time in accordance with RISD's attendance policy. Students will be responsible for completing outside work and managing the deadlines for projects. In class, students are required to participate in discussions and critiques.

Students are expected to respect the ideas of their classmates and engage constructively with the work of others. Students should feel welcome to express themselves while also respecting their classmates identities, pronouns, boundaries, etc.

I have provided [readings to help you with critique](#) in the readings folder.

An "A" student will be on time, present in class, and ready to engage in the subject matter. They will challenge themselves during class time and in-class exercises. Their attention in class along with personal commitment to the subject matter and making will be noticeable in their presented work. Ultimately, they will present a final project that displays an understanding of class concepts and be prepared to discuss their work knowledgeably.

GRADING

A exceptional work and participation in crits, 100% attendance

B very good and strong overall work, with room for improvement

C meets standards with average, acceptable results

D failing to engage with projects, little to no contributions in class

F more that 1 unexcused absence, no participation in class, incomplete work

50% Participation and attendance: involvement in class activities, peer evaluation, contribution in critiques, weekly progress on projects.

Absence or lateness to class for any reason will affect grades.

(see attendance policy on the next page of this syllabus)

50% Completed projects and their documentation.

(keep sketches, save often, back-up frequently)

ACADEMIC POLICIES & STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Your participation and projects must abide by the following:

RISD Academic Code of Conduct:

<https://policies.risd.edu/academic/academic-code-of-conduct/>

RISD Code of Student Conduct:

<https://policies.risd.edu/student-life/code-of-student-conduct/>

Policies as detailed in the current RISD course announcement:

<http://departments.risd.edu/registrar/web/index.html>

An Installation Site Permit is necessary for any projects that require the use of non-classroom space or that could potentially pose a safety risk. A form is available here with further details:

<http://info.risd.edu/environmental-health-safety/>

Projects may not pose hazards that threaten or cause physical harm to yourself or others. Projects may not cause damage to studio, shop, and lab equipment or school facilities.

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

The passing off of someone else's ideas, writing, or work as one's own is plagiarism. Appropriate methods and forms of attribution vary by discipline. Some courses will include instruction in appropriate conventions for citation and attribution within the field. Students are expected to seek out relevant guidelines on their own (the RISD Writing Center offers resources and guidance), to ask faculty when in doubt about standards, and to recognize that they are ultimately responsible for proper citation.

You must know what constitutes plagiarism and avoid it. Attribute and cite your sources. All student work is expected to follow RISD's Academic Code of Conduct.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is mandatory. There is not an allowed number of absences. Prompt (on-time) arrival to class is expected. Arriving to class late (tardiness) is not acceptable. Three late arrivals will be considered an unexcused absence. If you must miss a class for any reason, notify faculty in advance and as soon as possible. Should you miss a class, you are responsible for gathering missed material and getting back on track.

Please be aware that if you have 2 or more unexcused absences you may be withdrawn from class. If you are not withdrawn due to absences, you can expect grade reductions. An unexcused absence will result in a 25% reduction in your final grade. This equates to a full drop in letter grade on a 4.0 scale. Please see the full RISD Class Attendance policy at:

<https://policies.risd.edu/academic/class-attendance/>

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The RISD community is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and the development of integrity. In order to thrive and excel, this community must preserve the freedom of thought and expression of all its members. A culture of respect that honors the rights, safety, dignity, and worth of every individual is essential to preserve such freedom. We affirm our respect for the rights and well-being of all members.

If you would like to make anonymous comments to the instructor, please use this form:

<https://forms.gle/uZZSxxydm8DNpX9t8>

DISABILITY SUPPORT

Disability Support Services (DSS) creates an accessible community at RISD that provides all students with the support needed to succeed academically. The office works to accommodate students with cognitive (learning), psychological and/or physical disabilities. Please see this link for more information:

<https://www.risd.edu/student-life/wellness/>

CLASS CALENDAR

[Alternative class calendar view](#)

Class 1

Mon, Jan 11

Introductions & Syllabus

[Link to Class Homework](#)

Lecture History of Graphic Design
Gestalt Principles

[Link to Class Readings](#)

HW Expressive Composition
GD is GD Everywhere

[Link to Sharing is Caring](#)

Class 2

Tues, Jan 12

Lecture Formal Considerations

Due Expressive Composition
GD is GD Everywhere

Tutorial Photoshop

Reading [Link](#)

HW Remix

Class 3

Weds, Jan 13

Tutorial Illustrator

Due Remix

HW Logotype

Reading [Link](#)

Class 4

Tues, Jan 19

Lecture Formal (Re)considerations
Choosing Fonts

Due Logotype

Reading [Link](#)

Tutorial InDesign: Type

S is C Cameron Nayeri
Sophie Feng

HW Poster
Exhibition Catalogue (EC): part 1

Class 5

Mon, Jan 25

Lecture The book & page
Exhibition Catalogues

Due Poster
EC: part 1

Tutorial InDesign: Image

Reading [Link](#)

HW EC: part 2

S is C Nicole Ban
Alina Spatz

Class 6

Tues, Jan 26

	Worktime & Check-ins	<i>Due</i> EC: part 2
<i>Lecture</i>	Visual Identity Systems	<i>S is C</i> Giana Marie Decicco Kara Park (R)
<i>HW</i>	EC: part 3 Visual Identity System (VIS): part 1	

Class 7

Weds, Jan 27

	Worktime & Check-ins	<i>Due</i> EC; part 3 VIS: part 1
<i>Tutorial</i>	After Effects	
<i>HW</i>	Final Exhibition Catalogue	<i>S is C</i> Jeffrey McCready Shiruo (Sara) Zhang (R)

Class 8

Mon, Feb 1

	Worktime & Check-ins	<i>Due</i> Exhibition Catalogue
		<i>S is C</i> Gina Kang Lily Joiner

Class 9

Tues, Feb 2

	Worktime & Check-ins	<i>Due</i> VIS: part 2
<i>Tutorial</i>	After Effects	<i>S is C</i> Angelina Yoon Tianle Xi (R)

Class 10

Mon, Feb 8

	Worktime & Check-ins	<i>Due</i> VIS: part 3
<i>Lecture</i>	Presentations	<i>S is C</i> Tiffany Cheung
<i>HW</i>	Final Visual Identity System	

Class 11

Tues, Feb 9

Worktime & Check-ins

Class 12

Weds, Feb 10

Final Critique *Due* Visual Identity System

Final documentation due by Sunday, Feb 14, 11:59 PM Eastern

READING & RESOURCES

Entries marked by the fleuron ♣ are popular & commonly used resources.

Learning Adobe Programs

Photoshop video tutorials from Adobe
helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/tutorials.html

Illustrator video tutorials from Adobe
helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/tutorials.html

InDesign video tutorials from Adobe
helpx.adobe.com/indesign/tutorials.html

How to download fonts from Adobe Fonts
[linkedin.com/learning/learning-adobe-fonts-formerly-typekit/expand-your-font-library-with-adobe-fonts?u=57686553](https://www.linkedin.com/learning/learning-adobe-fonts-formerly-typekit/expand-your-font-library-with-adobe-fonts?u=57686553)

Books: Introductions to Graphic Design

About Design by Gordon Salchow

Graphic Design Manual by Armin Hoffman

Graphic Design: The New Basics by Ellen Lupton & Jennifer Cole Phillips ♣

Design Elements: A Graphic Style Manual by Timothy Samara

Books: History of Graphic Design

Graphic Design: A Concise History by Richard Hollis

Graphic Design History: A Critical Guide by Johanna Drucker

A History of Arab Graphic Design Paperback by Bahia Shehab and Haytham Nawar

The History of Graphic Design. Vols. 1 & 2 by by Jens Müller and Julius Wiedemann

Meggs' History of Graphic Design by Philip Meggs ♣

Pioneers of Spanish Graphic Design by Emilio Gil

Women in Graphic Design: 1890-2012 edited by Gerda Breuer

Books: Typography

The Anatomy of Type by Stephen Coles

The Elements of Typographic Style by Robert Bringhurst 🍷

Inside Paragraphs by Cyrus Highsmith

Thinking with Type by Ellen Lupton 🍷

A Type Primer by John Kane

Typographie by Emil Ruder

Books: Publishers

Draw Down Books

Onomatopée

Phaidon

Unit Editions

Viction:ary

Films & TV

Abstract: The Art of Design, episode on Christoph Niemann

Abstract: The Art of Design, episode on Paula Scher

Artist Series by Hillman Curtis

<https://www.aiga.org/artist-series-videos>

Helvetica 🍷

Linotype: The Film

The Machine That Made Us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQ88yC35NjI>

Magazines

Communication Arts

Eye

Graphis

Print (out of print)

Podcasts

Breaking the Surface

Design Matters with Debbie Millman 🎧

Revision Path

Websites: Graphic Design

Design is History

designishistory.com

Design Observer

designobserver.com

Eye on Design

eyeondesign.aiga.org

Letterform Archive

letterformarchive.org

Design Readings 🎧

[Readings.design](https://readings.design)

Image Of The Studio

imageofthestudio.com

Its Nice That

itsnicethat.com

Women Of Graphic Design

womenofgraphicdesign.org

Websites: Typography

Femme Type

femme-type.com

Fonts In Use 🎧

fontsinuse.com

I Love Typography

ilovetypography.com

Practical Typography

practicaltypography.com

Typographica

typographica.org

Websites: Web Design

Hallointer

hallointer.net

Hoverstates

hoverstat.es

Httpster

httpster.net

Awwwards

awwwards.com

Libre & Open Source Fonts (a.k.a. legal, free fonts)

Adobe Fonts 

fonts.adobe.com

Beautiful Web Type

beautifulwebtype.com

Free Fonts by Womxn

design-research.be/by-womxn

Free Font Library

typotheque.luuse.io

Google Fonts 

fonts.google.com

League of Moveable Type

theleagueofmoveabletype.com

Open Foundry


open-foundry.com

Velvetyne

velvetyne.fr

Collettivo

collettivo.it

Items marked with a fleuron  are popular & commonly used resources.