

George Mason University
Course Syllabus

Course Title:	Graphic Information Design 1: Typography
Course Code/Section:	AVT 215, Sections 1 & 2
Session/Year:	Spring, 2007
Meeting:	Section 1: Monday, Wednesday, 9:30 am–12:10 pm, IN 129 Section 2: Monday, Wednesday, 1:30 pm–4:10 pm, FAB B208
Professor:	Jandos Rothstein
Contact Info:	jrothste@gmu.edu
Class information:	www.jandos.com/for students
Office Hours:	By appointment
Exam Schedule:	May 9, 2007, 10:30 am (morning session) May 9, 2007, 1:30 pm (afternoon session)

Course Description: Introduction to the elements of basic typography, including the history of letterforms, recognition and specification of existing typefaces, typographical style, and letterform design.

Objectives

1. Appreciate the importance of typography in visual communication;
2. learn the history and anatomy of letterforms;
3. understand the development of printing and its importance in typography;
4. develop knowledge of typesetting, proofreading and other practices; and
5. develop critique and presentation skills.

Content:

This is a design class—not a software training class.

Students will learn typographic principles using hand rendering and Macintosh publication programs. Through lecture, studio time, discussion and critique, students will develop a series of typographical solutions from rough schematic to mounted final presentation.

Attendance Policy:

Studio courses, by their nature, are a dynamic educational environment. During critique periods, and in the interaction of instructor and student on ongoing projects, the studio provides resources and learning opportunities that cannot be “made up” by other means. Therefore:

- Students are required to attend all class meetings, to arrive on time, and to stay for the duration of the class.
- Students arriving ten minutes or more late to class will be marked tardy. Students arriving 20 minutes or more late will be marked absent. Three tardy marks equals one absence.
- Students who accumulate four or more absences will receive a reduced or failing grade.
- There are no excused absences.

Class and University Policies:

- All projects are due at the **beginning** of class on the date assigned. Late projects will be reduced one letter grade for each week late or portion thereof. After two weeks, projects will not be accepted. The final project is due on the last day of class. No extensions will be given.
- Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by the instructor.) Violations must be reported to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously. Using someone else's words or ideas without attribution is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. Plagiarism will also result in a failing grade.
- Students must be completely prepared for class to be considered present, ie. they must have all necessary supplies and computer files and all ongoing (ungraded) projects with them. Working on the design portion of projects on platforms and software other than Macintosh QuarkXpress is by permission of instructor only.
- If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.
- Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.
- Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Students are responsible for the content of university and class communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.
- Cell phones and pagers must be turned off during class. The use of headphones is permitted during work periods.
- Students may redo work for a higher grade if the piece was originally turned in on time. Revisions must be a substantial reconsideration of the original—not merely a correction of errors. The deadline for revised work is the last day of class.

TEXT AND REFERENCES

Required:

Clair, Kate and Busic-Snyder, Cynthia, *A Typographic Workbook (2nd ed.)*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1999.

Suggested:

Bringurst, Robert, *The Elements of Typographic Style*, Hartley & Marks, Point Roberts, Washington 1992

Williams, Robin, *The Mac Is Not a Typewriter*, Peachpit Press, 1990.

Meggs, Philip B. and McKelvey, Roy (eds.), *Revival of the Fittest*, Northlight Press, 2000.

Gill, Eric, *An Essay on Typography*, David R. Godine, 1988 (originally publ. 1936).

Heller, Steve, *Typology*, Chronicle Books, New York, 1999.

Heller, Steve and Chwast, Seymour, *Jackets Required*, Chronicle Books, New York, 1995.

Chappell, Warren and Bringhurst, Robert, *A Short History of The Printed Word (2nd ed.)*, Hartley & Marks, 1999.

Jackson, Donald, *The Story of Writing*, Studio Vista, 1981.

Steinberg, S.H., *Five Hundred Years of Printing* (revised), Lyons & Burford, 1996.

Hurlburt, Allen, *Grid: A Modular System for the Design and Production of Newspapers, Magazines and Books*, John Wiley & Sons, 1982.

The Chicago Manual of Style (15th ed.), The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Bigelow, Charles (ed.) *Fine Print on Type: The Best of Fine Print Magazine*, Bedford Arts, 1989.

Tschichold, Jan, (Ruari McLean, trans.), *The New Typography*, University of California Press, 1987. (originally publ. 1928)

Harrower, Tim *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook* (3rd Ed.), WCB McGraw-Hill, 2001.

De Cumplich, Roberto de Vicq, *Bembo's Zoo*, Henry Holt, 2000.

Bain, Peter and Paul Shaw (ed.), *Blackletter: Type and National Identity*, Princeton Architectural Press, 1999.

The Adobe Type Reference Adobe Systems, Salinas, California, 2001.

Also: type catalogs, a good dictionary.

Materials & Supplies:

You will need the following tools & materials for this course.

Shaffer™ calligraphy pen, broad nib, black cartridges

Various papers and marking tools

Spray Mount*

Black or white mounting tape*

Xacto knives and blades*

Newspapers and magazines to cut up

Recommended: Ruler with points and picas

A design notebook (sketchpad, at least 9 x 12")

Super-Black mounting boards*

tracing paper , at least 18" wide*

Cutting pad (recommended)*

Other materials as assigned

* for home use.

Student Evaluation/Methods of Assessment:

All final projects will be graded by the following criteria: concept, execution and presentation. There will be a midterm grade based on a one-on-one portfolio review and grades from quizzes and projects. Final grade will be determined by project grades (50%) design process notebook (20%) test and quizzes (10%) and class participation (20%).

Course Outline (Subject to change)

Ongoing Project:

Typographer's Journal. Every student will maintain a typographers journal, which will contain thumbnail and schematic versions of ongoing projects, as well as observations about the typographical environment. (see assignment sheet) Size: 9 x 12 " minimum.

Bad/Good Type Contest. Every Wednesday at the beginning of class.

Type Quizzes. Every other Monday, starting week 3. Quizzes will be conducted immediately at the beginning of class and cannot be made up.

Week 1

Ransom Note. Create a note demanding credit for this class, or something else you want. Your note must contain a threat which uses at least one typographical term (You will find some in *Workbook's* Glossary); and be composed of at least one complete sentence. Choosing your type from magazines and other found published sources, choose letters that accentuate the meaning of the words you are using. For example, if you threaten to "squeeze" your victim's head, you might pack the letters closely together, or use a narrow or "condensed" typeface. Also, think about the relative importance of each word in your message. You might emphasize important words or phrases by making them bigger, isolating them on their own line, or putting them in a bright colors. Consider the overall composition. **Due: Monday, January 29.**

Week 1 Project introduction, Monday. Studio time, Wednesday.
Clair, Chapter 1.

Week 2-3

Calligraphy. Intelligent use of type is greatly aided by an understanding of previous typographical and calligraphic methods. This assignment is designed to enhance the student's understanding of, and appreciation for letter forms and how those forms fit together. Students will write the assigned quote, in Uncial, with an **illuminated** initial. Student's journals should include at least 5 distinct pencil roughs for possible arrangements of words, and at least 3 preliminary versions in ink. **Final due: Wednesday February 14.**

Week 2 Critique of ransom note, calligraphy project introduction, Monday. Contest, pencil roughs due, Wednesday.
Clair, Chapter 2.

Week 3 Quiz 1, studio time, Monday. Contest, final critique of calligraphy, introduction to color assignment, Wednesday.
Collect newspapers and magazines to bring in next week.
Clair, Chapters 3 and 9.

Week 4

Typographic Color. When typographers talk about “color” they are referring to two qualities: first, how dark or light a column of text is on a page, and second, how “even” that tone is. Imagine you took a blurry, black and white photograph of a page from a novel. If that tone is splotchy, due to big gaps between words, or dark in places because words are too close together or, the page was over-inked or inconsistently inked when printed, color is considered to be bad. Color can also be bad even if it’s even. If a too-bold font was chosen, or the plate was under-inked, legibility is negatively impacted. This assignment is designed to increase the students awareness of typographical color. Using only found *text* (no **display types**) create a composition that has at least one focal point, and some sense of depth or three-dimensionality. **Final due: Wednesday February 21.**

Week 4

Assignment introduction, studio time, Monday.

Contests, studio time, Wednesday.

Assignment for next week: find 5–10 strong images without type printed on them.

Clair, Chapter 4.

Week 5–6

Type and Image—Posters. Find two strong printed images, which can, but need not be examples of fine or decorative art. Both should appeal to you, but should not be too similar. For example, one could be a black & white photograph, the other could be a painting or drawing; or one could be a piece of 18th century graphic design, and the other could be a photo of a punk band. Design a 10 x 15” min. poster for each, using the principle of complementary and contrasting typography. Your posters must contain all necessary information for a plausible exhibit or event. Someone looking at your poster should know the basic when, where and why. **Final due: March 7.**

Week 5

Quiz 2, color critique, project introduction, Monday.

Contest, studio time, Wednesday.

Clair, Chapter 5.

Week 6

Roughs due, studio time, Monday. Contest, studio time, Wednesday.

Clair, Chapter 6.

Week 7

Quiz 3, Studio time, book selection for Expressive Type assignment

Monday. Critique of Type and Image posters, Wednesday.

Clair, Chapters 8.

Week 8–10

Expressive Typography, Book Cover Design. Students will design a cover for a work of classic non-fiction or fiction, randomly assigned. The title must be created with hand-drawn letterforms. You can choose to create an original, appropriate typestyle or create a piece of expressive word-design that exhibits some aspect of the book. Creating the design will require a deep understanding of the text. Then, scan your type into the computer, and use it as the basis of your design. Secondary type (author name, subtitle, endorsement, etc.) may be typeset or hand drawn, but must graphically knit with the rendered part of your design. **Wednesday April 4.**

Week 8 Studio Time, Monday. Contest, thumbnails due, studio time, Wednesday.
Midterm-Portfolio Due.
Clair, Chapter 10.

Week 9 Quiz 4, studio time Monday. Contest, book cover roughs due, critique, Wednesday.
Clair, Chapter 11.

Week 10 Studio time, Monday. Contest, final critique Wednesday.
Clair, Chapter 12.

Week 11–15

Final Project: Design a printed news vehicle that will appeal to young adults. Based on design brief, develop new design (cover, typical spread), for a daily publication that will appeal to 16–24 year olds. Your client insists that the cover have at least 3 articles, and every article have a minimum of 3 “points of entry.” Otherwise the parameters—size, paper, use of color, are open. **Final due: Wednesday, May 2.**

Week 13 Quiz 5, studio time, Monday. Contest, thumbnails due, studio time, Wednesday.
Clair, Chapter 7.

Week 14 Studio time, Monday. No class, Wednesday.

Week 15 Final Quiz, studio time, Monday. Final critique, Wednesday.