VM463: Graphic Design for Digital Media

Emerson College – Syllabus: Fall 2008 (revised 9/15/08)
Class sessions: Mondays 6:00pm – 9:45pm
Room: T809 at 180 Tremont St.

Camilo Ramirez: Camilo_Ramirez@emerson.edu
www.camramirez.com/teaching.htm
Office Hours: 180 Tremont, #1119C on Mondays 5 p.m.–6 p.m., and by appointment

Course Description:

This course includes the fundamentals and aesthetic considerations of design composition (text, image, graphics, motion) and production for digital media. Students will conduct studies of and complete exercises in design and layout for the screen; visual communication of ideas and concepts in a non-textual context; screen elements for digital media art, such as buttons, type, color, and virtual environments; file formats; and digital media considerations and information flow/sequencing and design. **Prerequisite: VM 260**.

Expectations:

You will increase your knowledge of graphic design theory, ability to discuss your design, and increase your practice in the context of digital media. You will be required to complete all assignments on time. Assignments will come in the form of individual modules. Each module will be part of an integrated, semester-long project that will be published online by the end of the semester. You will be given several in-class assignments designed to increase your familiarity with the tools, as well as take-home assignments that will be completed outside of class time. You are expected to participate in critiques and actively discuss your work and that of your peers. Be sure to bring your portable storage media (Flash Drive, FireWire drive, etc.) to every class, **and make regular backups of your work**.

Grading is based on the following:

Attendance: Class attendance is absolutely required. Three absences will result in automatic failure. Punctuality counts. If you are over 10 min. late, you will be marked late. Two tardies equal one absence.

30%, In-class lab Assignments: Each class session will have a lab objective that students are required to complete before the end of class. Details will be given the day of each class on the specific assignment for that day.

20%, Participation: Active participation in all critiques and class discussions is expected. This includes completion of all reading assignments.

50%, Production & Quality: Major assignments will be described in detail in a project sheet. Each of these will include a critique session and/or screening. Attendance on these days is also part of the assignment. Successful and timely completion of all in class and take home assignments is expected. Your grade will be reduced for late or missing a due date. Your performance and work on critique days will be based on the following criteria:
•**Quality:**
Do you effectively convey your message to your audience? Is it accessible? Does it make sense to them? What is the purpose of any ambiguities you may employ?
Does your project consciously and intelligently engage with the material on a stylistic level?
Does your chosen style reflect or expand upon your chosen theme/subject matter?
•**Production:**
Does your project meet basic professional technical standards? Are your images clear, in focus? Is your sound properly recorded and mixed? To what degree do any technical inadequacies detract from your project's effectiveness?

Required Supplies:

Firewire drive: Emerson college recommends either Lacie or Maxtor brand Firewire drives. Be sure that the drive you buy actually has firewire connections and is not only limited to USB2.
http://www.lacie.com/products/range.htm?id=10033
http://www.maxtorsolutions.com/en/

AND/OR

USB Flash drive: Also known as a "jump-drive", you can find these just about anywhere for relatively low prices. You should try to buy a USB2 drive rather than the slower USB connection.
http://www.newegg.com/Store/Category.aspx?Category=324&name=Flash-Memory-Readers

Suggested but not Required Supplies:

Domain Registration & Web Hosting: Although emerson provides free web hosting, you will want to register your individual "web-site name", also known as a domain name for a professional impression.. There are many companies that do this, and some are unreputable or expensive. I recommend this site, just be sure to activate your "who-is guard".
http://www.namecheap.com
If you buy your own domain name, you will need someone to host the site along with the name. Web hosting companies are a dime a dozen, and their offers change all the time. Again, go with someone who has a good reputation. Do your research, but in the meantime, here is one that I recommend.
http://www.hostgator.com

Suggested but not Required Textbooks:

Design Basics Index (Index Series)
Publisher: How ISBN: 1581805012

Universal Principles of Design by Lidwell, Holden and Butler
Publisher: Rockport Publishers, ISBN: 1592530079

Stop Stealing Sheep & Find Out How Type Works (2nd Edition) by Erik Spiekermann & E.M. Ginger
Publisher: Adobe Press ISBN: 0201703394

Graphic Design: A Concise History, Second Edition (World of Art)
Publisher: Thames & Hudson, ISBN: 0500203474

Disability Statement:
    If you believe you have a disability that my warrant accommodations in this class, I urge you to register with the disability Services Coordinator, Dr. Anthony Bashir at 216 Tremont Street, 5th Floor, (617.824.8415) so that, together, you can work to develop methods of addressing needed accommodations in this class.
http://www.emerson.edu/disability_services/index.cfm

Plagiarism Statement:
    It is the responsibility of all Emerson students to know and adhere to the College's policy on plagiarism. If you have any questions concerning the Emerson plagiarism policy or about documentation of sources in work you produce in this course, you should speak to your instructor.
http://www.emerson.edu/student_life/handbook/Policy-on-Plagarism.cfm

*Please Note: The following schedule is subject to change at my discretion. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out from your classmates what, if any, changes to the schedule have been made. Unless you receive an exemption from me, you will be responsible upon returning to class for both the current weeks assignments, as well as the assignments for the week you missed.

Week 1: September 8th
Review Syllabus. Introductions and logistics. Intro to Web Concepts & HTML. Email communication test.

Lab Activity: Intro to HTML, Site proposals.
Assignment: Obtain required course materials.
                           Write Site Proposal & print 2 copies.
                           Read "Casting the Net" & "Tim Berners-Lee" articles

---

Week 2: September 15th
Discuss Project Proposals. Illustrator Pen-tool exercise. 10 word exercise . Cutting Demo.

Assignment: Complete your Word Excercise

Week 3: September 22nd
CRITIQUE: Word Exercise.
Pictograms. Fundamentals of Logo Design.

Assignment: 30 Logo sketches

Week 4: September 29th
CRITIQUE: Logo Sketches.
Basics of color & type. Color Palettes. Print Colors vs Screen (Pantone)

Assignment: Adding Color to 5 Logo Designs.

Week 5: October 6th
CRITIQUE: 5 Color Logos.
Stationary Packages. Basics of Page layout. Sitemaps for the web.

Assignment: Sketch 3 versions of a Stationary Package.
                           Create a Sitemap for your website.

Week 6: October 13th – NO CLASS (Columbus Day)

Assignment: Sketch 3 versions of a Stationary Package.
                           Create a Sitemap for your website.

Week 7: October 20th
CRITIQUE: Present Stationary PackageSketches & Sitemaps.
Layout techniques with InDesign. Paper Selection.

Assignment: Finalize Stationary Package for Critique next week.

Week 8: October 27th
CRITIQUE: Stationary Packages.
Page layout for the web. Basics of Web Standards. DW Refresher. Interface Design.

Assignment: 3 Sketches of your Web Page Layout

Week 9: November 3rd
CRITIQUE: Web Sketches.
Usability. CSS sample site. Planning a layout for web.

Assignment: Combine your web sketches into one version that will be produced in DW with CSS.

Week 10: November 10th
CRITIQUE: Final Web Layout
Translating images, graphics & color for the web. Type on the web. Work on CSS web layouts.

Assignments: Finish Web Layout for Critique next week.

Week 11: November 17th
CRITIQUE: Working web layouts.
Animated Logo Storyboarding. Logo considerations for Web usage. AE Demo. Animated Type Exercise.

Assignments: Storyboard your Logo animation.

Week 12: November 24th
CRITIQUE: Animated Logo Storyboards

Assignments: Create a Logo animation for your website.

Week 13: December 1st
Putting your Logo animation on your site. Creating a Design Standards Manual.

Assignments: Work on your final Presentation

Week 14: December 8th
FINAL CRITIQUE pt.I: Class presentations of all Identity elements combined & Standards Manuals.

Week 15: December 15th – CLASS MEETS 8pm—9:45pm
FINAL CRITIQUE pt.II: Class presentations of all Identity elements combined & Standards Manuals.