

Syllabus – Fall 2025  
**MCOM 3311 Visual Design**

MW 2:00 PM – 3:25 PM

Instructor: Vanessa Joyner

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(The best way to contact me is by email)

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM, and by appointment

**Course Overview:**

Visual Design covers the theory and practice of graphic design. The course emphasizes the history of graphic design; they will also gain progressive knowledge of the applications that produce them. Application expertise and an understanding of design principles will allow them to create various projects: corporate identity, advertising layout, logo design, poster, typographical projects, and other related products. Students will understand and apply concepts and theories in using and presenting images and information using tools and technologies appropriate for public relations/integrated communication or mediated journalism.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

- |  |
|--|
| 1) Know the many theories that are the foundation of visual and/or graphic design.   |
| 2) To learn various methods of creating visual or graphic design products such as logos, posters, ad design and campaigns, greeting cards, and more which will be useful for personal and/or commercial publication. |
| 3) Will have the ability to redesign a non-functional or weak print visual communication tool into a well-designed functional tool using research and the design process.  |

**Required Textbooks and Readings:**

**Graphic Design Solutions,**

Robin Landa

Cengage Learning

Reflowable Layout

Print ISBN: 9781337554053, 1337554057

eText ISBN: 9798214344744

Edition: 6th Edition

Copyright: 2019

<https://sampling.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9798214344744>Links to an external site.

## Sketch Pad

**Becoming a Graphic & Digital Designer, A Guide to Careers in Design**, Steven Heller & Veronique Vienne, check out from the library.

Library: Access the book by going to [uttyler.edu/library](http://uttyler.edu/library) > Swoop Search > Key in: Becoming a Graphic Designer > Search > Book comes up > Click Online Access and read!

### **Additional Cost:**

Piddlin' Pottery - \$15 - \$25 (required)

Other possible additions - \$20

Design Club Membership - \$10

[Adobe Creative Cloud Subscription](#) - \$29.99 Month (not required, but helpful for 24-hour access to Adobe applications).

Alternative: Use the school-supplied lab computers in CAS 106.

**Special Course Notes:** -- The listed items are required. Details in Canvas

- 1) Guest Speaker – TBD
- 2) Guest Speakers – To be announced
  - a. The course will include a Service Project where we will work with an actual client.
- 3) Field Trip – Attend one or more learning sessions at Piddlin' Pottery or Tyler Museum of Art.
- 4) Attend Career Success Conference (If available this year)
- 5) A PC or Macintosh computer that is capable of running graphics applications. A minimum of 8 GB of RAM or more. Mini-computers are not recommended.
- 6) The computers in CAS 106 are available for your use according to the schedule posted, but not while another class is in session.
- 7) Photography/Video Consent Form.

### **Assignments and weights/point values**

1. Exercises: (Field Trips, Guest Speakers, Critiques, Class Participation, Sketches, and more)	20%
2. Exams or Quiz	20%
3. Projects: Service Project, Brochure, Poster, Ad Design, Flyer, and more.	35%
4. Attendance	5%
Total	100%

### **Grading Scale:**

A 93% or greater

B	83 – 92%
C	73 – 82%
D	63 – 72%
F	below 63%

**Late Work and Make-Up Exams:** UT Tyler does have a [Class Attendance policy](#) in the catalog. For those unexpected events that occur in our lives, most of the time, you will receive full credit for late work. Other situations may result in a 10 – 20 pt—grade reduction.

- 1) Introduction
  - a) Getting Started Quiz – To show an understanding of the course objectives.
  - b) Avatar Design – Self-portrait, Illustrator.
  - c) Padlet Wall – To begin the process of design thinking.
- 2) Graphic Design History Video
  - a) Infographic - On the history of graphic design.
- 3) Becoming a Graphic Designer
  - a) Quiz - This book introduces some of the most notable designers in the field
  - b) Exercise – Typographical Expression
- 4) Graphic Design Solutions
  - a) Exercises
  - b) Project - Branching Out Florist Ad Design (3 ads)
- 5) Field Trip
  - a) Piddlin’ Pottery – This visit will be an exercise in experimental design.
  - b) Field Trip – Tyler Art Museum
- 6) Service Project
  - a) Creating an ad or flyer for a business (to be determined).
  - b) This project will have several parts.
- 7) DVD - Fun, Fun, design project.
- 8) Meet your professor - To discuss all of your projects.

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**Calendar of Topics, Readings, and Due Dates**

Note that the last date to drop the course is included in the calendar along with the final exam date and time.

A – Assignment GDS – Graphic Design School LEC – Lecture DIS – Discussion CRIT – Critique

BGD – Becoming a Graphic Designer E – Exercise P – Project UG – Ungraded

<b>VISUAL DESIGN Fall 2025</b>			
<i>Design is Thinking Made Visual - Saul Bass</i>			
<i>Week #</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Class Topic</i>	<i>Readings for Next Class</i>
Week 1	T 8/26	Read – Syllabus / Course Structure and Goals <b>ASSIGN</b> – Getting Started Quiz and, Introductory Exercise (These items in Canvas) Due: 9/2	Ch 6 Visualization, Icons, and color
	TH 8/28	DIS - App Review / Rubrics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>ASSIGN</b>: InDesign template. Exercises will be added to this template.</li> <li><b>ASSIGN</b>: Avatar</li> </ul>	<b>WATCH</b> Video - Graphic Design History <b>READ GDS</b> Graphic Design Timeline
Week 2	T 9/2	LEC – Graphic Design History / Discuss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>ASSIGN</b>: History Infographic, Due: 9/9</li> </ul>	<b>DUE</b> : Getting Started Quiz <b>DUE</b> : Introductory Exercise on Padlet Wall  <b>READ BGD</b> Ch 1 Pgs 17-78 Ch 2 Pgs 96-186 Ch 4 Pgs 230-300  <b>READ GDS</b> Ch 1 Intro: Graphic Design Profession Ch 11 Branding and Visual Identity
	TH 9/4	<b>GUEST LECTURER - TBD</b> LEC – Becoming a Graphic Designer (Chapters 1, 2 & 4)  <b>ASSIGN</b> : In-class questions. LEC Ch 1 Careers Ch 11 Branding and Visual Identity	<b>READ GDS</b> Ch 2 QuickStart: Graphic Design Basics Ch 3 Type Ch 4 Design Process

Graphic Design Solutions Section – GDS			
Week 3	T 9/9	<p>LEC Ch 2 Graphic Design Basics  <a href="#">Exercises: Chapter 2</a></p> <p>LEC Ch 3 Typography / Typographic Expression  <a href="#">Exercises: Chapter 3</a></p> <p>LEC Ch 4 – The Design Process  <a href="#">Exercises: Chapter 4</a></p> <p><b>ASSIGN:</b> Exercises Ch's. 2-4, Critique 9/16</p>	<p><b>DUE:</b> History  Infographic  <b>DUE:</b> Avatar  <b>DUE:</b> Template  (Cover page,  Sections styled)</p> <p><b>READ GDS</b>  Ch 5 Concept &amp;  Creativity  Ch 7 Composition  Ch 8 Proportional  Syst</p>
	TH 9/11	Work on exercises	
Week 4	T 9/16	<p><b>CRIT: EXERCISES</b> – Ch's 2, 3, 4</p> <p>LEC Ch 5 - Concept Generation and Creativity  <a href="#">Exercises: Chapter 5</a></p> <p>LEC Ch 7 – Composition  <a href="#">Exercises: Poster</a></p> <p>LEC Ch 8 - Proportional Systems, the Grid, and  Brochure Design  <b>ASSIGN:</b> Exercises Ch's 5, 7, 8, Critique 9/23</p>	<p><b>CRIT:</b> Exercises Ch  2, 3, 4  <b>Quiz:</b> Ch 1,2,3,4</p>
	TH 9/18	Work on exercises	
Week 5	T 9/23	<p><b>CRIT: EXERCISES</b> – Ch's 5, 7, 8</p>	<p><b>CRIT:</b> Exercises Ch  5,7,8  <b>Quiz:</b> Ch 5,6,7,8</p>
	TH 9/25	<p><b>FIELD TRIP</b> – Tyler Art Museum/Free/Tour: 45  minutes and an Art activity.</p>	<p><b>READ GDS</b>  Ch 11 Branding and  Visual Identity  Ch 12 Advertising</p>
Branching Out Florist Ad Design			
Week 6	T 9/30	<p><b>GUEST SPEAKER (In-Class):</b> Hannah Buchanan</p> <p>LEC Ch 12 - Advertising / Ch 11 Branding  <b>ASSIGN Project:</b> Branching Out Florist (BOF)/3  Ads</p>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critique: Thumbnail sketches, Due 10/2</li> <li>• Critique 1: Ad Design, Due 10/14</li> <li>• Critique 2: Final Ad, Due 10/16</li> </ul>	
	TH 10/2	<b>CRIT:</b> Thumbnails for BOF/Choose best	
Week 7	T 10/7	Work on BOF Ad Designs	<b>Quiz:</b> Ch 11,12
	TH 10/9	Work on BOF Ad Designs	
Week 8	T 10/14	<b>CRIT 1:</b> BOF	<b>CRIT 1:</b> BOF Prepare and Announce for Field Trip next session.
	TH 10/16	<b>CRIT 2:</b> BOF Final Add to project  <b>FIELD TRIP:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet client, (to be determined)</li> <li>• Create art</li> <li>• Information Session</li> </ul>	<b>CRIT 2:</b> BOF Final
<b>Special Project</b>			
Week 9	T 10/21	<b>REVIEW:</b> Client Follow-up for (to be determined) <b>ASSIGN Project:</b> Client Ad Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin Research</li> <li>• Thumbnail sketches of Ad, Poster, Pkg</li> <li>• Critique: 10/28</li> <li>• Ads/Poster: Critique 1, 11/4</li> <li>• Ads/Poster: Critique 2, 11/11</li> </ul>	<b>READ GDS</b> Ch 10 Book Cover Ch 13 Web, Mobile Ch 14 Package Design
	TH 10/23	Answer Questions / Student Progress Meetings	
Week 10	T 10/28	<b>CRIT:</b> (Client) Thumbs/Pick best three designs.  Career Success: Follow-up questions (TBD) Work on Ad Design	
	TH 10/30	LEC Work on Ads	

Week 11	T 11/4	<b>CRIT 1:</b> Client Project Work on Ads	
	TH 11/6	Work Day	<b>Quiz:</b> 10, 13, 14
<i>Portfolio</i>			
Week 12	T 11/11	<b>CRIT 2:</b> Client Project  <b>ASSIGN Project:</b> Portfolio, Due 12/4 LEC Ch 13 Web, Mobile	
<i>DVD Package</i>			
	TH 11/13	LEC Ch 13 Book Cover/Ch 14 Package Design <b>ASSIGN Project:</b> DVD Package <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin Research</li> <li>• Thumbnail sketches of DVD, Due 11/19</li> <li>• Critique 1: DVD, Due 11/24</li> <li>• Critique 2: DVD, Due 12/2</li> </ul>	
Week 13	T 11/18		
	TH 11/20	<b>CRIT 1:</b> DVD (with Thumbs)	<b>CRIT 1:</b> DVD
	T 11/24	Thanksgiving	
	TH 11/28	Thanksgiving	
Week 15	T 12/2	<b>CRIT 2:</b> DVD	<b>CRIT 2:</b> DVD
	TH 12/4	<b>CRIT:</b> Portfolio	<b>CRIT:</b> Portfolio
		Finals Week	

### Art Organizations and Clubs

#### Why?

Being a part of these organizations will encourage teamwork and collaboration. Both are skills that will help prepare you for the professional world. Related organizations will also provide a space to step up into leadership, volunteer, manage projects, and learn to work through problems with new and fresh eyes.

- [Art News DFW](#) – Art & Artist in North Texas
- [DSVC](#) – The Dallas Society of Visual Communications, \$6.50 per month or \$50.00 a year

## Videos

Bob Aufuldish of [Aufuldish & Warinner](#), San Rafael, CA, shows us how he finds inspiration in his studio. [7:17]

Chapter 3 Movie

Armin Vit of [Under Consideration LLC](#), Austin, TX, talks about entering the "thought profession" of design. [10:10]

Chapter 3 Movie

Mike Perry of [Mike Perry Studio](#), New York, speaks of life before and after Urban Outfitters. [8:49]

Chapter 3 Movie

Max Spector of [Chen Design Associates](#), San Francisco, muses on "the designer as a psychologist." [4:50]

Other Resources

Web Links for Educators and Students

[http://college.cengage.com/art/0495572780\\_landa/links/all\\_links.html](http://college.cengage.com/art/0495572780_landa/links/all_links.html)

Google has a solution for the UX Design Education Gap: Google.

<https://www.fastcompany.com/3062640/google-has-a-solution-for-the-ux-design-education-gap-google>

AIGA Design Archives

<https://designarchives.aiga.org/#/entries/%2Bdiscipline%3A%22Brand%20and%20identity%20systems%20design%22/formats%3A%22Brand%20and%20identity%20systems%22/grid/relevance/asc/0/8/120>

## PHOTO AND VIDEO CONSENT FORM – Fall 2025 / Ms. Vanessa Joyner

I, \_\_\_\_\_, with a mailing address of

\_\_\_\_\_ City of \_\_\_\_\_, State of

\_\_\_\_\_ (the "Releasor"), grant permission and give my

consent to Ms. Vanessa Joyner (the "Releasee") for the photograph(s) or

electronic media images or videos used in this class for presentation under any

*legal* use:

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Artworks in Visual Design

Presentation (social media, websites, and print)

**Revocation (check one)**

- I understand that with my authorization below, the photograph(s) may never be revoked.

- I understand that I may revoke this authorization at any time by notifying \_\_\_\_\_ in writing. The revocation will not affect any actions taken before receiving this written notification. Images will be stored in a secure location, and only authorized staff will have access to them. They will be kept as long as they are relevant and, after that time, destroyed or archived.

Releasor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Releasee's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_