

## **VM463: Graphic Design for Digital Media**

Fall 2011 – Course Credits: 4

Tuesday & Thursday 2-3:45 – 180 Tremont St. 809

Instructor: Jonelle Lonergan ([jonelle\\_lonergan@emerson.edu](mailto:jonelle_lonergan@emerson.edu) or [jonelle.lonergan@gmail.com](mailto:jonelle.lonergan@gmail.com))

Office hours: 180 Tremont St. 916D – Thursday 1-2pm and by appointment

### **Course Description**

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This course will explore the fundamentals and aesthetic considerations of design composition (text, image, graphics, motion) and production for digital media. Students 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.*

### **Objectives**

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- To develop your own identity as a designer – your aesthetic, your process, and your brand
- To learn the principles of classical graphic design and how to adapt them to a digital environment
- To examine important works of digital media from a design perspective
- To think critically about your own work and be conscious of the design choices you make

### **Materials**

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The course has two required textbooks:

*Notes on Graphic Design and Visual Communication* (second edition)

By Gregg Berryman. ISBN: 9781560520443

*Responsive Web Design*

By Ethan Marcotte. Available at <http://www.abookapart.com> as a paperback and as an e-book.

To help you along technically, you will also view video tutorials on Lynda.com, a software training site. To watch the tutorials on your own computer, you must purchase a subscription: it's \$34 and includes access to five courses aimed at varying skill sets. You'll receive an email with instructions for creating an account.

You will also need a storage device to manage your media – a flash drive, an external hard drive, and/or an online dropbox.

Lastly, please keep an eye on the class website: <http://www.jonellelonergan.com/vm463>. The website will have readings, announcements, lab/project assignments, and other important information.

### **Assignments and Requirements**

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- Complete ten in-class lab exercises and three take-home projects, each showing your understanding of design principles, your practical skills, and your capacity for creativity
- Research a well-defined era of graphic design history and teach a short lesson about it
- Respond to occasional discussion questions on the class website
- Complete the assigned readings and viewings
- Participate in class discussions and critiques

## Grading

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- Projects: 60% (20% per project)
- History lesson: 15%
- Lab exercises: 10%
- Participation: 10%
- Online discussion questions: 5%

Your projects will be evaluated according to creativity and expressiveness as well as technical concerns. In other words: the idea, the form, and the function will all be considered and equally weighed in your grade. An “A” project grows out of a great idea, is technologically sound and bug-free, and has a carefully planned and well-executed look and feel.

Unless the subject matter demands an intentionally rough-around-the-edges aesthetic, I expect your work to be polished and professional.

**Late work:** Grades for projects will be docked 10% for each day they are late.

## Class Policies

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### *In-Class Behavior*

Refrain from computer work during presentations and lectures. Please silence your cell phones before class starts. Be respectful of each other at all times, especially while discussing our work.

### *Attendance*

Please come to class and arrive on time. Your final grade will be lowered by one point for each unexcused absence and 1/3 of a point for each time you arrive late to class. Three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

### *Disability Services Office*

Emerson College is committed to providing equal access to its academic programs and social activities for all qualified students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who are seeking consideration for services or accommodations should contact the Associate Director for Disability Services: (617) 824-8592, [dso@emerson.edu](mailto:dso@emerson.edu), or Disability Services Office, Emerson College, 120 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116. (For the College’s full policy on disability services, please see the class website.)

### *Plagiarism*

It is the responsibility of all Emerson students to know and adhere to the College's policy on plagiarism, which can be found at: [http://www.emerson.edu/academic\\_affairs/policies/Plagiarism-Policy.cfm](http://www.emerson.edu/academic_affairs/policies/Plagiarism-Policy.cfm). If you have any question concerning the Emerson plagiarism policy or about documentation of sources in work you produce in this course, speak to your instructor.

## Schedule

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TUESDAY 9/6

Introductions. Logistics. What is graphic design?

THURSDAY 9/8

Lab 1: Ad block

TUESDAY 9/13

Digital media vs. print media. Tools and industry standards. Why Adobe dominates.

**Due today:** Read Berryman (Design through Process); watch Lynda.com Illustrator tutorials

THURSDAY 9/15

Lab 2: Creative Suite showdown

TUESDAY 9/20

Grid layouts.

**Due today:** Finish Lynda.com Illustrator tutorials; Read Berryman (Grids)

THURSDAY 9/22

Lab 3: Working with the grid

TUESDAY 9/27

Typography, part I. History of type. Letterforms.

**Due today:** Read Berryman (Type) and Boulton, *Designing for the Web: Typography – Introduction, Anatomy and Classification* (<http://designingfortheweb.co.uk/book/>)

THURSDAY 9/29

Lab 4: Rethinking type

TUESDAY 10/4

Typography, part II. Type & web design. Screen fonts.

**Due today:** Read Boulton, *Designing for the Web: Typography – Hierarchy, Typesetting, and Printing for the Web*

THURSDAY 10/6

Peer review and work time

\*\*FRIDAY 10/7

**Due today:** Project 1 (via email)

TUESDAY 10/11

Color theory. Color management.

**Due today:** Read Berryman (Color) and Boulton, *Five Simple Steps to Designing with Colour* (<http://tinyurl.com/24sf54s>, <http://tinyurl.com/25ar46x> and <http://tinyurl.com/2feylfz>)

THURSDAY 10/13

Lab 5: Color schemes

TUESDAY 10/18

Gestalt. Patterns in graphic design.

**Due today:** Read Berryman (Gestalt)

THURSDAY 10/20

Lab 6: Figure and ground

TUESDAY 10/25

Separating content and presentation. CSS Zen. Working with code.

**Due today:** Read CSS Positioning 101 (<http://www.alistapart.com/articles/css-positioning-101/>) and CSS Floats 101 (<http://www.alistapart.com/articles/css-floats-101/>); Watch Chapter 2 of *CSS Web Site Design*.

THURSDAY 10/27

Lab 7: Stylesheets

TUESDAY 11/1

CSS3. Interactive design.

**Due today:** Read Chapter 1 of Cederholm, *CSS3 for Web Designers* (handout)

THURSDAY 11/3

Peer review and work time

\*\*FRIDAY 11/4

**Due today:** Project 2 (via email)

TUESDAY 11/8 – NO CLASS

THURSDAY 11/10

Symbols. Logos. Pictographs.

**Due today:** Berryman (Marks through Pictographs)

TUESDAY 11/15

Lab 8: Collaborative pictographs

THURSDAY 11/17

Infographics. Telling stories with data.

**Due today:** Read selections from Tufte, *Envisioning Information*

TUESDAY 11/22

Lab 9: Visualizations

THURSDAY 11/24 – NO CLASS

TUESDAY 11/29

Postmodern design. Breaking rules. DIY and amateur graphic design.

**Due today:** Read selections from Poynor, *No More Rules: Graphic Design and Postmodernism*.

THURSDAY 12/1

Lab 10: Making it messy

TUESDAY 12/6

Responsive web design. From small screen to multimonitor.

**Due this week:** Read Marcotte, *Responsive Web Design*

THURSDAY 12/8

Peer review and work time

FRIDAY 12/16 AT 1PM

**Due today:** Project 3