

Course Syllabus

Course Title: Editorial Design, Publication Design, or Magazine design
Course Code/Section:
Session/Year:
Meeting: This syllabus assumes six contact hours per week over two sessions
Instructor:
Contact Info:
Class information:
Office Hours:

Course Description: This semester we will be exploring long-form graphic design. While our focus will be on magazines, the skills developed—creating continuity and variety across a range of pages, presenting different kinds of information in context-appropriate formats, and developing brand identity and continuity, is also applicable to other common design tasks—annual reports, business documents, newspapers, brochures, books and other multipage documents.

Objectives

Develop professional visual sensitivity and competency in graphic communication through discipline of the magazine design process. Continuing development of professional computer design skills in drawing, page layout, and image manipulation using appropriate software. Develop a series of professional portfolio pieces including magazine brands, feature layouts, news section layouts and information graphics.

Content

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

Students will produce a series of design projects, developing them from thumbnail rough to smooths to final. Students will be expected to have, or to develop, the technical and computer skills necessary to complete their projects.

Attendance Policy (Teachers should substitute their own attendance policy here)

Studio courses include a substantial critique/discussion components and lab component. By their nature, studios are dynamic educational environments. 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. In short, your attendance is just as important as mine. Therefore:

- Students are required to attend all class meetings, to arrive on time, and to stay for the duration of the class.
- Students arriving seven 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 leave before the class is dismissed will be marked absent.
- Students who are having difficulty with the attendance requirement may be asked to drop the class.
- Students who accumulate three or more absences will receive a reduced or failing grade.
- There are no excused absences.

TEXT AND REFERENCES

Required:

Rothstein, Jandos, *Designing Magazines*, Allworth Press, New York, 2007.

Students are also expected to purchase **at least three copies** of the magazine they are redesigning during the course of the semester, and two magazines for the mashup assignment.

Suggested (add or subtract books as needed):

Adobe CS2 Illustrator Classroom in a Book, Adobe Press, Salinas, California, 2005.

Adobe CS2 Photoshop Classroom in a Book, Adobe Press, Salinas, California, 2005.

The Adobe Type Reference, Adobe Press, Salinas, California, 2005.

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

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

Williams, Robin, *The Mac Is Not a Typewriter* (1st. not 2nd. ed.), Peachpit Press, 1990.

Materials & Supplies:

You will need the following tools and materials for this course, and should have them with you at each session.

CD or DVD ROMs, thumb or hard drive recommended
ruler marked in picas—Design School Ruler or Schadler
masking/drafting/artist tape
mounting board, mounting supplies

drawing supplies (sketch pad, eraser, etc.)
recommended: 14" × 17" tracing or marker paper
other material as assigned/required by project

Student Evaluation/Methods of Assessment:

The quality of each project will be determined using the following criteria:

- Concept: Originality, creativity and effectiveness of the solution
- Aesthetics: Visual impact and beauty
- Presentation: Craftsmanship, effective use of materials

Class, Department and University Policies:

Add policies here.

Course Outline (Subject to change)

Workup Material With each incremental deadline, students will turn in color proofs—full-sized and cut neatly (razor or X-acto and straight edge—no scissors!) to trim, and an envelope containing documentation of creative preparatory work. Each envelope should contain at least 8 distinct concepts, 4 pencil or computer refinements of the chosen idea, and at least one preliminary printed piece. The envelope must also contain a cd rom, dvd or zip disk with Quark files (no thumb drives), and all supporting art and typefaces. Final pdfs must also be included. Missing components will result in a reduced grade (1/3 grade for each missing item).

Week 1–3

Magazine Content Analysis. Purchase two magazines, one each from the following two groups. You will note that nearly every magazine divides articles into sections. Generally, shorter items appear in the front and sometimes the back, (FOB, BOB) and longer pieces appear in the center “feature well.” While the content of the two magazines you purchase will vary, much of the underlying structure will be similar. Consider how both magazines use typography design and imagery, and how those choices appeal to readers. The rich visual and editorial choices the magazine’s staffs make form the personality or “brand” of each magazine. Come to the next class prepared to discuss specific features of each design and how the design relates to content. You may only use a magazine excluded from these lists if you choose mainstream newsstand consumer publication and you get my e-mailed approval before Wednesday’s class. I will not approve two magazines that are too similar—for example two fashion magazines.

Group 1

*Rolling Stone, Vibe, Spin
Esquire, GQ, Maxim, King
Eldr, AARP: The Magazine, Real Simple
Fortune, Black Enterprise, Forbes
Nat.Geo. Traveler, Outside, Surfer
The Progressive, National Review,
American Prospect, The Nation,
The National Review,
The American Conservative
Martha Stewart Living*

Group 2

*Vouge, Vanity Fair, White Walls
Time, Newsweek, Sports Illustrated
ESPN, Mad, National Lampoon
Esopus, Boudin, Colors, Good
Gourmet, Cook’s, Cook’s Illustrated
The New York Times Magazine
Bitch, Bust, Mean, Psychology Today
The New Yorker, Scientific American
Nature, Chemical & Engineering News
16, Glamour, CosmoGirl, Latina*

Week 1 Introduction to class and assignment, Monday.
Presentation of research results, Wednesday.
Read: Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2.

Magazine Content Part II: Mash-Up. Using the same two magazines as for the first assignment, design a feature story for one in the style of a feature from the other. You should not imitate an existing feature, but seek to simulate how magazine “A” might handle “B’s” content. Text and headlines should be real (you may find text but not images on the internet), Length: minimum 5pp, but be guided by how your magazine “packages” its features. Strive for a similar density of text and images across pages.

Week 2 Lecture on long-form documents, defining colors in Quark, work time, Monday, Parts of a magazine handout.
Work time, small-group critiques, Wednesday.
Read: Chapters 27, 28, 33.

Week 3 Studio time, Introduction of redesign assignment, Monday.
Final critique, Wednesday.
Read: Chapters 4, 5, 8, 9.

Week 4–11

Editorial Redesign. Our major project this semester will be a complete overhaul of a magazine, or an “editorial redesign.” While this may seem like a lot of time to accomplish a small goal, as you have already seen, a magazine format is a complex, carefully balanced machine with lots of components. A vast number of decisions go into a magazine format, which relate to obvious design decisions—type, color, grid, budget—but also the less obvious, how information is distributed and presented within sections. Many redesigns go farther—considering what sections might be enhanced, reduced, eliminated, or added, as well as the overall tone or voice of the magazine. A redesign can be done with an eye towards making the magazine appeal to a younger or wealthier audience, it may be intended to make the magazine seem more serious, or more approachable, it may attempt to use art or photography more effectively. You will start this project with a magazine that you believe is “broken”—severely in need of improvement or updating. For this reason, it is recommended that you do **not** choose a major “supermarket” newsstand magazine (like *People*, *Vogue* or *Esquire*). Once you have a magazine that should function better, your first step will be the creation of a three page written proposal explaining your choice—why the magazine is not working and how it might be repaired and updated so as to better serve its users—the readers and advertisers. (Some redesigns also take budget, production efficiency and staff into account.) Your final project will include a revised version of your proposal, three separate covers, a front news section (six pages) which includes at least two information/ASF components, a column (or POV) format (1 page), a second front section or back section with a different name, format and purpose (two pages min.), a two-page table of contents (two single pages or a spread), one long feature (five pages or more) and one short feature (two or three pages) for a total of 21 designed pages minimum. You must also turn in a copy of the published magazine. You are responsible for purchasing and reading the real magazine during the duration of this project. All pages must be printed in full size, full-color, trimmed neatly to bleed, and mounted on black mounting boards, which are logically organized and stacked in the order the pages would appear in the magazine.

As with any large project, it is anticipated that later design decisions will make it necessary to rethink earlier decisions. Therefore, grades given over the course of the semester will be considered provisional. The 21 pages turned in at the end of the semester must be “of a piece.” Even though pages will be designed over time, all finals must make editorial and graphic sense when viewed together. The final grade may be adjusted up or down to reflect how well the final magazine works as a complete solution. Your final must be turned in with supporting files using Quark’s gather for output feature which puts art, page files and fonts in a single folder. You must also create usable templates from your pages (which include page grids and style sheets). Finally, your disk(s) must include PDFs of every page. **Your disk will not be returned to you. Retain all files separately for your records.**

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| Week 4 | Magazine Branding: color, type, pacing, Comments on getting started, Studio time both days.
<i>Read: Chapters 11 and 12 and 14 (14 is a model for your written proposal) and the Writing for Designers handout from jandos.com/forstudents.</i> |
| Week 5 | Magazine Structure: signage, grids, points of entry, Magazine approval, Comments on getting started, Studio time, Wednesday.
<i>Read: Chapters 13 and 20.</i> |
| Week 6 | Lecture on Briefs, Studio time, Written proposal due. Monday. small-group critiques Wednesday.
<i>Read: Chapters 25 and 29.</i> |

- Week 7 Work time, lecture on ASFs, Monday, Small group critique of progress on FOB Wednesday.
Read: Chapters 3, 6 and 7.
- Week 8 Lecture on covers, studio time, Monday. Preliminary FOB finals due Wednesday.
Read: Chapters 18 and 30.
- Week 9 Studio time, Monday. small-group critiques of covers in progress Wednesday.
Read: Chapters 22 and 23.
- Week 10 Lecture: feature design. Studio time, Monday. Preliminary cover finals due, Wednesday.
Read: Chapters 31.
- Week 11 In-class project/lecture: The art budget, Studio time, Monday. Small-group critiques of features in progress, Wednesday
Read: Chapters 17, 21 and 26.

Week 12–15: Create missing sections, reconciliation of design, creation of style sheets and templates. While that may seem like a lot to get done in two weeks (and you may start earlier) you will likely find that by this point in the semester that you will have a good feel for your magazine by now, and these last two sections will go quickly.

- Week 12 Lecture: creating style sheets, Monday. Preliminary feature final due, Wednesday.
Read: Chapters 18 and 30.
- Week 13 Lecture: creating templates, Studio time, Wednesday: optional small-group critiques.
- Week 14 Optional Studio time, Monday. Optional small-group critiques, Wednesday.
- Week 15 Optional studio time, Monday. Final critique, Wednesday.