



Senior Proposal

Syllabus

01 / 03

Course Information

Professor / Lauren Meranda
Email / lauren.meranda@judsonu.edu

Meetings / Tuesday & Thursday 1-3:40pm
Website / www.judsonvis.com

Course Description

A selective survey of the history of visual communications through critical readings, individualized research, and studio work in modern and contemporary design issues. This course will be run as a seminar.

Each week will be focused around a theme, students are responsible for reading the selection of articles based on that theme, and must write a response blog post. We will meet every other week to have a group discussion on the articles.

Goals & Objectives

To introduce students to the myriad ways in which design interacts with culture and society
Provide an understanding of the evolution of the role of the designer in modern society
To identify and discuss key figures, events, and trends in the history of modern design

Analyze design to determine its historical significance as well as their relevance for contemporary issues
Compose clear and concise arguments for written, spoken, and "designed" communication

Attendance

You must attend a group discussion to meet in Professor Meranda's office once every other week. Attendance at all class meetings is required. There are very few students in the course, and your absence will be noticed.

Most of your grade is determined by class participation. If you are not present during a discussion, your grade will be negatively impacted.

Readings

You are responsible for readings from the textbook as well as the material posted on the class website. The reading assignments will be announced in class and posted on the class website. To be considered complete, you must post a two paragraph or more response to the

readings before the next class session, unless otherwise noted. It is suggested to print out the readings and have notes available for class discussions. Participation is mandatory and will be factored into your daily participation grade.



Materials

You are required to have *Looking Closer 3: Critical Writings on Design* for this class. All other reading materials will be provided.

It is recommended that the student have access to *Meggs' History of Graphic Design*. A digital copy is available to rent from the Judson library.

Late Work

All assignments are due by 5pm on the Friday of each week. An assignment must be posted on the blog AND CORRECTLY CATEGORIZED in order to be considered turned in. Late work will be marked down one grade for each day

past the due date, e.g. an A paper turned in after 5pm but within 24 hours will receive an A-. If you foresee a potential conflict, then see Prof. Meranda; with sufficient notice, it might be possible to arrange an alternative schedule.

Conduct

You are expected to conduct yourself courteously and professionally. Time spent in the classroom will be dedicated to presentation, discussion, and self-directed work time. Any other activities or behavior not conducive to our coursework will NOT be tolerated. Prohibited activities during class time include use of cell phones for talking or texting, surfing the web or social media for unrelated purposes, private

conversations amongst students, rude or insulting language or behavior, and any other form of distraction from the tasks at hand.

We have a lot of exciting work to do, and our time together is valuable. Let's make the most of it.

Accomodations

Judson University is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist students with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this class and are requesting accommodations, you must contact Gineen Vargas, ADA Compliance Coordinator in the Student Success Center, located in the Lindner Tower-2nd floor at 847-628-1556.

of a current licensed clinician report outlining the disability, possible limitations and reasonable accommodations in order to meet the needs of the post-secondary coursework. Accommodations are never provided retroactively - prior to finalization of the Letter of Accommodation. Gineen will be happy to meet with you to discuss your accommodations. All discussions will remain confidential.

The ADA Compliance Coordinator is responsible for coordinating accommodations and services for students with disabilities. Accommodations will not be granted prior to receipt

Further information is available by visiting the Student Success Center website https://myjudson.judsonu.edu/ICS/Student_Success_Center/

The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus should the need arise.



Course Overview

- 1 / Touch the heart of an individual with design
- 2 / Touch the heart of a community with design
- 3 / Touch the heart of humanity with design
- 4 / Writing to explore: list of 10 things most important
- 5 / Writing for perspective: creative essay
- 6 / Writing to Extract: exploring current knowledge
- 7 / Writing on Research: developing research goals
- 8 / Continue Research
- 9 / Thesis Statements
- 10 / Creative Brief
- 11 / Mapping the Market & Defining Project
- 12 / Developing a Presentation
- 13 / Proposal Presentations!



- Can design do more than sell products for our clients?
- Can design move someone enough to change the course of events?
- Can design play a bigger role in solving societal problems?

“So much of what designers do is technically very good, but it leaves people cold and has little meaning in their lives. The question came out of a frustration of drowning in professionally designed things that nobody gives a shit about, neither the maker nor the receiver. The main reason for all this stuff is that most designers don’t believe in anything. When your conscience is so flexible, how can you do strong design?”

–Stefan Sagmeister

Week 1

August 25

- What can Design do? What do you think is Design’s role in society?
- Write a personal design manifesto.

Homework:

Distill personal design manifesto into a 500-800 word belief statement.

August 27

Touch the heart of an individual with design.

- Look at the people around you—What are the challenges they face?
- Look within yourself—in what ways could you use design to impact your life?
- Propose a tangible way in which design can touch an individual.

Homework:

Touch the heart of an individual with design... and document it. Post results to the blog.



Week 2

September 1

Present results from "Touch the heart of an individual with design"—5min/person

Touch the heart of a community with design.

What are some communities that you belong to?

Choose one. Make a list of ten facts that define this community.

Format it as: Statement, Analogy, Metaphor...

s I go grocery shopping at least twice a week without an idea of what I want to get.

a My bi-weekly trips to Whole Foods are to grocery shopping as an improv actor is to theater.

m Each visit to the grocery store is an improv show in which I am the actor

Homework:

What are some challenges or areas of improvement for your chosen community?

Create a tangible project proposal for how design can touch the heart of a community.

September 3

Case studies

Research

Exploration/Experimentation

Homework:

Touch the heart of a community with design... and document it. Post results to the blog.



Week 3

September 8

Present results from "Touch the heart of a community with design"—5min/person

Touch the heart of humanity with design.

Write to learn—write a list of three global/humanity issues that you are concerned about

Discuss—break into groups by themes

Distill—narrow to a common theme

Homework:

Create a tangible project proposal for how design can touch the heart of humanity.

September 10

Present proposals

Case studies

Research

Exploration/Experimentation

Homework:

Touch the heart of humanity with design... and document it. Post results to the blog.

Week 4

Writing to Explore

Take some time to think about what is important to you.

objects / topics / issues / activities / etc.

Make a list of 7-10 of these things.

Write a paragraph for each explaining why you find them important.

Post on the blog

Homework: Narrow the list

Distill and analyze your in-class writing. Create written "features" on three of the topics you named as most important to you. You may revise your list. A feature should explain the what, where, why, etc. about your topics



Week 5

Writing for Perspective

Every story has two sides. In conflict resolution, looking at the other person's side helps give us perspective and empathy. We can gain a new understanding of the situation.

Homework:

In all situations, ones of conflict or joy, looking at it from a different perspective can deepen our understanding. For homework, you are to take two of your topics and look at them from a different angle. Identify a subject/object within your topic, and write an essay from it's/their perspective.

Your essay does not have to be any specific length. Write what needs to be written—no more, no less. Post your essays on the blog, and be prepared to read them to the class on Tuesday.

Week 6

Writing to Extract

Finding a project from a subject requires having a more intimate understanding of the topic. Knowing the subject matter is not necessarily understanding it, so we are going to deepen your understanding by extracting details.

If you have decided which subject matter you'd like to proceed with, you can do the following exercises with your chosen topic. If you are still not sure, keep exploring with both topics. Hopefully this step will help you decide which area to move forward with.

Homework:

In your book, Design Thinking, are process activities to help you dig deeper. You must apply a total of six of these processes to your topic(s). If you have one, do six exercises with that one topic. If you are still deciding between two, you may split the six between the two however you see fit. You MUST have 6 exercises by next Tuesday.



Week 7

Writing to Extract

Thus far, we have been relying heavily on information and assumptions you already have. Researching your topics more thoroughly will help you know and understand them more deeply. Gathering more information will give you a systematic knowledge of the ins and outs of your topic. You can learn what makes your topic what it is, why it is that way, and what are some of the problems within or facing it.

Types of Research

Qualitative / Quantitative / Primary / Secondary / Market / Production / Any more?

Discuss

What is the importance of research?

Where do you begin?

What are you trying to discover?

How do you keep track of your research?

Homework

Pick one of your two topics to move forward with.

Read *Design Meets Research*

Write up your goals for the research of your topic.

Make a research plan. Be as specific as possible.

What sources will you use?

How will you keep track of your research?



Week 8

Thesis Statements

1. What is a thesis statement?

A thesis statement tells others how you will interpret the significance of your subject matter under discussion—it is the road map of what to expect from the rest of the paper/presentation.

A thesis statement declares what you believe and what you intend to prove. A good thesis statement makes the difference between a thoughtful research project and a simple retelling of facts.

It should be contestable, proposing an arguable point with which people could reasonably disagree. A strong thesis is provocative; it takes a stand and justifies the discussion you will present.

It tackles a subject that could be adequately covered in the format of the project assigned.

It is specific and focused. A strong thesis proves a point without discussing “everything about ...” Instead of music, think “American jazz in the 1930s” and your argument about it.

It clearly asserts your own conclusion based on evidence. Note: Be flexible. The evidence may lead you to a conclusion you didn’t think you’d reach. It is perfectly okay to change your thesis!

It provides the reader with a map to guide him/her through your work.

It anticipates and refutes the counter-arguments

It avoids vague language (like “it seems”).

It avoids the first person. (“I believe,” “In my opinion”)

It should pass the *So what?* or *Who cares?* test? For instance, “people should avoid driving under the influence of alcohol,” would be unlikely to evoke any opposition.

2. How to write a thesis statement

Primary Statement

Motivation ([Something] [does something].)

Secondary Statement

Because [reason(s)], [something] [does something].

Tertiary Statement

Although [opposing evidence], [reasons] show [Something] [does something].

Supporting Statement

Concluding Statement

Example:

Primary Statement

Creativity rises from beneath repression.

Secondary Statement

When resources are removed, the materials available are reimagined to meet needs.

Tertiary Statement

Good design may not look well-made or well-produced.

Supporting Statement

Boredom sets in easily in prison, so prisoners are always coming up with ingenious ways to keep themselves busy. Dice and chess sets are made of paper mache, which in prison consists of toilet paper, water and glue.

Concluding Statement

Powerfully innovative and creative design emerge out of limitation and need.



Week 9

Creative Brief

You have now developed a nice working thesis statement as the foundation of your project. This will be the basis by which the rest of your proposal is built. Your thesis statement defined your topic, and now we must begin developing the criteria that will define your project.

Homework:

The creative brief informs our process and stands as a checkpoint along the way. A good brief is worth days of work. For Tuesday, I want you to follow the steps outlined on page 56. Start by developing questions and then considering the possible answers.

Week 10

Mapping the Market

From your brief, find specific outside projects/products/campaigns out there that match part or all of your brief. These will help you frame your project.

Homework:

Make short profiles of each—basic understanding of each.

Pull out the main attributes from your brief and create multiple matrices with these qualities.

Map the projects/products/campaigns on these matrices.

Analyze the results and find how your project can/will align or differ and why.



Week 11

Developing an Outline

In-class assignment:

Your presentation presents your project proposal in light of your research. You need to organize your process and proposal into an easy to follow narrative arch. Creating a presentation is much like writing a story. You must develop the main plot sequence and fill in the details from there. So, first you will need to develop an outline of the concepts you'd like to present:

Introduction

Body

Point 1–Rising Action (this)

Point 2–Climax (means that)

Point 3–Denouement (so then, I propose this)

Conclusion

Once you have a very basic outline, you can begin filling in more details:

INTRODUCTION

Attention-getter:

Central Idea:

Establish credibility and relate topic to audience:

Preview the main points:

Transition:

BODY

Main Point 1: (A declarative sentence about the first main idea for your topic)

Supporting point

Sub-supporting point

Sub-supporting point

Supporting point:

Sub-supporting point

Sub-supporting point

Supporting point: (If needed)

Sub-supporting point

Sub-supporting point

Transition

Main Point 2: (Repeat format from above)

Main Point 3: (Repeat format from above)

CONCLUSION

Summary of the main points

Restatement of the central idea

Closing lines that relate back to the introduction



Week 12

Making an Outline into a Presentation

In class we will go over techniques to transition your outline into an effective presentation. We want to create an engaging experience for the viewers. Consider the overall story you want to tell, and organize the flow of your presentation through that story.

Homework:

Reorganize your outline into a presentation format.

Week 13

Designing your Presentation

Now that you have a plan about what you want to say, you need to create visuals to support that. Your slides should supplement what you say, not the other way around. Practice giving your presentation as you are making the slides. This will make building your presentation a lot simpler and help you feel more comfortable with the outcome.

Random tips:

1. Keep your slides visually simple. The aesthetic should match the content and not over-power it. No transitions or cheesy graphics. Simple, clean, professional.
2. Have minimal text on your slides. Take us on the journey of what you are telling us, don't make us read everything, and please don't just read your slides! The only full sentences should be quotes.
3. Ditch the bullet points. Not including full sentences does not mean you should use large ugly bullet points. Remember your rules of typography! There are other ways of organizing information.
4. Include citations, data, and facts to support your claims. Your presentation will be better received if your information is validated with credible citations.
5. Test your presentation through a projector. The only way to be sure the text isn't too small or the colors are not horrendously misrepresented is to test it. Somethings may look great on your computer monitor and have a different reality projected. I personally like to make all projected presentations with black backgrounds, because the edges blend naturally into the screen.
6. Use color sparingly. Especially with a visually simple aesthetic, color communicates a lot. Be sure the messages match and that the presence of color does not distract from what you are saying.

Homework Due Tuesday, 11/10:

Post your slides as a PDF to the blog categorized as "Presentation-First Draft"

Have a first draft of your presentation ready to give on Tuesday, which you will give in small groups. This way you all will have time for individualized feedback.

On Tuesday, you will record each other giving your presentations and post them to the blog so I can view and send you feedback.

Homework Due Thursday, 11/12:

Watch everyone's videos on the blog and leave feedback in the comments on the content, slides, and presentation.

Revise your presentations to give to the class (and to be recorded) on Thursday.