

## **DePaul University**

College of Computing & Digital Media  
School of Design, Graphic Design

## **Syllabus**

# GD105: Intro to Visual Design

*Always check D2L for the latest version of syllabus.  
Syllabus may be readjusted throughout the quarter.  
Syllabus last edited Jan 07, 2021.*

## **Course Info**

Winter 2021

Section 801

Course Dates: 01/07/2021-03/18/2020

Thursday 5:45-9:00pm, Remote (See “Zoom Meetings & Attendance” and “Course Schedule” for meeting schedule)

Final Exam Date: Thursday, March. 18th from 5:45-9:00pm\*

*We will not have a final exam, instead there will be a final assignment/project to hand in during finals week. We will use our final meeting time for live group feedback sessions on your final projects.*

Instructor: Kyle Green

Email: [kyle.andrew.green@gmail.com](mailto:kyle.andrew.green@gmail.com)

Office Hours: Mondays, 6pm-7:30pm (use the office hours [sign-up sheet](#) within the Course Information module to reserve a slot, see section on “Advising & One-on-One Sessions”; all meetings must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.)

# Course Overview

## **Course Description**

This course will provide an introduction to the principles of visual design — including composition, form, counterform, point, line, plane, color, basic image-making (vector and photography) and elements of visual narrative and storytelling. This course will include video lectures and tutorials, films, readings, virtual discussions (livestream and chat), analog (hand-sketching) and digital-making (phone/computer, apps/software). Plan to work about 5-10 hours a week on coursework.

## Course Objectives

- This course will focus on theories of how the mind processes visual information, and then practice the application of this learning to achieve effective visual communication.
- This course is designed specifically for the needs of Graphic Design, Game Development, Digital Cinema, Animation, and Interactive Media students (but all majors are welcome).
- Although the class may require the use of software (Adobe CC), learning software is secondary to our goal of gaining an understanding of the mechanisms of visual perception.
- Practical issues introduced include sketching, iterative process, storyboarding, visual planning, and color systems.
- Theoretical issues include composition (emphasis, rhythm, contrast, unity, balance, scale, hierarchies of information), movement, color, and spatial illusion.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Experience a range of design methods, processes, materials, and contexts.
2. Apply basic elements of visual design including balance, color, dynamics, expression, form, growth, light, movement, sequence, shape, and space.
3. Practice iteration [and/or variation] to arrive at successful design projects.
4. Use visual design terms and formal language to communicate.
5. Analyze the effectiveness of works of art and design, recognizing strengths and citing areas for improvement.
6. Identify or integrate methods, processes, and/or materials that are relevant to project development.
7. Defend work with reason.

## Basic Materials & Supplies

- **Laptop, Desktop, or Tablet/iPad;** recommended MacBook Pro or Windows laptop capable of running Adobe CC Software
- **Sketch Book (at least 8.5x11);** or blank computer paper
- **Pencils, variety of pens (black);** your favorite drawing materials
- **Scissors (TBD)**
- **Digital Camera/Phone camera** (a basic one is fine)
- **External hard drive/flash drive;** or your preferred back-up method
- **Software:** Microsoft Office (Word, Powerpoint), or Apple (Pages/Keynote) or Google Suite (Google Docs, Slides), Adobe Creative Cloud or alternative (Gimp, Inkscape, ProCreate), and Zoom (See “Software” section for more info)

## Software & Tech

## Zoom

**How Zoom Works:** Zoom allows people to gather in a virtual room and meet synchronously. We're going to use Zoom to meet as a whole class, to meet in small groups, for office hours, and for individual student-instructor meetings.

### Zoom Community:

- While I prefer and encourage you to turn your camera on, you are not required to use your camera for Zoom sessions.
- [Virtual backgrounds](#) are a great way to enable video while maintaining privacy. If you are using a virtual background, please select something appropriate to a class setting.
- Muting your microphone when you are not speaking will help minimize sound feedback.
- Feel free to use the chat window to ask questions or leave comments.

**Access to Zoom:** Please note that students *don't* need Zoom accounts in order to join Zoom meetings. If students would like Pro accounts to host meetings of their own, they can follow these steps.

- Go to [depaul.zoom.us](https://depaul.zoom.us) and sign in with your Campus Connect credentials.
- Visit [zoom.us/download](https://zoom.us/download) to download the Zoom Client for Meetings. You can also download the mobile and desktop apps from this site.
- When using the apps, log in using your new Username@depaul.edu email address and existing Campus Connect password. Choose the "Sign in with SSO" option and specify the "depaul.zoom.us" domain, if prompted.

### Additional Zoom Resources:

[Getting Started with Zoom](#)

[How to Join a Meeting](#)

[DePaul Zoom FAQ](#)

## Adobe Creative Cloud

Our use of Adobe CC software for this course is contingent on accessibility. Alternatives will be provided if it becomes necessary. All work for this course can be completed with or without the use of Adobe CC; in fact if it comes down to it, we can have a lot of fun learning about and experimenting with different tools and software. This experience will equip you with the flexibility and dexterity to create successful work free of the limitations of particular software - a skill that will benefit you for life.

**Access Adobe CC:** [Click Here for Instructions](#)

Beginning Fall quarter 2020, DePaul is providing students free access to Adobe Creative Cloud for their home computers (access will be limited to the duration of the term). You will

need to use your **@depaul.edu** email address to get access to the Creative Cloud at home option. You will be redirected to a Campus Connect login screen--use your campus connect credentials to login.

### **Alternative Software**

Completing your coursework successfully does not hinge on access to Adobe CC. In other words, having or not having Adobe CC is not an excuse to not complete assignments or projects and will not hinder your ability to learn everything you need to learn from this course. While we traditionally have used Adobe Illustrator, there are a myriad of great alternatives available to you and we can work together to find a solution that works best for you. These include:

**Inkscape:** A powerful, free, and professional quality vector graphics software (comparable to Illustrator) which runs on Linux, Mac OS X and Windows desktop computers. [Access Inkscape](#)

**Gimp:** A free and open source image editor (comparable to Photoshop). [Access Gimp](#)

**ProCreate:** A powerful and intuitive digital illustration app available for iPad. [Access ProCreate](#)

*I don't care what tools you use throughout the course. Instead I care that you achieve the desired outcomes for each of your assignments and projects. You do not have to ask permission to use a tool if you think it will do what you need it to do, but please feel free to reach out at any point for advice, to brainstorm, or to discuss what options are available to you.*

### **LinkedIn Learning**

LinkedIn Learning, free with your DePaul student emails, offers a wealth of extensive tutorials on software. I will be available to answer specific software questions, but please keep in mind that the objective of this course is not to learn Adobe software. If you find yourself stuck or would just like to hone your Adobe CC skills, then take advantage of your free LinkedIn Learning accounts!

[Accessing your DePaul LinkedIn Learning Account](#)

### **IT Support**

For any tech support questions, SoD faculty and students may contact the following email. Staff will handle your questions or direct to the appropriate person/department.

• **Email: [scaavsupport@depaul.edu](mailto:scaavsupport@depaul.edu).**

- Hours: Monday- Friday 8:30AM - 8:30PM; Saturday 10AM - 6PM; Sunday 12PM - 6PM
- Knowledgebase: Additionally, you can find answers to commonly asked questions and issues here: <https://depaulscaavsupport.groovehq.com/help>

## Zoom Meetings & Attendance

**Class Meetings:** *Thursdays, 5:45-9:00pm*

**We will always meet on Zoom at the start of class each week** and, depending on the schedule, you will be instructed to remain on Zoom for the duration of the class or you will sign off then sign back on during scheduled meeting times.

All materials for this course will be provided within weekly modules in the content section on D2L (which may include lectures, project/exercise briefs, and additional resources).

Most classes will begin with lectures and discussions, then we will break out into small group or individual meetings.

Unless previously discussed and agreed upon with me, ***not*** attending / signing onto Zoom for class or individual / group meetings will ***negatively impact your attendance grade.***

**If you miss one class / meeting for an unexcused reason you will have 10% deducted off from your attendance grade.**

**If you miss two classes / meetings for an unexcused reason you will have 50% deducted off from your attendance grade.**

**If you miss three classes / meetings for an unexcused reason you will have 100% deducted off from your attendance grade.**

**If you miss four classes / meetings for an unexcused reason you will fail the class.**

**Being late for class will result in a deduction of 5% from your attendance grade.**

Zoom links to each class will be posted in each weekly module as well as emailed prior to the class.

# Projects & Assignments

## Assignments & Exercises

Each week **before class on Thursday**, a module will be made live on D2L that may include pre-recorded lectures, resources, and weekly assignments and/or exercises related to the provided material, which will be due the **following Thursday (before the next class)**. The components of these modules will always be introduced and reviewed during class.

## Projects

*You will be working on projects iteratively (in parts that develop into a whole) as part of your weekly assignments. Time permitting, your weekly assignments will result in three projects:*

**1. Point, Line & Plane: Object Analysis (40%)**

The fundamentals of design. In this project, we will look at different process/research methods, practice iteration, and work in black and white to explore and describe an object in point, line, plane and then a combination of the three.  
(Learning outcomes addressed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

**2. Form in Motion: Gifs (10%)**

In this project, we will dive into time-based narrative, develop basic storyboards, and explore animation/motion as a system for good design, flow, and communication.  
(Learning outcomes addressed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

**3. Photo Documentary Essay (10%)**

In this project, we will develop skills and understanding of the basics of photography, storyboarding, and visual narrative. You will build a black-and-white, photographic essay documenting our/your current reality. This is your final project.  
(Learning outcomes addressed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

## Turning in Your Work

- Submission criteria will be defined in each project brief.
- Assignments are due – submitted to D2L - at the date and time noted on each assignment brief. If your work isn't posted in time for critique the assignment will be considered late. (See "Late Work Policy" below for information on late submissions.)
- It is essential that you label any digital (or physical file):  
*LastName-FirstName-AssignmentName\_Version#.pdf*
- Post your homework to D2L **only** as PDF files and/or Google or Word docs.
- Do not post native application files such as .ai, .indd, or .psd.
- To make sure a file successfully uploaded, you may want to download it to your computer and re-open it after posting. If this results in success, you'll know it uploaded correctly.
- If all else fails, you may email assignments and leave a comment on D2L stating that you have done so.

# Grading

## Evaluation

While requirements will vary from project to project, I will be evaluating your work based on five main criteria:

1. Design: Have you applied the concepts and design principles we have been learning in class?
2. Creative Concept & Critical Thinking: Does your design/composition communicate your ideas? Did you put effort into developing your ideas both visually and conceptually? Did you incorporate feedback into your work?
3. Critique & Professionalism: Did you talk/comment during critique? Were you constructive and respectful?
4. Process Work & Effort: Did you push yourself? (strong research, planning, and development throughout each week); and did you push yourself further? (Did you take the critique of your peers into consideration? Did you revise your work when new techniques were learned?)
5. Timeliness & Execution: Did you **read** the instructions and follow them? Did you hand in your work on time? Is your work well-made, with attention paid to craft and detail?

**Accessed Detailed Rubric** → [Click Here](#)

*I do not look for perfection or the most-polished final projects. I look for students who take risks, keep exploring, try new things, and go back and improve projects after we review them. I want my students to develop a love and a passion for visual design. The course is meant to inspire you to discover design all around you. I expect you to work hard.*

## Weighted Breakdown

Your packets and work in this class will be graded based on a 0%-100% (F to A) grade scale and weighted as follows:

**Course Exercises 10%**—total class grade

Reflection 30%

Tech Survey 10%

Attendance Verification Form 10%

Color Basics 50%

**Participation in discussions and critiques 15%**—total class grade

Critique is a critical part of the design process and necessary to produce quality work that clearly illustrates your ideas. Being able to critically examine a peer's and your own work, as well as communicate its strengths and weaknesses to fellow designers is beneficial to everyone.

In order to practice and develop your ability to critically examine yours and your peer's work, as well as using design lingo to communicate your thoughts, you are expected to participate in critique whether that be a D2L discussion or live group feedback session.

Reading discussions 25%

Participation in project critiques both written and via Zoom 75%

**Attendance 15%**—total class grade

**Projects 60%**—total class grade

Throughout the quarter, you will be working on projects iteratively through your weekly assignments and exercises. Once completed, project submissions will be graded as a whole.

Project 1 40%—total class grade

Part 1—Analysis 5%

Part 2—Visual Research 5%

Part 3—10 Point compositions 15%

Part 4—10 Line compositions 15%

Part 5—10 Plane compositions 15%

Part 6 (Final)—combination of point line and plane + compiled PDF of all 40 compositions 15%

Project 2 10%—total class grade

Part 1 50%

Part 2 50%

Project 3 10%—total class grade

Part 1 50%

Part 2 50%

## **Grade Scale**

*Grades are a reflection of the effort put forth as stated below.*

### **Excellent**

A 100–93

A- 92–90

### **Good Work**

B+ 89–88

B 87–83

B- 82–80

### **Satisfactory**

C+ 79–78

C 77-73  
C- 72-70

**Somewhat  
Unsatisfactory**

D+ 69-68  
D 67-63  
D- 62-60

### **Incomplete Grades**

An incomplete grade is a special, temporary grade that may be assigned by an instructor when unforeseeable circumstances prevent a student from completing course requirements by the end of the term and when otherwise the student had a record of satisfactory progress in the course. All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptional cases will receive such approval. Information about the Incomplete Grades policy can be found at: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Grading-Policies.aspx>

## Late Work Policy

### **Extensions**

Make-Ups/Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis. If a significant life event prevents you from completing an assignment or you have a documented emergency, please reach out to me via email. For extensions, please notify within 48 hours (before or after) a deadline. If you know beforehand that you will not be able to meet a deadline, you should email me 48 hours before work is due. If a sudden emergency crops up overnight, you should email me within 48 hours after the deadline.

### **Late Work**

I accept late work. Turning in a late assignment is far better than not turning it in at all – some points are better than none.

Unexcused late assignments are accepted and will be penalized as follows:

- *Submitted within 2 weeks of the original deadline:* Your grade will receive a 10% deduction. If the assignment was worth 100%, it is now worth max 90%.
- *Submitted by Monday, March 22th:* I will accept late work (after the 2 weeks from original deadline) anytime from the original due date through March 22th at midnight for approximately 70% credit. If the assignment was worth 100%, it is now worth max 70%.

*It is **absolutely necessary** to email/notify me once you've submitted late work. I do not go back to check past submissions folders once the initial grading period is over. If you do not notify me, I will not see your work, therefore not rectify your grade.*

## Back Up

You are responsible for the frequent and methodical back-up of your class work over the course of the quarter. Data loss – from a lost or stolen flash drive, or bad internet – is not typically an excuse for late or missing work.

However, we are in an unprecedented situation.

Should this happen to you, the best course of action is to reach out to discuss your situation and request an extension. You would still be responsible for re-creating any required files that go missing, but your grade will not be penalized. I suggest signing up for Dropbox, using Google Drive, or purchasing an external hard drive for back-up purposes.

## Course Schedule:

### Changes to Schedule

This is a tentative schedule. We will attempt to follow this schedule as closely as possible, but we may encounter changes and alterations to our original plans. Should this happen, all changes will be addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L, and sent via email.

### Weekly Breakdown

**Week 01:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 1/7 @ 5:45pm)

Intro & Syllabus Review

Lecture: What is Visual Design?

*Class D2L Materials will include course exercises*

**Week 02:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 1/14 @ 5:45pm)

Lecture: Point, Line & Plane: Process, Research, Method

*Class D2L Materials will include course exercises and Project 01 materials*

**Week 03:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 1/21 @ 5:45pm)

Lecture: Gestalt – What is Visual Language?

*Class D2L Materials will continue work on Project 01*

**Week 04:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 1/28 @ 5:45pm)

Lecture: Balance, Harmony & Contrast

*Class D2L Materials will continue work on Project 01*

**Week 05:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 2/4 @ 5:45pm)

Lecture: Texture & Pattern  
D2L Online Critique  
*Class D2L Materials will continue work on Project 01*

**Week 06:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 2/11 @ 5:45pm)  
Layering & Dimensionality (Finalizing your PLP Projects)  
*Class D2L Materials will finalize work on Project 01*

**Week 07:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 2/18 @ 5:45pm)  
Intro to Color Theory (Pre-Recorded)  
*Class D2L Materials will include Project 02 materials and reading materials for discussion next week*

**Week 08:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 2/25 @ 5:45pm)  
Lecture: Intro to Animation & Time-Based Narrative  
Reading Discussion: The Politics of Color  
*Class D2L Materials will continue work on Project 02*

**Week 09:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 3/4 @ 5:45pm)  
Lecture: Motion Experiments  
*Class D2L Materials will introduce Project 03*

**Week 10:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 3/11 @ 5:45pm)  
Framing, Staging & Communication (Pre-Recorded)  
*Class D2L Materials will continue work on Project 03*

**Week 11:** **Full class meeting on Zoom** (Thursday 3/18 @ 5:45pm)  
(Final) Final Meetings on Final Project Progress  
**Project 03 Due** → Monday, March. 22th by midnight

## Resources

### Covid-19 Resources

DePaul has put together a FAQ page and a resources page to help us navigate through this unprecedented and sometimes rapidly changing situation.

[CDM Covid-19 FAQ](#)

[DePaul's Covid-19 Updates & Guidance Website](#)

[Fall 2020 Student Guide](#)

### **CSD Virtual Office Hours**

The CSD (Center for Student Disabilities) is offering virtual office hours from 10am-2pm (CST) Monday through Friday. You may get in touch using the link below:

[CSD Virtual Office](#)

The link will direct you to a Zoom session with them--similar to drop-in hours.

### **DePaul Career Center**

In the absence of face-to-face contact, the Career Center has developed a few easy ways for you to access information and navigate your career search:

[Virtual Advising & Résumé Review](#)

Virtual advising, drop-in hours, and email résumé review services

[Career Resources & Video Library](#)

A collection of over 50 new handouts and supplemental videos on a wide variety of career topics

### **Career Readiness Modules on D2L**

I will be adding a module on Career Readiness provided by the Career Center to our D2L

## **Policies & Additional Information**

### **Online Course Evaluations**

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Please see:

<https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/Pages/online-teaching-evaluations.aspx> for additional information.

### **Academic Integrity & Plagiarism**

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at

<https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/academic-integrity/Pages/default.aspx>.

### **Academic Policies**

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

### **Preferred Name & Gender Pronouns**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by your preferred name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The preferred first name will appear in University-related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at <http://policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid=332>

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) enabling them to access accommodations and support services to assist with their success. There are two office locations:

- Loop Campus – Lewis Center #1420 – (312) 362-8002
- Lincoln Park Campus – Student Center #370 – (773) 325-1677

Students who register with the Center for Students with Disabilities are also invited to contact Dr. Gergory Moorhead, Director of the Center, privately to discuss how he may assist in facilitating the accommodations to be used in a course. This is best done early in the term. The conversation will remain confidential to the extent possible.

Please see <https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/about/departments/Pages/csd.aspx> for Services and Contact Information.

### **Class Discussion**

Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day's topic. Participation allows the instructor to "hear" the student's voice when grading papers. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the

reading assignments. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussions.

### **Attitude**

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking or mocking another's opinion. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom (or Zoom). The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

### **Civil Discourse**

DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.