# Syllabus Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Designator</th>
<th>GDES</th>
<th>Section Number</th>
<th>001</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Number</td>
<td>4362 Thesis Studio and Exhibition</td>
<td>Semester and Year</td>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Meeting Days &amp; Time</th>
<th>Tuesday / Thursday 11:45am–2:45pm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>10 McNeal Hall (lecture) and 310 McNeal Hall (computer Lab)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Credits</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam Date &amp; Time</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>(Also state if there is NO final)</td>
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## Instructor’s Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Greg Pickman, Adjunct Professor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office Location</td>
<td>250 E. McNeal Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Phone</td>
<td>952-334-6091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gpickman@umn.edu">gpickman@umn.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Tuesday / Thursday 2:45pm–3:45pm (by appointment 310 McNeal)</td>
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## Course Information and Instructor’s Expectations

Course Description:

GDES 4362 Thesis Studio and Exhibition is a Lecture/Studio and Critique class with the purpose of helping the student develop and refine a body of design work that constitutes a professional graphic design portfolio. We will also discuss professional issues related to the business of graphic design. The prerequisite is GDES 4354 or 4365.

The preparation of a professional portfolio is an essential part of transitioning from graphic design student to working designer. A strong professional portfolio can also provide an important foundation for the development of a successful future design career. The course assignments will give students guidance in improving their current student portfolio pieces, developing new portfolio pieces, and presenting their work, and themselves, to prospective employers in a compelling way.

There will be many guest speakers who are design school graduates working locally. They will share their portfolio and job search strategies, and interviewing experiences. Several texts are recommended (see below) for additional guidance and reference.

Recommended and Recommended Materials:

### Recommended Text Book


### Recommended Text Book

Bring the materials you need to be productive to each class session to work on assigned projects. At your studio you will need all supplies necessary to create mockups, presentations, and promotional materials for your finished portfolio. Some kind of case or container will be required to hold your physical portfolio pieces. Other expenses may include high-quality computer outputs, web-hosting fees for a portfolio web site, printing costs for a promotional piece or a personal stationery system, or stock photo (royalty-free) purchase costs. Access to, or purchase of, a digital camera may be helpful. The amount of money you spend to create your final portfolio and marketing program is individual, and a specific dollar amount is not required. However, it is not uncommon for a student to spend between $500 and $1500 on a final portfolio.

Student Learning Outcomes following course completion: *must identify at least one outcome and how it relates to this course how it will be addressed and how it will be assessed* [http://www.slo.umn.edu/](http://www.slo.umn.edu/)

**Course Goals**

Graphic Design Portfolio will build competency in the following areas:

- *Design Analysis and Critical Evaluation.* The ability to judge the effectiveness of portfolio contents through critiques and a better understanding of real-world expectations.
- *Job Market Familiarity.* The development of an understanding of job opportunities and employer expectations, through research of the design job market.
- *Personal Marketing.* The creation of a self-promotion system.
- *Effective Portfolio Presentation.* The design of an effective display of your portfolio pieces in several media.
- *Pride in Production.* Maintaining high standards and craftsmanship as a work ethic.

**Release of Work Statement:**

Students understand that enrollment in this course grants consent for their work to be selected for inclusion in college or departmental publications (online or in print). Your instructor may select to use your work to represent her/his skills as an instructor in a teaching portfolio (online or in print).

**Attendance:**

Attendance is required to learn the course material and will be taken daily. Two unexcused absences are the maximum allowed before the final grade is lowered by one letter grade. Excused absences are for substantiated medical and personal emergencies only, with documentation.

**Workload:**

For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as an average of three hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in the course. For example, a student taking a three credit course that meets for three hours a week should expect to spend an additional six hours a week on course work outside the classroom.

**Grading Structure:**

Evaluation and grading for Thesis Studio and Exhibition will be based on the successful and timely completion of the project assignments and a demonstration of skills. The two grading categories are Design Process and Student Competencies, each of which is subdivided into different areas of evaluation. These evaluation areas are conceptual thinking and visualization, design execution, computer skills and craftsmanship, attitude and class participation, and verbal presentation skills.
The grading key is as follows:

- **A+** = 100+ points (outstanding)
- **A** = 95 – 99 (excellent)
- **A-** = 90 – 94 (very good)
- **B+** = 87 - 89 (good)
- **B** = 84 – 86 (satisfactory)
- **B-** = 80 – 83 (average)
- **C+** = 77 – 79 (mediocre)
- **C** = 74 – 76 (unsatisfactory)
- **C-** = 70 – 73 (weak)
- **D** = 65 – 69 (poor)
- **F** = 64 or below (failing)

For further reference, please visit: [http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html](http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html)

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**Accepting and Returning Assignments:**

Student projects will not be collected, students will take their projects with them at the end of class.

**Grading Late Work:**

Student are required to complete all class assignments, and present them on time. Late assignments will be given a point penalty that will result in your final grade lowered by a full letter. The final project presentation must be ready on the last day of class. After that time, projects will not be graded except for extraordinary circumstances. If you have a problem completing the work on schedule, please see me about alternative means of meeting your course obligation. Should such arrangements be made, it does not release you from any of the assignments required by this course. You will be given as much class time as possible to work on your assignments in class.

**Policy for Missed Exams:** **N/A**

**Make Up Work for Legitimate Absences:**

[http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html](http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html)

Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state and national elections.

**Extra Credit Options:** **N/A**

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**University Policies**

**Personal Electronic Devices in Classroom:**

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the students using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are to be used in the classroom. For complete information please see: [http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSROOMPED.html](http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSROOMPED.html)

**Use of Class Notes and Materials:**

Taking notes is a means of recording class information, but more importantly, of personally absorbing and integrating the education experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom
notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For complete information please see: 
http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSNOTESSTUDENTS.html

Scholastic Dishonesty and Student Conduct Code: 
http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf

Sexual Harassment: 
http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.pdf

Statement on Climate of Inclusivity:
You are expected to be attentive during class, ask questions if you do not understand something, and to offer your opinion. You are also expected to listen respectfully to other students and to me when speaking. The University of Minnesota is committed to providing a safe climate for all students, faculty, and staff. All persons shall have equal access to its programs and facilities without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation. Racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ageism and other forms of bigotry are inappropriate to express in this class. Reports of harassment are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help.
(or refer to http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/administrative/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf)

Academic Freedom and Responsibility:
http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Academic_Freedom.pdf

Availability of Disability and Mental Health Services:
The University of Minnesota is committed to providing all students equal access to learning opportunities. Disability Services (DS) is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

• Students who have, or think they may have, a disability (e.g. mental health, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical or systemic), are invited to contact DS to arrange a confidential discussion at 612-626-1333 (V/TTY) or ds@umn.edu.
• Students registered with DS, who have a letter requesting accommodations, are encouraged to contact the instructor early in the semester to discuss accommodations outlined in their letter.

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via www.mentalhealth.umn.edu or contact Counseling/Consulting Services at 612-624-3323.
ASSIGNMENTS

The FOUR ASSIGNMENTS in Thesis Studio and Exhibition are designed to help you assemble a polished, professional portfolio and present yourself to a prospective employer. The assignments may all be started at the beginning of the term, and each student will be expected to work diligently throughout the term, with benchmarks indicated on the course calendar. Each student may work at their own rate, but all must have these assignments completed by December 10th and be ready, on that day, to display the following:

- A Professional Portfolio, mounted and in a case or book. This includes an expanded project and a new project you have developed for this class, and projects that you have refined or improved to be featured in your portfolio.
- A Personal Stationery Set (letterhead, business card, thank you card and envelope).
- A Web Portfolio (at minimum features 3 projects).

Assignment #1: Portfolio Inventory

**STEP 1. VISUAL AUDIT:** Take an inventory of all your work: school assignments, group projects, internship work, freelance projects, etc. Make a master list of work you want to include in your final portfolio. Organize your list in a way that seems appropriate, with creation date, class, project type (identity, web, packaging, campaign etc). Then make a chart or table ranking your projects/pieces one by one: Does it have the potential to be in your final portfolio (definitely, maybe, only if I’m desperate). Does it need to be revised/reworked? Make notes about what’s required to bring the piece up to a professional standard (revise layout, new type, images etc). Then, rate your projects on a scale of 1 to 5. 5 means the highest design quality (looks professional), 1 means needs work (looks too amateur).

Finally, create a schedule or timeline to upgrade and finish your portfolio pieces by the end of the semester.

**STEP 2. SLIDE SHOW OF CURRENT PORTFOLIO:** Now that you’ve identified the finalists, make a low-res digital presentation of your portfolio as it is now to present in class. This slide presentation can be made in PowerPoint, Keynote or pdf. You can get digital images of your work by exporting native files as PDFs or JPGs. For some pieces use screen shots, photographs or scans. Some projects will need to be depicted in multiple views. This slide show is not intended as a final portfolio presentation, but rather as a low-res survey to help you plan and edit your work. As you flip through this presentation, we’ll be able to see trends and identify any gaps in your portfolio. Revise your schedule based on feedback.

Assignment #2a: Expand an Existing Project

This project offers a chance to create a campaign for a project you designed in a GD2 or GD3. For example, you may want to design a website or an ad campaign for a packaging project. You will concept, research and develop this project to be pertinent to the business world. It should have a client (can be fictitious), target audience, competition, and a business and design strategy.

Assignment #2b: Create a new Portfolio Project

This project offers a chance to create a new project for your portfolio. If you’ve identified a gap in your portfolio this is a chance to fill that gap with a new project. Or, create a project in an area of design that’s of special interest to you (giving your portfolio extra emphasis in that area). Again, you will concept, research and develop this project to be pertinent to the business world. Some examples might be: Design a new line of packaging; or, redesign a real company’s brand identity or website. After you have chosen your Expanded and New project, create a typewritten project outline (not to exceed one page) that gives a clear overview of both projects. This outline is due in class on Tuesday, September 24th We will discuss the proposed projects in class.
Assignment #3: Create a Personal Identity and Stationery Set

Design a personal logo or wordmark, stationery system (letterhead, business card, thank you card and envelope). Be sure that your contact information and other pertinent details are somewhere communicated within your personal identity system.

Assignment #4: Design a Web Portfolio

Design a website featuring your portfolio. Cargo Collective is a good choice. Make sure to use your personal logo, and design the visual vocabulary for the site that’s related to your design system. Each student should obtain an available domain name through register.com, Network Solutions, go daddy. Get a web host and upload your web site when functional. Make sure your portfolio website url is on your stationery.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

This is one of the most important classes you will take in terms of your future success as a designer. The more effort you put in to participation and collaboration, the more you will get out of the class. In addition to the feedback I will give you, I encourage you to help each other develop and refine your projects. Take a proactive attitude and work very hard to design the best portfolio you can. Your future job depends on it. I strongly recommend you follow these guidelines to insure your success in this class and in your job search:

1. DO THE ALL THE CLASS ASSIGNMENTS. ON TIME. Meeting deadlines is a very important skill to master. Respect the syllabus calendar and don’t get behind. Set aside enough time for the class assignments and come to class prepared with your work finished. The Portfolio Inventory project will help you organize and plan a strong foundation for your portfolio. The slide show part of the project will help you make the best decisions about which projects to revise, add or dump. Your Personal Brand Identity and Website will give you the opportunity present your work to perspective employers in a memorable way that showcases your personality and creativity.

2. Every week, come to class ready to work as a team, with me and with each other. Give constructive feedback on each other’s work. You’ve spent many semesters together and this is a time when you can help each other reach your full potential. Be open to criticism and self-improvement. Your work can always be better. The best designers don’t finish a project, it gets yanked out of their hands. Throughout the semester I’ll be asking you “Can the design be improved?” “What would make it stronger conceptually and visually?” And I hope to hear you ask and answer the same question for each other.

AIGA Student Portfolio One-on-One

It is strongly recommended that each student participate in this program, which takes place in late April (check website for details, minnesota.aiga.org). Here is the program description:

Since 1993, AIGA Minnesota's annual Portfolio One-on-One event has provided advice, insight, and industry information to design students from around the upper Midwest. Over the course of two days, students interact with professional designers during studio tours, portfolio reviews, and other activities. Students gain invaluable career insights and make connections that can lead to internships, mentorships, and jobs.

Studio tours give students a glimpse of different types of work environments. A panel discussion provides a chance to hear advice from and ask questions of experienced design professionals. Students are also given the opportunity to submit their portfolios for scholarship awards. Workshops on a variety of topics relevant to students and entry-level designers are held in tandem with the portfolio review sessions. Each student is given the opportunity to participate in at least three of these scheduled review sessions. The 20-minute sessions place the student one-on-one with a design professional who critiques the student's portfolio and evaluates their presentation skills. The designers who donate their time to the event come from large and small studios throughout the Twin Cities. They all have several years of experience in the industry and represent all varieties of print, multimedia, and interactive design.