

Spring semester 2020
8:30 am–11:30 am
Monday, Wednesday
4 credits

McNeal Hall 262 & B22 (letterpress studio, as appropriate)
Graphic Design Program
College of Design, University of Minnesota

GDES 2345-01 TYPOGRAPHY

Steven McCarthy, MFA, Professor

University of Minnesota Student Learning Outcomes (*Upon course completion, students...*)

Can identify, define, and solve problems...

By applying the elements and principles of design through the iterative design process; by proposing solutions, incorporating feedback and refining design proposals; by experimenting, innovating and testing ideas involving image and text compositions.

Can communicate effectively...

By making oral and visual presentations; by participating in critiques; by developing a critical vocabulary; by concurrently considering message content and visual form.

GDES 2345, **Typography**, is a introductory-level studio course in the graphic design program, with a focus on using type to communicate visually and verbally. Typography will cover the fundamentals of letterform design, the functional and creative use of type, the technical aspects of typesetting, some history of typography, and the development of symbolic and typographic elements. The course will build on compositional and imaging skills that students have started to develop in their earlier classes (all prerequisites are presumed to have been met).

The class structure is primarily studio-oriented and project-based, although there will be readings assigned and possibly some required writing. The hands-on “doing” of design will be supplemented with lectures, demonstrations, critiques, and possible field trips and guests. Exposure to the technical aspects of typesetting will supplement the creative and problem-solving exercises.

Three distinct learning modules divide the semester:

1. The basic unit of the letter: its construction, its component parts, typesets, faces and families, historical context, fonts and character sets
2. The word as building block: spatial relationships, legibility, word/symbol integration, visual form and literal meaning, figurative typography, type appropriateness, logotypes
3. Text and the page: display and text type, typographic color, readability, page composition, typesetting, use of grids, typographic hierarchy, multiple readings.

The course has these main objectives:

- a. develop an understanding of letterform structure and of letterform components
- b. gain technical skills with hand and digital type representation and composition, including typographic terminology
- c. develop an understanding of the principles of typographic legibility through letterform construction and analysis
- d. develop an understanding of the principles of typographic readability through compositional organization and page design
- e. gain exposure to the potential of typography to express and communicate meaning through form and function
- f. deepen the students’ awareness of visual and verbal media, including contemporary aesthetics through critical and analytical exercises

Office hours by appointment
McNeal 246c
smccarthy@umn.edu

GDES 2345-01 TYPOGRAPHY

continued

Attendance policy

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.

Textbook

Thinking With Type by Ellen Lupton (required).
Order online immediately, new or used.

Punctuality policy

Please arrive on time and plan to stay the entire session, unless notified otherwise. Being five minutes late is equal to being absent. Assignments are also due on the specified date; late assignments will be lowered a letter grade.

Materials

budget of \$100 for laser prints, final output
budget of \$50 for purchasing a digital font
pad of tracing paper
variety of fine, medium and thick black markers
miscellaneous tools (ruler, x-acto knife, etc.)
sheet adhesive (cello-mount / cello-tak brand)
black board and/or foamcore for presentations
other as needed, per assignment

Assignment policy

Assignment sheets will be handed out for each project, describing the project parameters in detail and providing interim and final due dates. Pay attention to the constraints of the assignment, so that your time and effort are used effectively. Assignments may be resubmitted once, within a week of the due date, for a maximum 5 point upgrade.

Conduct policy

A studio setting is conducive for an informal atmosphere, with student interaction an expected benefit. Please keep the focus on the task at hand too, and be respectful of your classmates and their work. Refrain from unrelated browsing or cell phone usage.

Communication policy

There are times when I'll need to reach the class for special announcements, due date changes, etc. It is required that you maintain a University of Minnesota email account, and check it daily, or as close to daily as is reasonable. If you prefer using a non-UMn email address, then set up your "U" account so that it forwards to the other one.

Grading policy*

Project grades are determined by the following criteria, each assigned a value between 1 and 10 (1 is low, 10 is high, x 3 for a max of 30). The numerical scores are weighted against the project percentages (24 @ 30%, 28 @ 20%, etcetera), and calculated objectively to arrive at the final course grade.

T technique (craftsmanship, neatness, exactitude, finesse)

L layout (composition, legibility, readability, spatial relationships, use of design principles and elements)

C concept (quality and originality of ideas, appropriateness, creativity)

A	29-30	outstanding
A-	27-28	excellent
B+	25-26	very good
B	23-24	good
B-	21-22	okay
C+	19-20	not bad
C	17-18	adequate
C-	15-16	weak
D	11-14	poor
F	6-10	failing

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Grading Structure:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html>

Make Up Work for Legitimate Absences:

<http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html>

Personal Electronic Devices in Classroom:

<http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html>

Use of Class Notes and Materials:

<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>

Academic Freedom and Responsibility:

http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Academic_Freedom.pdf

Disability Service letters must be on file with professor by end of second week of the semester.

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. (http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/administrative/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.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.

Academic Services:

If you would like additional help, please contact one of the offices listed below.

- Center for Writing
10 Nicholson Hall, Mpls | 612 626-7579
- Student Academic Success Service
340 Appleby Hall, Mpls
199 Coffey Hall, St. Paul | 612 624-3323

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).

GDES 2345-01 TYPOGRAPHY

continued

weekly class schedule

january

22. introduction to course, each other

27. begin reading *Thinking With Type* "Letter"; in-class exercise

29. begin work on assignment 1 (assignment sheet provided for each assn.)

february

3. assignment 1 rough presentation

5. work in progress

10. assignment 1 due, critique

12. read chapter *TWT* "Text", discussion; in class exercise

17. begin work on assignment 2, work in progress

19. work in progress

24. work in progress

26. assignment 2 rough presentation

march

2. work in progress

4. assignment 2 due, critique

9. SPRING BREAK

11. SPRING BREAK

16. read chapter *TWT* "Grid", discussion; in class exercise

18. begin work on assignment 3, work in progress

23. work in progress

25. assignment 3 rough presentation

30. work in progress

april

1. assignment 3 due, critique

6. field trip or guest lecturer (TBD)

8. begin work on assignment 4, work in progress

13. "digital font – own it" presentations

15. work in progress

20. work in progress

22. work in progress

27. assignment 4 rough presentation

29. work in progress

may

4. assignment 4 due, critique

The fine print

this syllabus is meant to provide a schedule for the semester, and is subject to change with unforeseen circumstances; reasonable notice will be given.