

**GDES 4362**

**Thesis and Exhibition**

3 credits; pre-requisite GDES 4361  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:30-10:40am McNeal 336  
Professor Sauman Chu, Ph.D.  
240H McNeal Hall  
624.9705 (Direct line)  
schu@umn.edu  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:45-11:45 and by appointment

**Course Description**

Senior Thesis and Exhibition is a capstone experience for seniors in the BFA graphic design program. A hybrid of studio and seminar, Senior Thesis and Exhibition will combine creative problem-solving, design prototyping, design refinement and a public exhibition, which itself will be a designed event. The course will refine and make tangible the comprehensive graphic design thesis research project started in Senior Thesis and Writing. All students are expected to successfully finish their projects using professional best practices for creating a final prototype: materials, quality, technologies, etc. Thesis projects may evolve, but any radical departure from the research phase will not be permitted.

The learning environment will consist of one-on-one tutorials, small group sessions, class presentations and critiques. Team work and collaboration is critical due to the joint exhibition scheduled for May 2017. The class will also occasionally interact with the other section of GDES 4362, taught by Karl Engebretson, and meeting at the same time as our section.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

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 complex visual communications; by prototyping designs in the most technically proficient way possible.

Can communicate effectively  
By making oral, visual and spatial presentations; by participating in critiques; by developing a critical vocabulary; by implementing appropriate levels of legibility and readability; by concurrently considering message content, visual and spatial form; through consideration of audience flow and interaction in three-dimensional context.

**Attendance**

Attendance is absolutely essential and entirely your responsibility as are the consequences of your actions. Attendance for every class and staying for the entire class is required. The student is required to be on time for each class and is expected to work in class for the entire class period. If students arrive 30 minutes or more after class starts, it counts as an absence. Students with more than three absences will receive a reduction of two letter grades from their earned grade (i.e. an A becomes a C) and five absences will receive a F as the final grade.

**Incomplete**

There are no incompletes given in this class except for situations of extreme medical emergencies. An official letter from a physician must be submitted before an incomplete can be considered. Incompletes must be made up within the following semester, otherwise, an 'F' will be given.

<b>University Grading Standards</b>	<p>A - achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.</p> <p>B- achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.</p> <p>C - achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.</p> <p>D - achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.</p> <p>S - achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better (achievement required for an S is at the discretion of the instructor but may be no lower than a C-).</p> <p>F (or N) Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.</p> <p>I (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.</p>
<b>Credits and Workload</b>	<p>For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to 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 coursework outside the classroom.</p>
<b>Classroom Conduct</b>	<p>All activities in the University, including this course, are governed by the university of Minnesota Student Conduct Code. Students who engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment for others may be subject to disciplinary action under the Code. In addition, students responsible for such behavior may be asked to cancel their registration (or have their registration canceled).</p>
<b>Scholastic Dishonesty and Student Conduct Code</b>	<p>Academic misconduct is defined as any act that violates the rights of another student with respect to academic work or involves misrepresentation of a student's own work. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to: cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarizing pieces of work, depriving others of necessary coursework, and sabotaging other's work. Discovery of academic misconduct is grounds for an "F" for the course.</p> <p>Visit <a href="http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf">http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf</a></p>
<b>Harassment</b>	<p>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, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation. Reports of harassment are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help.</p>
<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	<p>This policy governs the commitment to the prevention and awareness of and response to sexual harassment at the University of Minnesota (University). Visit <a href="http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.pdf">http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.pdf</a></p>
<b>Expectations of Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are responsible for all class meetings and materials, including any information contained in the syllabus</li> <li>• Students are responsible for being on time and preparing for all class sessions</li> <li>• Students are responsible for meeting all course requirements, observing all deadlines, examination times, and other course procedures</li> <li>• Students are responsible for seeking help when needed</li> <li>• Students who need special accommodations are responsible for working with the instructor and the relevant University offices</li> <li>• Students may not make commercial use of their notes of lectures or University -provided materials without the express -written consent of the instructor</li> </ul>

**Academic freedom and responsibility**

Academic freedom is the freedom, without institutional discipline or restraint, to discuss all relevant matters in the classroom, to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression, and to speak or write on matters of public concern as well as on matters related to professional duties and the functioning of the University. Academic responsibility implies the faithful performance of professional duties and obligations, the recognition of the demands of the scholarly enterprise, and the candor to make it clear that when one is speaking on matters of public interest, one is not speaking for the institution. [http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Academic\\_Freedom.pdf](http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Academic_Freedom.pdf)

**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. I will happily honor your request at any point to address you by your correct name, gender pronoun, or any other manner you would like to be referred. If you like, I will also instruct class members to do the same. Please advise me of how you would like to be referred to in class. [http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Equity\\_Diversity\\_EO\\_AA.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/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. The Office of Equity and Diversity has a Disability Resource Center (DRC) 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 DRC to arrange a confidential discussion at 612- 626-1333 (V/TTY) or [drc@umn.edu](mailto:drc@umn.edu).

- Students registered with DRC, who have a letter requesting accommodations, are encouraged to contact the instructor early in the semester to discuss accommodations outlined in their letter.

For additional information please visit: <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/>

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](http://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.

Student Writing Support

<http://writing.umn.edu/sws/index.html>

Student Academic Success Service

<http://www.uccs.umn.edu/>

**Use of Class Notes and Materials**

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

**Personal Electronic Devices in Classroom**

No cell phone is allowed in the classroom. Visit <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSROOMPED.html>

**Accepting and Returning Assignments**

You will turn in your assignments directly to me during class time. Assignments will be returned from me. Please don't drop off any work at the DHA front desk.

**Makeup work for legitimate absences**

Please contact your instructor for meeting your course work requirement and alternative due dates. Visit <http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html>

**Late Project Policy** The student is required to complete all class assignments, and present them on time. Projects, which are one class period late, will be marked down two letter grades. After that time projects will not be graded except for extraordinary circumstances. If you have a problem completing the work on schedule, please see your instructor 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 with your instructor in class. Late work will not be accepted.

**Extra credit options** There is no extra credit option for this class.

**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).

**Critiques** There will be regular critiques. You are required to attend whether or not your own work is ready for presentation. You are expected to critique your own work as well as the work of your peers. Critiques provide important ongoing feedback and support throughout the design process and help students refine their work and develop a constructive critical eye and increased vocabulary.

**Materials & Expenses** There is no required textbook, but readings or other media viewings may be assigned. Students will be responsible for budgeting for materials, supplies, services and media products for the successful completion of thesis projects. Although some financial support will likely be provided, students will be expected to share in group expenses like web hosting, catering, publicity, etc. and in class fund-raising efforts.

**Journal** Maintain a professional journal that contains all of your research, work in progress, etc.... in an easily accessible presentation that shows the sequence of your work. Document all your brain storms, questions, research, and findings, sketches, problems, type and color studies, etc... in short document and save all materials gathered as part of your project. Consider how to organize, plan and present this material professionally. Make it easy to go through, with work labeled clearly. Bring this Journal or your "rough working" journal to every class. Due 4.26. ( 20 points)

**Course Evaluation** Interim feedback will be given (oral and written) to guide students on their progress. Because of the complex nature of a semester-length thesis project, only a final letter grade will be given. Interim feedback will consist of: "exceeds expectations," "meets expectations," "needs work," and "fails to meet minimum expectations," and the reasons for each assessment. Among the grading criteria are considerations of:

*design process* (ideation, prototyping, testing, refining)

*technique* (craftsmanship, neatness, exactitude, finesse)

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

*concept* (quality and originality of ideas, problem-solving appropriateness, creativity)

Grading: Out of the 400 possible points

94%/ 375 points and above = A

85%/340 points and above= B+

77%/308 points and above =B-

70%/280 points and above =C

63%/252 points and above=D+

90%/360 points and above = A-

80%/320 points and above = B

73%/292 points and above =C+

67%/268 points and above =C-

60%/240 points and above =D

Below 240 points =F

\* Please note: ALL assignments must be turned in to receive a final grade. One missing assignment will automatically result in an "F" as the final course grade.

**Semester deliverables** (and percent weight towards final grade)

1. Completed senior thesis project (60%)  
The star of your portfolio, the crowning achievement of your BFA degree.
2. Journal that documents design process – sketches, notes, swatches, screen grabs, influences, etc. (20%)  
Hardcopy book or PDF of pages both acceptable.
3. Participation in senior show organization, identity and exhibit design, and installation (20%)  
Cooperation, contribution, accountability, responsibility, etc.

**Course Outline**

Each of you will develop a course schedule based on your own project. However, there are some deadlines that you will need to incorporate into your proposed schedule. Staying on track is essential to completing your projects. If your projects are not completed as per specifications, you will receive a lower grade.

**January**

- 16 introduction to course, each other, review presentations of GDES 4361w project topics  
18 review presentations of GDES 4361w project topics, cont.
- 23 Brainstorm session/ work on schedule  
25 Individual schedule due
- 30 Individual schedule-work in progress

**February**

- 1 Individual schedule-work in progress
- 6 Individual schedule- work in progress  
8 Individual schedule-work in progress
- 13 Individual schedule-work in progress  
15 Individual schedule-work in progress
- 20 Individual schedule-work in progress  
22 Individual schedule-work in progress

27 PHASE I due for assessment: conceptual development and explorations of rough form

**March**

- 1 Meeting-Senior Show committees (with 4362-02 section):  
Identity, Space, Website, Print, Reception, Fundraising
- 6 work in progress  
8 Critique- Where project is at, successes, pride; Unknowns, issues, and Anxieties
- 13 *Spring break* (no class)  
15 *Spring break* (no class)
- 20 Individual schedule-work in progress  
22 joint class committee work session; Senior Show identity finalized, web and print designs in progress
- 27 work in progress  
29 work in progress

**April**

- 3 PHASE II due for assessment: final thesis project prototype
- 5 joint class committee work session; Senior Show publicity materials approved and ready for printing
  
- 10 Senior Show website goes live
- 12 work in progress
  
- 17 final thesis project design revisions, fine-tuning for display
- 19 site visit to Rapson Hall, PHASE III due for assessment
  
- 24 exhibit preparation (space planning, signage, labels)
- 26 exhibit preparation (design journal due)

**May**

- 1 exhibit installation – Rapson Hall
- 3 exhibit installation – Rapson Hall

Exhibition May 4–14, 2018, HGA Gallery

Reception May 10, 2018; 6-9pm, Rapson Courtyard

Set up 3-6pm, take down 9-10pm.