

**GD 51 Course Outline as of Fall 2019****CATALOG INFORMATION**

Dept and Nbr: GD 51

Title: INTRO TO GRAPHIC DESIGN

Full Title: Introduction to Graphic Design

Last Reviewed: 5/12/2025

Units		Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks	Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	3.00	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	52.50
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	0	6	Lab Scheduled	0
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	3.00		Contact Total	52.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00

Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category: AA Degree Applicable

Grading: Grade or P/NP

Repeatability: 00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

Also Listed As:

Formerly:

**Catalog Description:**

An introduction to visual communications in the field of graphic design. The course includes: concept development, the creative design process, production, and presentation techniques through the development of design projects on various media, including beginning computer software skills. Emphasis will be placed on the application of basic design principles to graphic design problems in visual communications. Design solutions will explore the potential of strategy, concept, and design utilizing composition, layout, illustration, photography, typography, and symbology.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:****Recommended Preparation:****Limits on Enrollment:****Schedule of Classes Information:**

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Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended:

Limits on Enrollment:

Transfer Credit: CSU;

Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

## **ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:**

<b>AS Degree:</b>	<b>Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>CSU GE:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>IGETC:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>CSU Transfer:</b>	Transferable	Effective: Fall 2009	Inactive:
<b>UC Transfer:</b>		Effective:	Inactive:

**CID:**

**Certificate/Major Applicable:**

Both Certificate and Major Applicable

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Analyze the effectiveness of visual communications on graphic design projects utilizing the critique process.
2. Create original design projects that analyze, define, and solve problems in visual communications; while demonstrating original concept development, design and composition using text and image, production, and presentation skills.
3. Demonstrate a handle of basic vocabulary related to the graphic design field, and an understanding of the steps involved in developing a graphic design solution: research, strategy, concept, design, and craft.

### **Objectives:**

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Evaluate graphic design career options and identify areas that match the student's interests, personality, and skills.
2. Demonstrate and employ conceptual thinking as the basis of the design process.
3. Analyze professional graphic design pieces and explain how design elements, principles and techniques covered in the course have been applied.
4. Review and employ the fundamental theories and methodologies of visual communication.
5. Integrate design elements with an understanding of the intention with which elements are chosen, organized and created.
6. Demonstrate proficiency in the use of digital and traditional tools and techniques for design and production.

7. Critique their own and the work of others, offering constructive suggestions; while demonstrating knowledge of design vocabulary as well as the elements and principles of design composition through the critical evaluation process.

## **Topics and Scope:**

### **I. Design Process**

- A. Understanding requirements (project and client)
- B. Brainstorming
- C. Thinking conceptually
- D. Research
  1. Strategies for organizing design examples for later reference
  2. High quality design blogs and design forums
  3. Commercial and free graphics/stock photo sites on the web
- E. Thumbnails
- F. Executing effective basic visual communications
- G. Thumbnail, rough, comprehensive presentation skills
- H. Production and presentation skills

### **II. Principles of Design**

- A. Unity
- B. Balance/Harmony
- C. Rhythm
- D. White space/negative space
- E. Lines and shapes
- F. Simplicity
- G. Proximity
- H. Alignment
- I. Repetition
- J. Contrast
- K. Hierarchy/flow/focal point
- L. Grid/composition
- M. Characteristics of color in additive and subtractive color systems
- N. Typography. Terms, classification, and application considerations. For example: fonts, style, size, placement, case, alignments, and attributes.
- O. Graphic Resonance. Use of tone and denotative & connotative communications in graphic design.

### **III. Graphic Design and the Computer**

- A. Adobe Illustrator
  1. Tools
  2. Vectors
  3. Artboards
  4. Guides
  5. File formats
  6. Resizing
  7. Colors
  8. Selection
  9. Printing
  10. Layers
  11. Interface
  12. Import/export
  13. Paths/anchors
  14. Type

15. Best practices
- B. Traditional and digital roles in the design process
- C. Introduction the computer design and production
  1. Use of menus and windows to create, store and retrieve documents
  2. Point, click and drag
  3. Move, delete and save documents
  4. Fundamental scanning and printing procedures
- D. Different types of downloadable software sites on the web:
  1. Freeware
  2. Shareware
  3. Commercial
- E. Software tutorials for graphic designers online:
  1. Strategies for finding and selecting quality software tutorials
  2. Tutorial formats: comparing video and text tutorials
  3. Software forums
- IV. File Management
- V. Analyzing Graphic Design Career Options
  - A. Overview of Graphic Design business
  - B. Career and education resources
- VI. Industry Standard and Best Practices
- VII. Online Resources for Designers
  - A. General introduction to graphic design resources and online tools (including browsers, plug-ins and online bookmarking sites)
  - B. Survey of search engines and their features
  - C. Portfolio sites and design galleries valuating the quality of online information
- VIII. History and Contemporary Trends
- VIII. Class Critiques

### **Assignment:**

1. Written career paper and/or presentation with notes
2. In class exercises (1-17), such as:
  - a. Worksheets, exercises, or assignments that explore the fundamental design principles and elements
  - b. Hands-on visual communications problem solving and process for projects including research, strategy, objectives, concept and design development, production and implementation. Conceptual design exploration, brainstorming, thumbnail sketching, and design development
  - c. Create a human color wheel used to explore a variety of color schemes and color principles: each participant represents 1 -2 colors on the wheel
3. Graphic design projects (1-4), such as:
  - a. Creating graphic design projects from concept to a finalized design that are effective visual communications
  - b. Assignments focusing on the conceptual development in project-based digital images and/or time-based works
  - c. Creation of designs through various digital media input and output methods using vector or raster-based software
  - d. Using client criteria, design a icon that effectively communicates to a specific target audience
4. Class participation and attendance, such as
  - a. Group and individual critiques in oral and written formats
  - b. Participating in, in-class learning activities

## 5. Quizzes and/or exams (1- 16)

### Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

**Writing:** Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Written career paper and/or presentation with note

Writing  
5 - 20%

**Problem Solving:** Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

In class exercises

Problem solving  
5 - 40%

**Skill Demonstrations:** All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

Graphic design projects

Skill Demonstrations  
40 - 60%

**Exams:** All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

Quizzes and/or exams

Exams  
5 - 15%

**Other:** Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Class participation and attendance

Other Category  
5 - 15%

### Representative Textbooks and Materials:

Instructor prepared materials

The Essential Principles Of Graphic Design. Millman, Debbie. Rotovision. 2008 (classic)

How to Think Like a Great Graphic Designer. Millman, Debbie. Allworth Press. 2007 (classic)