

# Introduction to **Graphic** **Design 450**

Binghamton University

## Arts 410 Graphic Design III

Instructor, Mike Wesko

**Tuesday & Thursday: Science 3 Computer Lab** – 2:50 pm - 5:50 pm

Office Hours: By appointment only

---

### **Class Description:**

Arts 410 is a continuation of the Arts 310 (210) class. Students will continue to work with elements on a plane with emphasis on the use of the design process to creatively, efficiently, and effectively communicate a message. Students will perform more advanced problem solving of complex relationships of elements and communication of messages. The projects have been selected to offer the student projects and situations they may encounter as a graphic designer in the real world. The student will be working more in depth on typography, page layout and production for print.

Each student should use the fullness of their imagination, while organizing their time, in order to produce their best work. Competition increases as more and more people own computers and desktop publishing software. Your reasoned work, increased knowledge of typography, relationships of elements, use of the design process, the grid and creativity will separate you as an advanced graphic design student from a commodity.

Students will be **required** to attend each scheduled class and be prepared to work and participate in discussions, critiques, and general topics concerning design. Class starts at 2:50 pm, that means the student is in the classroom prior to 2:50 pm, signed in, and ready to start. The student must be prepared with supplies and tools necessary to do the given assignment in class that day. The instructor will announce in class, the materials required for the next class period. The student is expected to remain in class for the full three hour class time. The student is responsible for any work or materials missed on a day of absence.

It must be understood that the final grade for the semester will be based on the student's **project grades, effort, attitude, and attendance**. At mid-term, any student not working up to expectations will be told verbally. It is assumed that the students in the class are interested, motivated, and willing to work to complete the given assignments.

**Having Trouble:** There will be a lot of work and it will be to the student's advantage to remain current with the assignments. If it appears you are having trouble doing the work or keeping up with the assignments or deadlines, **see me immediately**. I will work with you to resolve the problems.

### **General Rules:**

- Bring all required tools and materials to class (be prepared)
- No guests without prior approval from the instructor
- No distracting noise that might disturb classmates (ie. cell phones during lectures); headphones permitted
- No unnecessary materials, or garments on the work tables during class
- No food or drink in the classroom (leave the room for a short break if necessary)
- Clean your work space before leaving for the day.
- ***NO CUTTING ON ANY OF THE TABLES***

**Please enjoy the class and take advantage of this time as a student in answering design problems as creatively as possible, but, take your work seriously.**

## Arts 410 Graphic Design III

### Procedures and Requirements:

---

**1. Projects:** A variety of projects are planned for this class to meet specific objectives and to be given throughout the semester. We will advance to projects as time allows.

**2. Portfolio:** This is an accumulation of all the projects given during the semester and will be reviewed one-on-one with the instructor at the end of the semester. Included in the portfolio should be one set of thumbnails and all of the projects for this class; and your binder with each assignment sheet. The portfolio must be completed within the given semester to receive a final grade.

**3. Evaluation:** Work will be evaluated after each assignment and at the end of the semester. Classroom critiques will be given on all projects as well as a written critique by the instructor. Students in Arts 410 should realize that this is the last design class offered before graduating and should work accordingly.

• **Projects will be submitted to the instructor on assigned dates and times otherwise the project will be considered unacceptable. I will make every effort to grade projects and return them as soon as possible.**

• **Students will not be allowed to redo projects to obtain a better grade for those projects.**

• **However, the student can redo a project in efforts to improve the final portfolio grade.**

The final grade will be based on **project grades, the portfolio presentation**, and additional consideration will be given for **attitude, participation, and attendance**. This is very similar to a rating process that employers will use in evaluating you as an employee.

**4. Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all classes for Arts 410. Students may miss up to 3 classes for the semester. Any absences above this, can result in a significant lowering of the final grade or failure. If you have a valid excuse to be absent, contact the Art Department office (Rm. 223) 777-2667. The administrator will file a note for university tracking.

**NOTE:** Class should be considered *valuable* work time. Yes, you may be comfortable working in your room or home, but use this time to start understanding the work place.

**5. Outside work:** The time outside of class will vary for each student depending on their skills. It is the student's responsibility to create their best work. The classrooms are available at any time other than when another class is in session.

**6. Critiques:** Discussions will be scheduled on a regular basis upon completion of projects when each student is expected to exhibit their work whether finished or not. **A project not in the critique is considered unacceptable (and will receive a grade of F).** Emphasis will be on individual verbal reasoning of work accomplished, as well as a discussion and analysis of all student work shown during the critique. The objective is to develop verbal communication skills as well as gain new understandings in design. All students are expected to participate in this discussion of work.

**7. Bibliographic information:** For all 410 projects, bibliographic information must be included in standard bibliographic format. For any photography or written material that is not original or is used from any source other than the student, those sources must be precisely noted.

**8. Concept Statement:** A designer must understand the needs of the audience in relation to the message that is to be communicated. Your concept statement should be a short and sweet summary of your project (not more than 75 words), to be used as a "boilerplate" description of all of the deliverables. This is a high-level mission statement of the project. The 75 words (or fewer) you write here will be the most important words in the whole project; they should be highly polished. That means you should spend a significant amount of time and energy thinking about, writing, reading, editing/spell check, discussing and rewriting it. Be efficient with words. Chop out "empty" words that don't say anything. On the other hand, be as specific as possible within the word limit; do not be vague and try to communicate by implication (don't leave it to the reader to fill in the blanks). You should use positive statements about what will be done.

## Arts 410 Graphic Design III

### Preparing a Concept Statement (Design Brief):

---

A concept statement or design brief can be used for any project which involves creating a logo/corporate identity, brochure, direct mail, advertising, websites, packaging or trade show exhibits/displays.

Although writing a concept statement may seem like a daunting prospect at first, the benefits are numerous:

- **It provides all the information you will need to create a really effective solution**
- **It provides an objective point of reference for assessing ideas and visuals**
- **It can help focus efforts into the right areas to save valuable time (and money once you are working in the field)**

#### **A Typical Concept Statement:**

This simple guide helps you to create a workable concept which will benefit everyone and get you the results you need:

#### **Background**

- Explain the background (of the company, product, services or project)
- Describe in detail what it is that you need to produce (logo, identity, brochure, etc.)

#### **Goals/Objectives**

- What is your overall goal or objective? (for the company, product, services or project)
- What specific objectives do you want to achieve?
  - Does it have to communicate particular information?

#### **Audience**

- Who is the potential audience?
- What do you know about them?
  - You may need to do some research

#### **Usage**

- What will the material you produce be used for?
  - Example: If you are designing a logo and corporate identity, will it appear on stationery, packaging, uniforms, vehicles, etc?
  - Example: If you are producing a brochure, will it be used for mailings, by sales people, at trade shows, etc?

#### **Style**

- Is there a particular style or theme that should be used?
  - Some keywords to use: new, technological, traditional, quality, modern, creative, reliable, value, etc.

#### **Deliverables**

- What are the deliverables at the end of the project?
  - Example: EPS files of logo in different formats, Corporate Guidelines, Brochure or Stationery in InDesign format, Complete web files/outline, etc.

## Arts 410 Graphic Design III

### Preparing a Concept Statement (Design Brief) continued:

---

#### **An example of a concept statement:**

XYZ Corporation has been in business for 35 years and manufactures an extensive product line of widgets. The widgets are sold through a national sales network to customers throughout the world. Most of XYZ Corporation's customers are engineers at large companies.

A new logo will be designed for XYZ Corporation. In developing the new logo, I will look to upgrade their image to reflect the quality and technology that is represented in their widgets. The logo should present the customer with a sense of reliability and value. XYZ Corporation plans to use the new logo on stationery, signage, vehicles, packaging and eventually in national advertising campaigns and a website. At the end of this project, I will deliver to the client a CD with their logo in typically used file formats: .eps for print, .jpg for web and PowerPoint (Mac & PC), .tif formats for presentations.

## Arts 410 Graphic Design III

### Procedures and Requirements (continued):

---

**Materials and Tools:** The following is a list of the minimum required materials, tools, and supplies for the class. It is a minimum requirement, but essential for the student to satisfy the needs of the assigned project. The student may find that more supplies or higher quality materials may be needed.

#### **Materials:**

- Paper cement, thinner and large dispenser with brush (Bestine cement/thinner is the recommended brand)\*
- Tracing paper (11" x 14" pad)
- 100% Rag Translucent Marker Paper
- Drawing paper (11" x 14" pad)
- Sketch book or pad (approximately 11" x 14")
- Suitable paper as needed for computer output (laser compatible paper)
- Drafting tape (not masking tape)

#### **Tools:**

- Portable drawing board
- T-square (metal recommended)
- Triangles; 45/90 and 30/60 degree (metal recommended)
- Pica ruler (see-through with fine markings is recommended)
- Board brush
- Utility knife (mat knife)
- X-acto knife and box of no. 11 blades
- Erasers (soft white)
- Sanding pad
- Portfolio case (minimum paper)
- Pencils (soft lead & hard lead)
- Black markers: fine and broad nibs

#### **Storage Devices:**

- Flash Drive – 1-2 GB (minimum)
- CD's (rewritable)

**Absolutely no cutting directly on the work surfaces. Use plastic cutting mats.**

**\* These materials can be hazardous to your health, use in a well ventilated area.**

### Review of Design Process:

---

A designer must **understand the needs of the audience** in relation to the message that is to be communicated. Therefore, **information gathering** is the first logical step. If you are working for an agency or corporation, often the information about the project, audience (demographics), and competition is supplied by a marketing group. By putting your found information and message to be communicated into a concisely written **concept statement**, you verbalize and outline the needs of the project. Your concept statement includes the needs of the audience and matches visuals with the message to be communicated. Specify the style and character of the images that need to be used to communicate that message. Generally, the final written statement should be typed and accompany your solution for presentation.

The message to be communicated should be perceived as a benefit to the target audience. The images, colors, text, characteristics of the font to be used should all reflect how the company and their product meet the needs of the target audience.

The next step in the design process is **creating thumbnail sketches**. When creating your thumbnail sketches, work freely. Thumbnail sketches put your thoughts into visual terms that **the audience can understand**. Without knowledge of the audience and how that audience benefits from the product, you cannot begin.

Working quickly provides you with the most creative solutions. Your mind works quickly and jumps to unusual, and therefore, more creative ideas. If you are sketching quickly, not precisely, you will get those ideas on paper. After creating many pages of thumbnail sketches, relate those sketches to the information you gathered. Match the look and feel of the images and characteristics of the typeface, to the message.

After creating the thumbnail sketches, you will choose between one or two thumbnails to create the next step in the design process, the **enhancement drawings**. You must enlarge the thumbnails to the finished size to determine exactly which visual is best and also to determine the exact placement and size of each element. The grid for that solution will be created for placement of elements in this stage. The exact typeface will also be chosen based on character and size that is most suitable. This step is needed so that no time or money is wasted further in the process.

After all design decisions are made in the enhancement drawings, the **comprehensive layout** is created from the best solution chosen from the enhancement drawings. This is the layout that will be presented to the client. In this case, making all of the design decisions in the enhancement phase is most obvious. In the comprehensive stage all elements should look as close to the intended final piece as possible. Most clients do not want to or cannot visualize something verbally described.

After the clients approval, the final phase for print production is preparation of the **digital mechanical art**. Today, most often soft files generate the plates for offset lithography. Therefore, files must be exact. The graphic designer must have knowledge of the printing process to be used so that the production of files and hardcopy is done correctly. Many times a person working in the field of **print production** is called a **graphic artist**.