GRAPHIC DESIGN ELECTIVE

Summer 2014

CFA AR 389

Summer Term 2 · Foundations of graphic design

LEVEL	Elective · condensed summer course
CREDITS	4
MEETS	Summer Term 2 · condensed
DATES	Summer 2, 2014 (July)
LOCATION	[confirm]
INSTRUCTOR	Professor Nicholas Rock
OFFICE	[confirm]
CONTACT	nickrock@bu.edu
OFFICE HOURS	After each class by appointment; open hours July 7, 14 and 21, 12–2

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Overview

> "Not everything is design. But design is about everything. So do yourself a favor: be ready for anything." —Michael Bierut, *79 Short Essays on Design*

The goal of this studio is to give you a basic understanding of the foundational principles of graphic design. You will be introduced to different concepts, and studio processes through a series of projects, working both on and off the computer, readings, and homework assignments.

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Learning Outcomes

We will cover 3 major topic areas:

- **Object and Image.** Basic principles of visual form making and image composition. Understanding of object and image through representation, visual metaphor and context.

- **Language and Typographic Form.** Introduction to basic concepts of typography. Basic principles of typography as form, typography as content. The impact of the written word on visual form.
- **Narrative and Visual Storytelling.** Building on what is discussed in the first two topic areas, we will begin to experiment with combining concept, type, image and language to create narratives and visual stories as a way to more broadly understand the principles of graphic design.

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Course Structure

Class Rules

- Work hard.
- Be respectful.
- Show up. And show up on time.
- Work harder.
- Show your work, process, everything you have or be prepared to, daily. The more you are getting feedback from the class the better. It makes your work better and it helps you evolve as a designer.
- Questions. Ask them. Often. Questions are ALWAYS beneficial to the entire class, not just the person asking.
- Experiment. Sketch. Test. Sample. Prototype.
- The project is never complete.
- The printer is always broken.
- Collaborate.
- Dish it out and take it.
- Laugh.
- Be opinionated. Debate. Ask more questions.
- Don’t take it personally. Critique is for everyone’s benefit.
- I will challenge your ideas, be prepared to defend them.

Communication

It is expected that you as a class will help and support each other throughout this course and others for that matter. That said, I am of course fully accessible in class, at my office (I am typically available after each class by appointment, with open office hours July 7th, July 14th, July 21st between 12 and 2), and via email: nickrock@bu.edu. Please do not use any other email address to contact me. All communication should go through my BU email address or via Basecamp.

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Projects

The projects in this class will be sequential, however we may also have work that happens simultaneously. There may be small weekly homework assignments in addition to readings given in context to certain projects.

Weekly Readings

Individual · weekly

Each week you will be given one or two readings that relate to the broader topics of design we will be discussing.

News Response

Individual · three per week · due by end of class each Thursday

Each week I would like you to prepare 3 graphic / visual responses to news stories from that week. These should all be 8.5 x 11, Black + White and include the title of the news story and source as a footnote. You will post these onto our class Basecamp as PDF files.

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Assessment

Your grade in this class will be based primarily on the body of work you produce over the course of the class. In addition, the following specific points will be factored into your final grade for the course:

- **Attendance.** Attendance at each class is mandatory, this is a condensed course so we cover a lot of ground very quickly. Class discussion and critique are not things that are easily made up and happen regularly. You must contact me in advance if you need to miss a class. If you have more than one unexcused absence your mark will be lowered by one full grade. If you are late, or absent you must follow up with me, as you will still be responsible for the work. You should be scheduling appointments around your classes since you know your class schedule, and not the other way around.
- **Class Participation.** Part of the job as a designer is communicating effectively, on a design team, in a studio environment or with clients. You will be expected to be an active member of the class, particularly during critiques as all feedback is important. Discussion is an important part of the design process. If you are not participating regularly in the discussion you will be asked for your opinion.
- **Project Execution.** All projects should be given your full attention and effort. Each component of your projects will be reviewed, projects need to be submitted on deadline and should be complete according to project brief. Projects must be completed by the due date. Late work will be penalized. All parts of your projects in this class will be evaluated including process and research documents.

- **Project Process.** You are expected to document the process of each of your projects throughout the semester. This means, saving all sketches, writings mock ups etc. Your documents will be given the same attention to detail as your design work. The process for each project will make up a portion of your grade.

We will have a final review of work on the last day of the course. After which you will receive a letter grade based upon the following criteria:

- **A** — You demonstrate an advanced understanding of concepts presented and are able to complete work above and beyond suggested parameters.
- **B** — You exhibit a more than competent understanding of concepts presented and utilize these concepts in an articulate and noteworthy manner.
- **C** — You demonstrate a basic understanding of the information studied and apply this information to assigned problems meeting basic expectations but not going beyond suggested parameters.
- **D** — You exhibit limited understanding of the concepts and complete work below the level required for satisfactory performance.
- **F** — You demonstrate little or no understanding of course material, show little desire or motivation to complete the work or turn in incomplete projects.

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Calendar

DATE	EVENT
Jul 7, 14, 21	Open office hours, 12–2
Each Thursday	News Responses due by end of class
Last day of course	Final review

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Materials & Tools

- **Basecamp** — an online collaboration tool for centralized class communication: a central portal for class discussion outside of class and a digital library of class resources.