GRADUATE TYPOGRAPHY

Fall 2017

CFA AR 601

LEVEL	MFA · Graduate studio
CREDITS	4
MEETS	[confirm]
DATES	Fall 2017
LOCATION	[confirm]
INSTRUCTOR	Professor Nicholas Rock
OFFICE	808 Commonwealth Ave, 4th floor (connected to the graduate graphic design studios)
CONTACT	nickrock@bu.edu
OFFICE HOURS	Tuesdays and Thursdays 11–12:30; Wednesdays 12:30–2:30, by appointment

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Overview

> “[typography] is a craft by which the meanings of text (or its absence of meaning) can be clarified, honored and shared…” —Robert Bringhurst

As designers, we use typography as one of our tools to affect how, when, why and where people receive information. In addition to the tools we use and the skills we develop, we are challenged to leave our mark, our voice on the project, to reveal the information through the filter of your own perspective.

Type is the foundation, the backbone, of graphic design. Many of the best design projects are grounded with excellent typography, whether they are print or digital, motion or interactive. Well considered typography will often help lead to a project’s success. Typography carries the message, the point, the ultimate goal of the design. Additionally, a knowledge and expertise in typography prepares designers to think about systems in general which is an important skill to have in any kind of problem solving.

The goal of this course is to present you with a series of typographic challenges. You will learn how to operate with constraints, think about systems, and the relationship of content and form.

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Course Structure

Check-ins

We will, on occasion, meet individually instead of meeting as a full group, in which we will discuss your status in the class, questions or concerns, project specifics or anything else that is sometimes easier to discuss individually, to ensure that you all know where you stand and that we are all on the same page.

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, 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

Weekly Homework — News Response

Individual · weekly

Each week you must choose 2 stories in the news that you have an interest in and make a typographic response poster for the news story. You are not making an illustration for the story, your news response is a commentary on the news story, or something inspired by the news story.

Requirements: 2 news response posters · 8.5 x 11 portrait (vertical) · Black + White only (including gray) · Type only.

Periodic Readings

You will be receiving readings occasionally which we will reference and discuss during class.

Project 03 — The Whole Is Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts

Individual · autobiographical poster

Create an autobiographical poster.

Requirements: life size · tiled 8.5 x 11 sheets (this means it should be designed to be tiled, NOT just a big poster printed on 8.5 x 11 tiled sheets) · remember that this class is a typography class .... so ... no images.

Constraint List

The source closes with a list of constraints: extreme scale · only serif · only humanist · no color · no computer · hand drawn · portrait · landscape · one font · two fonts ·

illegible · poster as carpet · poster for the 17th century · things you see from 10 feet away · things you see from 100 feet away · things on page 156 · paint · use only a text editor · straight lines · curved lines · make something loud · make something quiet · make something funny · something other than paper · create collage · use pattern · use texture · found objects · multi-lingual · 3D · shadows · backwards · tiled · code · map · use a camera · outside · packaging

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Assessment

You will be evaluated over the course of the class and will be assessed according to the following major areas:

- **Attendance.** Attendance at each class is mandatory. As the core studio course for your major it will make up some of the most important work you are doing here. 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. At my discretion, if you have more than one unexcused absence your mark will be lowered by as much as one full grade. If you are late, or absent you must follow up with me, as you will still be responsible for the work. I will not chase you down to catch you up. You should be scheduling appointments around your classes since you know your class schedule, and not the other way around.
- **Class Participation.** Part of a designer's job 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. Lack of participation will negatively impact your final grade.
- **Group Work.** Designers rarely work independently. Completed work is almost always the result of a team effort of some sort, whether it be just designers, designer and client, designer, developer, writer etc. In this class there will be times when you will be asked to work as part of a team.
- **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. You will be given an opportunity to improve upon each project following that project's final critique.
- **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.

- **Being Professional.** As you are learning to be designers, one of the most important aspects of working professionally is the way you conduct and carry yourself in interactions with clients, employers, peers etc. Pay attention to emails you send, things you say in class. Give respect. Earn respect.

Basic Principles for Grading

We will not have a final review of work for the class. You will have your normal semester end reviews. 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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Materials & Tools

- **Basecamp** — to consolidate class communications: a central portal for class discussion outside of class and a digital library of class resources.