

Dynamic Information Design Syllabus

Cornish College of the Arts
Design Department

DE 310 Dynamic Information Design
Spring 2008
Tuesday/Thursday, 1:00pm-3:50pm
Room MCC 407

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Course Description

Effective information design is essential with the increasing amount of critical data that has the potential to influence decision-making. Designers play a critical role as visual translators in clarifying complex data, organizing information and processes, and developing aesthetic systems. Students analyze and synthesize the relationships of information and visual interpretation applied to local and international topics. Effective communication of complex information is the goal.

Course Objectives

Become smarter designers
Learn criteria for judging successful information design
Develop a professional working process
Explore alternative methodologies

Course Learning Outcomes

Create effective charts and diagrams
Create work in a variety of topics, media, and techniques
Create work suitable to promote yourself

Course Format

There are 3 main projects and 1 ongoing exercise. Class time will be spent primarily on critiques and student presentations, supplemented with teacher lectures and reading discussions.

Course Evaluation

Three Projects
25% Design Robot
35% Car Toys
25% AI Gore, the IPCC, and me
Ongoing
10% Ongoing Presentations
05% Participation & Professionalism

Professional Courtesy

Arrive to class on time.
No cell phones are used during class time.
No headphones during class time.
No checking personal email or surfing the web during class.
Respectful participation in class discussions and critiques is expected.

Attendance

Attendance in class is paramount as lectures, in-class exercises and class critiques cannot be replicated for absentees.

Absences

The only absences that will be excused are for illnesses requiring a doctor's care (a note from your doctor must be provided), family emergencies, or jury duty. Even in cases where absences are excused, if the maximum number of classes are missed (see below), withdrawal will be recommended due to the amount of in-class content missed.

The following guidelines for penalizing grades due to unexcused absences will be applied:

Courses that meet twice per week:

3 absences = drop one grade
(i.e. B+ to B)

5 absences = drop two grades
(i.e. B+ to B-)

6 absences = failure or recommended withdrawal, meeting with the Department Chair.

Lateness

All classes begin when scheduled.
Two late arrivals = one absence.
30 minutes late or 30 minutes leaving early = one absence.

Grading

Grading is based on the following:

- Following department policies
- Turning in all work, on time, mistake free; Being prepared
- Intellectually engaged in class, project, and other people's work
- Creating and showing a wide variety of physical work with multiple concepts and executions.
- Highest level of aesthetic refinement and conceptual development.
- Advancing the intellectual practice and aesthetics of Graphic Design

Grading System

A 95 – 100 %
A- 90 – 94
B+ 85 – 89
B 80 – 84
B- 75 – 79
C+ 70 – 74
C 65 – 69
C- 60 – 64
D+ 55 – 59
D 51 – 54
D- 50
F 49 and below

Retrieving Student Work

Students are responsible for retrieving their work. Students are expected to pick up all work handed in no later than three weeks after the official last day of classes. If work is not picked up, it will be assumed that the work is not wanted and will be discarded.

Late Projects

Late projects will result in the following:
One business day late = drop one grade;
two business days late = drop two grades;
three business days late = zero.
Projects are due at the beginning of class.

Student Affairs

Student Affairs is dedicated to enhancing and complementing Cornish College of the Arts students' educational experience through programs, services and opportunities that aid in their personal development. Student Affairs is committed to community building, co-curricular learning, student support, and student involvement. If you are a student with a documented disability and you need accommodations, please make an appointment with the Director of Student Affairs to discuss these accommodations. The Director of Student Affairs is located in room 301. All discussions will remain confidential.

Counseling

The Counseling office is located in room 308 and can be reached at 206-726-5027.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is a free resource for all Cornish students, faculty, and staff who are interested in developing their writing and reading. Located in room 311, the center is a place where students come to work on their writing and receive individual guidance at any phase of the writing process, regardless of their level of development. Students can work in one-on-one or small group conferences, pick up grammar and editing handouts, check out books about different kinds of writing, and access personal computers and a laser printer. Drop-ins are welcome to meet with tutors during the posted hours that they are available. Contact Linda Krutenat, H&S Department Coordinator, at lkrutenat@cornish.edu for appointments.

General Safety

Please inform yourself of safety procedures for this room, including emergency evacuation routes and the location of the closest first aid kits and fire extinguishers. Consult the Health & Safety Procedures booklet posted near doors and eyewash stations. Detailed information is also provided in the College student handbook.

Required Resources

The Visual Display of Quantitative Information, by Edward Tufte
Universal Principles of Design, by William Lidwell, Kritina Holden, Jill Butler

Recommended Resources

Envisioning Information, by Edward Tufte
Visual Explanations: Images and Quantities, Evidence and Narrative, by Edward Tufte
Beautiful Evidence, by Edward Tufte
Designing Interactions, by Bill Moggridge
Mapping: An Illustrated Guide to Graphic Navigational Systems, by Roger Fawcett-Tang and William Owen

<http://www.infosthetics.com/>
<http://www.nytimes.com/>

Please see class website for additional resources:
<http://www.visible.org/>

Dynamic Information Design Projects & Schedule

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Learn One, Do One, Teach One

Project Description

One principle used in training doctors is "Learn one, do one, teach one." To fulfil the last strategy, each student will teach the class 6-7 topics randomly chosen from the book: Universal Principles of Design. You must include additional examples to supplement those found in the book. One student will present a week, each Thursday, starting on 1/31.

Design Robot

Project Description

Two ideas converging in design today is the bottom-up "hyper-rational" approach and the emergence of the computer not only as a design tool, but as design author. This project explores these ideas as you create an aesthetic system that designs by itself.

Process

Choose a venue within Seattle that has a regularly updating schedule of events. Create a design system for those events that eventually removes you from the process. The design by-product of the system could be a poster, video, or website. The system should be able to be written out as explicit instructions where no decision is left to the production mechanism. Execute at least 2 items from the system. Swap projects with someone and have them execute another one.

Requirements

A design system documented as a set of instructions
At least 2 products produced by you
1 produced by someone else

1/15 Class Overview
Start Design Robot
1/17 Show & Tell
Lecture/Pick Venue
1/22 Sketches/Styles
1/24 Crit/Work
1/29 Design Due
1/31 Instructions Due
Production
2/5 Swap
2/7 Production/Refine

Car Toys

Project Description

Design a digital interface for a car radio.

Product Requirements

1. Product must use existing technology. E.g. touch-screen.
2. Radio must fit within a standard single DIN size.
3. The feature set must include a radio and mp3 player. Add additional features you would be interested in.

Requirements

Your work must be documented and submitted in a process/presentation book.
The final outcome must include a digital demo, click-through, or working prototype.

2/12 Design Robot Due
Start Car Toys/Field Trip
Lecture
2/14 Research Due
2/19 Biz Requirements Due
2/21 Metaphor/Concept Due
2/26 User Flow Due
2/28 Wireframes Due
3/4 Design/Crit/Work
3/6 Design Due
1 on 1 meetings
3/11 Break
3/13 Break
3/18 Prototype/Crit/Work
3/20 Prototype/Crit/Work
3/25 Prototype/Crit/Work
3/27 Prototype/Crit/Work

AI Gore, IPCC, and Me

Project Description

In 2007 Al Gore and the IPCC shared the Nobel Peace Prize for their work to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about Climate Change. However, most people have only a superficial understanding of the topic. Using the IPCC reports of 2007 and other resources, explain one aspect of the report in greater detail. Consider combining multiple charts to increase understanding. Use the principles of Edward Tufte's book The Visual Display of Quantitative Information as a guide for your design.

Requirements

Final form is open.

Resources

See the class website for links to the reports and other resources.
<http://www.visible.org/>

4/1 Car Toys Due
IPCC Starts
Read Report
4/3 Lecture
Read Tufte
4/8 Sketches
Tufte Discussion
4/10 Crit/Work
4/15 Crit/Work
4/17 Crit/Work
4/22 Crit/Work
4/24 Crit/Work
4/29 IPCC Due
5/1 No Class

