

Design 115

Letterforms + Typography

Definition

"Typography is the visual manifestation of language."
– Ellen Lupton

Course description

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of [western] typography including type history, form and use. From individual letterforms to bodies of text and grid systems, we will explore typographic principles through a series of projects with increasingly complex parameters.

Objectives

To investigate, understand, and apply the fundamental aspects of typography and the principles of presenting information and conveying meaning through typography.

Format

Course format is a combination of lecture/discussion and studio/workshop. There are lectures on various topics to help you build your typographic skills from week to week, and you will work in class on projects. We spend much of class working and reviewing work, so your participation is important and will reflect in your grade. In addition, you are welcome to meet with me on an individual basis to discuss your work. Class field trip may be scheduled.

You can access important course files via the following Google Drive link. UCD login required.

<https://goo.gl/DXnXqq>

Syllabus and Grades are accessed via UC Davis Canvas:

<https://canvas.ucdavis.edu>

Prerequisites

DES 1, 14, 15, 16

Required text

Lupton, Ellen. *Thinking with Type: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, and Students*. Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004. ISBN 1568984480.

Supply List:

You will need the following supplies:

- Metal-ruled edged ruler or 12" larger metal-edged triangle (30/60 or 45) for cutting
- 12" x 18" or larger self-healing cutting surface
- x-acto knife and no. 11 blades
- Rule with picas and inches (Schaedler is preferred)
- Tracing paper pad (at least letter size)
- Pencils – soft and hard lead
- Pencil sharpener
- Mechanical pencil 0.5 fine
- Erasers
- Roll of Scotch removable transparent tape
- Black markers – fine, regular, chisel point
- Bright white laser or inkjet printer paper
- Sketch book or binder for process book
- Removable/cloud storage for saving and backing up your digital files
Options include Google Drive, Dropbox, and USB drives. Always have a backup of your files.

Grading policy

You will receive feedback on your progress in the form of grades, verbal critiques and discussions. Your final grade will be determined by the following:

- 10% - class participation
- 10% - quizzes
- 10% - process book
- 10% - project 1
- 25% - project 2
- 35% - project 3

- A** :: Your work is excellent. You exceeded expectations. Your research is thoughtful and extensive. You explored many different approaches. You were completely engaged by the project and realized your ideas with sophisticated ability. You presented your work in a highly professional manner. You were consistently prepared and met all project deadlines. Your participation in class was significant and enlightening. You excelled in demonstrating your understanding of the project.
- B** :: Your work is very good. You went beyond just meeting the expectations of the class, but there are some issues still needing attention. Your research and realization is very good. You met deadlines and were prepared. You participated in class discussions. You were able to show that you have an understanding of the project.
- C** :: Your performance in class was good, and met average standard. You met the expectations of the class, but did not put in any extra effort to go further.
- D** :: Your performance was weak. You did not meet all of the expectations of the class.
- F** :: Your work is unacceptable and far below the expectations of this class.

No grade of "incomplete" will be given.
No late projects are accepted.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken at the beginning and end of class. you must participate in class for the entire class period—including studio time for work and critique—to be considered present. Class begins promptly as scheduled with announcements and discussion. If you are late, you will miss important information and handouts. Arriving late or leaving early is treated as a half absence. Two absences will lower your grade by one whole letter grade.

If an absence is unavoidable, it is your responsibility to obtain notes, handouts and assignments from another student and learn the material you missed. If you have unanswered questions, contact our Student Tutor or our TA. If you've talked with other students and still have a specific question that I can help you with, you may email me. Please be very specific with your question, including what you know and what is still unclear. I will do my best to answer emails within 48 hours; however, I don't usually read email on the weekend. If you are aware of an upcoming absence, are ill, or have a family emergency, please make arrangements with me ahead of time.

Teaching Assistance

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Vincent Pacheco: vepacheco@ucdavis.edu

Course Work

ASSIGNMENTS AND SCHEDULE

The schedule may be adjusted during the course and changes will be announced at least one class period in advance. In addition to the projects and readings, short exercises and individual and group activities will be assigned.

RESEARCH

Some of your work will require library and online research, such as finding out about a particular designer. Become familiar with the resources in the Shields library (as well as other libraries and resources) so that you know where to look for good examples of type and design. In your daily life, start to be aware of typography and design. Analyze what you see based on the principles we are investigating in class.

PROJECTS

You are responsible for planning ahead to be sure you have prepared any materials you may need to research, sketch, write, design, draw, experiment, etc. in class. In most cases you will sketch by hand to develop your ideas before moving to the computer for final production. The computer is a better production tool than thinking tool.

You will need to keep all working sketches and source files for all projects and assignments.

EXERCISES, FIELD TRIPS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Exercises and additional individual and group activities, possibly field trips will be assigned or arranged during the course to develop necessary understanding of course material and skills.

CRITIQUES AND PRESENTATIONS

Critiques are meant to push you further in your thinking, exploration, and development of ideas. We will have critiques often so be prepared to talk about your work. You will be expected to express your ideas and objectives using typographic and design-related terms. You will gain experience organizing your thoughts and visual materials in a professional manner for presentation and discussion. As part of your project grade, you will be evaluated on the quality of your presentations.

QUIZZES

Quizzes covering lectures, discussion, readings, and handouts may be given at any time during the course. Quizzes will be graded with either a check, a check plus, or a check minus. Quiz grades will be used as a deciding factor when you are between two grades (for example, if you are between a B+ and an A-, and you received check pluses on your quizzes, your final grade will be an A-).

FLASH CARDS

We will work on developing type identification skills by using a series of flash cards. Any typeface that we have talked about in class will be fair game. Make your own set of type specimen sheets to study with at home.

Expectations

It is important to think creatively and critically, attend all classes, have all assignments completed for class, be prepared to work productively on the current assignment, and participate fully in all class cooperative-learning activities. You are responsible for planning ahead to be sure you have prepared and brought with you the materials you need to research, sketch, write, draw, experiment, etc. in class.

During class time, your cell phone, or its equivalent, is to be turned off and out of sight. Exceptions may be made only if you discuss your situation prior to the start of that day's class; in this case, your cell phone must be set to vibrate/silent.

Plan on being *present* in class and developing efficient work habits. Studies show that multi-tasking is less effective than many of us believe! Surfing the Internet, checking email, instant messaging, etc. take away from your ability to participate fully in class. Participation counts for 10% of your grade—this can sometimes be the difference between one letter grade and the next.

Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities can be made by talking with the professor as early in the quarter as possible; solutions that benefit one student can end up benefiting the class as a whole, so please feel free to come forward with any questions or suggestions. You can also contact the Student Disability Center: <http://sdc.ucdavis.edu>/or 2-3184.

**UCD Code of
Academic Conduct**

All students are expected to adhere to the UCD Code of Academic Conduct at all times. Student Judicial Affairs (sja.ucdavis.edu) lists the following responsibilities for students:

- Be honest at all times.
- Act fairly towards others. For example, do not disrupt or seek an unfair advantage over the others by cheating, or by talking or allowing eyes to wander during exams.
- Take group as well as individual responsibility for honorable behavior. Collectively, as well as individually, make every effort to prevent and avoid academic misconduct, and report acts of misconduct that you witness.
- Do not submit the same work in more than one class. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, all work submitted to fulfill course requirements must be work done by the student specifically for that course. This means that work submitted obtains permission from the instructor.
- Unless permitted by the instructor, do not work with others on graded coursework, including in and take-home tests, papers, or homework assignments. When an instructor specifically informs students that they may collaborative on work required for a course, the extent of the collaboration must not exceed the limits set by the instructor.
- Know what plagiarism is and take steps to avoid it. When using the words or ideas of another, even if paraphrased in your own words, you must cite your source. Students who are confused about whether a particular act constitutes plagiarism should consult the instructor who gave the assignment.
- Know the rules – ignorance is no defense. Those who violate campus rules regarding academic misconduct are subject to disciplinary sanctions, including suspension and dismissal.

Course Schedule

This tentative schedule may be adjusted during the course and changes will be announced at least one class period in advance. Reading assignments from the required text are due on the date shown. Short exercises and additional individual + group activities will be as signed. Quizzes may be given at any time.

week	day		reading	
1	sep 21	W	Introduction to the class / Project 1: Minimal Letterforms / Begin thumbnail sketches	
	sep 26	M	Project 1: 1st set of thumbnail sketches (group discussion)	
2	sep 28	W	Project 1: 2nd set of thumbnail sketches (quick look / work in class)	
	oct 3	M	Project 1: full-size compositions due	
3	oct 5	W	Project 1: due at the beginning of class / critique	pp 11-60
	oct 10	M	Project 2: Type Hierarchy Studies / work in class	
4	oct 12	W	Project 2: Set 1 sketches due / desk crit and work in class	
	oct 17	M	Project 2: Set 2 desk crit and work in class / presentations	pp 61-110
5	oct 19	W	Project 2: Set 2 sketches due / work in class / presentation	
	oct 24	M	Project 2: Set 3 sketches due / small group crits and work in class / presentations	
6	oct 26	W	Project 2: FINAL version of all 3 sets due at beginning of class / begin project 3	
	oct 31	M	Project 3: in class - thumbnail sketches and format studies (white models)	pp 111-173
7	nov 2	W	Project 3: white models and storyboards due (crit) in class - 1/2 size storyboards	
	nov 7	M	Project 3: 1/2 size storyboards and full size sample spreads due (crit) in class - type study	
8	nov 9	W	Project 3: type study due (crit) in class - "front matter" sample spreads with grid; "stories" sample spreads with grid	
	nov 14	M	Project 3: "front matter" and "stories" sample spreads with grid due (crit) in class - cover design and complete mockup	
9	nov 16	W	Project 3: cover design and complete mockup due (crit) in class - final typographic refinement and revise mockup	
	nov 21	M	Project 3: final typographic refinements & revised mockup due (speed feedback) in class - production	
10	nov 23	W	Project 3: final prints due in class - book production (trim and construction)	
	nov 28	M	Project 3: in class - book production (binding)	
11	nov 30	W	Project 3: due at the beginning of class: FINAL CRITIQUE	