

IDT 534 Information Design, Fall 2024

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<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/95958321051?pwd=R0JZTkhh2N2N6b0tESWREWWFJNUtqdz09>

Course Description:

Explores the theoretical and practical use of graphics as a form of visual communication. Topics include visual perception and forms, design theory, chart and graph theory, relationships between formatted text and graphics, and color and design concepts. Students will apply theory to the design of visuals in communication.

Learning Objectives:

This course will expose students to:

- fundamental principles in graphic design, visual communication, and information design
- a diverse range of applications of design principles
- hands-on practice applying design principles to information graphics

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this semester, students should be able to:

- apply design principles to critique information graphics
- apply design principles to create their own information graphics

Evaluation:

Assignment	Grade Percent
Pattern Design - Visual Processing	5%
*Layout Design – Visual Weight	20%
*Brand Design – Visualizing Emotion	25%
*Visual Life Story – Visualizing Information	40%
Inspiration board	10%
TOTAL	100%

*Grades for these assignments will be determined in part by peer evaluation.

Readings:

1) Textbook

Universal Principles of Design, Revised and Updated: 125 Ways to Enhance Usability, Influence Perception, Increase Appeal, Make Better Design Decisions, and Teach through Design 2nd Second Edition.

by William Lidwell, Kritina Holden and, Jill Butler

ISBN-13: 978-1592535873

ISBN-10: 1592535879

2) Textbook

Design Is Storytelling by Ellen Lupton

ISBN-10 : 194230319X

ISBN-13 : 978-1942303190

3) Some pages for inspiration:

<http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/>

<http://www.stefanieposavec.com/>

<https://www.aiga.org/>

<https://eyeondesign.aiga.org/>

<https://www.aiga.org/inspiration/aiga-design-archives-special-collections>

Some key design principles covered in this course

(along with page numbers from the *Universal Principles* book 2003 edition):

- 80/20 rule page 14
- Advance Organizer page 18
- Alignment page 24
- Archetypes page 28
- Area Alignment page 30
- Chunking page 40
- Closure page 44
- Color page 48
- Comparison page 52
- Consistency page 56
- Constancy page 58
- Contour Bias page 62
- Fibonacci Sequence page 94
- Figure-Ground page 96
- Five Hat Rack page 100
- Forgiveness page 104
- Golden Ratio page 114
- Good Continuation page 116
- Gutenberg Diagram page 118
- Hierarchy page 122
- Highlighting page 126
- Iconic Representation page 132
- Inverted Pyramid page 140
- Layering page 146
- Legibility page 148
- Mental Model page 154
- Modularity page 160
- Normal Distribution page 166
- Progressive Disclosure page 188
- Propositional Density page 190
- Proximity page 196
- Readability page 198
- Recognition over Recall page 200
- Redundancy page 204
- Rosetta Stone page 206
- Rule of Thirds page 208
- Serial Position Effects page 220
- Signal to Noise Ratio page 224
- Similarity page 228
- Storytelling page 230
- Symmetry page 234

Course Overview and Due Dates

Date	Topic	Assignment Due
Week 1 – August 27	Visual Processing	
Week 2 – September 3		Pattern Design (Sept 3)
Week 3 – September 10	Visual Weight	
Week 4 – September 17		
Week 5 – September 24		Layout Design (Sept 24)
Week 6 – October 1	Critique	Layout Design Peer Evaluation (Oct 1)
Week 7 – October 8	Visualizing Emotion	
Week 8 – October 15 Fall break (Oct 12-15)		
Week 9 – October 22		Brand Design (Oct 22)
Week 10 – October 29	Critique	Brand Design Peer Evaluation (Oct 29)
Week 11 – November 5	Visualizing Information	
Week 12 – November 12		
Week 13 – November 19		
Week 14 – November 26 Thanksgiving (Nov 27-Dec1)		Visual Life Story (Nov 26)
Week 15 – December 3	Critique	Visual Life Story Peer Evaluation (Dec 3)
Exam Week – December 10		Last day to complete Inspiration Board Posts Last day to submit late work. (Dec 10)

Assignment Details

Inspiration board (10% Due December 10):

Find 10 designs that inspire you. It can be an image, a poster, a website, or even a 3-d object. Post an image or a link to each of the designs to our inspiration board (link info provided below). If you post an image, be sure to credit the source of the image in the image caption.

Each post should include a written note addressing the following two points:

- Name a specific design principle that is nicely applied and explain why/how it has been well applied.
- Say something about what you like about the work in non-technical terms (a feeling you get from it, what draws you to it, etc).

(something about it you like, a design principle that is nicely applied, a feeling you get from it, anything at all).

This assignment is intended to help you find inspirations for your other assignments as you work through this course. I strongly recommend that you work through this assignment slowly throughout the semester, adding about one post per week as you work through the course. The practice of writing about design is also intended to help you with peer evaluations.

Submission Instructions:

Just post your contributions to the 'Inspiration' padlet (**link will be provided to registered students**). The padlet is organized in columns. One column for each participant. When you log in for the first time, create a section, label it with your name, and post all your contributions to your section. I will grade all contributions that have been posted by or before December 10. Do not email any submissions to me.

Pattern Design (5% Due Sept 3):

This exercise is intended to help us gain intuition for how to capture a viewer's attention with design elements. (The idea is drawn from Lupton page 157.)

Create a pattern with a repeating element. Add an element that is different and easy to find. Add another element that is different but hard to find.

Submission Instructions (submit by Sept. 3)

Submit the following to me, via email, with the subject line "Pattern Design Submission":

- An image file of the pattern you created.
 - A detailed explanation of your process and design rationale
- (Preferably, both together in a single document entitled "PatternDesign_YourName".)

Post your image file to the 'Projects' padlet (**link will be provided to registered students**)

The padlet is organized in columns. One column for each project. Post your image under the 'Pattern Design' column. **MAKE SURE THAT YOUR POST IS ANONYMOUS.**

Evaluation

Process and Design Rationale are clearly explained	2
Visual design accomplished the stated goal	2
Visual design has aesthetic appeal	1
Total	5

Layout Design (20% Project Due Sept 24, Peer Review Due Oct 1):

Find a quote or a saying that inspires you. It must be no longer than 10 words.

Create a design that lays these words out on a page in dynamic ways. Consider the different ways in which the text can be read, and how to bring those out visually. Think about different ways that the text can be ordered, and/or different parts of the text that could be emphasized to bring new meaning into the text. Do not add any images or icons here. You may include nonrepresentational graphic elements, such as dividing lines and sections. You must explain your rationale for all design decisions that you make.

In this assignment, you will be reviewing a peer's work, and you will be graded on your review.

Submission Instructions (submit by Sept. 24)

Submit the following to me, via email, with the subject line "Layout Design Submission":

- An image file of the layout you created.
- A detailed explanation of your process and design rationale

(Preferably, both together in a single document entitled "LayoutDesign_YourName.")

Post your image file to the 'Projects' padlet (**link will be provided to registered students**)

Post your image under the 'Layout Design' column. **MAKE SURE THAT YOUR POST IS ANONYMOUS.**

Evaluation

Layout Design	Process and Design Rationale are clearly explained: 4 Visual design accomplished the stated goal: 4 Visual design has aesthetic appeal: 2	10
Peer review		10
Total		20

Peer Review Instructions (submit by Oct. 1)

Select one of the submitted images from the 'Layout Design' column. Write the comment 'reviewed' under your selected image. **MAKE SURE YOUR COMMENT IS ANNONYMOUS.**

Submit the following to me, via email, with the subject line "Layout Design Review:

- The image that you are reviewing
- Your written evaluation

(Preferably, both together in a single document entitled "LayoutDesign_REVIEW_YourName".)

Your written evaluation must include the following:

- A description of the work, which includes:
 - o Observations about how your eye moves through the composition.
 - o Observations about the visual weight of elements in the composition
- Your interpretation of the work (how are you reading it?)
- What do you think the designer is trying to achieve with this layout?

Do not include scores on your evaluation. If something is poorly done, explain why and how it could be done better. If something is well done, explain why it works in terms of design principles.

Brand Design (25% Project Due Oct 22, Peer Review Due Oct 29):

In this project, consider how design elements communicate emotion and personality. Come up with something that you want to brand. It could be yourself, your company, an imaginary company, etc.

Create a set of branding guidelines, and then create an artifact based on those guidelines. Your artifact could be a poster, a mock webpage, a brochure, or any 2-D graphic artifact.

Your brand guidelines must be packaged to include: your logo, your fonts, your colors, two or three sample images, and representative keywords. You must package your brand guidelines in a visually appealing way that conveys your brand.

Your artifact must clearly apply your brand guidelines and convey your brand.

Include a description of how you applied 2 different principles of design, and a discussion about the emotions and personality expressed through your design (see Lupton, Chapter 2).

Submission Instructions (submit by Oct 22, 15%)

Submit the following to me, via email, with the subject line "Brand Design Submission":

- A pdf file of your branding guidelines.
- An image (or pdf) file of the artifact you created.
- A detailed explanation of your process and design rationale.

(Preferably, all together in a single document entitled "BrandDesign_YourName.")

Post your artifact to the 'Projects' padlet (**link will be provided to registered students**)

Post the image under the 'Brand Design' column. **MAKE SURE THAT YOUR POST IS ANONYMOUS.**

Evaluation

Branding Guidelines	All items are included (logo, fonts, colors, images, and keywords) Your brand is clearly conveyed	5
Brand Artifact	Your design follows the brand guidelines Your brand is clearly conveyed Visual design has aesthetic appeal	5
Explanation	Includes a clear description of your brand. Decisions about fonts, colors, and other design elements are clearly explained.	5
Peer review		10
Total		25

Peer Review Instructions (submit by Oct 29, 10%)

Select one of the submitted images from the 'Brand Design' column. Write the comment 'reviewed' under your selected image. **MAKE SURE YOUR COMMENT IS ANNONYMOUS.**

Submit the following to me, via email, with the subject line "Brand Design Review":

- The image that you are reviewing
- Your written evaluation

(Preferably, both together in a single document entitled "BrandDesign_REVIEW_YourName".)

Your written evaluation must include the following:

- A description of the work, which includes:
 - o Observations about the design principles applied.
 - o Observations about the emotions and personality the work conveys
- What are some keywords that you would use to describe this designer's brand?

Do not include scores on your evaluation. If something is poorly done, explain why and how it could be done better. If something is well done, explain why it works in terms of design principles.

Visual Life Story (40% Project due Nov 26, Peer Review due Dec. 3):

Come up with a way to visualize your life. The format for this work could be a poster or a brochure, a booklet, webpage, or whatever fits. The artifact should contain at least three different visualizations. These can include (but are not limited to):

- Visualizations of things you own or collect; Visualizations of your interests and/or hobbies
- Maps of places you've lived and/or traveled
- Visualizations of your education and/or your skill sets
- Timeline of key events in your life

The goal is to convey your personality, your story, and at least three pieces of information. The information must be communicated visually, with a minimum of text.

Consider balance in composition when bringing different types of information together, and the design principles that can help augment aesthetic appeal. Your composition should appear unified, and not come across as a collection of visualizations.

Consider design elements that convey emotion and personality. How are you using, font, colors, symbols, and visual metaphors? Consider how the eye moves through the page, and what information is prioritized.

Submission Instructions (submit by Nov 26, 30%)

Submit the following to me, via email, with the subject line "Visual Life Submission":

- An image or pdf file of your visual life story. (You may also submit a link if you make a webpage)
- A detailed explanation of your process and design rationale.

(Preferably, all together in a single document entitled "VisualLife_YourName.")

Post the image file of your artifact to the 'Projects' padlet (link will be provided to registered students)
Post the image under the 'Visual Life Story' column. MAKE SURE THAT YOUR POST IS ANONYMOUS.

Evaluation

Artifact	Information is communicated clearly through the visual design Personality and emotion are conveyed through the design Visual design accomplished the stated goal Visual design has aesthetic appeal	20
Explanation	Decisions about fonts, colors, and other design elements are clearly explained in terms of the emotions and personality they convey. Decisions about how you chose to visualize different types of information should be clearly explained.	10
Peer review	Describe the work, and the information being conveyed. Observe the design principles applied. Observe the emotions and personality the work conveys.	10
Total		40

Peer Review Instructions (submit by Dec. 3, 10%)

Select one of the submitted images from the Visual Life Story' column. Write the comment 'reviewed' under your selected image. MAKE SURE YOUR COMMENT IS ANNONYMOUS. Do not select an image that has already been marked 'reviewed'.

Submit the following to me, via email, with the subject line "Visual Life Review":

- The image that you are reviewing
- Your written evaluation

(Preferably, both together in a single document entitled "VisualLife_REVIEW_YourName".)

Do not include scores on your evaluation. If something is poorly done, explain why and how it could be done better. If something is well done, explain why it works in terms of design principles.

Course Policies

Late submissions:

I will accept late submissions until DECEMBER 10, 2024. I cannot accept any submissions after this date. Late submissions will incur a penalty of 10% unless otherwise discussed on a case by case basis.

Grading Scale:

Letter	Range %
A	92-100
A-	90-91
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
F	0-63

Plagiarism

Please understand **that you must submit original work for design projects**. If you submit work that you did not create without proper attribution, you will automatically receive a 0 for the project. This is plagiarism.

Plagiarism - passing off someone else's work as your own — is not just a violation of academic integrity or ethics: it ***is a crime***. The SUNY Polytechnic Institute Student Handbook 2020-2021 states clearly that the instructor may assess an appropriate penalty for plagiarism and other violations of the Academic Integrity Policy (<https://sunypoly.edu/sites/default/files/studentconduct/Student-Handbook2020-2021.pdf> , pp. 46-49). Reasonable penalties for violations can include failure for the assignment, the permanent placement of a letter describing the incident in the Office of the Provost (“Chief Academic Officer”), or even failure for the course (note: students may challenge these decisions before the Academic Integrity Board).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Your access in this course is important to me. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, SUNY Polytechnic Institute is committed to ensuring comprehensive educational access and accommodations for all registered students seeking access to meet course requirements and fully participate in programs and activities.

Students with documented disabilities, temporary, or medical conditions are encouraged to request services by contacting Student Accessibility Services (SAS) or filling out the [Request for Accommodations form](#). Please note, requesting accommodations is only the first step. You must provide documentation to SAS and meet with staff *before* receiving accommodations. Please do this as early as possible 1) because accommodations are never retroactive and 2) so that we have adequate time to arrange your approved academic accommodation/s. Once SAS creates your accommodation plan, it is your responsibility to provide me a copy of the accommodation plan.

If you experience any access barriers in this course, such as with printed content, graphics, online materials, etc., reach out to me or Accessibility Services right away. For information related to these services or to schedule an appointment, please contact the SAS using the information provided below.

Office of Student Accessibility Services

SAS@sunypoly.edu

(315) 792-7170

Peter J. Cayan Library, L112