

NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE TITLE	Introduction to Graphic Skills
COURSE NUMBER	ART140
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Introduction to Graphic Skills is the study of conceptualization, visualization, process, and computer skills necessary to a designer and/or photographer in the current multi-faceted field of visual arts. In addition, the course introduces students to the design world through assignments, reading, research, practice, and various techniques demonstrated and practiced in class. It is a preparatory class, required for all succeeding classes in the degree programs. It demands a creative approach, a professional attitude (work done neatly and on time), correct use of terminology and full attendance.
CREDIT VALUE	3.0
COURSE OBJECTIVES	<p>Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properly and safely use and care of equipment and supplies • Select the appropriate software and hardware to execute a particular communication design concept • Describe and select the appropriate color models for screen-based and print media • Use correct terminology for communication design • Discuss ideas in a professional manner • Apply professional presentation techniques <p>Major Topics to be Included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple tools and techniques using design software • Scanning basics • Introduction to typography • Centering and measuring/sizing and scaling • Color models (CMYK, RGB, and Hexadecimal) • Presentation techniques such as mounting and matting • File management as it relates to hardware and software • Professionalism as applied to critiques and class work
MATERIALS	10 Pack CD media; 1 USB Flash Drive (stored safely—not on keychain); a 3-ring notebook with sleeves, CD sleeves for class; notes, handouts and all project preparation processes; 1 sheet heavy-weight illustration board OR 1 Self-healing cutting mat 12" x 18"; a 12" 45° - 90° clear plastic triangle; a 18" good metal ruler; a roll 3/4" white artists' tape (not linen tape); a roll thin, clear double-stick tape; 1 tool or tackle box or container to carry small tools; 1 Prismacolor color pencil set (12 or 24); 3 Drawing pencils (H4, HB, B3); 1 plastic film eraser (white); 1 X-ACTO knife, pencil size with safety cap; 1 pkg #11 X-ACTO blades; 1 small pad Letraset® Studio-Tac®, repositionable dry; adhesive (blue stripe on front of package – not red stripe)*; (Follow directions and keep in plastic); 1 pad tracing paper, 12" x 18"; 1 "Sharpie" marker (medium or fine point); Letramax® Mat Board (15" x 20" in Superblack 100) OR Crescent® Mat Board (15" x 20" in all Black double-sided); Newsprint OR Black, Gray or Neutral-colored Art Paper
RECOMMENDED TEXT	<p><i>Adobe Illustrator CS6 Visual Quickstart Guide for Windows and Macintosh</i>, published: Peachpit Press; Berkeley, CA</p> <p><i>Adobe Photoshop CS6 Visual Quickstart Guide for Windows and Macintosh</i>, published: Peachpit Press; Berkeley, CA</p> <p><i>Adobe InDesign CS6 Visual Quickstart Guide for Windows and Macintosh</i>, published: Peachpit Press; Berkeley, CA</p>

COURSE HOURS Mondays & Wednesdays 2:00 – 4:00 pm

CONTACT INFO geckler@nvcc.edu • 240-210-0375
<http://www.gregeckler.com/> (course website, can be found under the About section.)

The best way to contact the instructor is via email at geckler@nvcc.edu. Please use your student VCCS for all correspondence to the instructor. Failure to do so may result in an undelivered message.

Please give the instructor 24 hours to respond to emails and voice mail Mondays–Thursdays. Emails and voice mails sent out on Fridays–Sundays, may not be answered until Monday.

The instructor will be available during Office Hours (onsite) and Virtual Office Hours. Please check Faculty Information in Bb for office hours schedule and more information on Virtual Office hours.

OFFICE HOURS *Regular + Virtual Office Hours:*
 Monday + Wednesday: 4:00 – 7:00 pm (room AT 251)
 Tuesday: 3:30 – 4:30 pm (room AT 119)
 Thursdays: 3:30 – 4:30 pm (room AT 119)

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA Students will receive a handout for each assigned project, and must hold onto this as it will explain the expectations and specs for each assignment. All work that is incomplete or does not follow specs will be counted as late and treated as such.

Each project will be judged on the following criteria:

- Deadlines (10%): Has the student met all deadlines for each stage of the project? Were projects complete, on their due date and time?
- Process/Sketches (10%): Is there evidence of strong research and development?
- Participation (10%): Has the student contributed positively to class discussions and critiques on a regular basis? Was their feedback constructive and respectful of other classmates? Did the student pay attention during class lectures and discussions?
- Specs (10%): Did the student follow the specified instructions for each project? Were the specified materials and sizes used?
- Concept (10%): Is the concept well thought out and developed?
- Execution (50%): Is the technique strong? Do the aesthetics support the concept? Is the craftsmanship flawless?

NOTE:

1. This class requires extensive critique and problem solving. You will be required to defend your work and be critical of your classmates' work to ensure you understand the responsibilities of an Art Director.

2. Rough sketches are to be presented with EVERY assignment. If sketches are done in drawing books, they must be photocopied or cleanly cut out from books (no jagged/ripped sketch paper!).

GRADING SCALE A 100 to 96 • A- 95 to 91 • B+ 90 to 88 • B 87 to 84 • B- 83 to 81 • C+ 80 to 78 • C 77 to 74 • C- 73 to 71 • D+ 70 to 66 • D 65 to 61 • F 60 and below

DEADLINES Each project and assignment will have specific guidelines stated for their deadlines. Work due must be ready prior to date and time specified. If work is presented late during the due date's class period, it will result in a 1-letter grade reduction for the corresponding project. If the work is presented outside of class time or at a later date, it will automatically receive a grade of "F". Students who drop off a project that is due, but skip that day's class, will be graded as if absent. All work must be handed in person by the student it belongs to, unless in case of emergency, when previous notification must be given to the instructor (in person, by phone, or email).

Computer crashes, failure of backing up work, forgetting work at home, not finishing on time, files erased from lab computers, and other excuses will not be accepted. Students must take full responsibility for their work and deadlines.

COMPUTER ACCESS In order to be successful in this class students need to have access to the following:

- Computer (Mac or PC)
- Adobe Creative Suite (CS) or Creative Cloud (CC)*
- InDesign
- Illustrator
- Photoshop
- Acrobat
- Browser applications Firefox and Safari
- Reliable high-speed Internet connection
- Scanner or digital camera
- Color or Black+White Printer

The Communication Design labs are available to all communication design students, currently enrolled in a course. Each lab is equipped with Macintosh computers, flatbed scanners, and printers.

Open lab times are available throughout the semester, and normally start after the first week of classes. For a schedule of the open lab times please check under Open Lab Hours in Bb or for postings outside of the labs or in Communication Design Department areas.

Monday AT-119 3-8:30 p.m. (5.5 hrs)

Tuesday AT-140 3:30-6:30 p.m. (3 hrs)

Wednesday AA-383 2:00-6:00 p.m. (4 hrs)

Thursday AT-255 2:30-6:30 p.m. (4 hrs)

**Please note that the Alexandria Campus Communication Design Labs are currently running CS6 applications. Student who have an older version of application much take the necessary steps to make sure their files are compatible with the labs. Instructor will be more than happy to demonstrate how to prepare files in these cases.*

BLACKBOARD (Bb) Blackboard will serve as the primary means of exchanging files in this course. Please be sure to follow the instructor's directions for how and where to post files. Submitting files incorrectly may result in the assignment being marked as late or the instructor not accepting your work.

In an event of consistent college/campus closings, class may continue through Bb, in an effort to stay on the semester's schedule. It is the student's responsibility in an event of a college/campus closing to check Bb and/or their student email account for class updates, announcements and assignments.

Students are responsible for logging on to the class Bb, at least once a week to download weekly course materials and assignments.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

It is advised and the student's responsibility to check their student email and the announcement section of Bb on a daily basis for class updates.

Students are expected to attend class regularly and on time with preparation completed. If it is necessary to be absent for any reason, the student is responsible for emailing the instructor prior to class at geckler@nvcc.edu.

Regardless of the reason for being absent there are no excused absences. Students are responsible for all content missed during any absence.

2 absences in a class that meets once a week is grounds for a drop in final letter grade.

3 absences or more will be grounds for an "F" (fail) for the final letter grade.

3 late arrivals or 3 early departures are equivalent to 1 absence.

Attending class unprepared may result in being marked absent.

Cumulative chronic lateness or leaving before class is dismissed is the same as being absent. The instructor will announce breaks and students will be expected to return to the classroom at the specified time.

Information from classes missed is to be obtained from the class Bb site and/or a fellow student.

Any student failing to turn in multiple projects or having accumulated multiple absences can receive a grade of "F" for the course. If a student decides to stop attending class, it does not entitle them to a grade of "W"— such action will result in entry of an "F" grade. You must meet with me (instructor) if you are having problems.

Absences and tardiness... as noted before, and... If you know you will be late or absent, please contact the instructor, preferably prior to class, to avoid being penalized on your work. Absence in and of itself does not postpone a deadline requirement in your case unless arrangements for an extension are made in advance of the deadline.

Late submission of work and make up work—Late homework, will be downgraded and will not receive credit if it is more than one class period late; late projects are unacceptable unless arrangements for an extension are made in advance of the deadline.

No makeup work will be assigned.

Meeting deadlines is your responsibility, therefore it is important that you keep multiple backups of all your files; make at least two copies of your work and save it on two separate disks. Do not work from a disc, drive etc. Save your work to the desktop then copy the work to the disc or drive after you have completed the work. Do not rely on keeping your files on the computers in the labs; any work left on the school computers cannot be considered safe. Losing your work is not an excuse for missing deadlines. Even if your work is erased from the school computers or becomes corrupted or lost, you are still responsible for turning projects in on time.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & DISHONESTY

NOVA expects students to be honest in all their academic endeavors. Violation of the college's Academic Dishonesty Policy (www.nvcc.edu/curcatalog/admin/academic.htm) is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The college will address any violation to the policy on an individual basis, and any violation will be grounds for failure of assignment or the course; higher penalties such as suspension or dismissal may also be considered depending on the severity of the situation. Please refer to your instructor's course syllabus and/or assignment sheets for more information on penalties for academic dishonesty.

The principle of academic dishonesty includes Plagiarism, Falsification & Fabrication, Cheating, and Unfair Academic Advantage.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is taking another's work and claiming it to be one's own.

All students are expected to create their own work, both written and designed. Quotations, paraphrases, the appropriation of imagery, or ideas from source material without proper citation, according to the instructor's policy, will be seen as a direct violation of The Academic Dishonesty Policy.

Students who are using work that they did not create must present proof of rights to the instructor, whether that is a receipt of sales from a stock image company, a statement from the source indicating public domain on assets used, or a letter/email granting permission of use from the owner. The faculty doesn't recommend obtaining materials from sources that promotes free usage of material, as the ownership of rights may be in violation of copyright laws.

FALSIFICATION AND FABRICATION

Falsification and Fabrication is providing misinformation about a source with the intent to deceive.

All citations of work used should be detailed and cited appropriately to avoid a violation of The Academic Dishonesty Policy.

All students are expected to create and submit new work every semester for every class, in direct response to each assignment. Students are not permitted to resubmit work that was created in previous or concurrent course, or from another program/institution (educational or professional), unless their instructor has granted permission prior to the submission of the assignment.

CHEATING

Cheating is the act of intentionally accepting and/or giving aid to oneself or another for gains of a higher grade or academic advantage.

Cheating is also the use of sources that are not authorized in the assignment or by the instructor. i.e. the use of design templates without prior authorization from the instructor.

UNFAIR ACADEMIC ADVANTAGE

Unfair Academic Advantage is when a student purposely seeks to steal, destroy, or damage another student's work for the purpose of obtaining a better standing within a course or within the program.

Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Assistant Dean and Division Dean, depending on the severity of the situation may be reported to the Dean of Students. The accused student does have the right to appeal accusations; please see the NOVA Student Handbook for more information on disciplinary policies.

Additional information regarding Student Conduct and Academic Dishonesty can also be found in the NOVA Student Handbook.

WEEK 1	
Wednesday 8/21	Introduction to Graphic Skills • Review Syllabus & Schedule • Mac/Lab Overview
WEEK 2	
Monday 8/26	ILLUSTRATOR: Working space, advantages and disadvantages of vector art, learning the tools, Building simple shapes, Illustrator's pen tools, and the pathfinder. (Pen Tool Exercise).
Wednesday 8/28	Review Road Signs Project
WEEK 3	
Monday 9/2	NO CLASS (<i>Labor Day</i>)
Wednesday 9/4	Road Signs Thumbnails Due
WEEK 4	
Monday 9/9	ILLUSTRATOR: Best practices for Illustrator tracing, Using the pathfinder palette, and The Power of Actions.
Wednesday 9/11	Road Signs Work in Progress.
WEEK 5	
Monday 9/16	Final Presentation for Road Signs Project • Introduction of Stamp Project.
Wednesday 9/18	PHOTOSHOP: Working space, advantages and disadvantages of Raster art, learning the tools, image creation and modification, defining colors, and color spaces.
WEEK 6	
Monday 9/23	Stamp Project Thumbnails Due.
Wednesday 9/25	Stamp Project Work in Progress.
WEEK 7	
Monday 9/30	PHOTOSHOP: The Power of Actions II, Scanning images (and oversized images), Brushes abound, and The Clone Wars.
Wednesday 10/2	Stamp Project Work in Progress.
WEEK 8	
Monday 10/7	NO CLASS (<i>Non-Instructional Day</i>)
Wednesday 10/9	Stamp Project Work in Progress.
WEEK 9	
Monday 10/14	PHOTOSHOP: More things with Photoshop!
Wednesday 10/16	Stamp Project Work in Progress.
WEEK 10	
Monday 10/21	Final Presentation for Stamp Project • Review Poster Project.
Wednesday 10/23	INDESIGN: InDesign as a typesetting/art creation medium. • Creating documents, text boxes, justification, hyphenation, and placing artwork.
WEEK 11	
Monday 10/28	Poster Project Research Due
Wednesday 10/30	Poster Project Thumbnails Due
WEEK 12	
Monday 11/4	Poster Project Work in Progress.
Wednesday 11/6	INDESIGN: Creating multi-page, multi-column documents, defining colors, master pages, facing pages vs. spreads.

WEEK 13

Monday 11/11 Poster Project Work in Progress.

Wednesday 11/13 Poster Project Work in Progress.

WEEK 14

Monday 11/18 Poster Project Work in Progress.

Wednesday 11/20 **INDESIGN:** The Power of Actions III, Working with Style Sheets, and Aligning objects.

WEEK 15

Monday 11/25 Poster Project Work in Progress.

Wednesday 11/27 **NO CLASS** (*Thanksgiving Break*)

WEEK 16

Monday 12/2 Poster Project Work in Progress.

Wednesday 12/4 Poster Project Work in Progress.

WEEK 17

Monday 12/9 Final Presentations for Poster Project Due

Wednesday 12/11 Portfolio Show • Last Day for Reworks.