

# Course Syllabus

What you will learn in this course

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## **Digital Design 1a: Introduction**

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Are you an artistic person drawn to the idea of creating graphic elements? Then a career in digital design may be for you! In this course, you will learn the basic principles of design, the tools needed to succeed in the industry and how to design objects for specific purposes and audiences. You'll also learn how to market yourself and open your own design business all while building a portfolio. Let's align your skills and dreams today for a career in digital design!

## **Unit 1: What Is Graphic Design?**

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Humans have always communicated with visuals. Today, our world is filled with visual communications that were crafted by graphic designers who plan, arrange, and create the visual elements in pages and screens. The purpose of the graphic designer is to design objects that are easy to use, appealing, and effective for their specific purpose and audience. Graphic design is constantly changing to keep up with new technologies and ways of communicating, which

means that career opportunities in this field will continue to increase. Even if you don't want to become a full-time designer, it's important to understand basic design principles because our daily lives are saturated with communications that have designs on us.

## What will you learn in this unit?

1. Define graphic design and describe how it has developed as a field
2. Outline the ways in which technology shapes the field of graphic design
3. Explain why graphic design is inseparable from its cultural environment

<b>UNIT 1 Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Unit 1 Critical Thinking Questions	Homework
Unit 1 Activity 1	Homework
Unit 1 Activity 2	Homework
Unit 1 Activity 3	Homework
Unit 1 Discussion 1	Discussion
Unit 1 Discussion 2	Discussion
Unit 1 Quiz	Quiz

## Unit 2: Careers in Graphic Design

Because graphic design is all around us, there is also a significant job market for talented graphic artists. One of the most exciting aspects of a career in graphic design is the number of different paths, or specialties, you can choose from. No matter which path you take, your work will entail finding ways to apply design principles to an object, whether that object exists in the physical world or is a digital object made of 0s and 1s. If you're interested in a career that includes graphic design, you can start now by learning about the different jobs you might be interested in and participating in student organizations that will put you a step ahead of the competition.

## What will you learn in this unit?

1. Categorize several types of graphic design careers
2. Identify the skills, education, and experience necessary for graphic design careers

3. Explain how student professional organizations can help you prepare for design careers

<b>UNIT 2 Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Unit 2 Critical Thinking Questions	Homework
Unit 2 Activity 1	Homework
Unit 2 Activity 2	Homework
Unit 2 Activity 3	Homework
Unit 2 Discussion 1	Discussion
Unit 2 Discussion 2	Discussion
Unit 2 Quiz	Quiz

### **Unit 3: Skills for Success**

Graphic designers are experts at using several graphics-based software platforms. But they also need a solid understanding of foundational computer terms, file management skills, and extensive knowledge about how digital images are described and measured. Knowing the best practices for written communication, especially when it comes to working with clients, is also essential.

#### **What will you learn in this unit?**

1. Define foundational computer-related terms
2. Describe methods for the effective naming and organization of files
3. Articulate foundational concepts for creating, storing, and distributing digital images and text files
4. Explain best practices for professional written communication skills

<b>UNIT 3 Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>

Unit 3 Critical Thinking Questions	Homework
Unit 3 Activity 1	Homework
Unit 3 Activity 2	Homework
Unit 3 Activity 3	Homework
Unit 3 Discussion 1	Discussion
Unit 3 Discussion 2	Discussion
Unit 3 Quiz	Quiz

## Unit 4: Finding the Right Tools

The work of graphic designers and artists changed drastically in the early 1990s when digital software for creating and manipulating images and photos became available. In today's market, graphic design is always a computer-based skill: you can't get work without expertise in the industry-standard software platforms. No matter what type of design you're creating, there is a specialized software platform (probably several) to make the job easier. Although some of the industry-standard platforms are too complex and pricey for a beginner, there are several open-source and free options you can use to learn the basics.

### What will you learn in this unit?

1. Describe the difference between raster- and vector-based software and how raster-based software is used in graphic design
2. Explain how vector-based software platforms are used in graphic design and digital publishing
3. Identify industry-standard UX/UI design software and its functionality for creating interface designs

<b>UNIT 4 Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Unit 4 Critical Thinking Questions	Homework
Unit 4 Activity 1	Homework
Unit 4 Activity 2	Homework

Unit 4 Activity 3	Homework
Unit 4 Discussion 1	Discussion
Unit 4 Discussion 2	Discussion
Unit 4 Quiz	Quiz

## Digital Design 1a Midterm Exam

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- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the **first** half of the course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

<b>MIDTERM Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Midterm Exam	Exam
Midterm Discussion	Discussion

## Unit 5: Graphic Design Basics

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The twenty-first century is an image-saturated time to be alive. Visual communication is everywhere around us: in the posts we scroll through on social media, in the websites we visit each day, in the billboard advertisements we glance at as we drive down the highway, in magazines as we flip through the pages, and in the video games we play. Graphic designers are involved in the creation of all these communication types. In this unit, you'll learn about the basic building blocks in an image and the principles designers use to create effective visual communication. Understanding these foundational concepts is an important first step toward creating great designs of your own.

### What will you learn in this unit?

1. Define the elements of design (line, space, shape, texture, form, value, and color)
2. Identify and apply the principles of design (emphasis, movement, balance, variety, rule of thirds)
3. Articulate the elements of an effective design portfolio and apply the principles of design to create one

<b>UNIT 5 Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Unit 5 Critical Thinking Questions	Homework
Unit 5 Activity 1	Homework
Unit 5 Activity 2	Homework
Unit 5 Activity 3	Homework
Unit 5 Activity 4	Homework
Unit 5 Discussion 1	Discussion
Unit 5 Discussion 2	Discussion
Unit 5 Quiz	Quiz

## **Unit 6: Print Design**

Although some designers are generalists, able to create both print and online designs, most graphic designers specialize in either online design that will be viewed on screens, or print design that will be physically printed on paper, plastic, textiles, or some other printable material. Print and online designers use the same basic elements and principles of design to create appealing layouts. However, because their designs must go through the extra phase of being printed, and because their designs are sometimes hundreds of pages long, print designers must learn an additional set of skills.

### **What will you learn in this unit?**

1. Describe the work of print designers and apply the principles of effective design to various print layouts
2. Identify the elements of document design and describe how to use them effectively
3. Explain the various printing processes used for commercial print jobs

<b>UNIT 6 Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>

Unit 6 Critical Thinking Questions	Homework
Unit 6 Activity 1	Homework
Unit 6 Activity 2	Homework
Unit 6 Activity 3	Homework
Unit 6 Discussion 1	Discussion
Unit 6 Discussion 2	Discussion
Unit 6 Quiz	Quiz

## Unit 7: The Art of Typography

Typography is using the style, arrangement, and appearance of letters to effectively communicate a message. If you learn to use typography well, it will structure your designs and help to create a brand or mood. Because typography has a long history and its terminology comes from that history, it's important to understand the evolution of typeface from letters chiseled in stone to words read on a smartphone screen. Once you've learned the basic typeface styles and their characteristics, you can use the principles of design to create effective, readable, and pleasing designs.

### What will you learn in this unit?

1. Demonstrate knowledge of typographic terminology and the anatomy of letters
2. Describe the history, classification, characteristics, and psychology of the serif and sans serif typeface families
3. Apply design principles to typography

<b>UNIT 7 Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Unit 7 Critical Thinking Questions	Homework
Unit 7 Activity 1	Homework
Unit 7 Activity 2	Homework
Unit 7 Activity 3	Homework

Unit 7 Discussion 1	Discussion
Unit 7 Discussion 2	Discussion
Unit 7 Quiz	Quiz

## Unit 8: Understanding Color

Humans' primary sense, the one we use the most to take in and interpret our world, is sight. We can distinguish about 10 million colors, and colors are often associated with moods, feelings, and emotions. For a graphic designer, this means color is one of the most powerful methods for creating visual distinctions and interest in a design. Color theory is a considerably involved subject, but having a good understanding of some basic principles can help you design with impact and elegance.

### What will you learn in this unit?

1. Define the characteristics of color and how we perceive it
2. Explain color theory and apply color harmonies to create effective designs
3. Identify the most often used color formats, explain how they differ, and choose the appropriate format for your design context

<b>UNIT 8 Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Unit 8 Critical Thinking Questions	Homework
Unit 8 Activity 1	Homework
Unit 8 Activity 2	Homework
Unit 8 Activity 3	Homework
Unit 8 Activity 4	Homework
Unit 8 Discussion 1	Discussion
Unit 8 Discussion 2	Discussion
Unit 8 Quiz	Quiz



## Digital Design 1a Final Exam

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- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the **second** half of the course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

<b>FINAL Assignments</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Final Exam	Exam
Final Discussion	Discussion

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