

DESKTOP PUBLISHING SYLLABUS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Course number: MCM 282.01

Course title: Desktop Publishing

Credit hours: 3

Semester/year: Fall 2009

Class times: TT 2 - 3:20 p.m.

Classroom: EV 360

Instructor: Ruth Massingill

Office: Evans 304

Office hours: TT 10-11 a.m.; 1-2 p.m.; others by appointment.

Office phone: 936-294-1494

Email: rmassingill@shsu.edu

Student emails will be answered as quickly as possible. Emails received on weekends or after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays will be answered on the next business day.

NOTE: Unless instructed otherwise, please submit all assignments as hard copies; email assignments will not be accepted.

TEXT & MATERIALS REQUIRED

TEXTS

Evans, P. (2001). Exploring Publication Design. Australia: Thomson Delmar Learning (required)

InDesign CS3 reference manual (optional)

OTHER MATERIALS

- A PC-compatible back-up storage device (be sure flash drives are USB mass storage compliant).
- a binder and sheet protectors for the clip file assignment (one binder per group)
- an SHSU email account (so you can be contacted by the instructor and members of your group)

DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

MCM 282 Desktop Publishing: This course introduces students to the principles of design applicable to publications created using desktop publishing software and computer technology. Special attention is given to design principles, typography, layout and production techniques. (No prerequisite)

This class focuses on gaining professional-level skills and knowledge. You'll be exposed to good and bad design and will learn to know the difference. You'll discover how to use the essential building blocks of design — type, art and line — in new and creative ways. You'll learn clever ways to locate and use resources such as graphics and scanned art. You'll learn to think about audience and medium and how those affect the way you craft your message. And, of course, you'll also be learning to use new technical tools to create those effective messages.

In the end, you'll have a more critical eye for design and production techniques, you'll be able to "talk the talk of desktop publishing" and you'll know how to design and create attractive publications. In short, you'll have valuable skills that you can use in social or professional settings, from creating a newsletter for an organization you belong to to snagging an internship or job.

Making this journey has lots of "ah ha" moments as you forge links between theory and practical application. This class will follow a step-by-step process that gives you usable amounts of information in "byte-size" pieces; each assignment builds on what you have already learned. Teaching methods combine presentation, examples and discussion with considerable hands-on production and personal feedback. It's going to be fun!

OBJECTIVES

The principal goal for this class is

1) To develop specific skills, competencies and points of view needed by professionals who use computer hardware and software in the hands-on production of publications.

These skills include:

- expertise in the use of the DTP page layout program, InDesign, from basic page setup through use of specialized techniques such as type manipulation and graphic effects
- ways to find, adapt and create art even if you are NOT an artist
- understanding graphic formats and conventions that give publications a quality look
- writing and editing copy to enhance your message

To develop the skills listed above, it is important that you:

A) Gain factual knowledge that provides a context for desktop publishing (DTP), including:

- the history of publishing and how computers fit into that history
- DTP terms and jargon

- trends and projections for jobs that require DTP skills

B) Develop creative capacities based on

- skillfully integrating typefaces and illustrations
- designing functional and inviting layouts
- creatively using white space and design principles
- writing to persuade and inform

CLASSROOM POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

A commitment of your time to this course is essential. Regular attendance is expected and will be necessary for successful completion of the course. You are responsible for any assignment made during class in your presence or absence. Save your late approvals for when you are ill or have an emergency (or for when the computers are cranky). Otherwise, NO late work will be accepted and you will lose the points allotted for that assignment. It will not be possible to make up missed class sessions. Deadline, for class purposes, is the minute the class begins the day work is due, unless otherwise designated. Follow professional procedures as you would for a job. Punctuality is essential; class attendance is expected and will be noted. Tardiness or leaving early will count as an absence. After two (3) absences/tardies, participation points will be deducted for each additional absence.

Attendance will only be taken once during the class. If you are late and roll has been taken, you are absent unless you provide a letter to the instructor verifying that you were in class.

Students attending SHSU co-curricular activities will not be penalized for absences. Appropriate documentation should be presented to the instructor prior to the absence.

TIME REQUIREMENTS

This class meets for three hours each week. You will also be assigned out-of-class readings, and you probably will need to work on your projects during scheduled open lab times. You should expect to allow at least two out-of-class hours of preparation for every hour you spend in class.

EQUIPMENT

PC computers and DTP software will be provided in this lab for all assignments given. You may use other computers, but software may not be compatible. Please do NOT use substitute software! Lab hours will be posted. You can store your work on both the server in the lab and the university server, but you may also wish to purchase a portable storage device for your work.

FORMAT FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Some assignments will require thumbnail sketches, which should be hand-drawn. All InDesign assignments should be printed out in black and white (no color copies) and turned in as hard copies with the corresponding assignment sheet (be sure to make an required notations on the assignment sheet.) Email assignments will NOT be accepted without prior agreement.

QUIZZES, CLASS PARTICIPATION

You will be quizzed over reading material assigned as well as classroom discussion. (You will need to purchase the book.) No make-up quizzes are given. For a university-sanctioned absence, you may take a quiz early by prior arrangement.

Class participation is part of your grade in this class. Students are expected to be present, to have completed the readings and to contribute during class discussion. In addition, participation points can be affected by the following:

- Beepers, iPods, BlueTooth headsets, cell phones and other electronic communication devices may not be used during class. If any electronic device interrupts class, that student's participation grade will be reduced by a letter grade.
- Students may not read other material/newspapers/magazines and/or work on material for other classes during this class. Computer monitors must be turned off unless you are asked to work on the computer. Surfing the Internet, reading email or conducting other cyberspace business not related to the class is not allowed during class time. Anyone doing so will lose a letter grade from his/her participation grade.
- All students are expected to be attentive during presentations by class members or the instructor. Failure to render this common courtesy will result in loss of participation points.

GRADING:

Your course grade will be based on a 500-point scale, which will include participation, computer exercises and projects, quizzes and a final.

5 Computer Exercises @ 25 pts each - Max points: 125 (25%)

You will complete exercises dealing with Internet research, word processing, graphics and desktop design. At least part of these exercises will be completed during class time, although some open lab hours will be available. You may turn in one exercise up to one class session late with a late ticket. Other late work will not be accepted, even for reduced credit. You have the option of re-doing ONE exercise for re-grading if it is submitted (with the original exercise) no more than two weeks after it was graded and returned.

2 Projects @ 50 pts each - Max points: 100 (20%)

Building on the skills developed in the computer exercises, you will produce two comprehensive projects. You may turn in one project up to one class session late with a late ticket. Other late work will not be accepted, even for reduced credit.

5 Quizzes @ 20 pts each - Max points: 100 (20%)

Quizzes will be announced in advance and will be taken online. These cannot be made up. Anyone arriving after roll has been called and the quiz has begun will not be able to take that quiz. Students will NOT be allowed to make up a quiz except in cases of computer/electricity failure or with approval from instructor prior to quiz date.

NOTE: An optional extra credit quiz will be worth up to 10 additional points.

Clip file - Max points: 25 (5%)

You will be assigned to a group that will compile a clip file over the course of the semester, adding to it on a weekly basis. The examples included in the clip file will illustrate the concepts discussed in class.

Class participation - Max points: 50 (10%)

As described elsewhere in this syllabus, attending and participating in class is extremely important. To obtain all participation points, a student must not miss more than 3 classes and must actively engage in the class as described herein. (Negative participation points are possible.)

Final: "Super quiz" & final project- Max points: 100 (20%)

The final will have two parts: 1) a summary test, drawing from reading, lecture and class demonstrations (50 pts), and 2) a brochure product that features your best work and demonstrates what you have learned in the semester. You will present your brochure during the final time period. (brochure project: 50 pts)

Specific descriptions of all assignments can be found on the Blackboard class page, where grades will also be posted. Blackboard will give you a grade percentage - This is not correct! Please ignore the stated number and follow the grade scale below.

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Ultimately, letter grades must be assigned to evaluations of course work. Under the definitions established by Sam Houston State University, students who receive the following letter grades are considered to have reached the level of attainment defining that letter. Thus, letter grades received for journalism courses may be interpreted this way:

A= Excellent

B= Well above average

C= Average

D= Barely passing

F= Failure

Grading throughout the semester; however, is conducted on a point scale. The combined value of all assignments is 500 points. Points are added or subtracted from that according to standards described in this syllabus. In this class you will accumulate points toward a final grade. There will be no percentage weighting of assignments. The grade in the course will be determined using the following scale:

500 - 450 pts = A

449 - 400 pts = B

399 - 350 pts = C

349 - 300 pts = D

less than 300 = F

All grades will be posted on the Blackboard Class page and may be accessed by the student at any point during the semester. A final class grade will not be released over the phone or internet. However, students may determine their final class grades by comparing the totals to the scale above.

Students who cannot complete the course requirements due to illness or any other unforeseen issue may apply for an X in the course. To apply for the incomplete, the student must submit in writing to the instructor a documented explanation. The request will be submitted to the dean of CHSS for a final decision.

SHSU POLICIES

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. (Taken from official SHSU policies)

Ethics are the cornerstone of responsible communication. Honesty is expected--and demanded--of all students. Violations of professional ethical standards can lead to an automatic "F" in the course. All work in this class must be original work. No work that a student has already published or is in the process of publishing is considered original work. No work a student has used to meet requirements in a previous class is considered original work.

Students found guilty of dishonest behavior in this class will be asked to leave the class and will be given the grade of F for the entire course.

Plagiarized papers will not be accepted. For the sake of clarity, plagiarism is defined below:

Plagiarism occurs when one person claims credit for another person's work. It is a form of intellectual dishonesty that is treated with great severity by professionals and by the university. Students are encouraged to review the university's policy on plagiarism.

PROPER CLASSROOM DEMEANOR OR CONDUCT

According to the Student Handbook, "Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Please turn off or mute your cellular phone and/or pager before class begins. Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking among themselves at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in, minimally, a directive to leave class, or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy."

The students' right to speak on the topics of their choice will be upheld in the class. Choice of topic, values and beliefs will not be judged. Audience members are expected to respect the views of their classmates.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

FACULTY EVALUATIONS

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation toward the end of the semester, using the IDEA system.

Q-DROPS

Students are allowed no more than five Q-drops during their academic career at Sam Houston State University. Classes that are dropped prior to the Q-drop date will not count toward the limit. Students who have used their limit of five Q-drops will need to petition their respective dean to drop a class. If the dean refuses to grant permission to drop the class, the student will be required to remain in the class.

The Q-drop limit took effect with the start of the fall 2004 semester. Any drops accumulated prior to the fall 2004 semester will not be included in the five Q-drop limit. Neither will Q-drops from other universities.

NOTE: A Q-drop is a drop made after the last day for tuition refunds (12th class day for fall/spring; 4th class day for summer) but before the date for which a drop would result in a grade of 'F' - as published in the Academic Calendar.

Web Links

About DTP

Here's a fun quiz to try. Also, subscribe to this useful newsletter!

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 (Aug 24)

Introduction/Orientation

READ:

Module 1: Class overview

Module 2: Introduction to DTP

Chapter 1- Publication Design

Assignments:

Exercise #1

WEEK 2 (Aug 31) and WEEK 3 (Sept. 7)

Quiz #1

Introduction to design

READ:

Module 3 and Chap 2 in Pub Design

Assignments:

Clip File Group assignments

CLIP #1

Exercise #2

WEEK 4 (Sept 14) & WEEK 5 (Sept 21)

Introduction to typography

READ:

Modules 4 and 5 and Chaps 4 and 5 in Pub Design

Assignments:

Project 1 (Applying design and type principles)

Quiz #2
CLIP #2

WEEK 6 (Sept 28)
Integration of text and art

Assignments:
Exercise #3
CLIP #3

WEEK 7 (Oct 5)

Graphic design and clip art

READ:
Chap 3 in Pub Design

Assignments:
Exercise #3 (cont)
CLIP #4

WEEK 8 (Oct. 12)

Multi-page documents/Text tricks

READ:
Chap 6 in Pub Design

Assignments:
Extra credit quiz
Exercise #4
CLIP #5

WEEK 9 (Oct 19) & WEEK 10 (Oct 26)

Photography/captions/scanning

READ:
Modules 8 & 9

Assignments:
Quiz #3
Exercise #5
CLIP #6
Project 2

WEEK 11 (Nov 2) and WEEK 12 (Nov 9)

Newsletters

READ:
Chapter 8

Assignments:
Quiz #4

WEEK 13 (Nov 16)

Brochures & Printing

READ:
Chap 7 in Pub Design

Assignments:
CLIP #7
Assign final project (brochure)

Thanksgiving Holidays: Nov 25-27

WEEK 14 (Nov 23) and WEEK 15 (Nov 30)

Brochure production and critiques

READ:
Chap 9 in Pub Design

Assignments:
Quiz #5
Super Quiz Review

WEEK 16 (Dec 7)

Wrap up

Assignments:
(Clip file due Dec 8)
Presentation of brochures
(Final presentation Dec 10)
Super Quiz

WEEK 17 (Dec 14)
Scheduled final, projects returned