

# VISUAL DYNAMICS: GRA 2111c

cameron thomas  
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monday:  
wednesday:

norman hall G514i > 3:00 to 6:00  
fac 114 > 3:00 to 6:00

office: 302c (grad studio)  
hours: by appointment



## WELCOME TO VISUAL DYNAMICS

This course is structured to explore the language and practice of graphic design at a rudimentary level. By the end of this course students should be able to use graphic design elements as effective visual communications tools. Students will learn basic design skills such as figure/ground, layout, composition and continuity and apply these strategies to design exercises both in and out of class. Students will also be required to research design concepts and ideas as well as materials and techniques leading to a more complete understanding of graphic design. By finding solutions to assigned design problems and participations in critiques, students will develop conceptual and practical design skills. Students will also complete in-class projects to learn time-management skills and brainstorming techniques.

## TEXTS

There are no required texts, however I will provide handouts to read. There will also be reading materials at the Fine Arts library from time to time.

## COURSE STRUCTURE

The instructional method of this course will include four design projects, lectures, quizzes, a research paper, group discussions and presentations. Participation in all aspects is imperative to your success in this course and will be an integral part of your final grade.

## TIMELINES

All deadlines and due-dates will be announced in class and posted in handouts. It is your responsibility to be aware of these dates and any changes to the schedule. Not knowing is not a valid excuse. If you have any questions please ask.

## GRADING AND EVALUATION

The purpose of grading is to clearly and accurately pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of your progress as a designer. In this course you will earn your grade through hard work. You will receive grades on all assignments and will be given a progress report at midterm to prevent any surprises. The mid-term progress report will evaluate progress, note strengths and areas for improvement. Your overall grade will be based on your understanding of the information and ideas discussed, formal and conceptual progress and professionalism during the course.

## GRADE PERCENTAGES

- 60% > sum of the projects
- 10% > sum of all in-class projects
- 10% > sum of quizzes
- 10% > research paper
- 10% > professionalism (participation, motivation, attendance, deadlines)

## GRADE SCALE

- A (100% - 90%) superior work, all criteria have been surpassed in a distinguished manner
- B+ (89% - 85%) very good work, all criteria have been surpassed
- B (84% - 80%) above average work
- C (79% - 70%) adequate, average work
- D (69% - 60%) barely meeting criteria
- E (59% - 0%) failure to meet criteria

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## PROCESS

You are required to keep a Process Book (sketchbook or visual journal) to document your progress throughout the semester. The process book is used for practice exercises, brainstorming (in and out of class), taking notes and keeping any other material having to do with the course. You are strongly encouraged to collect interesting images, shapes, photocopied materials and glue them in the book. Please bring this to each and every class, as I will ask frequently to see what you have been working on. Feel free to comment on the class, respond to thoughts, ideas, questions, homework, critiques, discussions, readings or any other pertinent topics.

## LARGE INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

In addition to specific criteria defined by individual project goals, all projects will be graded on their success in the following areas:

1. Concept / Idea > This is the ability to discover and define design problems and issues in a clear and consistent language.
2. Solution > This pertains to the quality of Visual and Conceptual Solution. Factors such as composition, inventiveness, originality, layout and craft will be considered in grading.
3. Classwork > You are required to keep all information related to this class in your sketch book and should photocopy the pages to create a presentation for the process of each project. Quantity (yes, sometimes over quality) and innovation are important factors the more you do, the better your design will be.
4. Craft > I will not accept work that does not meet the required presentation (such as cover sheets). Maimed work will never be received (don't even insult me with torn, soiled or stained work).

Also important in considering project grades:

Completeness and Timeliness. Please do not turn in a project after the specific deadline, as no late projects will be accepted. Failure to meet deadlines will result in a zero. Only in the case of extreme situations that are called to my attention in advance can something be arranged. These excuses must be accompanied with proof. Always plan ahead.

## IN-CLASS PROJECTS

These are small yet thought provoking projects, which will be turned in at the end of the class session. They are not announced so if you are absent the day one is given you will receive a zero for that project. In-Class projects cannot be made up and no late projects will be accepted.

## QUIZZES

There will be quizzes based on discussion, reading and lecture material. They will not be announced so if you are absent the day one is given you will receive a zero for that quiz. They cannot be made up.

## MATERIALS

You will need the following:

01. Hardbound sketchbook
02. Acid free paper
03. Matte board (for mounting projects)
04. Black ink pens (Rapidograph pens are nice)
05. Pencils (a mechanical pencil is best)
06. Straight edge
07. X-Acto knife
08. Storage discs - Zip or USB "Key" Disc

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## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Good attendance and punctuality are expected for this class and will strongly affect your grade. Roll will be taken at every class. You will be considered late if you arrive at class after roll has been taken. Every three times you are tardy will equal one unexcused absence. No unexcused absences will be allowed. The third absence will lower your final semester grade by one letter grade. The fourth unexcused absence will lower your grade by two letter grades and so on. A total of seven absences, excused or unexcused, will result in you receiving a failing grade for the course. There are no excused absences for anything but a verifiable death in the immediate family or with a doctor's note on his/her stationery with a telephone number. The doctor's note must be presented at the next class.

## OTHER POLICIES

Always be open and constructive. Critique ideas, not people. No side conversations during presentations or critiques. No instant messaging or working during lectures, discussions or critiques. Also please turn cell phone ringers off during class time.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: "I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all of their academic endeavors and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University. Detailed Academic Honesty Guidelines may be found at <http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/Rules/4017.htm>

## DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Be advised that you can and will be dismissed from class if you engage in disruptive behavior. Students who intentionally act to impair, interfere with, or obstruct the mission, purposes, order, operations, processes, and functions of the University shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by University authorities for misconduct, as set forth in the applicable rules of the Board of Regents and the University and state law governing such actions. A detailed list of disruptive conduct may be found at <http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/Rules/1008.htm>.

## COUNSELING SERVICES

Resources are available on campus for student's experiencing personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals, which interfere with academic performance. Find out more about counseling services here: <http://www.counsel.ufl.edu>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By continuing participation in this course you acknowledge that you have read and understand these policies. In addition, you agree that you have read and understand this syllabus, attendance and grading policies, and are aware of the Guidelines for use of University Facilities and Grounds for Making and Exhibiting Design (A copy of these guidelines is posted in the School of Art + Art History Office.)

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## Class Schedule.

This is subject to change (of course). Days marked as a "work day" are primarily set aside for in class production, however we will also have lectures, guest speakers, pop quizzes, reasearch trips and/or in-class projects.

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JANUARY	wed 05:	welcome, syllabus, in-class project one, start project one
	mon 10:	intro to design lecture
	wed 12:	work day
	mon 17:	mlk day - no class
	wed 19:	work day
	mon 24:	work day
	wed 26:	project one due - presentations
	mon 31:	start project two

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FEBRUARY	wed 02:	visual metaphor lecture
	mon 07:	work day
	wed 09:	rare books library
	mon 14:	work day
	wed 16:	work day
	mon 21:	work day
	wed 23:	project two due - presentations
	mon 28:	spring break - no class

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MARCH	wed 02:	spring break - no class
	mon 07:	mid term reports, start project three
	wed 09:	propaganda lecture
	mon 14:	work day
	wed 16:	library
	mon 21:	work day
	wed 23:	work day
	mon 28:	project three due - presentations
	wed 30:	start project four

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APRIL	mon 04:	work day
	wed 06:	library
	mon 11:	work day
	wed 13:	work day
	mon 18:	research paper due - presentations
	wed 20:	project four due - presentations, ciao!