



Architecture starts and ends as graphic design.

The Graphic Architecture Project (GAP) is a way of thinking about the intersection of the flat and the deep. In this class we examine the visual rhetoric employed to convey design concepts. Typography is fundamentally the procedure of arranging type, but it can also be the particular art of traversing meaning with form. In addition to developing a general typographic fluency, we will consider the visual tone of how messages are conveyed, and explore ways to appropriately control and manipulate that tone through typography.

We will also investigate conceptual issues through a series of extremely practical assignments drawing on historical standards as well as contemporary examples of graphic design. Our ultimate goal is to establish a shared verbal and visual lexicon with which we can create, and critique, graphic work and to align conceptual intent with visual results.

Initially, we will focus on basic composition and classical typography. We will study the minute details of letterforms and investigate type design and typesetting from a historical and visual perspective. We will look at the composition of graphic space using both typography and basic forms. This part will consist mainly of shorter assignments. As the problems are iterative and designed to build from one week to the next, it is essential that you complete each in the given time period.

In the second part of the semester, we will begin with a lesson in simple but considered and refined typesetting, followed by assignments that deal with layered content—combining multiple hierarchies of text and images—therefore working with more sophisticated design systems. We will continue to explore the use of grids for managing complex information and for the graphic articulation of two dimensional space.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Access to and basic knowledge of Adobe InDesign: While you will be given tips and help along the way, this is not a software class. In order to successfully complete the assignments, a working knowledge of InDesign is required. Adobe Illustrator is not an adequate substitute for dealing with typography.
 - Keep multiple pages in a single PDF (always use PDFs, not JPGs)
 - Always name files using the correct naming convention.
e.g. NameLastname_200131.pdf
 - Keep files at a reasonable size
2. Formatting: Acknowledging and responding to constraints is an important aspect of design. Students are expected to observe guidelines for presentations.
 - You will receive a failing grade if you have more than 3 unexcused absences (non-negotiable)
 - 3 unexcused tardies will count as an absence (1 hour late or more is considered an absence)
3. Attendance and participation: Final grades will be largely determined by class participation.
 - You will receive a failing grade if you have more than 3 unexcused absences (non-negotiable)
 - 3 unexcused tardies will count as an absence (1 hour late or more is considered an absence)
4. Attendance to Graphic Project is required for students taking this course. Talks on Jan 16,17; and portfolio reviews on Jan 23, 24.

Week 1	1/12	Class	Intro/Presentations
Week 2	1/19	Class	Crit (1, 2.1–3)
Week 3	1/26	Class	Crit (1, 2.4)
Week 4	2/2	Class	Crit (3), Presentations (4)
Week 5	2/9	(Midterms)	Crit (3), Presentations (4)
Week 6	2/16	(Midterms)	Crit (5)
Week 7	2/23	Class	Crit (5, 6)
Week 8	3/2	(Spring break)	
Week 9	3/9	Class	Crit (6)
Week 10	3/16	Class	Crit (7)
Week 11	3/23	Class	Crit (7)
Week 12	3/30	Class	Crit (7)
Week 13	4/6	Class	Crit (7)
Week 14	4/13	(Finals)	Final Review

REFERENCE

The class will focus primarily on direct experience through the assignments. While there are many books published on graphic design, typography and publishing, most are not particularly useful. These books will serve as useful reference on typography and designing books.

The Elements of Typographic Style
Robert Bringhurst
Vancouver: Hartley & Marks, 1996

Designing Books: Practice and Theory
Jost Hochuli, Robin Kinross
London: Hyphen Press, 1996

INTRO ASSIGNMENT: Found Typography

By midnight, Friday 1/15, email me a 1-page PDF showing 3 examples of successful and beautiful use of typography with a paragraph for each explaining your choice. Examples of typography can be found anywhere. Selected examples will be shown and discussed in class.

As we will be reviewing everything on screen, please use landscape format for all your work in this class, unless otherwise noted.

ASSIGNMENT 1: Kerning

Typeset your first and last name using a classical serif typeface, in all caps. Manually adjust the letterspacing in between the letters. The objective is to make the words appear balanced and evenly spaced. Center your name on a letter size sheet, landscape format. We will repeat this assignment over the course of several weeks, in tandem with other assignments.

ASSIGNMENT 2: Image Composition

Images can be powerful and when handled with care and intentionality, they can communicate narratives beyond the obvious. By utilizing minimal but important tools, such as image selection, sizing, white space, sequence, adjacencies, relationships, and orientation, one may be able to command how images are seen and understood.

- 2.1 Use 2 images to create a narrative.
- 2.2 Use 4-6 images to create a narrative.
- 2.3 Use 10-20 images to create a narrative.

At least 1 image in each composition must be your own.

- 2.4 Repeat exercise 2.2 but add captions. Captions can be repurposed or quoted text from another source, or written by you. Make 2 different versions by only changing the captions, while keeping the images the same.

ASSIGNMENT 3: Table of Contents

Design a speculative table of contents for a book that compiles your own body of work. A thoughtful table of content can reveal a lot about the a book. This exercise is as much typographic as it is editorial.

- 3.1 Only use one typeface and one type size.
- 3.2 Use as many typefaces, sizes and devices as you want but make intentional choices.

ASSIGNMENT 4: Story of a Typeface

Prepare a five-minute presentation on the history and significance of a given typeface. Prepare a PDF for presentation on screen.

You will be randomly assigned one of these typefaces:

Akzidenz Grotesk, Baskerville, Bell Centennial, Bembo, Bodoni, Caslon, Century, Century Gothic, Clarendon, Courier, Franklin Gothic, Futura, Galliard, Garamond, Gill Sans, Gotham, Grotesque, Minion, Optima, Palatino, Plantin, Sabon, Swiss, Times, Trade Gothic, and Univers.

- Who designed the font, and when?
- What other fonts are similar to it?
- What are some of its defining characteristics?
- Which artistic or cultural movements influenced the design/designer?
- How is it typically used?
- Can you find examples of it in use in the world (books, posters, signage, etc)?

ASSIGNMENT 5: Cover Cover

Take a book cover of your choice. Replicate, and then change certain elements in order to shift the reading of the cover. Consider which elements you may manipulate and why those are significant. What was the original cover communicating and how did it change through your manipulation? The book must be a meaningful one for you (in its content, origin, theme or design etc.).

ASSIGNMENT 6: Personal Statement

Typography has two basic functions, one hierarchical, the other expressive. Through the manipulation of typography a designer organizes a text and gives it voice. In addition, the arrangement of letters and words on a page has an aesthetic, compositional quality. Therefore where you put the words on a page makes a composition, and like all visual acts, composition has meaning in and of itself.

Write two pieces of text about yourself, each between 50 and 250 words. You can write it as a condensed autobiography, a resume, a poem, a riddle, an obituary, etc. You must include your name, but the format is completely up to you.

This exercise is meant to make you look carefully at two phenomena: 1) how does the arrangement of words on a page color and shade a reader's understanding of a text (expression), and 2) how can you make abstract, aesthetically interesting arrangements using typography (composition).

Think through these questions when you're working on your compositions:

- How is your text structured, and what kind of typographic treatment does it demand?
- How do you create emphasis and order?
- How can you "activate" the white space of the page?
- Overall what qualities does your composition have?
- How does your typographic composition relate to the edges of the page?
- Can you manipulate your reader using typographic choices?
- Can you create a sense of scale? Order? Narrative? Hierarchy?
- Can you assign certain adjectives to them? Are they quiet, dynamic, balanced, irregular, etc.?

ASSIGNMENT 7: Final Assignment TBA