

# Art 354: Computer Graphics

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California State University  
**Northridge**

Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication  
DEPARTMENT OF ART, GRAPHIC DESIGN

## Art 354 Computer Graphics —3 UNITS (3-3)

Spring 2012 - Mon. & Wed. 8:00am - 10:45am, AC404

### Office hours and Location

Tu & Th 11am -12:30pm in AC333.

*Students should not get discouraged if office hours do not work with their schedule. The instructor is flexible and can meet on other days and times. Please inquire about other hours.*

### Prerequisites

Art 200, Art 244

### Course Description

Application and principles of computer graphics as a creative technological medium. Practical tutorials in the use of Illustrator CS5 and Photoshop CS5 in the creation of print graphic communications. Tapping into the computer as a powerful medium for visual expression.

### Course Objective

This course will cover Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop CS5 (basic to advanced skill levels). We will deal with both technical and creative aspects of each application.

### Course Student Learning Outcomes

Understand and Apply Knowledge Related to Computer Graphics and Visual Communication.

1. Develop professional skills in the process of design from conceptual development to completion of final product.
2. Conduct research on a design problem and apply research to conceptual development.
3. Produce professional presentations of computer graphic concepts and ideas.
4. Be able to demonstrate the ability to critique others and their own work on the techniques of computer graphic design.

### Required Texts (2)

- *Real World Adobe Illustrator CS5* by Mordy Golding
- *How to Cheat in Photoshop CS5* by Steve Caplin

### Supply List

- 2 External hard drives (western Digital is one of the better brands) (one is for back up and the other is for working)
- USB mini flash drives will be helpful in transferring data, but are not to be used for storage.
- Must have access to a scanner outside of class time.
- Tracing paper
- HB pencils
- White art eraser
- Black felt tip fine pen (for sketches)
- All projects will be printed so please save money for output materials.

### Art Department, Student Learning Outcomes The black SLOs are addressed in this course

- 1 Acquire basic knowledge, theories, and concepts about art; develop a foundation of art skills and a high level of craftsmanship; communicate ideas and concepts through writing, speaking and art making; acquire a competency with the tools and technologies associated with the visual arts.
- 2 Broaden knowledge of ancient through contemporary art; develop an understanding of the theoretical, cultural, and historical contexts of art.
- 3 Apply processes of generating and solving problems in art; analyze, interpret and question traditional methodologies and preconceived notions of art and art making.
- 4 Explore and engage in interdisciplinary forms of art making.
- 5 Develop an appreciation and tolerance of diverse perspectives dealing with art, culture, teaching and learning.
- 6 Become involved in both individual and collaborative art experiences with other students, faculty, and community.
- 7 Develop a career path for an art profession or an art-related field; develop an understanding of the demands and expectations of that area of art profession or art field.

### MISSION

The CSUN Art Department is committed to teaching students to experience and value visual thinking and creative problem solving in art, as well as recognize the concurrent importance of perception, experimentation, innovation, and critical thinking. We encourage students to understand the history and traditions of art with their relevance to social and community concerns as well as the art of different cultures. Students are also encouraged to utilize and interact with the services, facilities and technologies offered throughout the University as well as those provided by the Art Department.

NOTE: Changes in content or activities may occur at instructor's discretion based on course and learning needs, scheduling or other circumstances. SUCH CHANGES WILL NOT AFFECT COURSE POLICIES.

Lower Division  
Required

Lower Division  
Elective

Upper Division  
Elective

## STUDIO PRINCIPLES

- 1 Follow Lectures
- 2 Obtain Quality work
- 3 Practice & Train yourself
- 4 Conduct Research
- 5 Meet w/ Art Director
- 6 Produce Sketches
- 7 Be Involved in Critiques
- 8 Abide by Policies

### Instructor's role

As the teacher of the class, my role is the **Art Director** as well as the **Client**. As the art director / client, it is my responsibility to give you all the guidelines for the project, including but not limited to: deadlines, criteria, instructional assistance and guidance for making the project successful.

As the art director I will be conducting the following:

- 1 Lecture and/or demonstrate: theory, practice, software, strategies, history. *Lectures/ demos will start at the beginning of the class. I want to share as much of what I know to you. So don't be late!*
- 2 Provide criteria and guidelines for all projects and oversee the quality and process. I will adhere to a high standard and will push the graphic designer to produce the highest quality work.
- 3 Explain the process of problem solving, the methods of execution, project completion and presentation. Art Director will guide the students and provide software techniques and resources for practicing and learning independently. (Art Director will not hold your hand.)
- 4 Provide visual examples of previous studio work and examples of other graphic design work, through examples shown in class as well as access to my personal library of books and resources.
- 5 Meet with students as often as possible and provide guidance through one-on-one individual meetings.
- 6 Look at all sketches and progress. Provide tips and techniques for creating thumbnail sketches. The art director will go through all sketches and provide feedback and suggestions.
- 7 Facilitate class critiques and group discussions during project development. Allow students to observe other projects in progress to gain confidence in the verbal presentation of ideas, to express critical evaluation of their own, and other student's projects.
- 8 Monitor and enforce all policies and procedures as listed in the work (syllabus) contract. Distribute payment (grades) in a timely manner and to maintain transparency on payment procedures.

### Graphic Designer's role

As the student, your role is the graphic designer. As the graphic designer in the studio, your payment for working on all activities is your grade. Your work in the studio is evaluated based on your strong work ethic, and the list below.

As the graphic designer you will be required to follow a specific work ethic. You will need to do the following:

- 1 Demonstrations and lectures will be often. It is your responsibility to follow along, take notes, be attentive.
- 2 Work on all projects to the fullest and the highest quality. It is important that your idea, execution, and presentation be clear and clean. Projects should meet the criteria and guidelines listed. Spend quality time on projects and do not waste time with multiple things. *(You might think you can multi-tasks, but this is untrue and a myth. Cognitive studies show, you have to reset your brain when working on multiple things. Multitasking is often mistaken for focusing or blacking out multiple things.)*
- 3 Learn to train yourself through books and online tutorials. Practice and read software manuals and make it a habit to problem solve and find information on your own. Because software changes frequently, you must get into a habit of learning through books and online resources.
- 4 Research and examine curated graphic design works. Looking on the internet will not help you see quality design. graphic design magazines, graphic design annuals, and graphic design books go through a rigorous process to present the best graphic design samples.
- 5 Meet with Art Director (teacher) to go through your project. Obtain as much one-on-one assistance and guidance as possible. A successful project must have the assistance and approval of the art director.
- 6 Work on all sketches and rough drafts as specified. As a graphic designer working in a professional studio, you will be asked to produce sketches for your projects. Some projects you require thumbnail sketches—30, 40, or 50 sketches per project. These sketches should be at the highest quality in line and drawing technique. The graphic designer must learn how to draw in order to produce good sketches. (So "learn to draw."— Saul Bass)
- 7 Critiques happen in graphic design studios fairly often. These group critiques are also brainstorming meetings that will help produce a successful project. Be present and interactive in all critiques and provide feedback on other people's work as well.
- 8 You will need to abide by all the policies and procedures as listed in the work (syllabus) contract. This will ensure proper payment is earned. (see Studio Policies pg. 4)

# STUDIO ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS:

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES/ PRACTICE EXERCISES AND ASSIGNMENTS

There maybe some studio time to work on these activities, but all assignments will completed outside of class time. There will be very little time to work in class. Studio time will be used for lecture/ demonstration by teacher. All assign activities are due on the schedule date and posted in a shared folder. Late assignments will be marked down.

*(See STUDIO POLICIES on page 4 for details about late work.)*

## DESIGN STUDIO PROJECTS:

There are 3 types of studio activities: 1) Studio Practice exercises; 2) Main Studio projects; and 3) Readings. These activities are considered in-studio and out-of-studio assignments and must be handed in for studio payment (course credit). Some in-studio days may be lab works days; however, plan to spend at least 9 hours per week outside of studio time in order to complete these assignments.

**STUDIO PRACTICE EXERCISES:** These practice assignments often coincide with the Main Studio Projects. These activities are vehicles for learning about the skills of the profession. programs or with practical construction. These practices are part of your overall payment (grade). (see points breakdown for value)

**MAIN STUDIO PROJECTS:** These projects are to be completed outside of studio time (at home or in the lab). The main studio projects are given as a way for the student designer to explore and practice visual communication. Student designers are encouraged to push the boundaries of design through innovation and conceptual development. The main studio projects are evaluated according to design, concept development, presentation, and skills. (See project sheets for further details on evaluation criteria)

- Project #1: Rock/ Gig Poster —*Illustrator*
- Project #2: Logo and Stationary System —*Illustrator*
- Project #3: Movie Poster —*Photoshop*
- Project #4: Website design for Movie site —*Photoshop*
- Project #5: PDF- Portfolio of your work- Including class work

**READINGS:** Readings are often connected to practice assignments. But sometimes you will be asked to read something from the internet or watch an online video.

## PROJECT SUBMISSION

All assignment are to be submitted digitally in Drop-Box as well as physically through printouts. (Drop-Box will be explained.) Printed versions have criteria and restrictions, so read creative briefs very carefully.

Students are required to submit a compilation CD at the end of each semester that includes all projects in a portfolio style PDF format. Therefore, you will need to keep a back up of all your work as it is completed. Loss of data is no excuse for not having work in portfolio PDF.

*Students are responsible for obtaining all work by the beginning of the following semester.*

## Late Project Penalties

In the graphic design field, you get paid for a project on the timeliness of its completion. Your payment for this class is a grade. A project not ready at the beginning of a deadline date/critique/presentation (class time) will be penalized by a payment deduction. If the project is handed in after a deadline it is considered late.

Things happen to cause a project to be late, but you must be prepared for anything and you must be ready to except the consequences of a late project.

## THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES OF (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) NON-VIABLE EXCUSES: (for late projects)

- “I had limited lab access. / My computer was down.” Plan ahead for lab time!
- “I was sick. / I was stuck in traffic. / I overslept.” An absence is not an acceptable excuse for a late project. You have to take responsibility for yourself and meet the client (the teacher) with the project.
- “The printing place ruined my project. / The printing place could not print my file. / I am getting the project printed now. ” You need to plan accordingly; don’t wait to print before just before class. Give yourself a day before to make sure nothing goes wrong.
- “I lost my USB drive. / My file was corrupted. / I forgot my USB drive and I was going to print before class.” Forgetting your data or Loosing data is not an acceptable excuse for a late project. You need to make sure you back up all your files on a CD or another hard drive. Plan ahead. Be responsible.

## STUDIO POLICIES:

### Classroom Courtesy:

1. Be on time
2. Do not leave class early
3. Be respectful: to teacher and classmates always
4. Turn off cell phones: Do not answer your phone in class or walk out of the class to answer your phone. Please turn your phone off and store it in your bag.
5. Focus while in class: Leave all your other class work and problems outside this class.
6. Help others: If someone is struggling help them. We are a community of learners.
7. Practice: Spend the time to focus on your skills and learn as much skills as possible in and outside of class.

### Attendance and Participation

Attendance is mandatory in the studio. Lectures, directions, demonstrations and critiques will not be repeated. If you have missed a studio session, you should always contact your fellow students or the instructor about what was missed before returning to class. **Do not miss studio sessions on project deadline days as you will be marked down for missed deadlines.**

The graphic design studio is a work place. You are paid with a grade. There are 30 sessions in 15 weeks. Like a job, you have sick days. You have 2 sick days for the whole semester. These are paid days where you will not be docked pay (grade) for missing these sessions. More than 2 absences will result in a payment deduction (lowering your final grade.) For each absent your final grade will be deducted 4 points.

For example: if your final grade is a 100 [A] because you have handed in all assignments on time and according to criteria, but you have taken your 2 sick days but you took 3 more unexcused absences, then you will be deducted 12 points from that grade. This means you will have an 88 [B+] Or if you earned a 90 [B+] grade point with 3 absences then you would have a 78 [C+].

The 2 sick days (excused absences) can be used as you like. So save them for when you really need them. If an illness or emergency requires more than 2 sick days (absences), official documentation will be required. Attendance and promptness will greatly affect your overall final grade.

*Reasons for absences must be in writing (with a doctor's signed note or other official paperwork, such as jury duty). Students are responsible for contacting instructor regarding absences, expected late arrivals to class or need to leave class early; no contact with instructor is interpreted as unexcused.*

### Lateness

There are no free lates. You clock in, at the beginning of a studio session. For every late = half of an absence. So 2 points are deducted from your pay (grade). In other words, 2 late's equally an absent, so make sure you are on time.

During the first 10 minutes of the studio session, the instructor will take attendance. If you are not present at this time, you will be marked as absent. Please notify the instructor if you were late or not present during role call. If you are late for more than an hour, you will be marked absent.

### THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES OF (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) NON-VIABLE EXCUSES:

1. Not finding a parking space.
2. Employment obligations.
3. Needed to work on another class.
4. Dog ate my homework.
5. Someone is getting married.
6. Planned a vacation to Hawaii (or elsewhere).
7. Weather: it's too hot, too cold, or it rained.
8. Was printing my project.

### VIABLE EXCUSE examples:

receipt from clinic visit, note from doctor with signature and date, receipt for car service w/date and time, any other type of signed documentation regarding time, date and unavoidable reason for absence.

The university gives authorization to lower grades or fail students for poor attendance and tardiness at the instructor's discretion. (Students have known to get a very low grade because they come late or are absent frequently.) Read studio policies listed on this page.

## ALL CELL PHONES MUST BE OFF OR SILENT DURING CLASS!

Text messaging is included in undesirable phone activities. No internet browsing, video-gaming, text-messaging, working on homework or projects for other classes. If you have an emergency and need to access your messages or place a call during class, please inform instructor in advance.

## NO FACEBOOK, TWITTER, OR ONLINE CHATTING!

If you are spotted doing any of the above, you will be asked to close your laptop or turn off your mobile device. Even if you are using the device for note taking or working on your projects. No exceptions. If you continually do so, you will be asked to sit closer to instructor for constant monitoring.

## \*\*\*VERY IMPORTANT\*\*\*

If a student has any of the following items, they will receive an incomplete on the assignments and will be asked to redo. (This means even if money has been spent on printing and mounting.)

### Therefore avoid the following at all cost:

1. Crooked lines or paper fraying.
2. Pixelated images or graphics
3. Glue residue or dirt marks
4. Uneven folding.
5. Misspelling or grammar problems
6. Any font not approved by professor (check the Font wall for all "Do's and don'ts of fonts)

### None of the following fonts can be used.

#### (Banned Fonts)

- Script fonts must be approved before using. (if you are not sure ask)
- Fonts w/ city names -Chicago, Monaco, New York, Geneva
- Chancery or any calligraphy style

|                       |         |           |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------|
| Arial (use Helvetica) | Peignot | Trebuchet |
| Bauhaus               | Mistral | Verdana   |
| Comic Sans            | Myriad  | Zapfino   |
| Courier               | Sand    |           |
| Hobo                  | Skia    |           |
| Palatino              | Tekton  |           |
| Papyrus               | Times   |           |

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

### ASSESSMENT AND EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Development of concepts that are thoughtful, original and innovative
- Careful attention to execution, technique and completion of projects
- Effective visual and verbal presentation skills - neatness is important and projects should be presented on foam core or whatever is required for the project.
- All visual elements should be neat and clean.
- Active & verbal participation in class activities & critiques
- Attendance with necessary materials and assignment preparation
- Personal challenge and effort in project development
- Deadline compliance
- In class work
- Demonstration of abilities and growth
- Studio principles are followed
- Demonstration of work ethic

## OTHER VALUABLE INFORMATION

### Students with Learning Disabilities

If you have a learning disability or feel that you may have a learning disability, it is suggested that you contact the Center on Disabilities ([codss@csun.edu](mailto:codss@csun.edu); 818-677-2684). You may be encouraged to register in order to be eligible for accommodations.

### Code of Student Conduct:

Essential to the mission of CSUN is a commitment to the principles of academic integrity and ethical behavior. Because the integrity of the academic enterprise of an institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required at CSUN. Adherence to the Academic Honesty Policy reflects the commitment of our community to the value of learning and our core principle of social responsibility.

For information about the Code of Student Conduct, go to <http://www.csun.edu/a&r/soc/studentconduct.html>

## PAYMENT (GRADE)

### GRADE BREAKDOWN

Projects development is evaluated based on a point system as follows:

90% = Excellent, 80% = Good, 70% = Average, 60% = Weak, 50% = Poor, 0% Not Shown

### FINAL GRADE CRITERIA

A 93-100

**A** Clearly stands out as excellent performance and, exhibits mastery of learning outcomes. Meet all the criteria.

A- 90-92

B+ 87-89

B 83-86

**B** Grasps subject matter at a level considered to be good to very good, and exhibits partial mastery of learning outcomes. Meets most of the criteria.

B- 80-82

C+ 77-79

C 73-76

**C** Demonstrates a satisfactory comprehension of the subject matter, and exhibits sufficient understanding and skills to progress in continued sequential learning. Meets some of the criteria.

C- 70-72

D+ 67-69

D 60-66

**D** Quality and quantity of work is below average, exhibits only partial understanding and is not sufficient to progress in the studio sequence. Meets some of the criteria.

F 59-

**F** Quality and quantity of work is below average and not sufficient to progress. Meets very little of the criteria.