

## Typography One Project Four

### What Is Graphic Design?

You will combine type, imagery, and graphics to present an article on the subject of graphic design. Additional content will supplement the main narrative. Your book will use type, image, and graphics to communicate the field of graphic design to the audience.

### Process

1. Create an engaging, multipage document with InDesign.
  - Consider how your design can enhance the interest of the text. What does design about design look like?.
  - Enhance the experience of the text with images and graphics.
  - Be progressive and experimental in your approach. Beyond experimentation with layout, the binding technique allows for variable page dimensions, cutouts, different paper types, etc.
  - Explore page dimensions, inserts, "diecuts", inserts, etc. to develop a unique and engaging book form
2. Explore layout and typography
  - This book will need to present several different types of texts. Explore column structure, alignment, position, formatting and text flow
  - Explore layout strategies that can organize the content and maintain clarity while keeping the reader engaged
  - Develop an organizational structure/grid that provides for both continuity and differentiation
  - Utilize graphic and hierarchical devices to both structure and enhance navigation
  - Experiment with typefaces and font styles that clarify and amplify the subject
  - Utilize hierarchical devices and typographic details to design a document that is both appealing and refined
3. Research/Project Development
  - Read the articles and text. Conduct additional research into the topic to create an appropriate context for the text and to brainstorm layout and imagery. Consult books and websites for more information.
  - Research binding models and develop the form of your book. (in-class examples and on course homepage)
  - Image/Graphics Research. Create illustrations/photographs that you may want to use in the book. Develop a plan to use imagery and graphics to accompany text. Research typefaces.
  - Thumbnail sketches. Investigate layout ideas, organization and grids. Create quick preliminary sketches to generate ideas and potential solutions to the problem. Don't draw out all the individual letters or images. Use shapes and shades of grey to block out type and graphics. Explore visual/verbal relationships
  - Choice/Refinement. Narrow to one or two layout plans. Use the computer and work to actual size. Work quickly, printing out proofs and revising. Use both drawing and digital output at this stage, experimenting with placement of images and text.
  - Comprehensives. Perfect book design. Produce a full scale, bound mock-up of book for critique.

### Final Presentation

1. Use Adobe InDesign to create a multipage, bound book in color.
  - Books will be wire bound and must be at least fourteen pages. Page dimensions are your choice.
  - Front and back covers must be designed for the book (include your name in the design).
  - A Microsoft Word file containing all required text can be found on the class homepage
  - All assigned text must be incorporated into your book.
  - Books must have imagery and graphics to accompany the text. All imagery must be original.
  - Books should include additional hierarchical elements such: as pull-quotes, captions, call-outs, etc.
2. Printing. Plan Ahead! Large files will take longer to print!.
  - With a multi-page document, files will become more complex. Package your document regularly; organize links and fonts. Practice working with the wire binding format and create models.
  - Projects are due on the date announced. **There will be no exceptions or extensions made for binding, printing or access problems.**

## Schedule

- Nov 13 **Due Today:** Project Three. Introduction of Project Four:  
**Homework:** Research the subject. Brainstorm image ideas. Photograph/Draw appropriate imagery  
Explore binding models, determine page dimensions  
Create 50 thumbnail sketches of layout ideas—consider theme and variation
- Nov 15 **Due Today:** Research, notes, sketches, contact sheets, drawing.  
Layout concepts for individual critique.  
**Homework:** Read the article: "Syntax and Communication" by Carter, Meggs, Day. Respond to questions  
(below) in your workbooks.  
Create 3, distinct, full-size black and white layout concepts for critique.  
-sample layouts must experiment with typography, multiple columns, grids, hierarchical  
devices, imagery/graphics.
- Nov 20 **Due Today:** Document spreads and concepts for critique. Carter, Meggs, Day article discussion. Be  
prepared to discuss overall theme of your book and its relationship to the subject.
- Nov 22 Thanksgiving Break
- Nov 27 Binding Demo  
**Homework:** Complete Full-Scale, Bound Book required for critique. Books must be printed in color for  
representation and proofing purposes. Books must be complete with all of the text from the  
two articles, graphics, imagery, hierarchical devices and covers.
- Nov 29 **Due Today:** Polished Comprehensives for critique. Mock-ups must be printed in color, contain all  
information and be bound.
- Dec 4 Work Day. PDF, Drop Box Demo.
- Dec 6 Work Day.
- Dec 11 **Due Today:** Project Four: Submit along with **all** work completed this semester. Workbooks for all projects  
must also be submitted. Be sure to include research notes, sources for paper and images.  
Submit in clean brown paper portfolio, clearly labeled with name and class. Electronic  
documentation of all projects must also be submitted.
- Dec 13 Individual critiques of portfolios will occur during the last week of the semester. You will meet with me  
in AC216 during your designated critique time. Check class list for your time and quietly enter the room,  
setting up your work five minutes before your designated time.

## **Questions** Syntax and Communication

### Syntax and Communication Homework Questions

How is a typographic sign visually dynamic?

How do “word signs” relate to representation?

What are interletter relationships?

How does typographic form become lively?

What spacing concerns are raised by the orientation of lines of type?

What three variables govern the relationship between column and margin?

What three factors affect eye movement across the page?

What are some ways that contrast can be used in formatting columns?

What is typographic space? What is its structure?

What is visual compensation?

In typographic problem solving, what does the designer create?

What is a visual hierarchy?

What are counterpoint and counterpart relationships? What are questioning and answering forms?

Describe visual punctuation, accentuation and typographic joinery.

What is ABA form? How does it improve the communications experience?

How is proportion defined in ABA form?

What is visual correspondence?

## **Main Body Copy**

### **What is Graphic Design?**

*Quentin Newark*

Graphic design is the most universal of all the arts. It is all around us, explaining, decorating, identifying: imposing meaning on the world. It is in the streets, in everything we read, it is on our bodies. We engage with design in road signs, advertisements, magazines, cigarette packets, headache pills, the logo on our t-shirt, the washing label on our jacket. It is not just a modern or capitalistic phenomenon. Streets full of signs, emblems, prices, sale offers, official pronouncements and news would all have been just as familiar to ancient Egyptians, mediaeval Italians or the people of Soviet Russia.

Graphic design performs a number of functions. It sorts and differentiates—it distinguishes one company or organization or nation from another. It informs—it tells us how to bone a duck or how to register a birth. It acts on our emotions, and helps to shape how we feel about the world around us.

There is an old joke amongst graphic designers: 'Bad graphic design never killed anyone'. This is meant to show that design is inconsequential, ultimately decorative, a question merely of picking one typeface or color rather than another that would work just as well. Journalists delight in using the adjective 'designer' to stand for a particular kind of cynical consumerism that distracts us with a jazzy visual appearance: fancy bottle-tops, cod-Victorian labels, new logos for unethical companies for example. This has led to phrases like 'designer water', 'designer jeans', even 'designer babies'. Depressingly, graphic designers do sometimes play a small part in producing this tinsel.

Imagine if graphic design was banned, or just simply disappeared overnight. There would be no written word, no newspapers, no magazines, no internet, no science to speak of, books for the wealthy only, cowrie shells for money, a few items of literature, a handful of universities and only the crudest medicine. Everything would have to be painstakingly written by hand. Without design's process and ingredients—structure and organization, word and image, differentiation—we would have to receive all our information by the spoken word. We would enter another Dark Ages, a thousand years of ignorance, prejudice, superstition and very short lifespans.

Rather than a frivolous extra, the uses and purposes of graphic design are so integral to our modern world—civilization—that Marshall McLuhan named us "typographic man".

### **Function versus aesthetics**

The father of the term 'graphic design' was an American, William Addison Dwiggins—a very successful designer who produced advertising material in the form of posters, pamphlets and adverts in newspapers and periodicals. In 1922, he wrote: "In the matter of layout forget art at the start and use horse-sense. The printing-designer's whole duty is to make a clear presentation of the message—to get the important statements forward and the minor parts placed so that they will not be overlooked. This calls for an exercise of common sense and a faculty for analysis rather than for art." In this essay, we can see straightaway what the initial ingredients of graphic design were thought to be a century ago, using Dwiggins' terminology: type letters, white spaces, decorations, borders and such accessories and pictures.

Dwiggins saw graphic design as almost entirely concerned with the preparation of the artwork to be printed. One of his alternative terms for graphic design was 'super-printing' (super meaning 'above' or 'before'). But today graphic design and typography are generally understood to be quite distinct. Typography is the arrangement of the mechanical alphabet, type, and by implication is usually focused on printed reproduction. Graphic design is a broader term and includes typography, as well as other graphic disciplines: image-making and manipulation, the possibilities of which have broadened considerably since Dwiggins' day; logo design and identity schemes; exhibi-

tion design; packaging and so on. Much of this work is reproduced by methods other than simply printing on paper: photographic transparencies, digital outputs, colored vinyl, sodium light, paint, wood and metal, cathode-ray tube and so on.

Dwiggins' ideas about design are concerned with achieving predictable results. Printertypographer, Francis Meynell, had a more thrilling approach to the role of typography—and therefore graphic design. In 1923, he wrote a piece called 'With twenty-six soldiers of lead I have conquered the world'. "All the heights and depths and breadths of tangible and natural things—landscapes, sunsets, the scent of hay, the hum of bees, the beauty which belongs to eyelids (and is falsely ascribed to eyes); all the immeasurable emotions and motions of the human mind, to which there seems no bound; ugly and terrible and mysterious thoughts and things, as well as beautiful—all are compassed, restrained, ordered in a trifling jumble of letters. Twenty-six signs!"

In contrast to Dwiggins, Meynell emphasizes the poetic and aesthetic content of design. This could be because Meynell type-set and printed books—including Shakespeare—whereas Dwiggins dealt with uninspiring commercial messages. But in these two extracts we have the seed of the most fundamental tension that exists within design. One position states that design is essentially a functional activity, with the needs of the paying client foremost. The opposing view regards design as too significant to be seen in such terms, and that it ought to be used in ways that emphasize and explore its expressive potential: function versus aesthetic possibility. These two ideas are always grinding against one another, both within the field of graphic design and within each individual graphic designer.

Graphic designers constantly struggle with these two models—the model of the artist, and the model of the artisan. The model of the artist is: an individual whose work is concerned with self-discovery. Only she can know when a piece of art is complete, or what the materials or subject matter for each new piece are to be. The purpose of art, put in the broadest terms by Susan Sontag, is "modifying consciousness and organizing new modes of sensibility". This is a purpose that challenges the very idea of purposefulness. Who is the judge? There is no 'client' in art (rarely in modern art as there was in the art of previous centuries), no-one who funds an activity so diffuse and subjective, who might set an objective, a purpose, and call it successful or unsuccessful. And who exactly is the viewer, who can say when it works or when it does not work, or when it fails to do something as difficult to define as "modifying consciousness"?

Art sets out to be unique. Since the artist is not exactly sure of where she wants to get to, the artistic process is experimental, speculative. And it must often fail. When it works, it does so almost by accident. It sets out to be expressive; in Marshall McLuhan's words, each piece of art is a new "sensory mix". It is communication as broad and loose as it can be defined.

Set against this is the model of the artisan: an individual who represents a craft. The artisan is fashioning an object—a book, a bench, an inscription—that must work and be successful, or she will not be paid. She needs to develop methods that are repeatable and reliable.

Her process is purposeful, her aesthetic style expressive within the terms of the purpose. As Stanley Morison put it, typography has "only accidentally aesthetic ends". Communication is focused within the terms of the commission.

These two models represent the poles between which the graphic designer must choose a position. Is she to produce work that transcends something as mundane as purpose determined by someone else, using a process that aims at uniqueness, and risk failure? Or is she to work using 'horse-sense', with novelty lower on her list, satisfying herself with the reliably successful execution of each task?

### **What is a graphic designer?**

One way of looking at design is to see it not as finished pieces, but the process itself. Ernst Gombrich, in his

seminal book *The Story of Art*, wrote that “there really is no such thing as Art. There are only artists...” If we say ‘there is no such thing as graphic design, only graphic designers’, what defines a graphic designer?

Is everyone a designer, as a recent publication by Mieke Gerritzen asserted? It goes on to say (in Dutch-English), “‘Everyone is a designer’ is a marketing demographic, not a statement about the logic of a practice. While everyone has the same statistical chance of chancing upon a serendipitous moment or two, creating a practice of design still requires linking up hundreds if not thousands of discrete decisions into systems that extend from part to part, from project to project, from year to year.”

What are the decisions that make up the practice of design? I suggest there are two fundamental activities that can be found in the practice of every graphic designer. The first I want to call ‘making sense’. No designer, however contrary, ever said, ‘I want to make this more complicated than it needs to be’, or ‘I want to leave someone with no idea as to what this is’. The designer’s instinct is to simplify and clarify. “Design is the child of the concept of efficiency;” says Jorge Frascara. All design has to give shape to its raw material, sequence it, order and sort it, give it a hierarchy. The material forms of design—books, posters, signs, packages, webpages—insist that something needs to be read first, seen first. It follows then that there is an order, something first, and something last. Even the most intricate and florid design is a clear map, indicating with scale, color and position the issues and subjects that the designer wants the viewer to comprehend.

The second I want to call ‘creating difference’. The product, company, or event needs to be unique and easily recognized, picked out and distinguished from thousands of others. The designer wants her work to stand out, not only from the work of other designers, but also from her other work. The compulsion to create difference is unrelenting, the impact and power of visual form that is new is deeply embedded in all designers. Fetishization of the ‘original’ drives the constant renewal of the language of design. It sends designers in search of new ways of drawing type and novel combinations of color. It drives efforts to escape the grid, and lies behind the need to loot art, film, television and the vernacular for ever fresher ways of making typefaces and juxtaposing images and words.

All design, even the newest new work, follows existing patterns, codes, shapes and genres. These patterns constitute the fabric of visual language—a language that is constantly being evolved and expanded, but, like any verbal or written utterance, all visual expression has to draw on its grammar if it is to be meaningful.

The graphic designer then is someone who is always making sense of her material, and mediating it through the forms and codes of visual language.

***Additional text that must be contained in the book:***

“The nature of process, to one degree or another, involves failure. You have at it. It doesn’t work. You keep pushing. It gets better. But it’s not good. It gets worse. You got at it again. Then you desperately stab at it, believing ‘this isn’t going to work.’ And it does!”

Saul Bass

“It is important to use your hands. This is what distinguishes you from a cow or a computer operator.”

Paul Rand

“No one loves authenticity like a graphic designer. And no one is quite as good at simulating it.”

Michael Bierut

“Graphic design will save the world right after rock and roll does.”

David Carson

“Good design is all about making other designers feel like idiots because that idea wasn’t theirs.”

Frank Chimero

“The life of a designer is a life of fight. Fight against the ugliness. Just like a doctor fights against disease. For us, the visual disease is what we have around, and what we try to do is cure it somehow with design.”

Massimo Vignelli

“A designer knows he has achieved perfection not when there is nothing left to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.”

Antoine d Saint-Exupéry

“My M.O. became about trying stuff and not worrying about the grid or the structure until I have a feeling for what I’m doing. Then you tidy it up after. If you start off tidy, it’s really hard to get messy.”

April Greiman

“My work is play. And I play when I design. I even looked it up in the dictionary, to make sure that I actually do that, and the definition of “play,” number one, was “engaging in a childlike activity or endeavor,” and number two was “gambling.” And I realize I do both when I’m designing.”

Paula Scher

“...graphic design, in the end, deals with the spectator, and because it is the goal of the designer to be persuasive or at least informative, it follows that the designer’s problems are twofold: to anticipate the spectator’s reactions and to meet his own aesthetic needs.”

Paul Rand

## 25 Common Graphic Design Terms

### 1. CMYK

Also known as four-color process, this abbreviation stands for cyan, magenta, yellow and key, which refers to black. This is a color model that refers to the four inks used in some color printing.

### 2. RGB

This abbreviation stands for red, green and blue. It’s a color mode for all images shown through an electronic display, such as a computer or television.

### 3. Kerning

The process of adjusting the spacing between specific characters in a font helps you to create proportional and balanced typography.

### 4. Trim

This is where your printed piece will be cut down to its correct size. It represents the final dimensions of your project.

### 5. Bleed

This refers to the area outside the trim that still prints in case the cuts are not exact. It gives the printer a small amount of space to account for the movement of the paper and design inconsistencies.

### 6. Pica

A typesetting unit of measurement equaling one-sixteenth of an inch. InDesign and other design software use picas as a way to measure size and space.

### 7. Comp

A rough version of your design that is often created as a pencil sketch, but it can be digital as well.

### 8. Serif

This term refers to the little edges that stick out from letters in certain typefaces. For example, at the end of the letter “T” at the top left, right and at the base of the letter. Common serif fonts include Times New Roman, Georgia and Garamond.

## 9. Sans serif

A style of typeface in which there are no small lines at the end of each character stroke. Common sans serif typefaces include Arial, Helvetica and Verdana.

## 10. Lorem ipsum

Lorem ipsum is a form of “filler” used as a placeholder for text in a design. This scrambled Latin text allows designers to create design layouts without having access to the final written copy.

## 11. Hierarchy

A system for grouping the type based on the order of its importance so the reader can easily navigate through the content.

## 12. Resolution

Resolution is the image quality in the design based on dots per inch for printed works and pixels per inch for digital work. The higher the resolution, the crisper the photos will be.

## 13. Grid

An organized framework with even columns and rows that helps designers to align design elements in a more efficient and accurate way.

## 14. Vector graphic

An image made up of paths and curves (vectors) rather than a grid of pixels. Unlike raster images, these are able to be enlarged without losing image quality. Vector graphic file extensions include .EPS, .AI, .SVG and .DRW.

## 15. Bitmap

Defines a display space and the color for each pixel or “bit” in the display space. It is characterized by the number of pixels and the information content per pixel.

## 16. JPEG

A JPEG is an example of a graphic image file type that contains bitmaps. It is created for compressing full-color or grey-scale digital images of real-world scenes. It was not designed for lettering or cartoons.

## 17. Pixel

The smallest unit of a digital image or graphic that can be displayed and represented on a digital display device.

## 18. Tracking

Similar to, yet importantly different from kerning, tracking is adjusting the spacing throughout an entire word. Once kerning has been used to determine the right spacing between each letter, tracking can be used to change the spacing equally between every letter at once.

## 19. Saturation

Refers to the intensity of color in an image. Increased saturation causes colors to appear purer while decreased saturation causes colors to appear more washed out.

## 20. Tone

Tone is the lightness or darkness of a design element. Tone is crucial because it is responsible for creating the contrast between light and dark that will draw maximum attention in a design.

## 21. Style guide

A set of design standards for a specific brand to ensure complete consistency in the style and formatting of design assets. This often includes guidelines for color schemes, typefaces and how logos are used and placed within an asset, among others.

## 22. Orphan

Also known as a widow, this term refers to the words or short lines at the beginning or end of a paragraph. These words are isolated from the rest of the content, often causing an unwanted focal point.

## 23. Mock-Up

A realistic representation of how the design will look; a scale or full-size model of the design used to demonstrate, promote and validate the design. This can also be referred to as a “proof.”

## 24. Negative space

The space surrounding the words and shapes in your design. Some designers choose to use the negative space to create an additional design, like the arrow found between the “E” and the “X” of the FedEx logo.

## 25. Typography

This is the art of using typefaces to communicate. This skill encompasses both the typefaces and the negative space surrounding them.