

JOUR 203

Principles of Visual Communications
T/TH 8:30 – 9:45a, SMJC 106
Section 2

Professor

Jason Porter

jp14@email.sc.edu

Graduate Assistant

Alistair Cameron

alistair@email.sc.edu

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the theory and history of visual communication in the mass media, with an emphasis on informational and persuasive messages created by graphic, photographic, and multimedia processes. Students will complete assignments that require them to explore design principles for print and onscreen media as they gain an understanding of design tools and techniques.

Prerequisites

None

Learning Outcomes

After passing JOUR 203, all students should be able to:

- List the major principles that are the building blocks of good design for printed and onscreen content such as unity, harmony, contrast, balance, proportion, center of visual interest and rhythm.
- Recognize the significant role of visual communications in contemporary media and culture.
- Identify the major theories of visual perception and explain why they are useful.
- Identify the terminology of type and the expressive qualities of type.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the role of color in the communications process including basic color theory, color mixing and interrelationships, the use and mechanics of color in printing and onscreen processes.

- Identify the elements of good composition in photography and videography.
- Identify the influence of prominent visual communicators, art movements and cultural trends on the aesthetic values of commercial and editorial art and photographic imagery.
- State a specific method for delivering a reasoned critique of visual messages created for print and onscreen media.
- Demonstrate the ability to use appropriate software to create successful communications combining typography, color, illustration, still and moving images and sound.
- Identify major legal and ethical issues related to the creation and use of photo- graphic and graphic imagery.

Methods

Students will learn by:

- Studying the history of visual communications in the fine arts and mass media.
- Studying principles of design, typography, color, photography, illustration, printing and paper use from lectures and assigned readings.
- Critically analyzing other work
- Doing a series of in-class and out-of-class assignments

The Professor

My name is Jason Porter. I have created art as an animator, illustrator, designer, and motion graphics artist for web, video games, film, and television commercials. My current research is in interactive young children's literature and augmented reality. To find out more about my work, my website is jasonthewebsite.com.

Communications

My office hours are Monday and Wednesday, 8:30 – 9:30am in SJMC 238. This is the best way for you to come in and get help while working on your projects. I am also available outside of office hours by appointment only. Class communications, when outside of office hours, will primarily take place via UofSC email (jp14@email.sc.edu) or the class Slack channel. Please check your email and Slack daily for class communications.

Please email/slack Alistair with questions about grades being recorded.

Course Materials

Recommended Reading:

- *White Space is Not Your Enemy* by Golombisky and Hagen. Focal Press.

Useful website links, slides, course videos, assignments, and grading information will be posted on Blackboard throughout the semester. I have also set up a slack channel for further class discussion and communication with your colleagues and myself.

- Use the following link to join the class Slack Channel:

A subscription to Lynda.com is highly recommended. You can get a subscription for free by using a Richland County Library card – free to you as a UofSC student. This online resource has excellent video tutorials for all types of software, especially the Adobe Creative Suite. A subscription to the Creative Suite is not required but may be helpful.

Technology

To participate in learning activities and complete assignments, you will need:

- Access to a working computer, your own or the university's, that has a current operating system with updates installed.
- Reliable internet access and a UofSC email account;
- A current Internet browser that is compatible with Blackboard; Use this link to check compatibility, as it changes:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support/Browser_Checker

Technology Support

If you have problems with your computer or technology; have IT-related questions; or need support, including Blackboard, please contact the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) Service Desk at (803) 777-1800 or submit an online request through the [Self-Service Portal](#) or visit the [Carolina Tech Zone](#).

University Labs

This class is designed for you to be able to excel with the provided lab facilities in SJMC building; there is more than enough hardware and software to serve all who need it. Many labs have all the tools you need; some may have only a few. Familiarize yourself with the different labs, both the software and the peripherals.

You will not be able to use the same workstation every time you sit down to work. This is normal. If this troubles you, get your own computer. If you use a private computer, you are responsible for making sure that it is powerful enough to do the jobs you need, that it has the appropriate software, storage, and methods of output.

Your work will be held to the same standards regardless of the hardware or software you use. Hardware or software issues, whether using your own equipment or University-owned, is never an excuse for late, missing, or unacceptable work. Technical problems are part of the

process and solving them as they come while allowing yourself enough time to make the deadline is part of your coursework.

Expectations

You will be required to use a variety of visual-communications skills, techniques, and tools to complete the assignments, projects, and tests for this course.

I will demonstrate the use of these tools in class, but it is up to you to master them—this takes time and patience. This class will require a good amount of out-of-class work. You will not succeed in this class if you fail to consistently watch the outside-of-class videos and do the tutorials.

Unless specified for “laptop days” the use of laptops, tablets, mobile phones, or any other electronic device during class is not permitted. Research continuously shows that taking notes by hand is more conducive to learning than typing out your notes.

Make a paper copy of the last page of the syllabus, write your name legibly on it, and sign it. It's sort of the Van-Halen-brown-M&Ms (<http://bit.ly/2bgOlfs>) section of the syllabus that gives me a little assurance that you're paying attention to details. Turn it in to me by the deadline—before I read this sentence out loud on the first day of class to receive 10 points extra credit.

Grading Policy & Scale

Your final grade is based on the number of points you earn, weighted as follows:

Item	Points	Percent
Flyer	100	20%
Website	100	20%
Test 1	100	20%
Test 2	100	20%
Test 3	100	20%
TOTAL	500	100%

You are not in competition with other students for grades. I will not negotiate grades after the fact, regardless of personal feelings, what you feel you deserve, the status of your financial aid or athletic eligibility, or how close you may think you are to the next grade level. I expect your best and most focused effort in your work at all times. This is a minimum, and it should go without mention. The fact that someone works hard in a college course doesn't have any bearing on how I score or evaluate work.

I am unable to discuss grades or other personal academic matters via email; this is what office hours are for, so please come see me in person with any questions. If you wish to dispute the grade of a specific assignment/project, you may do so during my office hours the week following the return of the grade. After 5 days, your ability to dispute ends.

Grade	Percent Range	Standards
A	100 - 90	Excellent work
B+	89.9 - 85	Exceeds standards
B	84.9 - 80	Average work
C+	79.9 - 75	Slightly below standards
C	74.9 - 70	Below standards
D+	69.9 - 65	Unsatisfactory work
D	64.9 - 60	Very unsatisfactory work
F	59.9 - below	Fails to meet standards

Deadlines

You will lose 1/3 of your grade for each day your assignment is late. That means that after 3 days late, the assignment is worth zero points. This includes cases of absences, unless they are documented emergencies whereby more than three days extra time is required. Please be responsible and plan ahead. This class is just too large for me to be able to juggle organizing assignments that are trickling in late.

Whose Stuff Is This?

The work you make in this class is yours. You hold the copyright; you can do whatever you want with it afterwards. You are, however, making the work under the auspices of this course. As such, the work you make in this course might be used in the future, without necessarily contacting you in advance (though we will always make a good faith effort to contact you). For example, I may show your work to future or prospective students, use it in whole or part in promotional material for SJMC, include it in future compilations, and so forth (appropriate credit to you will always be given).

Attendance

I will not take attendance.

All slides and course videos will be posted on blackboard. I encourage you to come to class though as you will quickly learn that the slides are somewhat useless without the in-class lecture. Please do not ask me to fill you in on course material you missed because of an absence—this is your responsibility.

Academic Integrity

The University of South Carolina has clearly articulated its policies governing academic integrity, and students are encouraged to carefully review the policy on the Honor Code in the [Carolina Community](#). Any deviation from these expectations will result in academic penalties as well as disciplinary action.

Plagiarism

Using the words or ideas of another as if they were one's own is a serious form of academic dishonesty. If another person's complete sentence, syntax, key words, or the specific or unique ideas and information are used, one must give that person credit through proper citation.

Copyright/Fair Use Statement

Students will cite and/or reference any materials that they use in this course which they do not create. You, as students, are expected to not distribute any of these materials, resources, quizzes, tests, homework assignments, etc. (whether graded or ungraded).

Diversity and Inclusion

The university is committed to a campus environment that is inclusive, safe, and respectful for all persons, and one that fully embraces the Carolinian Creed. To that end, all course activities will be conducted in an atmosphere of friendly participation and interaction among colleagues, recognizing and appreciating the unique experiences, background, and point of view each student brings. You are expected at all times to apply the highest academic standards to this course and to treat others with dignity and respect.

Accessibility, Disability, and Triggers

I am committed to ensuring course accessibility for all students. If you have a documented disability and expect reasonable accommodation to complete course requirements, please notify me at least one week before an accommodation is needed. Please also provide [SDRC](#) documentation to me before requesting accommodation. The Student Disability Resource Center is in LeConte College Room 112A, sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu Likewise, if you are aware of cognitive or emotional triggers that could disrupt your intellectual or mental health, please let me know so that I can be aware in terms of course content.

Student Success Center

In partnership with USC faculty, the [Student Success Center](#) (SSC) offers a number of programs to assist you in better understanding your course material and to aid you on your path to success. SSC programs are facilitated by professional staff, graduate students, and trained undergraduate peer leaders who have previously excelled in their courses.

Library Resources

The university [library](#) has great resources to locate meaningful research and for finding out how to cite materials in your projects. Remember

that if you use anything that is not your own writing or media (quotes from books, articles, interviews, websites, movies – everything) you must cite the source in MLA format.

Weekly Schedule

The class schedule is subject to change depending on how fast or slow we move through the material.

Date	Day	Topic	Details
14 - Jan	T	Visual Communications	
16 - Jan	R	What is Visual Literacy	Module 1-5
21 - Jan	T	History of Visual Communication	Module 6-16
23 - Jan	R	Early Visual Communication	
28 - Jan	T	Modern Visual Communication	
30 - Jan	R	Semiotics	Module 17-18
04 - Feb	T	Gestalt Principles	Module 19-21
06 - Feb	R	Principles of Design	
11 - Feb	T	Test 1	
13 - Feb	R	Understanding Color	Module 22-27
18 - Feb	T	Resolution / Raster / Vector	
20 - Feb	R	Photoshop – Laptop Day	
25 - Feb	T	Typography	Module 28-31
27 - Feb	R	Using Space	
03 - Mar	T	History of Photography	Module 32-34
05 - Mar	R	Contemporary Photography	
10 - Mar	T	Spring Break	
12 - Mar	R	Spring Break	
17 - Mar	T	Post Modernism	
19 - Mar	R	Test 2	
24 - Mar	T	History of Cinema	Module 35-37
26 - Mar	R	Video and Digital Cinema	Flyer Due
31 - Mar	T	TBD	
02 - Apr	R	Web Planning	
07 - Apr	T	Wix – Laptop Day	Module 41-46
09 - Apr	R	Copyright and Ethics	
14 - Apr	T	Deep Fakes	
16 - Apr	R	Advertising	
21 - Apr	T	Immersive Communication	
23 - Apr	R	Final Review	Website Due
30 - Apr	T	Test 3, 9 - 11:30am	