

Fall 2011

## GRA2164C: Advanced Graphics Projects

9:00 - 12:30 am • TBA • August 23 to December 6

Benjamin Gillham, MFA • gillhamb@nwfsc.edu • 729-6019 • Office: 1:00 - 3:30 pm MTWR

Welcome to Advanced Graphics Projects! The Northwest Florida State College Catalog describes this course as follows: “An advanced Graphic Design course addressing common Graphic Design problems. Students will explore advanced software functionality and creative, aesthetic, and portfolio development. Access to a high quality digital camera required.”

This is a course where students explore a large multifaceted project in order to demonstrate strong technical competencies, problem solving skills, and creative development capabilities. It is important that you demonstrate in your portfolio that you are capable of developing complex graphic design products. In past semesters you have worked on a number of single page documents. Time has come for you to revisit InDesign and do something more challenging.

You will be working on one project throughout the semester. This project will utilize your photographic, illustration, and graphic design skills. You will be producing a magazine. A magazine has both commercial and literary content. It contains articles and advertisements. Both of these things incorporate copy writing and visual support material. It is rare that a designer would be responsible for all of the content and all of the art and the process of publication. It does happen that one person is in charge of most of these things, so you need to be prepared.

This project will have several stages. First is the idea generation phase. What will your magazine be about? This isn't a simple thing to determine considering a magazine has to live for month after month, year after year. Your idea must be one that is constantly renewed with new information and interest over time. Because of this, the idea phase can't just be “I'm interested in fishing, so I'm going to make a magazine about fishing.” You have to think through a range of content that can be included in your articles. You should be able to imagine dozens of them before you ever get started. If you can't, then your magazine will be in trouble before the first issue is complete.

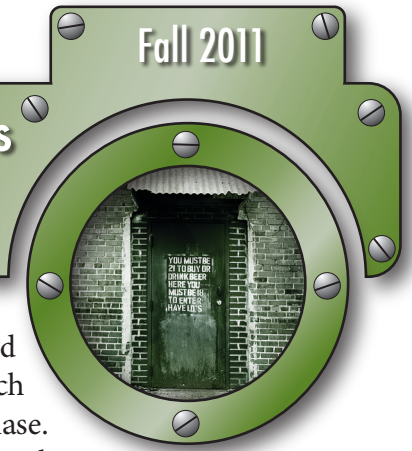
The second phase is the research and development phase.

Here you will be out gathering content to include in the magazine. This should be done as much as possible before you proceed any farther. The design process for a complex publication like a magazine is largely dictated by the content that is to be communicated. Content surprises cause a major increase in workload in the design phases. In this second phase, research and write several articles and explore possible advertising content.

The third is graphic design. Once you have developed the content you want to publish, you can make good decisions on how to organize and structure it. Every magazine has a well developed “graphic standard” which includes grid proportions, typographic conventions, and key illustrative themes which may include graphic elements that communicate the structural formatting of the magazine. You will develop a strong graphic standard for your magazine. In the design phase you will also produce all of the photographic imagery and illustrations necessary.

The final phase is actual publication. We don't have a printing press, so we can't actually do this stage of the process, but we will produce a “press ready” set of files that represent what you would take to a printer when you are ready to go to press. You will go through the “pre-flight” process in InDesign and package your magazine. In the pre-flight process, you will do a final pass to copy-edit the text, ensure that all graphics are in the correct format. This means that all photographic imagery will be in CMYK mode with at least 300-400ppi resolution etc. InDesign checks to be sure that all placed graphics are present, and organizes them into a system of folders called a package. This is the information that you will burn to CD and take to your printer (or in this case turn in at the end of the semester).

I hope that you are excited about this challenge and make the most of it as we go through the semester. You will prove to yourself that you can do it!



## **Equipment/Supplies:**

(1) Several blank CD-R discs for storing your work. USB memory keys work but are slow and somewhat unreliable. You are required to maintain the integrity of your data. Failure of a disk will not be considered excuse for late work. You **MUST** back up your own data. The computers may occasionally crash, as all computers do, so save early and often so that you don't lose several hours work!

(2) You will need a good digital camera that produces quality images. A digital SLR camera like Canon's Digital Rebel XT, XTi, XSi, or T1i are good ones to consider. Specific recommendations are available.

(3) It is recommended that you have access to a good quality computer and Adobe Creative Suite outside of class time. Open lab time will be available, but limited. You should consider buying the complete Adobe Creative Suite of applications. A good choice would be either the "Design Standard" or "Design Premium" bundle. These are available at a highly discounted price through the NWFSC Store, or online from academic software vendors. Do **NOT** buy software from illegitimate super discount vendors. Many times you will receive illegal bootleg copies, and you may have problems with the software itself, or the serial numbers provided. Specific recommendations for computers are available. Generally, the Apple Macintosh® is the standard of our industry. It is largely a myth that "Macs are more expensive."

## **Attendance Issues:**

Attendance in this course is extremely important as it is a hands on learning experience, not a lecture based course. You will be allowed two absences. After that, any additional absence will result in an immediate excessive absence report, which may result in your withdrawal from the course, or an automatic one letter grade drop in your final grade per absence. An excused absence may be given upon consultation with me but only in case of illness or emergency. **YOU WILL NOT PASS THIS COURSE** if your attendance becomes a problem. If you have more than four absences of any kind by November 1 (the last day for a W grade or to change to audit), you should withdraw from the course. If we get to the end of the semester and you have an excessive number of absences, you will receive an "F"

Note that showing up late for the class, leaving early, or only staying for ten minutes does not constitute attendance. Attendance will be taken at random times during the class period, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you were recorded as present if there is any question in your mind.

In unusual situations like acute illness, death in the family etc., you may receive an "Incomplete" as your grade. Incomplete grades are made up outside of normal class attendance in open lab settings during the semester following receipt of the "I" grade. You must inform me of your situation and discuss your options. Incomplete grades are not automatic. See the NWF State College catalog for detailed descriptions of the college policies related to grading, attendance, etc.

You are expected to attend all class meetings. "I don't have anything to do" does not equal an excused absence. It is evidence that you are not participating in the course in a manner appropriate for an art student. Each and every class session is designed for you to have the freedom to explore the creative process with the tools at hand. Even if you have the software at home, you are still required to come to class. This is a basic college policy.

## **Course Requirements:**

This is an art class. Your grades are based on your instructor's professional judgment of the success or failure of your concepts, aesthetics, and effort in completing assignments. In this class, you will be graded at two intervals. Once at midterm for a review of your progress to that point, and once at the end of the semester when you turn in your finished product.

Your graded work will be placed in the designated area of the studio. If you are uncomfortable with this, I can hold it in the office until you choose to pick it up. Graded work will be retained for approximately 4-6 weeks into the following semester. If it is not picked up in this time period, it may be recycled. **ALL PROJECTS MUST BE TURNED IN INSIDE A YELLOW BUSINESS ENVELOPE AVAILABLE IN THE COLLEGE STORE, OR AT OFFICE SUPPLY STORES.**

In case of a campus emergency (power outages, hurricanes, war, famine, bee swarms, faculty illness) on a due date, the due date will be pushed back to the next available class session. If the College is closed for an extended period of a week or more, an adjustment of the course schedule will occur and you will be made aware of it the

first day back. Late work will receive a 1 grade penalty—note the final project is due the last day of class, and therefore, cannot be turned in late.

Students are responsible for adherence to all College policies and procedures, including those related to academic freedom, cheating, classroom conduct, and other items included in the NWF State College Catalog and Student Handbook. Students should be familiar with the rights and responsibilities detailed in the 2009-10 NWF State College Catalog and Student Handbook. Plagiarism, cheating or any other form of academic dishonesty is a serious breach of student responsibilities and may trigger consequences which range from a failing grade to formal disciplinary action. Use of another person's imagery or designs constitutes plagiarism in this course. Only use your own photographs or other imagery!

As a courtesy to other students and the learning process, students may not bring children with them to class sessions. Health and safety concerns prohibit children from accompanying adult students in any lab, shop, office or classroom or other college facility where potential hazards exist. If a child-related emergency means you must miss class, let me know when you return.

If you have special needs for which accommodations may be appropriate to assist you in this class, please contact the Office of Services for Students with Special Needs in Building C-1 on the Niceville Campus, or call 729-5372 (TDD1-800-955-8771 or Voice 1-800-955-8770). If you have special needs, you also must speak with me directly in the first week of class so that I fully understand and can create a plan to address your needs.

**Due to the nature of our facility and the sensitivities of our students, please refrain from wearing colognes or perfumes to class.**

**What do your grades mean?**

**A=** Work turned in on time. Work that clearly exceeds the basic expectations of the assignment. Work of unusual quality or quantity and seriousness of effort.

**B=** Work turned in on time. Work that exhibits a clear attempt at exceeding the basic expectations of the assignment. Work exhibiting better than average quality or quantity and seriousness of effort.

**C=** Work of average quality and quantity. Work that satisfies essential basic requirements. Work that would benefit from further effort from student and more student interaction with instructor.

**D=** Work that is clearly not exhibiting the basic requirements of the assignment in either quality or quantity.

An increase in effort is clearly needed and closer interaction with instructor is strongly suggested.

**F=** Work that fails to meet the lowest expectations for the assignment. This may be due to a simple lack of effort or may suggest that the student pursue other career goals.

**Due Dates:**

Midterm Review Package: October 11

Includes at least one cover, and the TOC, and one finished written article with illustrations/photos.

Final Review Package: December 6

Includes a finished, pre-flighted InDesign Package, and a PDF export of your full magazine.

