



## MCOM 415, Media Graphics

### Fall 2017 Syllabus

*Location:* VB207

*Meeting Time:* Monday 6:30 – 9:10 pm

*Class website:* <http://www.adammarton.com/mediagraphics>

*Instructor:* Adam Marton

*Email:* amarton@towson.edu

*Office location:* SA166

*Office hours:* 30 mins before and after class, please email to schedule appointment.

### Course Description

The student will explore the visual communication potential of type, white space, information graphics, photographs and interactive design. At the end of the course, the student should be able to understand and utilize design fundamentals as well as produce a wide variety of graphics.

### Grading Criteria

Descriptions for each of the assignments below will be distributed and discussed in class.

#### **Class Participation** – *10% of your final grade*

Research will be completed outside of class and used as discussion points throughout the semester. Credit is earned by students who are present and contribute to the discussion.

#### **Written Exercises** – *10% of your final grade*

- Case Study (5%)
- Well designed web sites (5%)

#### **Projects** – *80% of your final grade*

- Project 1: Ad Design (20%)
- Project 2: Information Graphics (10%)
- Project 3: Logos / Branding (10%)
- Project 4: Newsletter Design ( 20%)
- Project 5: Web Site Design (20%)

### Classroom etiquette

*Use of cell phones is not permitted.* Responsible use of desktop computers for course materials only is required. Respectful behaviors to faculty and fellow students, including appreciation of diverse student population and opinions, are expected.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory for all classes. This course requires ongoing interaction between students and instructor in the form of critiques, software instruction, and discussion. *More than two unexcused absence will cause your letter grade to drop 5% for each additional unexcused absence (i.e. 3 absences = -5%, 4 absences = -10%).* Absences will jeopardize your overall success in this class. The student is responsible for coming to class prepared for full participation in class activities. Only documented medical or legal excuses will be accepted.

## Grading Policy and Late Submissions

You will complete projects, written exercises, and participate in classroom discussion during the course of the semester. You may submit one revision for projects 1 - 5 by a specific date stated in the class schedule. Your grade on the revision will be your final grade. No revisions will be accepted for any written exercises or project 6. All course activities have specific due dates and will not be accepted late. Assignments not completed on time cannot be submitted as a revision. No exceptions.

## Grading System

Students may not attempt a class for the third time without prior permission from the Academic Standards Committee.

<b>A</b>	<b>93-100</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>80-82.9</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>63-66.9</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>90-92.9</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>75-79.9</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>60-62.9</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>87-89.9</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>70-74.9</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0-59.9</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>83-86.9</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>67-69.9</b>		

## Textbooks

*Required:* The Newspaper Designer's Handbook by Tim Harrower

*Required:* D.I.Y.: Design it yourself by Ellen Lupton.

*Optional:* The Non-Designer's Design Book by Robin Williams.

*These books can be purchased at the TU bookstore or online.*

## Materials

A TU email account

Thumb Drive

## Lab Hours

Please take advantage of the computer lab to complete work outside of class if you do not have access to a computer at home or the appropriate software. You will need time outside of class to complete each project. The lab hours for the semester will be posted out side of the lab. Additional information will be provided in class about lab hours.

## Academic Integrity Policy

All student work including assignments, presentations, and tests must adhere to the university's Student Academic Integrity Policy <http://towson.edu/studentaffairs/policies/>. The policy addresses such academic integrity issues as plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, cheating, complicity in dishonesty, abuse of academic materials, and multiple submissions. See the last page of this syllabus for the department's policy concerning plagiarism and cheating. Penalties to violation of academic integrity ranges from F for the assignment to F for the course, in addition to a report filed in the Office of Student Conduct and Civility Education.

## COFAC Civility Code and classroom behavior

COFAC places a priority on learning. We value the inherent worth and dignity of every person, there-

by fostering a community of mutual respect. Students have the right to a learning environment free of disruptive behaviors and offensive comments. Faculty have the right to define appropriate behavioral expectations in the classroom and expect students to abide by them. Faculty have the responsibility to manage and address classroom disruption. Staff have the right and responsibility to define appropriate behaviors necessary to conduct any university activity free of disruption or obstruction.

We believe that in order to achieve these ideals, all COFAC students, staff, and faculty are expected to exhibit and practice civil behaviors that exemplify: (1) respecting faculty, staff, fellow students, guests, and all university property, policies, rules and regulations; (2) taking responsibility for one's choices, actions and comments; (3) delivering correspondence – whether verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic – with respectful language using professional writing standards and etiquette; and (4) accepting consequences of one's choices and actions. The use of offensive, threatening or abusive language, writing, or behavior will not be tolerated and can lead to academic dismissal. Further information about civility can be found in Appendix F of the university catalog.

**Examples demonstrating civility in the classroom as a student include:**

- Being respectful of the professor and other students.
- Not texting or using cellular phones and other electronic devices.
- Not using your laptop for activities other than class work.
- Not eating or drinking in class.
- Not reading newspapers or listening to music during the class.
- Not sleeping in class.

**Examples demonstrating civility in the classroom as a faculty member include:**

- Being respectful of the students.
- Attempting to understand individual student needs and learning styles.
- Discussing civil behavioral expectations during the first class.
- Taking time to talk with students whose behaviors negatively affect the classroom.
- Encouraging students to follow your civil behavior.

**Liability Statement**

In all assignments, students must comply with all laws and the legal rights of others (e.g. copyright, obscenity, privacy and defamation) and with all Towson University policies (e.g. academic dishonesty). Towson University is not liable or responsible for the content of any student assignments, regardless of where they are posted.

**Students with Disabilities Policy**

This course is in compliance with Towson University policies for students with disabilities as described in <http://www.towson.edu/dss/>. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with Disability Support Services (DSS), 7720 York Road, Suite 232, 410-704- 2638 (Voice) or 410-704-4423 (TDD). Students who suspect that they have a disability but do not have documentation are encouraged to contact DSS for advice on how to obtain appropriate evaluation. A memo from DSS authorizing your accommodation is needed before any accommodation can be made.

**Weapons Policy**

To promote a safe and secure campus, Towson University prohibits the possession or control of any weapon while on university property. See the university policy at <http://www.towson.edu/studentaffairs/policies/>.

**Plagiarism**

The Department of Mass Communication and Communication Studies announce the following policy regarding plagiarism:

1. Any words or images quoted directly from a source must be footnoted and in quotation marks. Similarly, in oral presentations, attributions must be clear.
2. Any ideas or examples derived from a source that are not in the public domain or of general knowledge must be clearly attributed.
3. Any paraphrasing or rephrasing of the words and/or ideas of a source must be footnoted. In oral presentations, attributions must be clear.
4. All papers and presentations must be the student's own work. Papers or presentations authored by others even with their consent constitutes plagiarism unless such authorship is made to the instructor.

Any student found plagiarizing in any of the above ways will receive an automatic F for the assignment and may receive an F for the course. Documented evidence of the plagiarism will be kept in the Department office. Last, any student discovered soliciting others to write a paper, speech, test, or other assignment for that student will receive an automatic F for the course. There are ambiguities in concepts of plagiarism. Each instructor will be available for consultation regarding any confusion a student may have. Most students are careful to avoid blatant plagiarism, the unacknowledged copying of exact words of the source. However, students must also be aware that the concept of plagiarism extends not only to wording but to patterns or sequences of ideas. If you paraphrase a section from a book without acknowledgment, using the same sequence or structure as the original author, then you are plagiarizing.

### **Cheating**

The Department of Mass Communication and Communication Studies has adopted the following policy regarding cheating:

**ANY STUDENT CAUGHT CHEATING ON ANY QUIZ OR EXAM WILL RECEIVE A MINIMUM OF AN F ON THE QUIZ OR TEST AND A MAXIMUM OF AN F FOR THE COURSE.**



## MCOM415: Class Calendar

### CLASS 1 - AUGUST 28

#### In Class Agenda

- Introductions
- *Lecture*: design basics
- Design basics exercise
- *Discuss*: Case Study, Project 1: Ad Design & sketches

#### Due Today

#### Homework

- Get magazine for Case Study
- Project 1: Ad Design sketches due 9/18
- In-class assignment: Ads due 10/2
- Read Harrower 1: Fundamentals

### SEPTEMBER 4 - NO CLASS (LABOR DAY)

### SEPTEMBER 11 - NO CLASS

### CLASS 2 - SEPTEMBER 18

#### In Class Agenda

- InDesign training & workshop
- Review sketches with Adam
- *Discuss*: Project 1: Ad Design, In-class assignment: Ads

#### Due Today

Project 1: Ad Design sketches

#### Homework

- Project 1: Ad Design due 10/2
- In-class Assignment: Ads due 10/2
- Read Harrower 3: Page Design

### CLASS 3 - SEPTEMBER 25

#### In Class Agenda

- *Lecture*: Typography
- Typography lab
- *Discuss*: Case Study, Project 1: Ad Design, In-class Assignment 1

#### Due Today

#### Homework

- Project 1: Ad Design due next week
- In-class Assignment: Ads due next week

## CLASS 4 - OCTOBER 2

### In Class Agenda

- *Critique:* Ad Designs
- Student presentations for In-class Assignment: Ads
- *Discuss:* Project 1: Ad Design advanced version

### Due Today

- Project 1: Ad Design
- In-class Assignment 1: Ads

### Homework

- Project 1: Ad Design advanced version due next week
- Case Study due 10/16

## CLASS 5 - OCTOBER 9

### In Class Agenda

- *Lecture:* Infographics & workshop
- *Critique:* Ad Designs advanced versions
- *Discuss:* Project 2: Infographics, Case Study

### Due Today

- Project 1: Ad Design advanced version

### Homework

- Case study due next week
- Project 2: Infographics due 10/23
- Read Harrower 6: Graphics & Sidebars;

## CLASS 6 - OCTOBER 16

### In Class Agenda

- *Lecture:* Color Theory
- Color theory group exercise

### Due Today

- Case Study

### Homework

- Project 2: Infographics due next week

## CLASS 7 - OCTOBER 23

### In Class Agenda

- *Lecture:* Logos / Branding
- Review DIY chapter on logos
- Logo / Branding group exercise
- *Critique:* Infographics
- *Discuss:* Logo project and In-class assignment

### Due Today

- Project 2: Infographics

### Homework

- Project 3: Logos / Branding due 11/6
- In-class Assignment: Logos due next week

## CLASS 8 - OCTOBER 30

### In Class Agenda

- *Lecture:* Photos
- *Lecture:* Redesigning
- Student presentations for In-class Assignment: Logos

### Due Today

- In-class Assignment: Logos

### Homework

- Project 3: Logos / Branding due next week
- Read Harrower 4: Photos & Art

## CLASS 9 - NOVEMBER 6

### In Class Agenda

- *Lecture:* Story Design
- *Critique:* Logos project
- Review DIY chapter on newsletters
- *Discuss:* Newsletter project and In-class assignment

### Due Today

- Project 3: Logos / Branding

### Homework

- Project 4: Newsletters due 11/20
- In-class assignment: Newsletters due next week
- Read Harrower 5 & 7: Nuts & Bolts & Special Effects;

## CLASS 10 - NOVEMBER 13

### In Class Agenda

- Photoshop training & workshop
- Student presentations for In-class Assignment: Newsletters

### Due Today

- In-class Assignment: Newsletters

### Homework

- Project 4: Newsletters due next week
- Revisions for projects 1 - 3 due 11/27

## CLASS 11 - NOVEMBER 20

### In Class Agenda

- *Lecture:* Web Design
- *Critique:* Newsletters project
- *Discuss:* Well-designed websites written assignment and Project 5: Responsive Website

### Due Today

- Project 4: Newsletters

### Homework

- Well-designed websites written assignment due next week
- Revisions for projects 1 - 3 due next week
- Project 5: Responsive Website due 12/18

## CLASS 12 - NOVEMBER 27

### In Class Agenda

- Lecture: Web Design II
- Review DIY chapter on websites (pg 167)
- Student presentations of well designed websites

### Due Today

- Well designed websites written assignment and presentation
- Revisions for projects 1 - 3 due today (*not required*)

### Homework

- Project 5: Responsive website due 12/18
- Revisions for projects 4-5 due 12/11

## CLASS 13 - DECEMBER 4

### In Class Agenda

- Animated gifs / Web animation workshop
- Finish well designed websites student presentations if needed

### Due Today

### Homework

- Project 6: Responsive website due 12/18
- Revisions for projects 4 due next week

## CLASS 14 - DECEMBER 11

### In Class Agenda

- In-class work on websites

### Due Today

- Revisions for projects 4 due today (*not required*)

### Homework

- Project 5: Responsive website due 12/18

## FINAL EXAM - DECEMBER 18

### Final Exam

- Student presentations of Project 5: Responsive Website

### Due Today

- Flash drive containing responsive website design and print outs of all pages





## MCOM415: Projects

Students are expected to complete **five projects** and **two written exercises**. Additionally, students will complete **three assignments** to prepare for in-class discussions.

### PROJECT 1: AD DESIGN (20%)

#### ***Part 1: Basic Version***

Design a text-only advertisement for one of the products below. You will be designing the same ad in two different sizes: 7.5 x 10 inch print ad and a 300 x 250 px web ad.

Start by drawing 5 – 10 thumbnail sketches of the layout of your ad. These will be discussed individually with the instructor in class.

Next, create the advertisements in Adobe InDesign. You may use only black and white and one typeface, but you may change the weight of the font. You cannot use color or images. You can vary size and positioning (backwards, top to bottom, rotate, etc.) of the type to convey your message. The ad should feature a headline and body copy. All copy in the ad should be written in your own words.

Your grade will be based on how creatively you can express your message using only type and your ability to incorporate the strategies (contrast, alignment, proximity, and repetition) discussed in class lectures.

#### ***Part 2: Advanced Version***

Create a second version of your ad. You may now incorporate color and one additional font into your design, but no photographs may be used. Build upon your “basic” design.

Your grade will be based on the use of color, application of additional font, ability to enhance this design based upon the basic version of the ad, as well as the overall aesthetics.

#### ***Products:***

**Sarah’s Favorite Frozen Apple Pie** - These apple pies use certified organic apples sourced from Maryland farms. They can be found at a variety of local retailers and speciality stores. The pies have a lattice-top and crust that was Sarah’s great-grandmother’s recipe. Sarah prides herself on using real ingredients with no added preservatives or artificial flavors.

**EarVibe Headphones-** These in-ear, wireless headphones provide the ultimate freedom for music lovers everywhere. High-tech, small and powerful, the EarVibe headphones are perfect for the gym, the trail, school, and everyday use. They feature 9mm drivers encased in steel housing that pump out a thumping low-end bass as well as pleasing mids and highs for a well rounded sound regardless of genre or tastes. They come equipped with a chrome carrying case and earbud tips in multiple colors and sizes. Selling for \$85 a pair, these are sure to take your on-the-go listening to the next level.

## **PROJECT 2: INFORMATION GRAPHICS (10%)**

Create two different infographics that best represent the data below. Students should create two different types of infographics (i.e. one bar chart, one diagram, etc). Infographics should be the actual size that they would appear in a newspaper or magazine. Start your design on a 8.5 x 11 inch page. The content of each infographic must vary and students should be creative in their design.  
*Grading Criteria:* interpretation of the data, creativity, execution and overall aesthetics.

### **DATA:**

#### **Coffee Price Per Bag**

Caribou: \$7.87

Maxwell House: \$6.37

Eight O'Clock: \$5.53

Millstone: \$5.24

Dunkin' Donuts: \$8.87

Folgers: \$7.43

Green Mountain: \$7.82

#### **Cost of Air Jordans through the years**

1985: \$65                      2002: \$200

1986- 87: \$105                2003: \$175

1988: \$100                    2004: \$165

1989: \$110                    2005: \$175

1990-95: \$125                2006: \$175

1996: \$135                    2007: \$175

1997-99: \$150                2010: \$170

2001: \$160                    2011: \$170

2012: \$290

**Towson Student Diversity Data:** <http://www.towson.edu/studentdiversity/profile.html>

### **Diagram / Map of your choice**

Create a diagram or map of things that interest you or that you are an expert in. For example, a map of the best bars in Baltimore. Or a diagram of how to do a series of yoga poses, a dance move, or cook a specific meal.

## **PROJECT 3: LOGO / BRANDING (10%)**

Invent a company or publication. Use type, color and graphics to create a logo. You will create one horizontal logo and adapt that into a square logo that could be used on social media.

*Grading Criteria:* Overall design aesthetic, branding, consistency across platforms

## **PROJECT 4: NEWSLETTER DESIGN (20%)**

Design a newsletter and email blast for the company of your creation from the previous project. The newsletter dimensions are 8.5x11 inches (1 in margin, content to stay within a 7.5x10 border and use a 3 column grid) and the email blast is 800 px wide, variable height, no margins. The newsletter must include the following:

- 4 pages (front page, inside spread and back cover)
- 5 or more short articles. The content can come from relative web sites
- A masthead that would be used in every issue.
- At least 4 photographs. They may be obtained from outside sources.
- One new infographic
- Include headlines, pull quotes and other graphic elements
- Include elements that link your pages together such as color, banner, footer, etc.

Now, adapt the content of this newsletter into an 800px wide promotional email. The email should preview the newsletter without including full content. Remember, the goal of an email is to get the view to click-through to the content.

*Grading Criteria:* use of photos, ability to tie the pages together, creative use of space, overall aesthetics, infographic creation, translation into email, email engagement potential.

## **PROJECT 5: RESPONSIVE WEBSITE (20%)**

Using the same topic as your newsletter, create a mock-up for a responsive website. You will design the following in three different breakpoints (1080 px, 768px and 320px wide):

- Homepage
- Topic landing page
- Article page

The website design must include the following:

- A header/banner on each page
- Appropriate navigation
- Text (can use content from newsletter project)
- Images
- Designed demonstration of a hover state
- One map
- Consistent color scheme
- Consistent design
- Extra credit: An animated element (submitted separately)

### *Grading Criteria:*

- Including and execution of the elements above
- Consideration of goals and audience
- Creativity and the overall aesthetics of final product
- Design variations at different breakpoints with audience usage in mind

## **WRITTEN EXERCISES**

### **Case Study (5 %)**

Go to the store and find a magazine that you have never seen before. Find an example of good page layout design from that magazine. You may not use magazines like People, Newsweek, Cosmo, etc. Choose a feature article (at least three pages in length) from that magazine. Answer these questions in a one page, double spaced, typed report; attach the original article or a copy of it.

- 1) What style type is used for the body copy? Approximately what size is the type? Is extra leading used between lines? If so, approximately how much? Is the body copy easy to read? What alignment is used?
- 2) What style type is used for the headlines? What mood does that type convey?
- 3) Are typographic devices such as pull quotes and initial caps used? What type styles are used for these items? How effective are the items at breaking up the copy and providing white space?
- 4) What other typographic devices are used (hint: color -- remember, black, white and gray are colors -- symbols, etc.) to unify the pages of the article? Are any devices used to tie this article to others in the magazine?
- 5) What is your overall impression of the typographic treatment of this article? How could it be improved?

### **Well-designed websites (5 %)**

Find three responsive websites that you consider to be well designed. Write a two page written report outlining why the sites are well designed. Consider navigation, design fundamentals like contrast and repetition, and the use of responsive design principals. Be prepared to present your findings in class.

## **IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS (10%)**

The following assignments will be completed throughout the semester outside of class. These assignments will be discussed during class to compliment the readings and lectures. Please see the calendar for class discussion deadlines. It is important to complete these entries on the due dates in order to participate in class discussion and receive credit. If you are not in class on a night where we discuss a topic below you may not receive credit for that specific discussion. You may not use the Towerlight or Baltimore Sun for any of these assignments.

**Ads** - Find 2 examples of ad design that you find attractive. Also, look for 2 examples of poor ad design. Be prepared to discuss your reasoning.

**Logos** - Find 3 logos that are examples of effective visual communication and branding. Print the logos out and be prepared to present in class, discussing what the logos communicate about the brand and why they are effective.

**Newsletters** - Find 1 example of a printed newsletter and 1 example of a well-designed email newsletter. Present in class, discussing what you like and don't like about the examples.



## MCOM415: Deadlines

### **Projects – 80% of your final grade**

Project 1: Ad Design – 10/02 Basic; 10/09 Advanced

Project 2: Information Graphics – 10/23

Project 3: Logo / Branding – 11/06

Project 4: Newsletter Design – 11/20

Project 5: Responsive Website Design – 12/18

### **In Class Participation Assignments – 10% of your final grade**

Ads – 10/02

Logos – 10/30

Newsletter – 11/13

### **Written Exercises – 10% of your final grade**

Case Study – 10/16

Well designed web sites – 11/27

### **Revisions – not required**

Project 1 - 3 – 11/27

Project 4 – 12/11