School of Art  
ARTS 3354 - History of Graphic Design  
Fall of 2018  
Syllabus

Time and Place: TR from 5:55 to 7:10,  
Visual Arts Building 1.123  
Instructor: Dr. Carlos Roberto de Souza  
Email: desouzacr@utpa.edu  
Office and office hours: Rusteberg Hall room 180, T TR 12 to 3 pm. or by appointment

Course content
Arts 3354 will examine the historical, social and cultural impact of Graphic Design in the visual culture of Modernity. The course will follow a chronological progression based on the main adopted book (Meggs & Purvis, 6th edition, 2016) that will take us from the invention of writing in Mesopotamia around 3100 BC, to the digital present of the discipline and its international state. Arts 3354 is a combination of a survey course, covering a large quantity of relevant topics within the history of discipline, with an in-depth analysis of important expressive developments and their social impact. It is designed to connect the works of representative artists and relevant styles with the appearance and development of new printing and displaying technologies. It will focus on graphic design historical used for the dissemination of knowledge and information and its evolution as ever more present and efficient form of communication.

Course design
The course is composed of 27 lectures divided in 5 large units called modules. The covers the pre-history of graphic design with emphasis on the appearance of writing and early alphabets. In the second, we will examine the production of graphic material from the middle ages to the end of the Renaissance period in the early 17th century with emphasis on the introduction of early mechanical
printing. The third covers the repercussions of the Industrial Revolution during the 18th and 19th centuries, notably the relevant technological innovations appearing during this period, among them early mass printing presses based on the steam engine and photography and their impact in the form and appearance of printed material. The forth unit covers the arrival of modernity during the 19th century and the impact of early modern art, together with the introduction of new technologies such as electricity that further enhanced mass production. In the fifth module, we will study recent trends emerging from the beginning of the 20th century when the modern visual culture took hold to the advent of digital technology in the second half of the 20th century and the state of the discipline in the present. Most of this material including all the images and the final exam are from the adopted book (Meggs & Purvis, 6th edition, 2016).

**Intended learning outcomes:**

**B.F.A. and B.A. Students will demonstrate:**

1) Knowledge of appropriate historical and contemporary artists and issues.
2) Visual communication skills of the materials, equipment, and processes relevant to their major.
3) Critical and creative/generative thinking skills.
4) Verbal and written communication skills.
5) Ability to generate a cohesive body of art products and an overall capability to succeed.

**General Learning outcomes and Student Learning Outcome for this Course**

1) **Students will acquire demonstrable understanding of the history of Graphic Design from the invention of writing in Mesopotamia around 3100 BC to its digital present, by learning and expressing knowledge in discussions and written, oral and group assignments of the following topics:**
• The important, tendencies, styles and genres within the history of graphic design.
• Acquiring a demonstrable understand of the assigned readings and express the ability to summarize them in discussions and written assignments.
• Why and how graphic design appeared and changed at the times that it did.
• Students will acquire a visual record of the cannon of graphic design; works that are historically sanctioned by their impact and importance, for future use as reference in their own work.
• Identifying and discussing around 100 seminal works within the history of graphic design.
• Acquiring a level of understanding about the history of Graphic Design in light of and correlated with historical, cultural and anthropological knowledge, and from the perspective of art history and art criticism.
• Identifying examples of technological advances important for history of graphic design and discuss them in light of their social and stylistic impact in the discipline.

2) **Students will acquire a demonstrable understanding of the place of graphic design within the history of visual expression, communication and industry by learning and expressing knowledge in discussions and written, oral and group assignments of the following topics.**

• The historical connection between graphic design, writing, and mass printing.
• The connection and impact of artistic trends in fine arts such as Cubism, Constructivism, Minimalism and others in the creation of the visual language of graphic design.
• The historical appearance and evolution of the combination of text and illustration in graphic design.
• The development of typography and the use of illustration, notably engraving and etching techniques and photography.
• The different strategies used by historically innovative graphic designers in the development of typefaces and the use of illustration in the creation of an artistic language for the discipline

3) Acquisition of an understanding about some of the key issues in history of graphic design as well as the state of their discussion in the recently published texts by learning and expressing knowledge in discussions, written, oral and group assignments of the following topics:
• The correct use of some of the terminology pertinent to the history and criticism of graphic design.
• The role of graphic design in the democratization of artistic expression through its dissemination among and used by artistically underrepresented groups such as women, ethnic minorities and the citizens of colonized countries.
• Acquiring a demonstrable understand of the assigned readings and express the ability to summarize this knowledge in discussions and written assignments.

4) Acquisition of a demonstrable level of understanding of the social, economic and cultural importance of graphic design for contemporary life by learning and expressing knowledge in discussions and written, oral and group assignments of the following topics:
• Graphic design fundamental importance in political expression and the dissemination of information and knowledge.
• The importance and impact of graphic design on memory and social identity.

• Graphic design’s importance and impact on commerce and industry through it’s used in advertising and in the creation of corporative identity and brands.

• Graphic Design importance and impact on the dissemination of ideas and behaviors through its use in didactic materials, propaganda and advertising.

• The role of graphic design as a tool for mass communication and its importance for modern visual culture and consciousness.

• The role of graphic design in the press and social communication.

5) **Begin to acquire a level of understanding of the characteristics of graphic design as an autonomous medium by learning and expressing knowledge in discussions and written, oral and group assignments of the following topics:**

• The relationship between graphic design and aesthetics.

• The correct use of some of the terminology pertinent to the history and criticism of graphic design.

• The relationship between graphic design and semiotics.

• The representational possibilities and limitations of graphic in comparison to other forms of art.

• The impact of graphic design in art and the used of its visual solutions and materials by fine art artists.

• **Required Texts:**

• All of the reading material as well as the images to be used in exams and quizzes will be found in the two adopted books for the course:


• Acquiring the books is an obligatory requirement for the successful completion of this course.

• The course has a web page located in Blackboard where all documentation, including syllabus, schedules and assignments and some further specific readings will be available to the student. Pdfs of all lectures will be place online in a timely manner. All communication between the students and the instructor will be conducted through the page mail list. For that reason, it is very important that you have an operational email addresses listed there and check your messages in the page frequently.

**Grading Requirements:**

Grades will be based on a 100 point scale award according to the more or less successful completion of the following set of exercises.

1) Students will post a written small self-introduction in a bulletin board in the web page in the first week of the course. It should contain a self-portrait and a small text introducing himself or herself to the class and the instructor and explaining his or her interest in the history of graphic design. If desire students could post example of his or her work. This task will add one point to the final grade.

2) Five take-home quizzes each weighting 9 points for a total of 45 for the four of them. Each quiz will cover one of the five units that composed the course. The quizzes are located at the bottom of the folder containing each module in BLACKBOARD and, are scheduled to coincide with the conclusion of each of one of them. Each quiz is composed of 3 essay questions related to themes or ideas discussed in the lectures and readings. One is a slide comparison in which the students must identify a pair of images (title of the work, name of the artist, date, and medium) and write a small (around 200 words) analysis comparing and contrasting them in a convincing argument. The second is another small essay (around 300 words) based on a single image or a section of an assigned
reading. A third question is composed of a list of 5 concepts or terms taken from the content discussed in the module. Students must research each of these words and write a paragraph (from 50 to 100 words) explaining the concept or term and its definition. The quizzes covered the material discussed in the lectures that composed the module and follow the progress of your reading of the assigned chapters of the books. Mention to and discussion of topics presented in the books in the lectures in your answers as well as supplementary research of the topics is the best way of receiving a good grade. Due to the time constraints there will no substitutive, remedial or alternative assignment for these quizzes. No late quizzes will be accepted. It is imperative that you take all of quizzes in order to receive a passing grade.

3) Three one-page reactions papers each weighting 10 points for a total of 30 for the three of them. These are your reaction to a specific assigned reading for each paper, but “a reaction paper is not just a paper where you express your opinions or simply summarize the article in question. These papers require a close reading of the assigned text that goes beyond its surface meaning. They should engage the article or chapter’s argument and demonstrate your accordance or discordance with it based on evidence and clear reasoning. You must respond to the implied ideas, and elaborate, evaluate, and analyze the author's objectives and main points” (http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Reaction-Paper). Do not simply summarize the article. Bibliographic citations are required. Establishing connections between the text and the material discussing in class and in other readings is another important criteria for grading.

All written work for this course should be typed in Times or Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins all around. Pages should be numbered and a separate title page included. Bibliography and footnotes should conform to one of the styles described in the Chicago Manual of Style available
at the reference section of the library and online. Papers that are not written in this format will be handed back to be rewritten with a reduction in grade.

4) The final exam will be comprehensive that is, it will cover the entire content of the course and is worth 15 points for the final grade. The exam is divided in three parts: Part I consist of 10 fill-in-the-blanks and multiple-choice questions. They are about terms, concepts and ideas pertinent to the material, most found in the two adopted books. Part II is composed of three pairs of images which the students must identify (title of the work, name of the artist, date, and medium) and write a small analysis comparing and contrasting the two in a convincing argument. General directions on how to write a good slide comparison will be provided in the scheduled review lecture. Part III consists of two essays on subjects covered in the readings and in class, one of them involving a single image, and the other an essay question. Please, note that every lecture has a number of pages from the books assigned as an obligatory reading. All of the specific artworks of which you are responsible for can be found in the adopted books and a list of the images you are responsible to know for the final exam will be provided two weeks before the exam.

5) Active participation in course will account for the remaining 10 points of the final grade. Grades for this rubric will be assigned, at the discretion of the instructor, based on the students’ attendance and the degree of involvement in following activities:

i. Attendance to lectures: There will be no penalty for those who miss the maximum of three lectures, but missing more that will impact your grade. Students who were absent to more than three of first 10 lectures will automatically be dropped from the class, unless they justify their absence,

ii. Creating forums in blackboard and posting questions, suggestions and new ideas pertinent to the content of the course.
iii. Presentation of a hard copy of the two assigned books (Meggs & Purvis, 2016 and Heller & Ballance, 2001) in class to the instructor on latter than the second week of classes.

iv. Oral classroom participation in lectures and discussions: 
*Equitable class participation* does not necessarily mean that all students are expected to participate in the same way, or even the same amount, but you are required to demonstrate your ongoing engagement with the content discussed throughout the course.

v. Attendance to extra-curricular activities promoted by the department or suggested by the instructor such as talks, workshops, film presentations and museum exhibit. Students are responsible to document and demonstrate to the instructor their participation in these activities.

vi. Punctuality and neatness in presentation of the assignments: 
No late assignments will be accepted without written medical justification.

vii. Number and frequency of visits by the student to the web page: The web page will be a central component of the course and the student’s visits to it will automatically recorded and factored in the portion of the final grade associated with participation.

viii. Demonstration of reading and understanding the assigned readings and doing extra research.

ix. At last one interview with the instructor during office hours

x. Bringing to class new information about the subject of the course (artist, art works, books, etc.), not covered in the class but that the students found on his or her own research.
### Schedule of Grading Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Number of points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Introduction</td>
<td>09/10/2018</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Presentation</td>
<td>09/06/2018</td>
<td>+ 2 points added for participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First online quiz</td>
<td>09/09/2018 at 11:30 pm</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second online quiz</td>
<td>09/30/2018</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third online quiz</td>
<td>10/14/2018</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Reaction Paper</td>
<td>10/21/2018</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth online quiz</td>
<td>10/30/2018 at 11:130 pm</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Reaction Paper</td>
<td>11/04/2018 at 11:30 pm</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth online quiz</td>
<td>11/28/2018 at 11:30 pm</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Reaction Paper</td>
<td>12/01/2018</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Lecture #27</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>Date to be announced</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>101</td>
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</tbody>
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Scale used for each of the five 100-point quizzes:

A = 90 – 100 – Excellent  
B = 89 – 80 – Good  
C = 79 – 70 – Fair  
D = 69 – 60 – Needs Improvement  
F = below 59 – Poor

Scale used for each of the five 10-point quizzes:

A = 9 – 10 - Excellent
B = 8.9 – 8 - Good
C = 7.9 – 7 - Fair
D = 6.9 – 6 - Needs Improvement
F = below 59 - Poor

**General Criteria for grades:**

**A** = Student must perform at the *highest level*, showing sustained excellence and a high degree of intellectual initiative in all of the grading exercises and in class participation.

**B** = Student must perform at a *high level*, showing consistent and effective achievement in meeting requirements in all of the grading exercises and in class participation.

**C** = Student must perform at an *adequate level*, meeting basic requirements in all of the grading exercises and in class participation.

**D** = Student performance has been *less than adequate*, meeting only the minimum requirements.

**F** = Student performance has been such that *minimum requirements have not been met*. Missing any of the above described grading exercises will also result in an F.

Students are required to complete all of the above obligatory requirements to pass the course, but **completing the requirements is not to be confused with getting a passing grade. Grades will be based on the quality of the student’s performance in each task according to the instructor’s best judgment.** Tests
include both what we cover in class and the in readings, thus class attendance and careful note taking as well as the timely readings of the material are essential to your success in the course.

I am looking for in this assignment is the type of learning resulting from the student’s own initiative expressed in a clear written and oral form. That is to say, it is what you bring to the interpretation of the material, that extra element that will earn you an above-average grade. So you are encouraged to make your own connections between the readings, the art works and your personal research and present your ideas in a clear form. Special attention will be paid to paper discussing information and insights from the different readings and discussions that sustain a sound argument throughout the answers.

**Make-up Policy:**

There are no make-up exams. An alternate assignment will be given only in cases involving grave illness or accident, and documented evidence of such circumstances will be required. In all other cases in which assignments are submitted late, grading will be highly impacted.

**Miscellaneous information:**

**Cell phone and computers are not allowed in class.**

If you have a documented disability which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as I have outlined and/or if you need special accommodation/assistance due to disability, please contact the Office of Services for Persons with Disabilities (OSPD).

Mandatory Course Evaluation Period (November 13 – December 4). Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account you will be contacted through email with further instructions on the evaluation process. The evaluation window closes at 11:59 pm on December 4th, the last day of classes for the fall semester. Students who complete their evaluations by December 4th will have priority access to their grades.
A program of museum visits, films and, if possible, guest lecturers will be announced.

The instructor reserves the right to change any provisions of this syllabus as he sees fit to improve performance and accommodate unexpected circumstances.