



**New York City College of Technology**  
The City University of New York

**Department of Communication Design**

## **COMD 1100 – Graphic Design Principles I**

### **Course Description**

This basic design and color theory course explores graphic communication through the understanding of the elements and principles of design, as well as the design process, including idea development through final execution. Students develop basic skills in two-dimensional design, color, and content creation while employing the design process of research, sketching, and experimentation. Communication designers use the concepts explored in this course in disciplines such as advertising, graphic design, web design, illustration, broadcast design, photography, and game design.

1cl hr, 5 lab hrs, 3 cr

Prerequisite: None

### **Course Objectives**

<b>INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT</b>
<b>For the successful completion of this course, students should be able to:</b>	<b>Evaluation methods and criteria</b>
Use a variety of materials and tools including designers gouache, brush, graphite pencil, color pencils, rubber cement, exacto knife, t-square, triangle	The students will demonstrate their ability with each tool in a project or activity.
Use the elements and principles of design in a composition.	The students will create a pattern and describe the visual concepts used (line, space, shape, form, etc.) in a discussion.
Create a composition by employing the design development process.	Students will demonstrate competency by creating a design through appropriate research, thumbnail sketches, experimentation, and final execution using appropriate materials and tools. Students will also document the process by the use of a design journal.

Utilize the concept of compositional balance, including symmetrical, asymmetrical, and radial balance.	Students will demonstrate competency by designing a series of patterns utilizing various forms of balance.
Apply color theory to a specified design.	Students will demonstrate competency by using color theory to create a balanced composition.
Understand the basic concepts of electronic color systems used in publication and web design.	Students will demonstrate competency by using CMYK and RGB color palettes to create a digital composition.
Design a pattern of three-dimensional forms in one-point and two-point perspectives.	The students will demonstrate how volumes can be designed using perspective.
Communicate a concept through the use of the design elements and principles.	The students will demonstrate competency in developing themes (subject matter) through the use of appropriate design elements and principles.
Create various design styles to define different visual identities.	The students will demonstrate the use of design concepts in a stylized design, creating an identity for the subject matter.
Define and explain the design concepts and vocabulary in a critique.	The students will be able to describe the basic vocabulary and concepts of design for a test, essay, and discussion.
Present a basic portfolio of the projects in this course for final review.	The students will present their portfolio.

### General Education Outcomes

<b>General Education Outcome covered:</b>	<b>How the outcome is assessed:</b>
<b>Thinking Critically</b> Think critically to evaluate evidence and the perspectives of others before accepting or formulating an opinion	Evaluate through peer and individual critique to determine how well students were able to advance their project concepts by applying evidence and using logic to make decisions.
<b>Oral Communication</b> Prepare and deliver oral communication that promotes knowledge and understanding	Evaluate through class discussion and /or presentations if students use appropriate nomenclature to defend creative, critical, and technical decisions in project concepts and

	development.
<b>Writing</b> Write to express ideas clearly and concisely	Evaluate how well students absorbed and consequently applied the learning through written reflections, critiques and quizzes.

### Teaching/Learning Method

- Lecture/ Readings
- Demonstrations
- Project-based lab
- Research Assignments
- Blackboard Descriptions

### Required Text

None

### Attendance (College) and Lateness (Department) Policies:

The COMD BFA and AAS degrees are design studio programs. In-class laboratory activities and engagement with other students is a significant portion of the courses. Absences more than 10% of the total class hours may result in a 10% drop in a grade due to an inability to meet the deliverables of participation. This may be in addition to other penalties that will be imposed for failure to complete in-class academic requirements. Missing more than 25% of total class meetings will not be permitted. Any two 'lates' (15 minutes or more) will be equal to 1 absence.

### Academic Integrity Standards

Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting and citation of sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the college recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension and expulsion. More information about the College's policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the College Catalog.

### Grading

- |                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| ● Notebook/sketchbook  | 10%         |
| ● Mid-term test        | 10%         |
| ● Term test            | 10%         |
| ● Essay (Museum visit) | 10%         |
| ● First Project        | 10%         |
| ● Second Project       | 10%         |
| ● Third project        | 10%         |
| ● Fourth project       | 10%         |
| ● Fifth project        | 10%         |
| ● Final portfolio      | 10%         |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>100%</b> |

## Topics

WEEK	Lecture Topic	Sample Laboratory Exercise	Homework Assignment
1	<p>Define design and the design process: - research, thumbnail sketch, experimentation and final execution.</p> <p>Lecture on elements of design: - line, shape, value, color, texture &amp; format.</p>	<p>Project I: Pattern identity. The students will create a set of four patterns for understanding repeated shapes. The patterns should be arranged next to each other for comparison. Each pattern should illustrate a different type of arrangement in black and white. The four types of patterns to be illustrated are a clear figure-ground pattern, a confusing figure-ground pattern, a logical pattern, and an illogical pattern.</p>	<p>All homework assignments are to be determined by individual instructors.</p>
2	<p>Review of elements of design, emphasizing line &amp; shape.</p> <p>Principles of design discussed: - balance - figure/ground - positive/negative space</p> <p>Brush and ink technique for the final pattern project.</p>	<p>Project I: Students will select the final examples from their pencil thumbnail sketches created in the previous class. These drawings are transferred to illustration board to be painted in black and white creating the final patterns.</p> <p>Exercise: (Balance) Students will create a series of simple designs using 4 black rectangles (1.5" x 6") within a 6"x 6" framed square using vector-based software. Rectangles can rotate, overlap or go outside the frame (to be cropped later). Experiment with shape and space to create a sense of balance.</p>	
3	<p>Project I: Completion and presentation.</p>	<p>Project I: Students will paint the final version of the patterns and matte the project for the portfolio and a grade.</p> <p>Exercise: (Line) Students will experiment with line weight and spacing. Create a series of horizontal ruled lines, in varying thickness, across the page. Distance between lines can vary, creating the illusion of movement. Create several versions.</p>	

4	<p>Critique of Project I and introduction of Project II: a design, which focuses our attention on a particular subject.</p> <p>Review of elements of design, emphasizing line &amp; texture.</p> <p>Principles of design discussed:  - balance, repetition, emphasis, movement, contrast &amp; unity.</p>	<p>Project II: Emphasis  The students will create a design (layout) that communicates with simple shapes. This project will be constructed using nature as a source of inspiration. The natural forms will become representational and abstract when pen and ink are used to create a dynamically textured design. The student will first select the natural forms from a set of magazines.</p> <p>Exercise: (Shape) Students will create a simple design within a 6"x 6" framed square. Divide the square into 4 equal sections, placing a solid black square in one section, a circle in the second, and a triangle in the third. Next, copy and paste the 3 shapes, reducing them to 50%. Using all the shapes, experiment by arranging them within the 6" x 6" square: Shapes can overlap, touch but not overlap, or go outside the frame (to be cropped). Create several versions.</p>	
5	<p>Continued discussion of design principles (repetition, movement emphasis, contrast &amp; unity).</p>	<p>Project II: Students will create four thumbnail sketches for the second design project. Students will practice the pen and ink techniques needed to finish the design project. The student will transfer their design to an illustration board and complete the project.</p> <p>Exercise: (Space &amp; Movement)  Students will create a series of 3 simple designs within 6"x 6" framed square. Create 10 solid black squares, circles, and triangles, 1" in diameter. In one design, arrange the circles to</p>	

		create the sense of slow and fast movement. In the second design, arrange the squares to “bounce” in space. In the third design, arranges triangles to move “in and out” of space, showing depth.	
6	<p>Critique of Project II and introduction of Project III: creating three-dimensional content using volumes and color.</p> <p>Review of elements of design, emphasizing value, color, and format.</p>	<p>Project III: Using one-point and two-point perspective, students will create a drawing of cubes, using graphite pencil, t-square, and triangle.</p> <p>The students will determine a direction for a light source in a perspective drawing and then develop shadows on the subject. Students will create a grayscale, which will be drawn with a graphite pencil, and apply it to the perspective drawing to create shadows.</p> <p>Exercise: (Value) Students will create a grayscale.</p>	
7	<p>Continued review of elements of design, emphasizing value and color.</p> <p>Continued discussion of design principles (balance, emphasis, expression, dynamics).</p>	<p>Project III: Students will create a complex perspective drawing using the elements of design from the previous class. This drawing is a full-size sketch of the final project to be painted.</p> <p>Exercise: (Tint) Students will create a tint scale for one color.</p>	
8	<p>Continued review of the elements of design, emphasizing color theory.</p>	<p>Project III: The students will use the theory of color to create a color wheel with color aid paper or paint to be used as a reference in the third design project.</p> <p>Exercise: (Mixing Color) Students will create a color wheel using the CMYK palette.</p>	
9	<p>Continued review of the elements of design, emphasizing color theory.</p> <p>Digital color theory (CMYK</p>	<p>Project III: Students will focus on salient characteristics in the design by creating color volumes in a perspective.</p>	

	& RGB, Pantone) is discussed.	Computer Exercise: (Mixing Color) Use RGB sliders to create white, black, gray, cyan, magenta, and yellow. Use CMYK mode to mix red, blue, and green. Use the sliders to make tints. Add black to colors to make shades. Mix complementary colors to make neutrals.	
10	Continued discussion of digital color theory (CMYK & RGB, Pantone is discussed).	Project III: Students will practice the brush technique and begin finishing the final painting.  Exercise: (Value) In CMYK, students select 2 colors. Manipulate value and intensity to create 10-12 variations of the colors. Save to color palette. Use the colors in a grid study.	
11	Project 3: Final execution.	Project III: Students will continue the final execution of the third term project matting the painting for the portfolio.  Exercise: (Color Blends) Using the gradient tool, students make various color-to-color blends, including complimentary blends, mixtures between light value and dark value colors, CMKY blends, gray and hues to make tonal bars, and blends of colors with white or black.	
12	Critique of Project III and introduction of Project IV: Introduction to collage.  Continued discussion of design principles (emphasis, expression, dynamics).  Developing an individual identity or style.	Project IV: Students will create a collage that expresses a personal viewpoint. Students will collect images from magazines, which establish a theme, or identity or express a particular feeling.  Exercise: (Bezold Studies) Students create a pattern using at least 5 colors. Design is copy/pasted, and then one color is changed, affecting the overall appearance of color interaction.	

		Repeat the exercise, changing a color to a gradient of any color.	
13	Continued discussion of design principles (emphasis, closure, abstraction). - creating content/context - using the variables; - breaking the rules;	Project IV: Students will experiment with elements & principles to develop a collage. Students will experiment with the brush, paint, and textures on paper to find unique ways of expressing themselves.  Exercise: (Transparency Study) Students create a design with overlapping shapes. Color in each shape is set to approximately 50% transparency.	
14	Critique of Project IV and introduction of Project V: experimentation with representational and non-representational image-making techniques.  Continued discussion of design principles (emphasis, closure, abstraction).	Project V: Create different representational & non-representational styles of the same subject using brush, paint, and textures on paper for the fifth project.  Exercise: (Contrast, Figure/Ground Study) Students will experiment with RGB color by setting type (a word or phrase) on a background. Students will make at least 4 different color combinations, concentrating on color contrasts for readability.	
15	Critic and review of the semester's work.	Students will present their portfolio for the final critique.	

## **Bibliography**

*Graphic Design Solutions*

Rubin Landa

On Word Press Thomson Learning, 2007.

*Color Workbook*

Becky Koenig

Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007

*Typographic Design:*

*Form and Communication,*  
Rob Carter, Ben Day, Philip Meggs.  
Third Edition. Wiley Publishing

*@Issue:*

*The Journal of Business & Design*  
<http://www.cdf.org>  
Corporate Design Foundation  
Attn: International Subscriptions  
20 Park Plaza  
Suite 321  
Boston, MA 02116

*Designer's Guide to Color Series*  
Leslie Cabaga, North Light Books

*Communication Arts Magazine*  
P.O. Box 10300  
Palo Alto, Ca. 94303