

The Art Institute of California—San Francisco Course Syllabus

Course Number: GD2262
Course Title: Message Making

Class Meetings: Tuesday, 8–12

Session/Year: Spring, 2010

Instructor Name: Marty Chappell

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Instructor Availability Outside of Class: ask instructor for current meeting times/office hours

Message Making

Course Description:

This course focuses on how messages can be constructed through images using subject matter, context juxtaposition, editing, scale, color, and composition. Materials and technologies will be explored.

Course Length:	11 Weeks
Contact Hours:	44 Hours
Lecture:	22 Hours
Lab:	22 Hours
Credit Values:	3 Credits

Course Competencies:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Develop a basic understanding of semiotics with the denotation/connotation of images as they exist separately or together.
- Apply the design process to specific goal-focused problem solving.
- Explore nontraditional design options.
- Develop a basic understanding of how messages can be constructed through images, using subject matter, context, juxtaposition, editing, scale, and color to determine the degree of communication.
- Analyze and define creative challenges in message making.

Course Prerequisite(s): GD2241 Concept Design

Text(s): None required (however, see recommended books below...)

Recommended Readings:

- *Type and Image: The Language of Graphic Design* by Phillip Meggs. John Wiley & Sons, 1992. ISBN 442-25846-1
- *Mixing Messages: Graphic Design in Contemporary Culture* by Ellen Lupton. Princeton Architectural Press, 1996. ISBN: 156898099X
- *inspiration = ideas: A Creativity Sourcebook for Graphic Designers* by Petrula Vrontikis. Rockport Publishers, 2002. ISBN: 1564968669
- *Persuasive Images: Posters of War and Revolution* by Peter Paret, Beth Irwin Lewis, & Paul Paret. Princeton University Press, 1992. ISBN: 0691032041
- *The Power of the Poster* by Margaret Timmers. Victoria & Albert Museum, 2003 ISBN: 0810966158
- *Dr. Seuss Goes To War* by Richard H. Minear. New Press, 1999 ISBN: 156584565X.
- *Brochures: Making a Strong Impression: 85 Strategies for the Message-Driven Design* by Jenny Sullivan. Rockport Publishers, 2004. ISBN: 1592530419
- *Breaking Designer's Block: 501 Graphic Design Solutions for Type, Color, and Materials* by Rockport Publishers, 2004. ISBN: 1592530427

Materials and Supplies:

Digital disk for project storage (portable hard drive, USB flash drive), note-taking material, sketch materials, materials to mount printed work.

Estimated Homework Hours: 4 Hours per week

Technology Needed: Access to computer lab with image & illustration software and peripherals.

Grading Scale:

All assignments must have clear criteria and objectives to meet. All students shall be treated equitably. It will be that student's right to know his/her grade at any reasonable point that information is requested by that student. The criteria for determining a student's grade shall be as follows (on a percentage of total points basis):

A	100-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-65
F	64 or below

Process for Evaluation:

Your work will be evaluated in terms of your individual progress and efforts to accept challenges and improve your skills. Ultimately, the best work will receive the best grades. It will be the student's right to know his/her grade at any reasonable point this information is requested by the student.

Assignments and Exercises +100% of possible points

Attendance and Participation -30% of possible points (see "Class Rules & Requirements" page)

Class projects are worth the following percentages:

1. Propaganda Poster	20 %
2. Experimental Business Cards	20 %
3. Word Texture	20 %
4. Portfolio Presentation	30 %
5. Final Project	<u>10 %</u>
	100 %

Extra Credit Assignments: There will be no extra credit assignments; it is quite possible to receive an "A" in this course by meeting all requirements in a creative, careful, & timely manner.

Student Evaluation/Grading Policies:

- Class time will be spent in a productive manner.
- Grading will be done on a point system.
- Points for individual activities will be announced.
- All work must be received by the set deadlines.
- Late work receives a lowered grade.
- On-time projects may be redone with instructor approval.
- ABSOLUTELY NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE FINAL CLASS MEETS WEEK 11.

Classroom Policy:

- No food allowed in class or lab at any time. Drinks in re-closeable bottles allowed in classroom.
- If student elects to eat/drink outside class or lab door, missed time is recorded as absent.
- Attendance is taken hourly. Tardiness or absence is recorded in 15-minute increments.
- Break times are scheduled by the instructor at appropriate intervals.
- No private software is to be brought to lab or loaded onto school computers.
- No software games are allowed in lab (unless in course curriculum).
- Headphones are required if listening to music during lab. No headphones are allowed in lecture.
- Any student who has special needs that may affect his or her performance in this class is asked to identify his/her needs to the instructor in private by the end of the first day of class. Any resulting class performance problems that may arise for those who do not identify their needs will not receive any special grading considerations.

Disability Policy Statement:

It is our policy not to discriminate against qualified students with documented disabilities in its educational programs, activities, or services. If you have a disability-related need for adjustments or other accommodations in this class, contact the Disabilities Services Coordinator at 415-276-1060.

Academic Honesty Policy:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty while pursuing their studies at AiCA-SF. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: plagiarism and cheating; misuse of academic resources or facilities; and misuse of computer software, data, equipment or networks.

Student work that appears to violate AiCA-SF's standards of academic honesty will be reviewed by the Committee on Academic Honesty. If the work is judged to have violated standards of academic honesty, appropriate sanctions will be given. Sanctions include but are not limited to course failure and academic termination.

Weekly Outline

1 Message Making intro, and *Propaganda Posters* intro

Lecture/Demo:

Introduction to course outline, proposed exercises, and discussion regarding “What is Message Making?”

Overview of the class projects.

Discussion regarding expectations (both instructor’s and student’s) for the class.

Look at samples of Message Making.

Discuss portfolio “checkpoint” component of the class.

Propaganda: definitions and examples (Advertising, War, Politics, Art, Labor, etc.).

Lab: Assignment #1: *Propaganda Poster*—begin your sketches. (due completed week 3—see project handout)

Homework: prepare 3-4 sketches of your idea(s), to present in a small group next week.

2 *Propaganda Poster: studio day*

Lecture/Demo:

Background and inspiration for creating a personal propaganda poster—using the tools and techniques of illustration & message making to push your poster designs further.

Lab: work on your Propaganda Posters—style, research, sketches, typography, photos, etc.

Homework: finish production of your poster, and print it (mounting is optional). Bring digital file to turn in.

3 *Propaganda Poster critique, + intro to Experimental Business Cards*

DUE: Assignment #1: *Propaganda Poster* (must be printed for presentation, 11" x 17" minimum size)

Lecture/Demo:

Introduction to **Assignment #2: *Experimental Business Cards***. Project examples and techniques. Considerations of unusual occupations, shapes, typography, and delivery methods to reinvent a quick & memorable contact message. Three individual cards, printed and/or constructed.

Lab: Assignment #2: *Experimental Business Cards*—begin your sketches

Homework: prepare 3-4 sketches *per card* of your idea(s), to present next week. Gather any images or fonts.

4 *Experimental Business Cards: studio day*

Lecture/Demo:

Further considerations and refinement of your favorite occupational & design ideas.

Lab: work on completing **Assignment #2: *Experimental Business Cards***

Homework: finish production of your cards, and print them (may be handmade also). Bring any digital files.

5 *Experimental Business Cards critique, + intro to Word Texture*

DUE: Assignment #2: *Experimental Business Cards* (3 individual cards, printed and/or constructed)

Lecture/Demo:

Intro to Assignment #3: *Word Textures*: Overlapping words, sentences, quotes, and letterforms to form a visually textured multi-level message with graphic impact and meaning. Hand-done graphite rubbings of raised type will be one of the featured techniques of this project—used in conjunction with digital typography and text layering.

Lab: work on beginning **Assignment #3: *Word Texture***

— message & design concept, and perhaps gathering rubbings or fonts to create your message design.

Homework: bring the complete text you'll be using, plus sketches or comps of your layout idea(s).

6 *Word Texture: studio day*

Lecture/Demo:

Further considerations and refinement of your best design ideas. Layout & experimentation with your type graphics.

Lab: work on completing **Assignment #3: *Word Texture***

Homework: finish production of your artwork, and print it & mount it. Bring digital file to turn in.

7 *Word Texture critique, + intro to Portfolio Presentation*

DUE: Assignment #3: *Word Texture*

Lecture/Demo:

Considerations for collecting & organizing your work in a portfolio that presents your personal style as a designer. Writing a concise and personal “designer’s statement”

Lab: work on beginning **Assignment #4: *Portfolio Presentation***—collecting & sorting your best design work.

Homework: sort through all digital files that you would like to include in your portfolio, and edit to choose the very best examples. Photograph any objects that you need product shots of (books, sculptures, brochures, packaging, t-shirts, etc.).

8 *Portfolio Presentation: studio day*

Lecture/Demo:

Writing a concise and personal “designer’s statement”

Lab: work on completing **Assignment #4: *Portfolio Presentation***

Homework: finish layout of your portfolio, and save it as a compressed PDF. Bring digital file to turn in. Remember to include a Designer’s Statement.

9 PORTFOLIO PRESENTATION, + intro to <i>Final Project</i>
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DUE: Assignment #4: *Portfolio Presentation*: Presentations to class (must include Designer's Statement)

Lecture/Demo:

Combining Images and Words to construct and/or alter message meaning, including juxtaposition of photos and text.

Lab: Assignment #5: *Final Project*

Homework: gather ideas and sketches (or digital comps) for our final project. Be prepared to present ideas.

10 PORTFOLIO PRESENTATION, + <i>Final Project: studio day</i>
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Lecture/Demo:

Using graphic techniques to enhance and deliver your message(s) with visual impact and personal style.

Lab: Assignment #5: *Final Project*

Homework: finish production of your final project, and print & mount it. Bring digital file to turn in.

11 <i>Final Day</i>

DUE: Assignment #5: *Final Project*

Lab: Presentation and critique: *Final Projects*

*Weekly Schedule subject to change, based on class need.
Please contact the instructor and other classmates when absent to confirm assignments.*

Class Rules & Requirements: (read the fine print...)

- Attendance is mandatory; commit to being in class every session, on time.
- Instructor attendance policy (following AiCA-SF guidelines): Our class meets for a total of 44 hours. Both you and I are expected to be present for all these hours. A class is made up of the people who are actually participating. The more you are present, the higher your grade. **1 percent will be deducted from your average score for each full hour you are not in class, up to a maximum of 30% of your grade (1 pt. x 30 hrs.). Perfect attendance earns 2 extra percentage points.** By school policy, there are no excused absences.
- All assignments should be finished on time in order to progress smoothly. *Assignments turned in late will be lowered one whole grade (10 points) for each class meeting day they are late. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted.*
- There will be a critique of assignments at the beginning of many class sessions. You are expected to participate openly and freely in the critique. Mistakes are welcome; lack of participation is not. **If you are late for class, your assignment will not be included in the critique—as if it were not submitted on time.** This will lower your grade by 10%—the same as being a week late. **Projects must be presented in class to receive a grade.**
- Any project can be reworked for a higher grade, as long as the original due date is met. Projects being redone must be submitted within one week from the original due date. If you aren't in class on the day the project is due, you can email me the finished artwork as an attachment (marty@martychappell.com) by due date. **All projects must be presented in class to be counted as “turned in”, prior to receiving a score.**
- Finished work must demonstrate an understanding of the techniques covered in this class/specified in the assignment.
- Students are expected to utilize the techniques covered in lectures and demonstrations, participate in class discussions by sharing opinions, information and experiences, use studio time for Message Making projects, give feedback to other students, and be open to new ideas.
- Demonstration of respect for others' work and opinions is of utmost importance.
- Any student who has special needs that may affect his or her performance in this class is asked to identify his/her needs to the instructor in private by the end of the first day of class. Any resulting class performance problems that may arise for those who do not identify their needs will not receive any special grading considerations.
- **Plagiarism statement:** Plagiarism can be defined as presenting someone else's work as your own. Students found plagiarizing will fail the assignment and may fail the course.

Glossary —

semiotic: 1. Of or relating to semantics. 2. *plural semiotics:* a general philosophical theory of signs and symbols that deals especially with their function in both artificially constructed and natural languages.

semantics: 1. The study or science of meaning in language.
 2. The study of relationships between signs and symbols and what they represent.
 3. The meaning or the interpretation of a word, sentence, or other language form:
We're basically agreed; let's not quibble over semantics.

denotation: 1. The act of indicating or pointing out by name.
 2. The most specific or direct meaning of a word, in contrast to its figurative or associated meanings.

connotation:
 1. An idea or meaning suggested by or associated with a word or thing:
Hollywood holds connotations of romance and glittering success.
 2. The set of associations implied by a word in addition to its literal meaning.
 3. An idea that is implied or suggested.

Class Guidelines

Critique: all critiques will begin 15 minutes after class starts (@ 8:15, 1:15, or 6:15). Regardless of how talented a designer is, one of the more difficult aspects of producing a successful project is to show up on time and be prepared to reveal your work. Only those students who are present in class when the critique begins will receive full credit for showing their work. Students arriving late can participate in the critique, but will lose 10 points on their project grade. If you are late or not finished please come to class anyways—to offer your opinions and to see & hear what is being offered by your classmates.

Critique sign-up sheet: on critique days, there will be a sign-up sheet posted. Critique order will be first-come-first-served. Please list your name on the sign-up sheet when you get to class, if you want to show your work that day.

- **Due date, on-time:** full credit
- **Due date, late (> 15 mins.):** minus 10 pts.
- **Late 1 week, on-time:** minus 15 pts.
- **Late 1 week, late (> 15 mins.):** minus 20 pts.

Every student has **two chances** to present their work for a grade:

1. The day it's due
2. One week after it's due (minus 15 pts.)

If a student is absent on critique day, it limits the number of chances that a presentation can occur to only one possibility.

If someone is absent two classes in a row there will be no chance to have the work presented or recorded for a grade.

Reworking projects: Many of the most successful package designs in class are the result of re-working the student's original designs. For this reason, all assignments can be re-worked and re-presented one week after the original due date. Projects turned in on time can be re-worked and re-submitted. Late work doesn't qualify.

Attendance:

Less than 8 hrs. late and you get a 4 hr. 'discount'. More than 8 hrs. late and *all* missing attendance will count off (no discount). Perfect attendance earns 2 extra grade points (for example: the final grade would change from an 88 to a 90).