

# COMM 2511: Visual Communication Design

Tu/Th 9:35am –10:55am, Derby Hall 3176

## Instructor Information

Instructor: [Jessica Frampton](#)  
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Office hours:  
[Tuesdays & Thursdays: 11:00am – 1:00pm](#)  
[And by appointment](#)

## Course Description

The purpose of COMM 2511 is to provide an overview of visual communication design to help students develop a sense of visual literacy. Students will be introduced to design concepts such as visual unity, balance, color theory, and typography. Students will also critique existing examples of visual communication in addition to using design principles and Adobe Photoshop to create visual communication content of their own. Students will be required to share their work with the class for discussion and critiques.

This course is ideally suited for students who hope to pursue professional careers that involve working closely with visual and creative departments.

## Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Describe principles of visual design
- Use Adobe Photoshop (an industry standard) to manipulate images and produce designs for visual communication
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills in relation to visual communication and visual literacy
- Evaluate visual communication designs and provide constructive criticism to peers.

## Requirements

- Students should invest in **two flash drives**, which should be brought to class every day. The flash drives must be PC/Mac compatible with a capacity of at least 1GB. Always make sure that you back up all your work. Similarly, remember to continuously save your work. You should aim to save your work at least every 5

minutes. Sometimes computers crash, and we cannot recover something that you spent the past hour on but have not saved.

One of the few guarantees in life is a corrupted drive. Make sure you have plenty of backups. Therefore, **you should always have multiple backup copies of your work**. If you lose your flash drive or if it becomes corrupted and you do not have a backup copy, you will not get credit for any lost work.

- **Working knowledge of the Windows/Mac operating systems.** You should know how to create a folder, save a file to a folder, copy a folder or file, move files from the hard drive to a flash drive, zip folders, rename files, etc.
- **Access to the Internet.** Many elements of the course are presented online, so it is essential that you can gain access to these materials, whether on your personal computer or using the university's computers and resources.
- **A working OSU e-mail address & Carmen announcement notifications enabled.** I will often send emails or create Carmen announcements to provide updates to you regarding course materials, assignment due dates, and other important elements relevant to the class. Thus, it is important that you are able to receive these emails and announcements in a timely manner.
- **Willing and able to troubleshoot** on your own using online tutorials and other resources (e.g., Google, YouTube, Digital Union labs).

## Required Textbooks

All textbooks for this class are available **free** online via the OSU library database. If you prefer a print copy, feel free to purchase one, though this is not necessary for successful completion of the course. I will provide a tutorial on how to access these books online the first week of class.

- Faulkner, A., & Chavez, C. (2017). *Adobe Photoshop CC classroom in a book (2018 release)*. San Jose, CA: Adobe Press. Available from <http://proquest.safaribooksonline.com.proxy.ohiolink.edu:9099/9780134852560> (off-campus link)
- Malamed, C. (2015). *Visual design solutions: Principles and creative inspiration for learning professionals*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. Available from <http://proquest.safaribooksonline.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/book/e-learning/9781118864043> (off-campus link)
- Williams, R. (2014). *The non-designer's design book* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). San Francisco, CA: Peachpit Press. Available from <http://proquest.safaribooksonline.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/book/graphic-design/9780133966350> (off-campus link)

## Software and Lab Access

In our lab, we will use **Adobe Photoshop CC 2018**. A few labs on campus have Photoshop and other programs. It is your responsibility to locate public labs with Photoshop and to complete your assignments outside class time. There are many ways to use the software on your own, and the syllabus provides you with due dates in advance; therefore, not being able to access the programs is not an acceptable justification for late work.

### The Digital Union has four lab options with Adobe Creative Suite

(<http://odee.osu.edu/digital-union>). Their locations and hours are listed below.

Note: Digital Union labs are closed on university holidays and on Sundays preceding Monday holidays.

#### Locations:

Enarson Classroom 012  
Hagerty Hall 171A  
Prior Hall 460A  
Stillman Hall 145

#### Hours:

Mon-Thu: 8am-8pm  
Friday: 8am-5pm  
Saturday: Closed  
Sunday: 2pm-8pm

If you have your own computer and a compatible operating system, you have two options:

**Adobe offers a Creative Cloud (CC) membership for students.** You can acquire all their software at a discounted student price. Go to <https://creative.adobe.com/plans> to see all their plans.

You can also download a free trial version of Photoshop CC from <http://www.adobe.com/downloads/>. However, the **trial period lasts only seven (7) days**. I recommend that you download the software toward the end of the semester to help avoid the end-of-semester rush at the labs.

## Attendance and Professionalism

### Attendance

This class is a workshop that is based on a philosophy of collaborative learning. The class is driven by a set of assignments in sequential order with increasing levels of challenge. When a student misses class or falls behind on an assignment, it disrupts the progress of the whole class. **I will take attendance every day starting from the first day of classes.** You may miss **two** classes for any reason (no excuse or note required) without penalty. For every class you miss beyond two, your grade will be lowered by **1/3 of your overall grade** (e.g., a B+ would drop to a B if you have three unexcused absences). University-approved absences are exempt from this policy. Absences due to

medical concerns will be excused with appropriate documentation provided the documentation is submitted **within one week** of the absence. Do not schedule work, internships, or other classes during the COMM 2511 class; they are not accepted as valid excuses. Also, **do not make travel plans during finals week**.

## Professionalism

**Professionalism counts for 10% (100 points) of your grade.** You earn these points by following the rules and guidelines outlined in this section of the syllabus.

Unprofessional communication is not tolerated in the workplace, nor will it be tolerated in this class. Classroom discussion should be civilized, respectful to everyone, and relevant to the topic we are discussing. Mutual respect, willingness to listen, and an ability to constructively communicate about alternative viewpoints are especially important when critiquing classmates' work.

If you are contacting me via email, your tone and language should be professional. **I will not reply to emails that are rude and disrespectful.** Moreover, I love helping students with questions or concerns they might have, but I expect students to be respectful of my time. Therefore, before emailing me to ask about due dates or how many points an assignment is worth, **you should first check the syllabus and Carmen.**

This course is a technology-heavy course, and **you must be able to use technology responsibly.** You need to stay focused on class discussion and material as a courtesy to other students and your instructor, and so that you will do well in the class. Do not check your email, do homework for other classes, or use the Internet for tasks outside of class activities. You should not answer phone calls, texts, Snapchats, etc. while I am lecturing or while other students are speaking.

## Naming Files

Unless otherwise stated, you must name your files in the following format. Failure to do so will result in a grade reduction for your assignment:

**Format:** Lastname\_Firstname\_Assignmentname.filetype

**Example:** Frampton\_Jessica\_PS1.psd

## Photoshop Lessons

Throughout the semester, you will work independently to complete several lessons to learn how to use Adobe Photoshop. The lessons correspond with each Photoshop textbook chapter to help you put the techniques you learn into practice. You can download the lesson files from Carmen or by following the instructions in the Photoshop textbook. For each lesson, you will submit a final version of the file to Carmen.

Occasionally, you will be given some class time to work on the lessons, but expect to devote additional time outside of class to complete them.

**Note: Sections labeled “Extra Credit” in the textbook lessons do not count for extra credit in the course.**

## In-Class Activities and/or Quizzes

You will be provided with opportunities to apply your knowledge of both Photoshop and design concepts during in-class activities. **Many of these activities are graded.** You will know if an activity will be graded before turning it in at the end of the class period. Students who miss an in-class activity due to an unexcused absence will not be allowed to make up the activity, and all points will be lost. You must have a documented excused absence to make up an in-class activity. At any point in the semester, I reserve the right to substitute a “pop” quiz for an in-class activity. Quizzes are more likely if it becomes apparent that students are not completing assigned readings. **You should come to class prepared to use Photoshop skills and discuss design concepts covered in the readings.**

## Midterm and Final Exams

To excel in the class, you should focus on how you can use information from the readings and lectures to develop design ideas and incorporate them into your design assignments. The midterm and final will be closed-book and will cover information from both readings and lectures. You should know the principles of design in addition to technical terms and software practices. The final will be a cumulative exam.

You are required to take the exams on the scheduled days and times. Missing the midterm or final will result in zero (0) points. Make-up exams will only be allowed in cases of documented emergencies.

## Design Assignments

Bi-weekly design assignments will help students make incremental progress in developing their visual communication skills. In each design assignment, students are expected to demonstrate both design principles and Photoshop skills.

## Grading Criteria

Assignments will be evaluated along various dimensions outlined in a rubric. Scores will be based on creativity, design excellence, analytical thinking, attention to detail, and polished writing.

Here are some of the criteria that will be used while grading:

- Connecting your work to readings and class discussion
- Fluency with which design vocabulary is used
- Demonstration of technical competence with Photoshop tools
- Understanding of visual literacy principles presented in readings or lecture
- Ability to develop creative graphic designs
- Ability to critically evaluate visual communication, including self-critique
- Quality writing that expresses clear thinking
- Documentation of personal discovery through visual communication

Sometimes, students will be asked to take a look at another student's work and offer suggestions and critiques. Students are expected to be courteous with their critiques.

## Late Work

All design assignments, homework, and the final project are due before class on the listed due date unless otherwise noted. They should be turned in via the Carmen drop-box set up for that specific assignment. Computer/technology problems will not be considered an acceptable justification for late work. If you are having difficulties with Carmen, you may email me your assignment before the deadline to receive credit. The penalty for late work is as follows:

- **Photoshop Homework:** Students are strongly encouraged to work ahead of time on these homework assignments. Students have access to all the Photoshop homework files starting the first day of class. **Therefore, no late Photoshop homework will be allowed, and all points will be lost if turned in late.**
- **Design Assignments:** Late design assignments will be graded down a letter grade and will continue to lose a letter grade per day thereafter. For example, an "A" assignment would receive a "B" if turned in anywhere from 1 minute to 23 hours and 59 minutes late. **Design assignments will only be accepted up to four days late unless you have documentation of extenuating circumstances.**
- **Final Project:** Students will work on their final project several days before the due date. Therefore, **late submission of the final project is not acceptable and ALL points will be lost unless you have a documented emergency.**

## Grade and Point Distribution

<b>A</b> = 930-1000	<b>B+</b> = 870-899	<b>C+</b> = 770-799	<b>D+</b> = 670-699
<b>A-</b> = 900-929	<b>B</b> = 830-868	<b>C</b> = 730-769	<b>D</b> = 600-669
	<b>B-</b> = 800-829	<b>C-</b> = 700-729	<b>E</b> = under 600

Professionalism	100
Photoshop Homework	100
In-Class Activities or Quizzes	100
Design Assignments	200
About (50)	
Typography (50)	
Logo (50)	
Advertising (50)	
Midterm	200
Final Exam	250
Final Project	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,000</b>

## A General Note

Graduating seniors (and other students) who “need” this course to graduate should work especially hard to ensure that they will pass this class (a C- or higher is required for Communication and Journalism majors). There will not be opportunities for you to re-take exams or re-complete assignments to raise your grade. It is your responsibility to ensure that you receive a passing final grade by working diligently and responsibly throughout the semester. No exceptions will be made.

## Student Academic Services

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services’ website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

## Student Services

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition, and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

## Diversity

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to

building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

## Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu)

## Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info\\_for\\_students/csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp)).

## Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course. **To be clear, you should not put any of my course materials on document-sharing websites or record lectures without my permission.**

## Accessibility Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Requesting accommodations

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also



welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu); 614-292-3307; [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu); 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

## Calendar

I will make every attempt to adhere strictly to these dates. However, some of these dates are subject to change. **Please check Carmen, which is where I will post changes if necessary.**

Week 1	Topic	Readings	What's Due?
8/21	Course Overview; Ugly PowerPoints		
8/23	What is Design?; Visual Communication	Malamed Ch. 1	
<b>Week 2</b>			
8/28	About Me PowerPoint Presentations		About Me PowerPoint
8/30	Design Process; Intro to Photoshop	Malamed Ch. 2	
<b>Week 3</b>			
9/4	Balance, Alignment, and Other Design Principles	Williams Ch. 3; Photoshop Ch. 1	Photoshop Lesson 1
9/6	Photoshop Tutorials	Photoshop Ch. 2	Photoshop Lesson 2
<b>Week 4</b>			
9/11	Unity and Other Design Principles	Malamed Ch. 9; Williams Ch. 4	
9/13	Emphasis, Contrast, and Other Design Principles	Malamed Ch. 10; Williams Ch. 5; Photoshop Ch. 3	Photoshop Lesson 3
<b>Week 5</b>			
9/18	Elements of Design	Photoshop Ch. 4	Photoshop Lesson 4
9/20	Shapes, Depth, and Other Fun Things	Malamed Ch. 12	
<b>Week 6</b>			

9/25	Typography I	Malamed Ch. 6; Photoshop Ch. 5	Photoshop Lesson 5
9/27	Typography II	Williams Chs. 9, 10, 11, & 12	About Me Design Assignment
<b>Week 7</b>			
10/2	Color Theory I	Williams Ch. 7; Photoshop Ch. 6	Photoshop Lesson 6
10/4	Color Theory II	Malamed Ch. 7; Photoshop Ch. 7	Photoshop Lesson 7
<b>Week 8</b>			
10/9	Midterm Review		Typography Assignment
10/11	Fall Break – No Class		
<b>Week 9</b>			
10/16	Midterm Exam		Midterm Exam
10/18	Principles of Logo Design		
<b>Week 10</b>			
10/23	Vectors and Bitmaps	Photoshop Ch. 8	Photoshop Lesson 8
10/25	Advertising	Photoshop Ch. 9	Photoshop Lesson 9
<b>Week 11</b>			
10/30	Space	Malamed Ch. 4; Williams Ch. 2	Logo Assignment
11/1	Final Project		
<b>Week 12</b>			
11/6	Scale and Proportion	Photoshop Ch. 10	Photoshop Lesson 10
11/8	In-Class Activity		
<b>Week 13</b>			
11/13	Presenting Data	Malamed Ch. 16	Ad Assignment
11/15	Graphic Motion & Visual Rhythm		
<b>Week 14</b>			
11/20	Final Project		
11/22	Thanksgiving – No Class		
<b>Week 15</b>			
11/27	Presentations		Final Project
11/29	Presentations		Final Project
<b>Week 16</b>			
12/4	Exam Review		
<b>Final Exam TBD</b>			