UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Visual Design

2425-2-E2004P037

Learning area

STUDY OF THE MEANS BY WHICH COMMUNICATION TAKES PLACE

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

Understanding and critical analysis of visual communicative artifacts
Historical knowledge of graphic design styles and influences

Applying knowledge and understanding

Ability to consciously use different visual languages
Management of an editorial project from the brief to the realization

Contents

The course implies in theoretical and practical modalities.

The four theoretical modules purpose to provide the student with a cultural, historical and planning basis of visual design and are structured in frontal lessons. The first module focuses on the history of visual communication (styles and influences from 1880 to today), the second addresses the elements of composition (e.g. typography and layout) and applied theories of visual design (e.g. Gestalt), a the third concerns visual identity and corporate communication, while a fourth and final module deals with the more technical aspects of print and digital.

The practical part focuses on the graphic design of an editorial artefact in both printed and digital format. The lesson plan includes three workshop lessons to support the editorial design project.

Detailed program

Historical introduction to styles and protagonists (from 1880 to the contemporary):
• Art nouveau and jugendstil
• Plakatstil (“object-poster” in German)
• Bauhaus movement
• International typographic style / Swiss style
• Pop art and radical design
• Digital Age
• Identity Design, brand and corporate

Elements of the composition:
• Typography and lettering
• Layout
• Color theory
• Language of images (photographic, graphic and illustrated)
• Printing technology

Prerequisites

Knowledge and basic competences required for the visual design class: an interest for art history and images analysis capabilities.

For the academic year 2024/2025 it will not be possible to select this course as a single-course entry.

Teaching methods

The course is planned in 11 lessons of 42 hours total: 6 lessons of 4 hours in-person lecture-based classes, 3 lesson of 4 hours in interactive-classes as a project laboratory, 2 lessons of interactive-classes for the presentation of group work (6 hours in total) always in presence.

Theoretical lessons and multidisciplinary design activities aimed at exercising skills in the perspective of know-how, critical thinking and conscious choices.
Primary goal is develop the ability to analyze and decode visual communication.
The course is supported by a computer lab for practical teaching of graphic design software.
The course is in Italian.

Assessment methods

Written test with mandatory oral exam

Assessment modality is theoretical and practical.
The exam consists of two parts: the elaboration of a graphic project (individual or group) and a written computer exam (open-ended questions and multiple choice questionnaire) based on the bibliography and the teaching material provided.
Evaluation: both the design and theoretical methods will be evaluated up to 30 points and will average each other.
For attending students, the design activity will be verified on an ongoing basis with a presentation in the last classroom lessons.
For non-attending students, the methods for developing the project are specified on the e-learning page of the course. The project will be presented on the dates scheduled for the exam session, immediately following the written exam.

• **practical:** editorial graphics design activity with final presentation and related critical discussion. The evaluation of the student will take place on the basis of the quality of the work carried out and the characteristic elements of the project (strategy, creativity, coherence with the objectives, realization and effectiveness of the developed prototype);
• **theoretical:** written exam, set up with open-ended questions and a multiple-choice questionnaire, aimed at verifying the acquisition of historical and critical knowledge relating to the topics covered in the exam bibliography and in the teaching material provided.

Although this course is held in Italian, for Erasmus students, course material can also be available in English, and students can take the exam in English if they wish to do so.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Falcinelli, R. (2014). *Critica portatile al visual design: da Gutenberg ai social network*. Einaudi.
Perondi L. (2024), *L'alta leggibilità (non) esiste? - Cosa significa progettare un testo graficamente inclusivo*, Nomos Edizioni

Further information will be available and updated on the course's e-learning website.

Sustainable Development Goals

GENDER EQUALITY | SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS