

GRA 4196C / Ideas & Styles / Syllabus

Course information:

GRA 4196C | Class #14478 | Pre-requisites: GRA3112C & GRA3194
Meets: M/W 5–7 (11:45–2:45) FAC 314 | Final exam: 12:30–2:30 on TU 12/10

Instructor information:

Dr. Dori Griffin | email dgriffin@arts.ufl.edu | office FAC 103
Office hours M 9:30–10:30 AM, W 3:00–4:00 PM, and by appointment – book online [here](#)

I regularly check/return email in the early morning and late afternoon of every business day (M-F) and email is the best way to reach me outside of class. I'm happy to make an appointment to meet outside regular office hours, especially if your class schedule conflicts with these.

Texts & materials:

All required readings/viewings will be posted to our course website; beyond your laptop and Adobe Creative Cloud subscription, necessary project supplies will depend on individual design choices.

Course description:

GRA 4196C: Ideas & Styles places special emphasis on history and theories of graphic design including innovations and contemporary issues. In this class, we'll explore the ideas and visual aesthetics attached to the practice of graphic design over a range of places and times. We'll see and discuss some of the key graphic artifacts associated with our discipline and question how these are conceptualized and utilized by both designers and audiences. We'll make work that engages the historical/critical contexts and graphic design while contributing depth and focus to each student's portfolio through a studio-centered process of critical making.

Collaborative dialogues:

This class centers around discussing two questions: (1) What ideas and styles have traditionally been acknowledged as integral to graphic design history, and what are their historical and contemporary contexts? (2) How can practicing designers take an active role in shaping our understanding of the discipline's history and theory, making it more global, inclusive, and participatory? On most Wednesdays, we'll have a short (±30 minutes) lecture to introduce canonical ideas, designers, images, styles, and technical processes from the history of graphic design. These chronologically organized introductions offer a broad overview, providing a formal and contextual vocabulary shared by most designers practicing in North America and western Europe today. Being familiar with this content allows designers to participate in disciplinary and professional conversations from an informed position. We'll also work together to expand this narrative, pushing back against its boundaries and critiquing its power structures. Primarily, this will take place through an ongoing process of individually-driven visual research and critical making. In both discussions and critical making activities, we'll seek ways to understand where our discipline came from and to shape where it's going.

Critical making:

The studio work we do in this class provides opportunities for active, visually-oriented engagement with histories and theories of design. Through a process of critical making, each member of this class will contribute to our discipline's understanding of its past, present, and future. From a very practical standpoint, this studio work provides a series of interconnected portfolio projects that are sustained, multi-platform, conceptually rich, and formally sophisticated. Four smaller components will combine, at the end of the semester, into a single large project. Within this framework, there's a lot of room for flexibility and defining an individual formal/conceptual focus. You're encouraged to choose subject matter that's meaningful to you and pursue design solutions that allow you to explore styles, techniques, media, and physical/digital formats that will enrich your portfolio.

Graded assignments – 100 points total:

60% studio outcomes – 4 equally weighted project components
 Game concept and brand identity
 Game packaging
 Game cards + instruction booklet

- Animated ad(s) for game
- 30% research outcomes – 3 equally weighted assignments
 - Canonical style overview, with partner:
 - 100-200 word summary + 6 captioned images (due 9/9)
 - 15 minute audiovisual presentation w/ partner, varying due dates, see calendar
 - Game content / text: 250-300 word written summary (due 10/21)
 - Game content / images: 20+ captioned images (due 10/21)
- 10% final portfolio – written + visual documentation of process
 - * to earn credit for the portfolio, you must complete all the assignments above

Grading criteria:

In general, studio projects will be evaluated based on iterative process, conceptual development, formal resolution, and technical execution. Specific criteria and the weight for each will be addressed in individual project briefs, and each brief will be accompanied by a grading rubric.

Grading scale:

The grading scale for this course is consistent with the current UF policy for assigning grade points which can be viewed at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

<i>Letter</i>	<i>GPA</i>	<i>Percent</i>
A	4.00	100-95%
A-	3.67	94-90%
B+	3.33	89-87%
B	3.00	86-83%
B-	2.67	82-80%
C+	2.33	79-77%
C	2.00	76-73%
C-	1.67	72-70%
D+	1.33	69-67%
D	1.00	66-63%
D-	0.67	62-60%
F	0.00	59% or below

Course policies:

Process: An engaged process of development is vital to successful graphic design practice. You can demonstrate commitment to process by: showing work during process critiques, participating in classroom discussions, actively seeking feedback about your work, communicating in a direct and professional way if you have concerns or questions, being punctual and prepared for all class meetings, and actively using each project to build skills and meet goals that are important to your growth into the kind of designer you want to be. If you let me know what these are, we can work together to make sure your project work lets you meet them.

Craft: Professional presentation skills are an important aspect of graphic design and poor presentation will negatively impact your project grades. You can demonstrate commitment to professional craft by: meeting industry standards for image resolution – 300dpi minimum for print, 72dpi for screen; meeting project requirements for size, materials, and file delivery; and taking care with cutting, folding, and gluing – no messy or loose edges, bent corners, pixelated or smudged prints, or sticky surfaces.

Attendance: All absences after the first two cost 5 points each from the final grade in the course, unless you provide official documentation of a university-sanctioned reason for each subsequent absence and turn in the process work associated with the class you missed. Military service, varsity sports travel, and illness are common excused absences, documented by a written note from a commanding officer, coach, or doctor. More than six absences of any kind – missing 3+ weeks of class – results in automatic failure of the course unless we make arrangements in advance to accommodate necessary and documented situations. I'll give you a report of absences to date at mid-term; otherwise, it's your job to keep track. Two late arrivals or early departures equal one absence. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Deadlines: Just like in the professional world, deadlines are firm and meeting them is critical. To earn full credit, assignments must be turned in when class begins on their due date. Late work loses 10 points from the project grade for each 24 hour day it's late, including work that's turned in after class begins on the due date. Emergency situations should be documented in writing with an official excuse like a doctor's note when you return to school; alternative arrangements can be made in advance for non-emergency, university-approved situations like illness, university/military travel, religious observances, or unsafe roads for commuters – just email me *before* the deadline to let me know.

Electronic devices: Electronic devices should be on silent mode when class begins. All electronics, including computers and earbuds, should be silent and put away during presentations and all critiques. If your electronic devices disrupt a class, you'll be marked absent for that period.

Accommodations: Students requesting accommodations for disabilities should contact me right away to discuss specific needs so we can make sure this class works well for you. You'll need to register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, you'll receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to me when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Academic integrity: If you use words, images, or ideas that are not your own, cite them. Claiming the work of others as your own is a serious breach of professional ethics and will result in a failing grade in this class. The UF Honor Code specifies a number of other behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. View the Honor Code online: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

Online evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last 2-3 weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Double-dipping with ARH 4930: If you're also enrolled in ARH 4930, you're welcome to engage with the same general subject area you've chosen to research in that class. However, *none* of the images you choose for either class should overlap.

Campus Resources

Emergency Contact Information

UF Police: Emergency 911, non-emergency 352-392-1111 or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

UF Counseling and Wellness Center: 352-392-1575 or <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>

UF 24/7 Crisis Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Emergency-Services>

Contacts for Student Healthcare Center

Dial 911 for medical emergencies.

Dial 352-392-1161 for urgent after-hours medical questions.

Dial 352-392-1171 for after-hours mental health assistance, <http://shcc.ufl.edu>

General University Policies and Services

Most policies and procedures important to students are here: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/>

GRA 4196C / Assignment summaries

Design history teaching game – 4 (studio) project components

This semester, you'll conceptualize, curate, and design a teaching game to introduce graphic design students and practitioners to graphic design history. The traditionally-defined canonical styles we research as a group can provide a framework or a springboard for your game. Either way, your job as a game designer is to expand this narrative, opening up the history of graphic design to include people, places, and/or practices excluded from what's come to be known as the canon of graphic design history. Separately graded component parts of this semester-long project include game concept and identity system, packaging, a card deck with 52+ cards, an 8-16 page instruction booklet, and an animated ad. For each component, you'll receive a project brief and grading rubric when the project is assigned.

Canonical style overview – text + images

Working with a partner, research your assigned historical style. Write a 100-200 word summary that includes key names, dates, geographic locations, new technologies, influential concepts, and stylistic characteristics. Locate 6 images that are familiar, even stereotypical representations of your style. The point of this work is to crowd-source the labor of finding print-ready images of canonical works of graphic design so that everyone can use these but each person only has to devote the time to source three images. Caption these canonical images with the title, maker, date, and complete source information including URL. You'll need to locate high-resolution images, at least 3x5 inches at 300dpi, and make sure the URL is a direct link to that high-res image. To our shared blog, using your style name as the post title, upload your written summary, thumbnails of each image (about 400x600 pixels at 72dpi), and the caption (including direct URL to high-res file) for each image.

Canonical style overview – presentation

Your 15-minute presentation will have three parts, each lasting 4-5 minutes. (1) Collaboratively with your partner, summarize your canonical style research. Show what you've determined to be the two most commonly representative images for that style, and contextualize them within their place/time. (2+3) Individually, each partner will connect their assigned style to the expanded content they're developing for their educational game. Show an image example and discuss how it contributes to the familiar narrative of the style, how it expands that narrative, and why it's important for contemporary designers to encounter this image example alongside – or instead of – more familiar images. You'll probably need to give a very brief description of the goals and format of your game, for instance, "A re-working of Go Fish that introduces players to African American graphic designers" or "A rummy-style game to teach players about women in the history of graphic design." Presentations are intended to introduce our studio community to the familiar information that "most designers" know about each stylistic movement in the history of graphic design, as well as introducing us to two ways to re-think that familiar history. As the semester progresses, we'll encounter stylistic movements, the images most commonly associated with them, and (at least) 20 different ways to expand this received historical narrative. It might be tricky to find the information you're seeking – I'm available to help you locate resources so don't be shy about asking!

Game content – summary text

Your research process will be a long-term, individual, and deep engagement with sources and ideas about which you'll become our studio community's expert. Your summary text will record this contextual information in ways that your game might not. Write a 250-300 word reflective text capturing your area of research, your findings, and how/why understanding this information usefully expands our concept of graphic design history. This text should be thoughtful, insightful, and relevant – but it isn't a formal paper, and it can be written in the first person. Provide a properly formatted bibliography with a minimum of 5 scholarly sources you've consulted during your research process; each source should include a 1-sentence description of its (relevant) content. The bibliography isn't included in the word count.

Game content – images + captions

Your game will make use of historical and/or contemporary images, which you're responsible for locating. Post a thumbnail of each image, along with a caption including title, maker, date, and complete source information including a direct URL to the image. The minimum number of images/captions is 20. (If you're in ARH 4930, there's no double-dipping on images.)

GRA 4196C / Calendar

W 08/21	Course intro, sign up for content development, play games, assign readings
M 08/26	General ideation sketches – game concept, structure, content, brand identity Discuss Heller & Scotford readings
W 08/28	Identity system sketches <i>Styles overview: the middle ages & manuscript culture</i>
M 09/02	Labor Day – holiday
W 09/04	DHS conference – peer review written content and revised sketches <i>Styles overview: the Renaissance & printed page conventions – film & reading</i> read: https://blogs.getty.edu/iris/a-beginners-guide-to-the-renaissance-book/ watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHprwjOJIn8 optional fun with Stephen Fry: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQ88yC35NjI
M 09/09	Critique final roughs; canonical style overviews (text + images) due
T 09/10	Guest speaker Saki Mafundikwa, 6:00pm (required)
W 09/11	Due date #1 (brand identity) <i>Styles overview: early modern typography & the public sphere</i>
M 09/16	Thumbnails and templates for packaging + instructions
W 09/18	Digital sketches for packaging, assembled template for box + cards/booklet <i>Styles overview: Victorian design & mass production</i> <i>Presentation: Victorian design</i>
M 09/23	Revise & produce
W 09/25	Revise & produce <i>Styles overview: Arts & Crafts</i> <i>Presentation: Arts & Crafts</i>
M 09/30	Due date #2 (packaging, incl. blank/dummy cards + booklet)
W 10/02	Sketches for cards + booklets <i>Styles overview: Art Nouveau & Vienna Secession</i> <i>Presentation: Art Nouveau</i>
M 10/07	Establish grid/stylesheet/etc for cards, booklets, any other elements (eg, board)
W 10/09	Focus: cards <i>Styles overview: Futurism & Dada</i> <i>Presentations: Futurism and Dada</i>
M 10/14	Focus: card revisions
W 10/16	Review: how all the parts will fit together <i>Styles overview: Constructivism & De Stijl</i> <i>Presentation: Constructivism</i>
M 10/21	Game content due Focus: booklet
W 10/23	Focus: booklet revisions <i>Styles overview: Bauhaus & New Typography</i> <i>Presentation: Bauhaus</i>
M 10/28	Focus: booklet revisions
W 10/30	Revise & produce <i>Styles overview: Art Deco & Heroic Realism</i> <i>Presentations: Art Deco & Heroic Realism</i>

M 11/04 Revise & produce
W 11/06 Due date #3 (card deck + instruction booklet)
Note: if this is the Vox trip weekend, this due date will be moved to M 11/04

M 11/11 Veteran's Day – holiday
W 11/13 Storyboards due
Styles overview: the "International" (Swiss) style
Presentations: "International"/Swiss style

M 11/18 Revise & produce
W 11/20 Revise & produce
Styles overview: Basel & early postmodernism
Presentation: New Wave

M 11/25 Due date #4 (animated ads for game)
W 11/27 Thanksgiving – holiday

M 12/02 Workday
W 12/04 Due date #5 (revisions for project cohesion)

Tu 12/10 Final exam – portfolios due – optional remote delivery

GRA 4196C / Canonical styles sign-up

W 09/18 *Presentation: Victorian design*
_____ & _____

W 09/25 *Presentation: Arts & Crafts*
_____ & _____

W 10/02 *Presentation: Art Nouveau*
_____ & _____

W 10/09 *Presentation: Futurism*
_____ & _____

Presentation: Dada
_____ & _____

W 10/16 *Presentation: Constructivism*
_____ & _____

W 10/23 *Presentation: Bauhaus*
_____ & _____

W 10/30 *Presentation: Art Deco*
_____ & _____

Presentation: Heroic Realism
_____ & _____

W 11/13 *Presentation: "International"/Swiss style*
_____ & _____

W 11/20 *Presentation: New Wave*
_____ & _____