

## SYLLABUS

### GRA6930 MXD Seminar (3 credits)

Meets Tuesdays 3–6pm in 310 and IFH110, other meeting times as required

#### INSTRUCTOR

Maria Rogal  
Professor  
Graphic Design  
School of Art + Art History  
University of Florida

#### OFFICE HOURS

Tuesdays 10:35–11:35am  
& by appointment  
office 313D FAC

mrogal@ufl.edu  
352 273 3080

The most effective way to reach me is by email. I respond to emails during the week, between 8am–6pm. Expect a 24–36 hour response time.

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The graduate catalog describes this course as covering “Contemporary issues pertaining to design & visual communications and related areas. Discussion of literature, development of research questions, and framing methodologies.” This is the inaugural seminar in the new MFA, Design & Visual Communications program (the MXD). Its focus is on how we might design for equity and equitable engagement with the city of Gainesville and (mostly) with the east Gainesville community.

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Make connections across disciplines to shape one’s knowledge-base in design, including key issues in contemporary discourse,
- Learn to identify, conceptualize, frame, and articulate questions, problems, ideas, and concepts
- Synthesize and articulate complex information in a meaningful manner (verbal, writing, design)
- Increase understanding of the relationship of design to the economy, culture, and society

#### COURSE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

This is the semester overview. Specific details on each week’s activities will be announced in advance, as well as any changes in previously scheduled activities.

Weeks 1–4 Emphasis on concepts, context, theory, topics

Weeks 5–8 Practice methods, concepts

Weeks 9–12 Fieldwork, research, learning in context

Weeks 13–16 Findings, dissemination, reflection

#### REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Adobe Creative Cloud Suite
- Required texts are provided electronically or on reserve in the AFA library.
- At UF we have free access to the tutorial site, LinkedInLearning.com, which you can use to expand your knowledge of software for the course.

#### COURSE STRUCTURE

This course is divided into 3 modules, or blocks, and runs concurrently with GRA6931 Research & Practice, taught by Professor Gaby Hernández. This course consists of lectures, reading responses/reflections, journaling, exercises, writing, interactions

#### TOPICS

Design thinking, horizontal concepts and methods, ethnography, equity, design research, writing, fieldwork

#### COMMUNICATION

- You are responsible for emails sent to your ufl.edu account. It is a good practice to check your ufl.edu email at least once per day between Monday and Friday.
- I check emails regularly between Monday and Friday. Expect up to a 36 hour turn-around. If, after that period of time, you need a response, forward me the original email with a note that you are waiting for a response.

### GRADING + EVALUATION

The purpose of grading and evaluation is to pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of your work. To this end, I can only respond to what is observable. Expectations for grades are listed below.

A: 1000–950	Exceptional or excellent work throughout the process. Your final submission is excellent, with no errors or changes necessary
A–: 940–900	Excellent; surpassed all criteria but minor room for improvement
B+: 890–870	Very good; surpassed all criteria but some areas can be improved
B: 860–830	Good; met all criteria but more than minimal room for improvement
B–: 820–800	Above average; met criteria but needs improvement
C+: 790–770	Average; met some criteria but several areas for improvement
C: 760–730	Average; much improvement needed
C–: 720–700	Slightly below average; further improvement needed
D+: 690–670	Below average; very significant improvement needed
D: 660–630	Below average; poor and/or incomplete work
D–: 620–600	Below average; very poor and/or incomplete work; work well below level of study
E: <600	Failing; work did not meet any criteria or you submitted no work

### DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES

Your final grade will be based on your performance on work during the semester. Mainly, I consider most work to be drafts since 1) I want you to have the autonomy to be creative, critical, and take risks with it. In addition, I would rather you do the work, than find grades an obstacle to exploration and experimentation. One of the goals in the seminar is for you to contribute new knowledge, which you can do when you have latitude. I do hope what you contribute helps us as a community and the design, and world, community at large make the world better. This is one reason so much emphasis is placed on the process book, which is the final deliverable. As long as you turn your original work in on time, you may revise work at any point. Final revisions are to be submitted in your process book

### 300 points – Participation

30 sessions at 10 points each. Daily assessment of participation (excellent, satisfactory, needs improvement, unsatisfactory) throughout the semester. Each of the 3 blocks have different expectations and activities. However, you should primarily ask if you are present, on time, actively participate, provide constructive feedback, ask questions, display a professional attitude, conduct primary and secondary research, demonstrate respect, reciprocity, commitment to work, risk taking, maintaining flexibility, demonstrate or attempt to gain comfort with ambiguity, open, honest, and work to build trust.

- If you have ways you prefer to participate, please see me after the first class meeting to discuss accommodations and options for you to fully participate and benefit.
- Each class period you are awarded the following: 10 — Excellent, 7 — Good, 3 — Needs Improvement, 0 — Unsatisfactory
- Examples of Participation: Excellent: Contributes in a very significant way to activities, knows assigned materials very well, and exceeds overall course requirements; Good: Contributes to activities, knows assigned materials well, and exceeds many, but not all, course requirements; Needs Improvement: Minimal participation, not being prepared, slowing others down, creating more work for others, unreasonably diverting their attention to their work.

**700 points—Process book** (design and contents) I suggest you keep this book as a running document (we will discuss parameters). This will be your unique deliverable and part or all of it will later be combined with that of others as a record of the course and program. The ordering of the Table of Contents will be determined in week 8, with time for production.

- Reading responses: 7 x 10 points each = 70 points. Reflective response to the readings assigned. This will include three questions you have about the readings that might be discussed in class. This exercise is analytical, reflective, and creative. Evaluation: Depth of reflection; Structure of writing and thoughts; Evidence of relationship to practice; Questions for class discussion.
  - Field journal and documentation throughout the semester = 100 points
  - Methodology diagram = 40 points. May be your own interpretation of a process or a certain aspect in some depth
  - Case Study = 50 points (determined throughout the semester, with emphasis on blocks 2–4)
  - Exercises: 8 x 10 points each = 80 points. Evaluation is based on attention to content, form, and quality (depth and breadth).
  - Process posts (prepared for your website, the MXD website, Instagram) = 8 x 10 points each = 80 points. Roughly once every two weeks and serves as collaborative documentation of the seminar. Excerpts from field journals, with photos, drawings, sketches, videos, and writing are options.
  - Book design and production = 150 points (see required format)
  - Final presentation contribution + documentation = 50 points
  - IRB completion = 50 points
  - Extracurricular event participation – 3 events (including Saki Mafundikwa) with one page reflection on each event (visual or verbal) = 10 x 3 = 30 points
- Total possible = 1000 points

UF Grading Policy: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

The chart below outlines criteria for “A” work, the highest level, with qualifiers for all work below that. Work earning an “A” demonstrates the best of the UFGD program, work that we would use to promote the program to the broader design community, and is work that is portfolio-ready upon submission, with no revisions necessary. Craft is perfect, there are no typos, rags are balanced, typography is exceptional and all the parts form a cohesive whole.

<b>A</b>	100–95	4.00	Exceptional or excellent work from process to production. Research is appropriate; process demonstrates design thinking and development of a range of solutions (not just 1–3) that are plausible. Proposal(s) are built on consistently and support an iterative process. Realization is excellent and supports an exceptional concept. You have come to class with new work, are highly engaged in discussions and critiques, and know the materials well. Your final submission is portfolio-ready, with no errors or changes necessary (no typos, craft is excellent).
<b>A–</b>	94–90	3.67	Excellent; surpassed all criteria but still some room for improvement
<b>B+</b>	89–87	3.33	Very good; surpassed all criteria
<b>B</b>	86–83	3.00	Good; surpassed all criteria
<b>B–</b>	82–80	2.67	Above average; surpassed all criteria
<b>C+</b>	79–77	2.33	Average; met criteria
<b>C</b>	76–73	2.00	Average; improvement needed
<b>C–</b>	72–70	1.67	Slightly below average; further improvement needed
<b>D+</b>	69–67	1.33	Below average; much improvement needed
<b>D</b>	66–63	1.00	Below average; poor and/or incomplete work
<b>D–</b>	62–60	0.67	Below average; very poor and/or incomplete work; work well below level of study
<b>E</b>	59 or below	0.00	Failing; work did not meet any criteria or you submitted no work

#### **DEMONSTRATION OF SUFFICIENT PROGRESS**

**why is this important?** When working professionally, you will have various deadlines—not only at the end—and will build on your ideas. This is called **iterative design**. It is good practice to work consistently, to obtain feedback from your instructor and your peers, and to learn in this studio environment. To come to class unprepared or to put minimal effort into your work is unacceptable. Establishing a high standard in the classroom ensures that you learn to manage your time to meet deadlines, foster your own design process, obtain appropriate feedback, and develop to the best of your abilities. You must be proactive, not reactive.

If, at the mid-point review of a project, as indicated on the semester calendar, the instructor determines your work does not indicate you have made sufficient progress or meet the commonly expected standards you will not be permitted to move to the next stage. You will have one additional class period after that meeting to meet standards. If not demonstrated then, you will automatically earn a zero as your grade for the project. Likewise, if a project changes drastically at the last minute—without input from the instructor during class time—the instructor reserves the right to determine the project did not meet the requirements of sufficient progress and may assign a zero grade. This is because iteration and consistent progress towards completion is key to a solid professional practice. Design is not magic, it does not just happen, it is the product of research, process, and alignment with people's needs.

**ATTENDANCE**

You can miss two class days without penalty. Unexcused absences for 5 or more class periods will result in an 'E' unless there are extenuating circumstances. Arriving late/tardy 15 minutes after class has commenced means that attendance is not awarded on that day. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

**STUDENTS REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

All written work for this course should use US punctuation and follow standards in Chicago Manual of Style, accessible online at UF libraries. Resources and quotes should be properly cited, and references listed as described in The Chicago Manual of Style Author-Date system. Written materials should be uploaded onto CANVAS in Word documents (not PDF), unless images or figures require other format. Please include your name in document title.

**GRADES**

Please see the Graduate Catalog General Regulations section on Grades <http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=2750>. The only passing grades for graduate students are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and S. Grades of B-, C+ or C count toward a graduate degree if an equal number of credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with grades of B+, A- and A, respectively. Grade points are not given for S and U grades; S and U grades are not used to calculate grade point averages. All letter-graded courses eligible to count toward the graduate degree, except 1000- and 2000-level courses, are used to calculate the cumulative grade-point average. Letter grades of C-, D+, D, D- or E are not considered passing at the graduate level, although the grade points associated with these letter grades are included in grade point average calculations.

**ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION PROCESS**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals or in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

**MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FEES**

There are no materials or supply fees for this course.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The UF School of Art and Art History is concerned about the safe use of art materials. A complete handbook is provided at: <http://arts.ufl.edu/site/assets/files/37319/saahhealthandsafetyhandbook.pdf>

### **GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND SERVICES**

This resource covers most policies and procedures important to students.

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/>

### **UNIVERSITY HONESTY POLICY**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

**THE HONOR CODE** (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

An academic honesty offense is defined as the act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage. As a University of Florida student, one is expected to neither commit nor assist another in committing an academic honesty violation. Additionally, it is the student’s duty to report observed academic honesty violations. These can include: cheating, plagiarism, bribery, misrepresentation, conspiracy, or fabrication.

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

### **COMPUTER USE AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

All faculty, staff, and students of the University of Florida are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

<http://www.it.ufl.edu/policies/acceptable-use/acceptable-use-policy/>

### **CLASS DEMEANOR / DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to all. Please avoid the use of cell phones and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to discussion, including side conversations, should be held at a minimum, if at all. Faculty, students, Administrative and Professional staff members, and other employees [hereinafter referred to as ‘member(s)’ of the University], who intentionally act to impair, interfere with, or obstruct the mission, purposes, order, operations, processes, and functions of the University or the workplace that is a classroom shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by University authorities for misconduct, as set forth in the applicable rules of the Board of Regents and the University and state law governing such actions. Be advised that you can and will be dismissed from class if you engage in disruptive behavior.

A detailed list of disruptive conduct may be found at — <http://regulations.ufl.edu/regulations/uf-1-general/>

**CAMPUS RESOURCES**

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161. University Police Department: 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- <http://www.police.ufl.edu/> Academic Resources
- E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.
- Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://career.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>
- During the last two or three weeks of the semester, you will be able to evaluate the quality of instruction in this course. You will receive an email message letting you know the exact dates.