GRA 4197C: Visual Systems
3 credits | Fall 2022 | August 24th - December 7th, 2021

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Visual Systems in Graphic Design is a senior-level design studio where you will explore what it means to actively build multi-faceted design systems. This studio is made up of self-directed complex and integrated design projects. Students will learn and develop tools and techniques to move through the design process with intention and purpose. Discussions about work in progress consider the ways typography, color, imagery, layout, concept, and especially content all shape the meanings and appearance of our work — from inception to completion.

Students are encouraged to engage in an open-ended process of creating in which topics and potential outcomes are discovered through thinking, experiencing and making—not given by the instructor. Primary value is placed in the development of visual form and narrative over time, as well as on documentation and presentation. Students will learn to extend their ideas across multiple media platforms to create complex, branded visual systems.

Students will be asked and encouraged to create work that is rooted in personal interests and pushes their technical and intellectual boundaries. There is value in being experimental, failure is okay as long as we are learning. Patience, self motivation, flexibility (an open mind) and the will to explore multiple methods of making are crucial for a complete experience in this course.

While the work students will make prepares them and their portfolios for professional practice, students will also be asked to think about the current and future design field, social issues, and the role of the designer in social problems. Students will begin to identify and express their goals and values as it relates to their personal practice and visions of the future.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
- Explore the application of cohesive ideas across media platforms to create robust and timely visual systems.
- To develop the ability to choose media platforms that most effectively deliver ideas to an audience.
- To develop the ability to document process work and present that work to an audience.
- Begin the process of selecting and documenting work for a design portfolio.
- Re-focus on digital craft, tactile craft, and sound project documentation via photography and custom crafted digital mock-ups that move away from easily acquired on-line templates.
- To determine when a body of work is portfolio ready and how to present it accordingly.
- To cultivate a supportive and collaborative creative environment.
- To explore and discuss the role of the designer in contemporary design practice, identify post-graduation goals, and prepare for professional practice.
- To develop self direction and time management skills.

GENERAL CLASS TOPICS
This is an advanced graphic design course, and as such, it follows an iterative and non-linear process.
This semester, you will learn and practice topics such as:

design process
design methods / understanding audience and users / critical thinking / designing in favor of messages and contents / collaborative design / documantation / presentation

visual communication design
traditional design principles / typography / composition / materiality / production / multi-platform cohesiveness

professional and technical
flexibility and responsibility of design / contemporary issues / professional standards / terminology / design in context / design for online, screen based, and mobile media

These topics will be introduced through readings, discussions, case studies, homeworks, in-class exercises and critiques. They will also be integrated to the main assignment and project work throughout the semester.

INSTRUCTOR
Victoria R. Gerson, *she/her/hers*
vgerson@ufl.edu

MEETING TIME & LOCATION
Monday/Wednesday
Section 1: 11:45am-2:45pm (314)
Section 2: 3:00-6:00pm (316)

OFFICE HOURS
Tuesdays from 12pm-2pm + by appointment—*Please reach out to me, I'm here for you!*
https://ufl.zoom.us/my/vgerson
FAC317A

GRADING & EVALUATION

This course is composed of lectures, readings, discussions, design projects, presentations, critiques and feedback. The deliverables for this course are as follows:

70%	2 main semester projects
	Grade based on participation, process work, documentation of process, and the final deliverable
20%	Reading, writing, and group discussion of relevant articles + media
10%	Involvement with Design and professional practices and training outside of class (atleast 2)

Scale:
A | 100-95 A- | 94-90   B+ | 89-87   B | 86-83   B- | 82-80 C+ | 79-77
C | 76-73   C- | 72-70   D+ | 69-67   D | 66-63   D- | 62-60 E | 59 and lower

PROJECTS

The bulk of your grade in this class is based on earning points through your engagement with projects and reflections. There will be feedback from me and your classmates every step of the way. You will be invited to participate in your grading by completing self assessments after activities and projects. All projects final deliverables will include a process book and self assessment.

Projects will be evaluated based on research, concept, ideation, iterative process, conceptual development, attention to detail, formal resolution, and documentation. All projects will be submitted in Canvas. *See general semester outline on last page for tentative schedule.*

REFLECTIONS

There will be a reading, podcast, video, or activity (almost) every week, with a reflection/response post due before class. Whenever there is an additional optional reading/podcast/lecture etc, you may respond to it in your reflection for extra credit. All reflections will be submitted in Canvas.

REQUIRED TEXTS

There is no class book. I will provide links to all readings, videos, and case studies.

PLATFORMS

You will all be required to set up and have immediate access to these platforms during the semester:

Canvas: For storing any and all course materials and instructions, submitting assignments, grading, and communication.
Miro: For collaboration, feedback, and presentations.
Adobe CC: Discounted for Students
*Adobe CC Discounted for Students is a special UF student pricing on a one-year subscription to the entire Adobe Creative Cloud Suite. To purchase your Adobe CC Discounted for Students subscription, please log in at https://portal.helpdesk.ufl.edu and if eligible to purchase click on "Eligible, take me to OnTheHub" button. The service will run for one year from the time the software is activated. Distribution is provided by Kivuto/OnTheHub who is an authorized distributor for Adobe not affiliated with UF Computing Help Desk.

MEETINGS

This is a face to face in person class, unless otherwise stated by the instructor.

If you think or know that you have been exposed to, are experiencing symptoms of, or have tested positive for COVID-19, DO NOT come to class. Please let me know before the start of class so that I can provide a remote option, if you are feeling well enough to attend sychronously. Otherwise, you are expected to catch up and complete work asynchronously. See more under attendance policy.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In class time is critical, and attendance is required. You can miss two class days without penalty. More than 6 absences of any kind – missing more than 3 weeks of class – equals automatic course failure unless we make documented accommodations in advance.

To receive an "excused" absence, you must do one of the following:
1. Notify me before class begins that you will not be able to attend class
2. Notify me after class begins and provide official documentation of a university-sanctioned reason to

receive an excused absence. military service, varsity sports travel, and illness are common excused absences when documented by a written note from a commanding officer, coach, or doctor

Regardless of the type of absence, you are still required to complete assignments, so it is vital that you contact me as soon as possible to discuss your options. It is your responsibility to keep track of your attendance record in Canvas. Requirements for class attendance, make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. Along with more information on how UF assigns grade points, you'll find these by visiting: https://catalog.ufl.edu/graduate/regulations/

Religious Holidays

If you know that you will miss class time due to religious holidays, please inform me before the holiday (whether recognized by the university or not).

Tardies

If you know that you will be late to class ahead of time, please let me know as soon as you know.

If you are late 3 times, it will count as 1 unexcused absence

LATE WORK POLICY

Late work will not be penalized, as long as it is turned in within 2 days of the original due date. Please reach out to me so we can make sure you are staying on track. If work is not submitted within 2 days, points will be deducted from the final grade.

UF IN-CLASS RECORDING POLICY

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor. A class lecture does not include lab/studio sessions, student presentations, academic exercises involving solely student participation, or private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

UF HB7 GUIDANCE:

People learn best when encouraged to ask questions and express their diverse insights on course content which may include images, texts, data, or theories from many fields. This class addresses concepts of race, color, sex, and/or national origin as related to design. We study these important issues because understanding them is essential for anyone who seeks to make economic, cultural, and societal contributions to today's complex world. With this in mind, we do not limit access to, or classroom discussion of, ideas and opinions—including those that some may find uncomfortable or even offensive. In response to challenging material, students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas. But hostility and disruptive or disrespectful behavior have no place in a classroom, and we will respect one another's full humanity throughout this course.

COVID GUIDANCE

All people inside of UF facilities are encouraged to wear masks in community spaces in buildings, including common areas in our office suites, when we are not in our individual offices or workspaces, even if you are vaccinated. Students who must miss class due to quarantine will be treated as though they are absent from class because of any other illness. The instructor and student should think of it as such and arrange for the student to make up classwork.

Click here for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms. Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. Find more information in the university attendance policies.

SYLLABUS CHANGES

Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through email & Canvas.

TECHNOLOGY, FEES, AND EQUIPMENT USE

With questions related to your computer system and technology in the Graphic Design area, you can contact our Lab Technician, Michael Christopher (mchristo@ufl.edu). He can help diagnose problems and provide solutions.

MATERIALS AND DEVICES

In order for you to fully participate and meet course learning objectives, students taking graphic design courses are required to have appropriate hardware, software and access to the Internet. See this website for more details regarding hardware, software, specifications, and some purchasing options, including discounts for UF students.

Because computer access is an institutional requirement, computer costs are designated as allowable costs for students who qualify for Financial Aid. Accordingly, Student Financial Affairs has added costs for access to a computer into budgets. For more information, contact your financial adviser in the Office of Student Financial Affairs directly.

You are required to have:
- Adobe CC design suite
- Access to a cloud-based storage platform
- Your own laptop or desktop computer as required by the program, suitable for graphic design and production with appropriate RAM and storage capacity
- Access to a digital camera
- A dedicated sketchbook

At UF we have free access to the tutorial site, Lynda.com, which you can use to expand your knowledge of software for the course.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The goal of the SA+AH Health and Safety Program is to protect the health and welfare of all faculty, staff, and students and to cooperate with the University of Florida's Department of Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S). The SA+AH H&S policy and handbook is online here.

Michael Christopher is the Health and Safety administrator for the Graphic Design program. While there are very limited health and safety risks with the materials we typically use for graphic design, be aware that materials used in other areas often carry risks.

It is your responsibility to store everything you bring in the studio safely. Do not bring in any materials that are hazardous or combustible as the graphic design studios are not equipped for this type of storage. Knowingly or repeatedly storing such items in the studio may result in disciplinary action and loss of access to studio space outside of class time as well as loss of storage space.

Also,
- Batteries, some monitors, and lamps from digital projectors, if broken, may release mercury. There are no known health hazards from intact materials.
- Do not use spray adhesives or do hazardous work in the studios.
- Do not block aisles, halls or doors with stored items or when working.
- Take items which do not fit into the trash to the dumpster, follow dumpster guidelines.
- All users must follow the S+AH Container Policy (see the SA+AH Health and Safety Handbook online here.
- The GD Area policies prohibit use of hazardous materials, this applies to materials used in other areas. They may not be stored, ever, in the GD studios. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may affect your ability to use the studio unsupervised outside of regular class times.

ACCOMMODATIONS

I will make every effort to accommodate students who request and require assistance, in accordance with the American Disabilities Act. If you have accommodations through the university, please let me know.

MENTAL HEALTH + WELLNESS

I am here for you! This is a difficult school year for everyone and we are all adjusting. If you need/want to talk about your mental health, please reach out! If you would like to speak with a mental health professional, which I highly recommend for every student, the school information is as follows:

Campus Resources

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

UF POLICIES

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity means that if you use words, images, or ideas that are not your own, you must 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.

HONESTY POLICY

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, you are 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, copying ideas, plagiarism, bribery, misrepresentation, conspiracy, or fabrication. You can find UF's Student Conduct Code, here.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accomodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/). Once registered, students willreceive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

HARASSMENT

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty (http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eeo/sexharassment.html).

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

All 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 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. For more information, visit: http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/1008.pdf.

TWELVE-DAY RULE

Students who participate in official athletic or scholastic extracurricular activities are permitted twelve (12) scholastic day absences per semester without penalty. In any case, it is the student's responsibility to maintain satisfactory academic performance and attendance.

ABSENCES FOR RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students, upon prior notification of their instructions, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. A student who believes that he/she has been unreasonably denied an education benefit due to religious beliefs or practices may seek redress through the student grievance procedure: http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationattendance

PRIVACY POLICY REGARDING ONLINE SESSIONS (WHEN/IF APPLICABLE)

There will be ocassions when our class Zoom sessions may be audiovisually recorded for student in the class to refer back. Students who participate with their camera, engage or utiliza a profile image, are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the chat feature. Although, at times, the chat will also be saved for future reference for the class. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

GENERAL SEMESTER OUTLINE

August	**WEEK 1**	WED 8/24	Introductions, Syllabus, **INTRO to Project 1,** HW Select & Mind Map
	WEEK 2	MON 8/29	Due: Selection & Mind Map, Intro to Visual Systems, HW Mind Map
		WED 8/31	Guest Lecture: Randa Hadi
September	**WEEK 3**	MON 9/5	No Class, Labor Day
		WED 9/7	Step 2 Due, Discussion, Step 3- in class due before next class
	WEEK 4	MON 9/12	Mood Board
		WED 9/14	Mood Board Due, Critique
	WEEK 5	MON 9/19	Develop Visual Language
		WED 9/21	Visual Language Critique
	WEEK 6	MON 9/26	Work Day
		WED 9/28	Sketches Critique
October	**WEEK 7**	MON 10/3	Combine sketches & visual language
		WED 10/5	Critique, Final Design Direction
	WEEK 8	MON 10/10	Work Day, Final Designs
		WED 10/12	Critique
	WEEK 9	MON 10/17	Work Day, Final Designs
		WED 10/19	Critique, Process Books & Self Reflections
	WEEK 10	MON 10/24	Presentation Prep
		WED 10/26	Project 1 Due, **Intro to Project 2,** Project Proposal
	WEEK 11	MON 10/31	Brainstorm + Mood Board
November		WED 11/2	Share
	WEEK 12	MON 11/7	Work Day, Visual Language
		WED 11/9	Share, Design System Development
	WEEK 13	MON 11/14	Critique
		WED 11/16	Work Day
	WEEK 14	MON 11/21	Final Crit
		WED 11/23	No Class, Thanksgiving
December	**WEEK 15**	MON 11/28	Final Progress Check
		WED 11/30	Work Day, Presentation Prep
	WEEK 16	MON 12/5	Project 2 Due, Final Semester Reflection
		WED 12/7	LDOC