

## SYLLABUS

### GRA6930 MXD SEMINAR: *Design Identity, Ethics & Responsibility*

3 credits | Fall 2022 | August 24th - December 7th, 2021

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog description: Contemporary issues pertaining to design and visual communications and related areas. Discussion of literature, development of research questions, and framing methodologies.

Corequisite: GRA 6931c: *Research and Practice*.

#### INSTRUCTOR

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

#### MEETING TIME & LOCATION

Thursdays 11:45am-2:45pm  
IFH110

#### 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

#### Topic: Positionality & Responsibility

In this seminar, the attention will be placed on ways to understand and represent one's self-identity and how these identifications influence and align with the way we design and what we design. We will discuss issues such as the ethics of graphic design, social responsibility, self awareness, reflexivity, and identity, among other related topics.

Students will take on a project/undertaking that allows them to pursue subject matter that is really important to them while focusing on informed research making rather than purely expressive/creative activity. Through this process, students align identities and values with concrete goals for design practice. Students develop a Design & \_\_\_\_\_ topic that intersects with the course topic.

This course will be separate from but in conversation with the Research & Practice course. While R&P will touch on co-design and working with community partners, this seminar will focus on your individual research and practice.

*"We are not separate from the work we create, design is not neutral and the projects you work on, the people you work with, and what you create is a manifestation of your opinion about design and creative practice. Everything you make has you-ness and part of what you will do at design school is develop this you-ness as you develop skills as a designer. You are absolutely in your work, your work is a reflection of you and what you care about. You bring something unique to the table that another designer does not."*

-Mitch Goldstein

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Weeks 1-4	Identity mapping, research tools + methodologies, literature review, explore topics
Weeks 4-8	Project- problem framing, planning
Weeks 8-12	Project- design response, process + production
Weeks 12-16	Finalizing, presentation, case study, dissemination

#### GENERAL CLASS TOPICS

This is a graduate level 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 research methods / critical thinking / intention / iteration / documentation / presentation

##### *professional and technical*

flexibility and responsibility of design / contemporary issues / professional standards / terminology / design in context /

##### *visual communication design*

traditional design principles / typography / composition / consistency / detail / materiality / production / multi-platform cohesiveness

#### GRADING & EVALUATION

This course is composed of lectures, readings, discussions, projects, presentations, critiques and feedback. The grade is based on engagement with projects, reading materials, and discussions as well as participation, process work, documentation of process, and the final deliverable.

The deliverables for this course are as follows:

40%	2 projects
20%	Readings, Reflections, Group Discussions + Participation
20%	Process Book/Documentation
20%	Presentations

**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**

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*.

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.

**REFLECTIONS**

There will be a reading, podcast, video, or activity several times throughout the semester, with a reflection/response due on the Wednesday before class. The reflection/response must include two-three questions you wish to be discussed in class as well as one to two short paragraphs that explain how the texts that you read lead to this question. Be sure not to just summarize the content of the readings in your responses. Reflections will be evaluated on depth of reflection, structure, and questions.

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.

**PARTICIPATION**

Daily assessment of participation (excellent, satisfactory, needs improvement, unsatisfactory) throughout the semester. Excellent participation is being present, on time, provide constructive feedback, ask questions, display a professional attitude, commitment to work, risk taking, maintaining flexibility.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

There is no class book. All required materials will be provided.

**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 synchronously. 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.

### 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.

### **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](mailto:mchristo@ufl.edu)). He can help diagnose problems and provide solutions.

### **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

Students studying in the Design and Visual Communications MFA program are required to have appropriate hardware, software, and access to the Internet and perform design and design-related tasks, including access to UF's Canvas, UF GSuite/Google Drive, Teams, OneDrive, and Adobe Creative Cloud. 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.

### **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](mailto: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](mailto: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/](http://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 accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>). Once registered, students will receive 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 occasions 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 utilize 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.

### **IN CLASS RECORDING**

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.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services.

## GENERAL SEMESTER OUTLINE

<i>August</i>	<b>WEEK 1</b>	THU 8/25	Introductions, Syllabus, Intro to Course
<i>September</i>	<b>WEEK 2</b>	THU 9/1	Share Map, Reading discussion
	<b>WEEK 3</b>	THU 9/8	Printed Maps, Feedback, Reading Discussion
	<b>WEEK 4</b>	THU 9/15	Process Presentation, begin research
	<b>WEEK 5</b>	THU 9/22	Share final maps
	<b>WEEK 6</b>	THU 9/29	Framing / Project work (ongoing)
<i>October</i>	<b>WEEK 7</b>	THU 10/6	Framing / Project work (ongoing)
	<b>WEEK 8</b>	THU 10/13	Framing / Project work (ongoing)
	<b>WEEK 9</b>	THU 10/20	Framing / Project work (ongoing)
	<b>WEEK 10</b>	THU 10/27	Making / Project work (ongoing)
<i>November</i>	<b>WEEK 11</b>	THU 11/3	Making /Project work (ongoing)
	<b>WEEK 12</b>	THU 11/10	Making /Project work (ongoing)
	<b>WEEK 13</b>	THU 11/17	Making / Project work (ongoing)
	<b>WEEK 14</b>	THU 11/24	Disseminating
	<b>WEEK 15</b>	THU 12/1	Disseminating
<i>December</i>	<b>WEEK 16</b>	THU 12/8	Presentations