

300 Visual Storytelling Overview

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Office Hours: 10 – 11:30 a.m., T/Th
Also available by appointment

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Rationale for the course

Technology has exploded in the communication field in the last decade. The level of visual communication also is rising. Design skills are now required of all journalism professionals—print, broadcast, advertising and business communications. This is an intro course that will cover the theories, concepts and principles of visual communication and design production techniques.

Goals

- Learn the basics of good design, typography, photography, video, color theory and infographics.
- Learn the history of information design. “You drive using a rearview mirror. You have to design the same way.” (Estelle Ellis, designer).
- Gain a basic understanding of the most widely used design software in journalism and strategic communications.
- Learn how to constructively critique designed messages by evaluating your own work and the work of professionals and classmates.
- Think about the relationship between media and audience and learn how to meet the needs of diverse audiences.

Assessment

Learning outcomes in this class will be evaluated through in-class exercises, tests and design projects.

Materials

- *The Non-Designer’s Design Book*, third edition, by Robin Williams
- Readings as assigned on Blackboard
- Video tutorials in InDesign produced for this class by the J-School’s technical director. Videos are available on JSchoolTech.org

Class work

LECTURES: Will expand on readings and the text. You will want to take good notes that go beyond the main points of slides. Material from the lectures will be on the tests.

Note taking: You can’t take notes on a laptop in this class. You’re going to have to do it the old-fashioned way and write them! With your hand! A big study shows that students learn better when they take notes by hand. In some classes, I will want you to bring and use digital devices like your phone.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Four out-of-class assignments:** using InDesign. InDesign is available in the Mac labs and in the Journalism Resource Center as well as in labs on campus. But I recommend you rent it for \$14.99 a month from Adobe. Go here: <https://creative.adobe.com/plans?promoid=KSPAL>
- **Video:** You will shoot a short video on a class topic in a team of four.

- **Infographic:** To show off all your visual and InDesign skills, you will create an infographic as your final project.
- **Activities:** There will be 4 of these during the semester, worth 2 points each. You will get credit just for following instructions and doing them. You cannot make these up.

TESTS: Two exams worth 25 points each will cover lectures and readings. I do not give makeup tests without a verifiable excuse.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: I don’t have one. But know that students who attend class do better on tests because I show a lot of examples in class. I do not post lectures.

RULES TO LIVE BY:

Any student who turns in work that is not their own on any assignment will receive a 0 on that assignment and a letter grade deduction on the course grade. You may also be subject to Journalism School penalties on cheating and plagiarism, which can include expulsion from the School of Journalism.

- InDesign assignments are due at the start of class. Expect technical difficulties and do not wait until the last minute to print out work.
- Assignments turned in after the start of class will lose 1 point.
- No assignments will be accepted after the day they are due without a verifiable excuse.

Class etiquette

- Try not to be late. It disrupts the class. If you are late, come in the side door.
- Email: I get a ton of it. Please keep your emails short. You do not need to tell me if you are missing class—you need to get notes from someone if you miss.

Grading

Your course grade will be based on the following. There are 100 total points in the class.

2 tests	50 points
4 InDesign assignments	20 points
1 podcast	10 points
4 Activities	08 points
Infographic	12 points

You also will have the opportunity to earn 3+ points of extra credit

Grading Scale (how grades convert from points to letter grade):

A	93 points and above
A-	92 – 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
F	59 and below

Testing in this course is multiple-choice, using machine graded Scantron forms.

Anyone who looks at test forms of other students will fail that test. Students who allow other students to see the test form also will fail that test.

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT GRADES:

If you want to be a journalism major, you must get a C (a full-on C, 73 points or better, not a C-) in this class to continue in the J-School.

Special assistance

Any student with a disability or other medical concern that might interfere with full participation in this class should contact the instructor by the end of the first full week of classes.

Important add/drop deadlines:

- Feb. 8 (Monday): Last day to drop a full semester class and not have it appear on your transcript.
- April 18 (Monday): Last day to withdraw or drop a course. The transcript will show a “W.”

The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or lab meeting.

The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state aid.

300 Visual Storytelling Schedule

Spring 2016

MONDAY | WEDNESDAY | FRIDAY
10 – 10:50 a.m.

Wednesday 1/20

Introduction
READ: NDDDB, Ch.1

Friday 1/22

LECTURE: Creativity and Mind
Mapping

Monday 1/25

LECTURE: Video
–Shooting and editing Video
–Go over podcast assignment
–Podcast publishing

Wednesday 1/27

LECTURE: How to critique
design (knowing how to
critique will make you a better
designer and collaborator.)
READ: NDDDB, Ch. 9 – 10

Friday 1/29

Critique Exercise

Monday 2/1

DEMO: The Mechanics of
Indesign project #1 Basics
READ: NDDDB, Ch. 11 – 12

Wednesday 2/3

LECTURE: Typography
READ: NDDDB, Ch. 2, 5

Friday 2/5

LECTURE: Typography

Monday 2/8

LECTURE: Layout | Contrast
READ: NDDDB, Ch. 3 – 4

Wednesday 2/10

LECTURE: Layout | Alignment
LESSON #1 Basics DUE

Friday 2/12

Type exercise

Monday 2/15

No class

Wednesday 2/17

LECTURE: Layout | Repetition
and Proximity

Friday 2/19

DEMO: InDesign project #2
Resume
READ: NDDDB, Ch. 6, 8

Monday 2/22

LECTURE: Design history

Wednesday 2/24

LECTURE: Design History
READ: NDDDB, Ch. 7

Friday 2/26

Black square exercise

Monday 2/29

LECTURE: Gestalt

Wednesday 3/2

Test 1 Review
LESSON #2 Resume DUE

Friday 3/4

Test 1

Monday 3/7

LECTURE: Photo introduction,
power im imagery, diversity

Wednesday 3/9

LECTURE: How to take good
photos

Friday 3/11

DEMO: InDesign project #3
Layout

Monday 3/14 – 3/18

SPRING BREAK!!!!

Monday 3/21

Layout workshop GROUP 1

Wednesday 3/23

Layout workshop GROUP 2

Friday 3/25

Layout workshop GROUP 3

Monday 3/28

Layout workshop GROUP 4

Wednesday 3/30

Layout workshop GROUP 5

Friday 4/1

LESSON #3 Layout DUE

Monday 4/4

LECTURE: Color

Wednesday 4/6

DEMO: InDesign project #4
Color Wheel

Friday 4/8

LECTURE: Infographics

Monday 4/11

LECTURE: Ad Design

Wednesday 4/13

Ad Exercise

Test 2 Review

LESSON #4 Color Wheel DUE

Friday 4/15

Infographic Idea DUE

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Monday 4/18

Test 2

Wednesday 4/20

TBA

Friday 4/22

IG workshop GROUP 1

Monday 4/25

IG workshop GROUP 2

Wednesday 4/27

Layout workshop GROUP 3

Friday 4/29

IG workshop GROUP 4

Monday 5/2

IG workshop GROUP 5

Wednesday 5/4

DONE! Woo Hoo. No final!

INFOGRAPHIC DUE

Video teams Spring 2016

1. Design is like mapmaking (Feb. 5)
2. Critique process (Feb. 5)
3. Typography (Feb. 19)
4. Typography (Feb. 19)
5. Typography (Feb. 19)
6. Contrast (Feb. 19)
7. Contrast (Feb. 19)
8. Alignment (Feb. 22)
9. Proximity (March 2)
10. Repetition (March 2)
11. Gestalt (March 11)
12. Gestalt (March 11)
13. The grid (March 11)
14. Color (April 15)
15. Color (April 15)
16. Color (April 15)
17. Photography How-To (April 1)
18. Photography (April 1)
19. Layout (CARP) (April 8)
20. Design all around us (April 8)
21. Informational graphics (April 20)
22. Ad design (April 20):
23. Lessons from Visual Storytelling (May 4)
24. Lessons from Visual Storytelling (May 4)
25. Lessons from Visual Storytelling (May 4)

300 Visual Storytelling Videos

Spring 2016

Overview

The goal of this assignment is to give you experience creating, shooting, and editing a story in a video format. In this case the story will be a short video that depicts one of the topics discussed in class.

Video concept

Come up with a plan for telling the story in 1–1:30 minutes. You can take just about any approach you want: Lecture highlights, interviews with classmates, photographs, illustrations you find or create yourself. Your job is to provide an informative, entertaining and memorable video podcast. Your podcast must have original content—photos or video you shoot yourself.

Check out camera

You may check out a camera from the Dole Equipment Room, 2084 Dole. The room is open from 10–8, Monday through Thursday, and 10–5 on Friday. Later in the semester, it also will be open on weekends. Someone working checkout can give you a short lesson in how to use the camera. You can check out a camera for three hours, but ask for an extension if you need one.

Downloading video

You can use whatever program you want to edit your video, but we recommend Final Cut, which is available in the Dole labs and also in the Stauffer-Flint room 105 lab. Lab techs in Dole can help you with the program.

Specifications

- You will work in teams of 4 and be given a subject and deadline.
- Target audience: You will be creating this video for your classmates.
- Video length: 1 – 1:30 minutes
- Storyboard your video and turn in your storyboard when your video is due. You do not have to draw well, but your video must show planning and include 12 – 15 shots.
- Content: Parody, humor and creative approaches encouraged, but use good taste.
- Title and credits: You must start the video with a title page and end the video with credits of those who worked on the project.
- All video podcasts must be posted to the class Facebook page by the start of class in which they are due.
- No late podcast will be accepted.

Suggestions for dividing up the podcast tasks:

- Brainstorm video
- Plan shots and draw storyboard (does not have to be art. You can use stick figures!)
- Get camera / charge camera and return camera.
- Set up props and get images.
- Shoot video. (Will take one to two hours minimum depending on your ambitions).

History Of Typography



- Download video (30 minutes).
- Edit and post video (1-3 hours).
- Post to the class YouTube page. Specifics will be given in class.

Grading

This is a group project. However, if only one or two team members contribute to the process, please indicate this in the credits and tell me, and I will adjust grades accordingly. If you don't participate, you will get a 0.

The podcasts will be given one of the following four grades:

- A (10 points): Did a GREAT job. Content was original and exhibited effort and good design, and the class loved the video. Video was shorter than 1:30 minutes and turned in on time.
- B (8 points): Did a GOOD job. Video had a lot of good content but needed some polish in storytelling or editing. Video exceeded 1:30 by more than 10 seconds
- C (6 points): Did a satisfactory job but video had problems with editing, storytelling or timing. Video went more than 10 seconds over 1:30
- F (4 points): Missed the deadline. Had numerous errors/problems or did not fully participate in the project.

How the podcast will be evaluated

- Was the project entertaining? Did it contain original content?
- Did you keep the typography and video shots simple?
- Was the video informative and on topic?
- Did the project exhibit good sound and titles?
- Did the podcast exhibit good use of color and typography?
- Were the special effects handled well (not too many)?
- Were images and video of good quality?
- Was the video between 1 and 1:30 minutes