Web Typography

DES 353 Course Overview

Web Type *introduces* the following information, concepts, and skills

- Interactivity / Usability / Experience
- Web design and development
- Technology: HTML, CSS (Web Production)

Web Type *reinforces* the following information, concepts, and skills covered earlier in the program

- How to research
- Exploration of ideas and form
- Gestault Theory (continuation, similarity, proximity, and so on)
- Using a grid across a system of pages and/or projects
- Deconstruction of the grid
- Relationship between type and image
- Experimental typography
- Typographic systems (hierarchy, spacing/chunking)
- Fine typography (punctuation, numbers, ragged edges, etc.)
- History of typography (Gutenberg thru new media)
- Color

Web Typography has a blog!

webtype.blogs.umassd.edu

- Download lost handouts
- See previous student work
- Links to helpful resources

Web Typography is a course in typographic theory and practice... for the web. Through readings, lectures and projects/critiques, you will be introduced to various theoretical approaches to the typographic page, as well as various approaches to using typography for the web. You will also learn current technological standards. The course work for this class includes the following:

- readings provided in class on the history of typography and type theory, with an accompanying design project (resumes).
- completing a series of introductory web typography lessons
- researching and designing a web site (with a writing component)
- producing the web site
- designing and producing your own homepage that highlights the work done in this class

This class is intensive. You are preparing for advanced study in your field. Be prepared to work hard. To read, think, write, sketch, discuss, and revise.

Learning Outcomes

In Web Typography, you will:

- research: *gather* (information on possible artists / designers / typographic issues to focus on), *evaluate* (whether content is appropriate for project), *analyze* (readings, examples to use in your site), *explore* (possible solutions to the web structure/design)
- craft demonstrations: *practice* basic html/css skills before building final web project.
- graphic design history / context for our projects: *read and discuss* essays related to history of typography and typographic theories. *Write* how chosen artists / designers / typographic issues may or may not be aligned with one of the readings.
- vocabulary list to be learned: *identify or explain* the following terms: classical, modern, post-modern, HTML, CSS, tag, class, ID, div, stylesheet, padding, margin, web safe fonts vs web fonts, site map, wire frame, mobile first.
- design formats that will be addressed: *design and produce* web pages, a web site.
- software to be used: *use* InDesign/Illustrator/PhotoShop (creating mockup of web pages); *use* a Text Editor for HTML/CSS.

Attendance

This class is conducted in a studio format, meaning you work on projects in class. There will be critiques on projects, lectures on design-related topics, demos on software and syntax, and discussions of assigned readings. It is imperative you attend all classes, arrive on time, stay for the entire class meeting, and meet all deadlines. Two absences will be accepted, while any more will be considered excessive and may affect your final grade. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to make up the work. Please attend all critiques... even if you are not prepared to show your own work. You will learn by discussing the work of others!

Supplies List

- Sketchbook/Notebook
- A storage device or access to cloud (to back up your work)
- Money on your UMass Pass for color printouts
- A server space (Shawn Towne has negotiated with hawkhost.com. Price will be approx $25-30 for the year, including a domain name. I will provide more information in class. You will need either a credit card or paypal account to obtain a server space.)

Readings

- Essays: You will be provided with all theory and history readings
- Book/Activities: *Typographic Web Design: How to Think Like a Typographer in HTML and CSS* by Laura Franz is (free) online.

Office Hours

Mon & Wed 11:45–1:15
Tuesdays 3:15–4:15

My office is 349A. *To make an appointment*, sign up for a time on my door. In addition, if you have a quick question, email me at LFranz@umassd.edu. Please do not count on me replying to email on weekends.

Schedule

A detailed schedule will be handed out separately, and is subject to change. But as we start the semester, I expect we will use the semester in the following way:
First 7 weeks: web exercises, readings, design resumes (print)
Weeks 7 – 11: build resumes in HTML/CSS; research, curate, write, design final project
Weeks 11 – Exam: design and build the final project; build your homepage for the class

Final Exam

Tues/Thurs morning class: Tues, December 12, 9:00 – 11:00 in lab.
Tues/Thurs afternoon class: Fri, December 15, 12:00 – 2:00 in lab.

Grading

All project grades are based on process, presentation, attention to detail, and ability to discuss and critique your projects as well as your colleagues'. In addition, advanced projects are graded on identifying and communicating an idea through written and visual elements. Grading sheets will be handed out with each assignment so you know what will be evaluated in the final project.

A = Excellent (+)
Skill is performed to very high standard of proficiency for this level of the program. Very few problems in a range evaluated items, often no problems.

B = Very Good (✓)
Achieved a high level of proficiency for skill. Multiple problems in a section of evaluated items (*e.g., typographic details, color, images*) and/or one or two problems in multiple (but not most) sections. Work clearly exceeds "competency."

C = Good/Competent (ok)
Skill is demonstrated without being exceptional. Multiple problems in more than one section of evaluated items, and/or one or two problems in most sections. Students could be thought of as competent in respect to this skill.

D = Poor/Unacceptable (–)
Skill is demonstrated to a poor or unacceptable level. Multiple problems in majority of sections of evaluated items.

F = Fail (0)
Skill is absent or performed to a very low level. Multiple problems in almost all or in all sections of evaluated items.

Final grades are the total of all project, process, and participation grades.

Readings 10%
Print resumes: 10%
Web exercises: 10%
HTML/CSS resumes: 15% (5% each)
Research, curate, write final project: 10%
Design (visual, ux, organization) final project: 10%
Build final project: 10%
Take home final: 5%
Process and Participation: 20%

From the Provost

Incompletes
Incompletes may be given only in exceptional circumstances, at the instructor's discretion and at the student's request made no more than 48 hours after the final examination or last class. The student must be passing at the time of the request or must be sufficiently close to passing for the instructor to believe that upon completion of the work the student will pass the course. If the work is not completed within a year of the recording of the grade of I, the grade will become an F(I).

Academic Integrity
All UMass Dartmouth students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity and scholarly practice. The University does not tolerate academic dishonesty of any variety, whether as a result of a failure to understand required academic and scholarly procedure or as an act of intentional dishonesty.

A student found responsible of academic dishonesty is subject to severe disciplinary action which may include dismissal from the University. See umassd.edu/studenthandbook/academicregs/ethicalstandards.cfm for the full policy.

Academic Support Services
Are available, including services for learning and physically disabled students Contact the Center for Access and Success in LAR016.

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Rubric for Process & Participation (Crits, Exercises in class)

There are multiple opportunities to earn process points. It is in your best interest to have sketches, first drafts, refined concepts and weekly exercises done on time. *I will drop the two lowest process/participation days* (because we all have bad weeks now and then).

You will usually be asked to complete a number of tasks to earn process and participation points. The tasks are listed at right, with an explanation of why I ask you to do these things and what you need to do to receive full credit for each task.

Late Work
Unless otherwise specified, work must be turned in or on the wall by the start of class. At 6 minutes past start time, work is late. Late work must be submitted by the start of the next class to receive partial (1/2 max) credit.

If you do not have your work done, please come to class in order to learn from the critique of others. Most lectures are conducted during crit times.

Earning Points
We are focused on doing the work. As Sister Corrita Kent says: *The only rule is work. If you work it will lead to something. It's the people who do all of the work all of the time who eventually catch on to things.*

Written Analysis
Full credit = four or more details
Written analysis shows that you can break something down into significant parts and articulate how or why each part is or is not working. If you are not familiar with writing an analysis, it is helpful to keep two phrases in mind while writing: "show me" and "so what?"

Show me (or point out) something that is a significant detail that you are writing about. Answer "So what?" about that significant detail. Why is it significant? How does it solve (or fail to solve) a problem? How does it work related to the other details you point out?

Details to look at might change from project to project. Look at the rubric for the project to see what's important, but generally, you can almost always look at: typeface (styles, appropriateness), hierarchy, chunking, color, use of fine typography, rhythm and tension, language/writing, clarity of information, text/image relationship, and so on.

Note: This can be done in your notebook, and can be handwritten in with sketches. Do not worry about grammar, spelling, etc. I'm mostly interested in what you see.

Multiple sketches / pictures / versions of your ideas
Full credit = all sketches / pictures / versions requested
Partial credit = 75% or more of the sketches / pictures / versions requested
When you create multiple sketches / pictures / versions of your own ideas, it shows that you are looking at the same problem from multiple points of view. You are trying to find the best way to solve the problem. You are willing to take risks and try things in your sketches, that might not work, but who cares? You are exploring ideas!

Sketches should be clear (either due to visual detail or written notes)
Full credit = sketches are clear
When your sketches are clear (that is, someone else can see what the data is, the images are, what the headline is, and so on), it shows that you actually based your solutions on the data/images/text you will be working with. It's like sketching the floor plan of your living room. If you don't take into account the actual size of the items you need to fit in the room, the day you move your furniture in (e.g., the day you starting building your design ideas on the computer), you (or your client…) could be in for a nasty surprise.

Printouts of your work
Full credit = your work is printed out
When you print out your work, everyone can see the details more clearly. Details are hard to see on a computer screen. Are things the right size/shape/color? Do they line up correctly? Do they have the right hierarchy? Are image quality and color good? What needs to change?

Printouts are at the specified size, color, trimmed to size
Full credit = the printouts are the correct size, color, and are trimmed and pieced together
When your printouts are at the correct size and color, everyone can make sure things are working as expected. We can identify what needs to change. When things are trimmed to size, we can see the edge of the page you're working with. We can see how elements on the page relate to each other and to the edge of the page.

Revise and Refine
Full credit = significantly revised (to work out larger, more general problems with layout and concept), and/or refined (attending to specific details as indicated in crit).
Partial credit = attended to only one of the two... or attended to the wrong one (don't revise in order to avoid refinement and vice versa).

When you revise and refine, you learn to think like a designer. Taking risks and moving toward a communication goal.