Nashville State Community College  
Business & Applied Arts Division  
Visual Communications  

Master Course Syllabus  

Course Title: Com 1140 Design Fundamentals  
Credits: 3  
Class Hours: 3  

Course description from catalog including prerequisites and co-requisites:  
Topics include the principles and elements of design, basic drawing and media techniques, and 
the design/creative processes for visual communications. Prerequisite(s): Level 2 placement in 
English and Reading  

Semester Availability: Fall, Spring  
Not part of a Tennessee Transfer Pathway  

Instructor Information:  
Name:  
Email:  
Office Phone:  
Office Location: Office Hours:  

Textbook and Other Materials:  
Textbook: The Non-Designer’s Design & Type Book by Robin Williams (Deluxe Edition), ISBN- 
13: 98-0-321-53405-7  
Reference Materials:  
Communications Arts (CA), Print, Before and After Magazine, and the student Lynda.com 
subscription.  

Supplies:  
- Set of 2 to 3 different sized flexible brush markers (black)  
- 12–18 inch metal ruler with rubber or cork backing (the cork or rubber backing helps to 
  keep the ruler from sliding)  
- A folder or binder to keep notes and handouts  
- X-Acto Gripster Soft Grip Knife, or X-Acto Cut-All Knife with #11 blades  
- Small Cutting Pad or Mat  
- Toolbox to store supplies  
- Fine point felt tip pens in various widths—black, red, and blue, and graphic pencil set.  
- Highlighter Pen to underline text and handouts  
- Scissors  
- Glue Stick  
- 9 X 12 inch pad of Bristol Board  
- Kneaded eraser and white artist eraser  
- 3/4 inch white artist tape
• Small can Scotch 3M Spray Mount (use in a well vented area, preferably outside—definitely not around your computer)
• External saving device (flash drive)
• Prang 8 color watercolor set
• Round watercolor brush (No. 6 or 8)
• India ink (very black)—1 jar
• Bone folder for scoring (book binding tool)
• Jar of rubber cement
• Pencils (a set of drawing pencils or HB, 2H, 4H, 2B, 4B) the woodless pencils are more expensive, but are very good quality—made by Grumbacher)
• Multi-color ink pads
• Sketchbook (size to be determined by student) optional
• Circle and square plastic templates (optional)

Course Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:
• Identify, understand, and apply terminology specific to basic design concepts and the creative processes involved in the development of class projects and exercises.

• Explore different methods of researching concepts and ideas for class projects by using the Web and interfacing with industry professionals.

• Enhance illustration skills by exploring different drawing and media techniques demonstrated in class and by designing postcards on topics selected by students.

• Explore and understand the basic principles of design by arranging the elements or components of a project from the beginning concept (thumbnails) to the finished artwork.

• Understand how basic design skills can apply and overlap the different segments of the graphics industry—from Web to print to mixed media by research and developing design concepts that successfully meets the criteria for all facets of the industry.

Course Competencies:

• Can explain the process and procedures involved in the development of their projects.

• Has prepared and presented their work in a critiquing session.

• Has developed a basic understanding of the design process.

• Understands the value of good time management skills.

• Has a basic understanding of the elements of design.

• Be able to explain the concept and strategy behind their design projects.
• Be able to identify the type fonts used in their projects.

• Work should reflect research and preliminary sketches of ideas in the thumbnail stage.

• Work should reflect good concepts and use of design principles.

• Should have an understanding of the basic steps necessary for beginning a design project.

• Should understand expectations for a project.

• Has a basic understanding of the print, web, and multi-media industry and possible job opportunities available.

• Has an understanding of the design process from concept to completion of project.

• Has a good understanding of terminology.

• Knows the importance of reading and understanding instructions.

• Works within the deadlines established for completion of their projects and how deadlines are important by industry standards.

The following are general education competencies intended to support the course outcomes:

• Locate, evaluate, and use multiple sources of information in research for each project (ie: to include visuals used as reference when drawing or designing logos).

• Participate as team members and team leaders in group activities involving the evaluation and critique of projects.

• Use critical thinking skills to develop good strategies in assessing the pros and cons of designing unique design solutions as apposed to traditional less expensive designs.

• Use and adapt current technologies in their projects by introducing options in researching and executing their work.

• Appreciate cultural diversity and the influence of history and culture by researching and comparing the evolution of visual communications through the centuries beginning with cave paintings—similar to the development of logo and symbols used today.

• Apply scientific thought processes to a range of situations in determining the client and audience perception—to include color assessment, purpose, and expectations of actions taken by viewer of graphically prepared documents.
Topics to Be Covered:
Topics include the principles and elements of design, basic drawing and media techniques, and the design/creative processes for visual communications. (Subjects discussed will relate to the creative application for print, web, and multimedia).

Course Assessments:
The following performance assessments will be used to demonstrate students’ understanding, knowledge and skills:

Quizzes will be given to access their knowledge of the terminology and program content taken from reading assignments in their textbooks and handouts on principles of design, elements of design, and other related topics.

There are four to five drawing exercises graded on a points system. There is a major semester long project ending with a book containing 10 postcards which are created as weekly assignments. In addition to the texture booklet project, there is a logo design project. The students use type and graphics to create their work for each assignment. These projects are graded individually using a point system within a rubric specific to each project.

Notice of Right to Retain Student Work:
The Visual Communications program reserves the right to retain certain selected examples of student work for teaching purposes, promotional purposes, and as part of the permanent collection.

Grading Policy
A grade of “C” or above must be earned in all COM and PHO courses to meet prerequisite and graduation requirements.

Grading Scale:
Letter grades will be calculated according to the following scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 – 93</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92 – 85</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84 – 77</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 – 70</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 70</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FA or FN: Non-attendance (see Attendance Policy)

Semester Grade Breakdown:
- Homework and Participation: 10%
- Projects: 40%
- Weekly Quizzes: 20%
- Mid-term Exam: 10%
- Final Exam: 10%
- Postcard Booklet: 20%
Make-up procedures for missed assignments and work:
Students are responsible for all material covered and projects assigned according to the established deadline dates. A zero will be recorded for any missing assignments. There are no make-up exams or projects accepted past the due dates unless a doctor’s excuse can be provided. If you stop participating in the class for any reason, you should officially withdraw from the course. Lack of participation on a weekly basis could affect your final grade. Standard NSCC policies are also adhered to — provided in the content below.

Attendance Policy:
A student is expected to attend all scheduled classes and laboratories. Each instructor will formulate an attendance policy and provide it on the course syllabus. Absences are counted from the first scheduled meeting of the class, and it is the responsibility of each student to know the attendance policy of each instructor in whose class he/she is enrolled. If a student is absent from a class, he/she should give an advanced explanation to the instructor. Absences in a course may affect a student’s final grade. The student is responsible for all assigned work in the course regardless of excused or unexcused absences. Tardiness may also affect a student’s final grade.

Failure to attend class will result in a final course grade of “FA” or “FN” (see explanation below) depending on the individual instructor’s course policy.

FA= failure, attendance-related (unofficial withdrawal) Last recorded date of attendance required. FN= failure, never attended class (unofficial withdrawal)

Student Communication Channels
It is the student’s responsibility to check D2L and MyNSCC email on a regular basis. These are the official communication channels between the college and students. Students are responsible for the information communicated through those channels. D2L contains specific course information and MyNSCC contains information important for other purposes.

ADA Compliance Statement
Nashville State complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you wish to request any special accommodations for any courses in which you are enrolled, contact the Student Disabilities Office at 615.353.3721.

Classroom Misconduct
Nashville State Community College has a zero tolerance policy for disruptive conduct in the classroom. Students whose behavior disrupts the classroom will be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Please consult your Student Handbook for more specific details.

The instructor has primary responsibility for control over classroom behavior and maintenance of academic integrity. He/she can order temporary removal or exclusion from the classroom of any student engaged in disruptive conduct or in conduct which violates the general rules and regulations of the College.
Disruptive behavior in the classroom may be defined as, but is not limited to, behavior that obstructs or disrupts the learning environment (e.g., offensive language, harassment of students and professors, repeated outbursts from a student which disrupt the flow of instruction or prevent concentration on the subject taught, failure to cooperate in maintaining classroom decorum, etc.), the continued use of any electronic or other noise or light emitting device which disturbs others (e.g., disturbing noises from beepers, cell phones, palm pilots, lap-top computers, games, etc.).

Please be aware that children are not allowed in class or unattended on campus.

**Academic Dishonesty (Honor Code)**

Any form of academic dishonesty, cheating, plagiarizing, or other academic misconduct is prohibited. “Plagiarism may result from: (1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas, (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases in your own words (A Writer’s Reference 331). Academic dishonesty may be defined as, but is not limited to, intentionally trying to deceive by claiming credit for the work of another person, using information from a web page or source without citing the reference, fraudulently using someone else’s work on an exam, paper, or assignment, recycling your own work from another course, purchasing papers or materials from another source and presenting them as your own, attempting to obtain exams/materials/assignments in advance of the date of administration by the instructor, impersonating someone else in a testing situation, providing confidential test information to someone else, submitting the same assignment in two different classes without requesting both instructor’s permission, allowing someone else to copy or use your work, using someone else’s work to complete your own, altering documents, transcripts or grades, and forging a faculty/staff member’s signature.

In addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed through regular college procedures as a result of academic dishonesty the instructor has the authority to assign an “F” or a “Zero” for the exercise, paper, or examination or to assign an “F” for the course. Students may appeal through the appropriate college grade appeal procedures.

**Inclement Weather Policy**

In the event of an inclement weather event, check the Nashville State web site home page at www.nscc.edu for announcements on campus closures. Campus closures will also be announced on local television stations (channels 2, 4, 5, and 17).

When classes are cancelled, an online assignment will be posted in NS Online. Check your NS Online email for a message from your instructor regarding your online assignment requirements. Even though classes may be cancelled, some areas, i.e. Testing Center, may be open. However, you should check before commuting to campus.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Director of Security are responsible for cancellation decisions during an inclement weather event for the Nashville State main campus and the Southeast campus. Cookeville, Waverly, and Dickson Campus Directors will make class cancellation decisions based on conditions in their respective areas. Decisions about class cancellations are based on actual conditions, not forecasts. The perspective used for making decisions is that of the college as an employer, not as a K-12 institution. Students should use
their own best judgment in determining whether to report to campus during inclement weather when classes are not cancelled.