

## SYLLABUS

Arth 3451

### History of Design FALL 2013

Department of Visual Arts  
Weber State University

Prerequisites: ARTH 1100 Art and  
Architecture of the World: AD  
1000-Present or consent of  
instructor

Meeting schedule: twice/week for  
1:45 - hour sessions.

Credit hours: 4

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#### Course Description

Significant figures and movements in the history of graphic design from the development of written languages to the present. Contents include intersections with art movements and related disciplines such as architectural, product, and interactive design along with the social, political, and technical forces that have influenced these disciplines over time.

#### Primary text

A History of Graphic Design, Meggs

#### Additional readings

Graphic Design, A New History, Eskilson  
Illustration, A Visual History, Heller & Chwast

#### Learning Outcomes

Successful students will demonstrate an understanding of the linear progression of historical figures and movements in graphic design from pre-history to the present. This will require analytical and investigative skills as researchers into historical events and the contexts in which they occur. Among the departmental outcomes objectives (as expressed on the Provost's website), the following are specifically addressed by this course:

Possess a basic knowledge of visual culture from prehistoric to contemporary times.  
Have an awareness of the richness of cultural diversity through the study of creative work from many cultures.  
Possess skills in oral and written communication as they pertain to the visual arts.  
Be able to effectively do research using contemporary and traditional methods.  
Be able to think critically. Students should be able not only to analyze a work of art using traditional methods, but should also be able to develop thoughtful new interpretations.

#### Structure

Class time is devoted primarily to lecture, discussion and group class activity. Quiz and exam material will be pulled as much from class lectures as from assigned readings. Attendance and participation in class activity is mandatory for success.

#### Quizzes, Exams and projects

Reading and class participation will be measured by bi-weekly quizzes. Two exams, a mid-term and a final, will be based on readings, lecture material and peer presentations in class.

An, illustrated research paper will be required. Topics will be chosen and abstracts submitted by the fourth week in the term. Papers will be due at the end of week thirteen.

#### Evaluations

Grades are calculated as follows:

weekly quiz scores: 25%

mid-term exam: 25%

final exam: 25%

research paper: 25%

*Borderline evaluations may be influenced by your daily attendance record.*

#### Extended reading list

Thoughts on Design, Rand

My way to typography, Weingart

Designing Design, Kenya Hara, (Designing the senses, White)

The Psychology of human-computer interaction, Card, Moran, Newell

Design research: methods and perspectives, Laurel

The influencing machine, Gladstone

All-Consuming Images: The Politics of Style in Contemporary Culture;

Ewen, Stuart; New York, 1988.

"Beyond Couch Potatoes: Form Consumers and Designers to Active

Contributors"; Fischer, Gerhard; First Monday, 7[12], December 2002.

The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures; Baudrillard, Jean; London, 1998.

Week 4: research paper abstracts due

Week 8: mid-term exam

Week 13: research papers due

## Lecture / discussion schedule

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### Weeks 1-3

Precursors to graphic design  
*Meggs chapters 1-4*

the invention of writing in Asia, Egypt, and Mesopotamia  
evolution of pictographic systems to phonetic alphabets (Latin, Hebrew)  
the development of primitive forms of graphic reproduction  
first cultures to have daily contact with printed matter  
Egyptian burial scrolls, the first illustrated manuscripts  
Buddhist text scrolls, oldest surviving printed documents  
illustrated "block books" relief-printed from carved blocks  
the European illuminated manuscript  
the emergence of the codex

### Weeks 4-6

Design and the Renaissance  
*Meggs chapters 5-8*

the development of European typography  
Gutenberg, Fust and Schoeffer, the invention of printing  
the Italian influence on European typography  
Aldus Manutius and the first individually owned books  
the illustrated book, development of multi-color printing  
the rapid spread of printing technology and publishing, the establishment of trade guilds  
evolution of typography from "Old Style" through "Modern"  
Britain finally catches up

### Weeks 7-9

Design and the Industrial Revolution  
*Meggs chapters 9-12*

steam powered printing, the impact of technology on design and publishing  
the rise of consumer culture, followed by advertising and an explosion of expressive typography  
the invention of the line-o-type machine  
Ben Franklin, the Declaration of Independence and printing in the USA  
The Arts and Crafts movement and the return to "artistic integrity"

### Weeks 10-12

Design in the first half of the 20th century  
*Meggs chapters 13-17*

Wiener Werkstatte & Vienna Secession  
The influence of WWI and the Russian Revolution  
Expressionist illustration  
Realist narrative style in war propaganda posters  
Futurism, Dada  
Pictorial Modernism  
Sachplakat illustration, the German "object poster"  
Russian Suprematism & Constructivism  
The German Bauhaus school  
Architecture and illustration: Art Deco  
Architecture: F. L. Wright's organicism  
Jan Tschichold and the "New Typography"

### Weeks 13-15

The Information Age  
*Meggs chapters 18-24*

post WWII Swiss Modernism  
Architecture: the International Style  
Push Pin illustration & The New York School  
Rockwellian illustration  
the psychedelic poster: visual culture & iconography of the US 60s  
California Pop illustration  
the development of corporate identity, the precursors of "branding"  
the emergence of "information architecture"  
product design: development of the micro computer, desktop publishing, and modern vs post-modern theory through the lens of computer architecture  
the pixel (new tech) vs the halftone dot (old tech)  
design in the era of social media

**Sample bi-weekly quiz**

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Read carefully and respond with the SINGLE BEST ANSWER for each multiple choice question.

1. Identify the authors of the following:  
"if you cannot please all men... please the few; it is bad to please the many."  
"I don't want art for a few any more than I want freedom for a few."  
a. top quote: el Lissitzky, bottom quote: van Doesburg  
b. top quote: Schiller, bottom quote: Ruskin  
c. top quote: Hara, bottom quote: Malevich  
d. top quote: Ruskin, bottom quote: Rodchenko
2. Why did Rodchenko prefer the title "constructivist" or "engineer" to "artist?"  
a. he had severed his relationship with el Lissitzky and did not want to be associated with his kind.  
b. he felt like those terms better suited his role in supporting the party and building the new Russia.  
c. Malevich had already set up the new Russian aesthetic with Suprematism and Rodchenko didn't work in that style.  
d. he was insecure about his abilities and wasn't sure that he qualified for such a lofty label.
3. The Weiner Werkstatte practitioners were divided between...  
a. those committed to the collapse of the arts and crafts hierarchy and those who felt that painting was most exalted expressive form.  
b. those who advocated a return to Arts and Crafts principles and others who favored gesamtkunstwerk.  
c. Klimt on the one hand, and the Jugendstil artists on the other.  
d. Beardsley's influence from Britain and Mucha's influence from France.
4. Which country, more than any other, has struggled for centuries over the question of whether it should have a national typeface?  
ans \_\_\_\_\_

ESSAY: Choose one

*Include sufficient detail to add breadth to your response but keep your remarks focused mainly on the most trenchant aspects of the topic. Target length: 200 words.*

- Option one: Although he is not easy to categorize, Kurt Schwitters was one of the most prolific creative personalities of the early 20th C. He had a profound impact on many who came later in the century, including Robert Rauschenberg. Describe his career, and his work.
- Option two: Describe Kenya Hara's views on the concept of "white" and how this translates into his design solutions for Muji.
- Option three: Events leading up to and surrounding World War I, including the revolutionary conflicts in Russia during the same period, inspired many in the creative disciplines to react through their art and design. Describe three such individuals / movements and compare their motives, objectives and methods.

5. Movement, speed, and industrial excitement: which movement wove these elements into their manifestos and operational agenda?  
ans \_\_\_\_\_