

**SYLLABUS FOR A6916
STRATEGIC VISUAL COMMUNICATION**

Semester 2 2013-2014

General Information

Lecturer : Dr Yeoh Kok Cheow
Office : CS 03-17
Contact : 6790-8816; kcyeh@ntu.edu.sg
Office Hrs: *TBD*
Lectures : *Tuesday 1:30 - 2:30 PM*
Tutorials : *Tuesday 2:30 - 4:30 PM*

Assigned Text

Hand, D. & Middleditch, S. (2013). Design for media: A handbook for students and professionals in journalism, PR and advertising. Pearson: Essex, England.

Recommended Text

Pricken, M (n.d.). Creative Strategies: Idea management for marketing, advertising, media and design. NY: Thames & Hudson.

Course Description & Objectives

Strategic Visual Communication combines hands-on projects with lectures that offer interdisciplinary and applied explorations of projects involving visuality and interactivity in today's business world. This course is positioned for practitioners in one or more industries, particularly those in the field of branding, design, advertising, marketing, media and other strategic designs to understand and develop critical thinking about the forces behind visuality as a communicative practice. The primary objective of this course is for the MMC students--regardless of experience--to expand their appreciations of conceptual and technical skills to develop strategic communication portfolios.

Efficiencies could be gained by identifying synergies between conceptual to technical development of ideas to provide students the links to project management goals that are aligned with strategic business objectives. Projects are based on developing visual literacy found in local and global advertisements, strategic campaigns, and graphic projects which could translate into any number of media. Each student will choose the direction to pursue relevant to their profession. Students sharpen their technical skills and demonstrate an understanding of formal and conceptual issues through in-class assignments and seminars by utilizing appropriate ideas, materials and technique to best articulate their solutions. The assignments are open-ended and committed to exploring ideas that lead to conceptual and practical solutions.

Students will learn to:

- Define and create or source for images, words and concepts through uncovering and recognizing design relationships and interactions between different media to ensure effective visual communication.
- Understanding how to seek the relationships of meaning which appeals to an audience's need and appreciations.

- Conceptually and functionally understand and apply visual solutions that explores the who, what, when, where, why and how's of designing for advertising, design, marketing, image-based journalism, new media and strategic designs.

A6916 Website

We will rely partly on edveNTUre for announcements, course materials posting as well as notifications of changes in the schedule. Accessing Blackboard, we will find lecture notes as well as other relevant assigned reading materials.

Lecture and Work Schedule

For the assignment, the student will select his/her topic based on their personal interests. There are four components for assessment. The first is the **proposal** with the intention to gather information by researching on the topic necessary to complete for the next component, the project. The student will decide their own topic, put together a plan of action, and submit to the lecturer for approval. Once approved, they are ready to begin working. If they are not approved, they will need to make changes suggested and resubmit for approval.

The physical **project** is where they apply the information gained through research. The project may take many forms. As such, it is necessary for the student to document the project as it is his/her responsibility to demonstrate the applications of learning. Every aspect of the project must be documented as they are expected to keep a visual record of the planning and implementation of their project which leads to an end product: a **portfolio**. Students may not work on a project jointly but up to two students may collaborate on projects but they must write their own proposal identifying each person's responsibilities. They will also present separately. The assignment challenges the students to go above and beyond the normal class hours to work on their project.

The last component is their **presentation** to the entire class where the students will spend up to 10 minutes to explain their work followed by a five-minute Q & A period. This form of peer-learning is equivalent to learning from the field as each student will bring their discovery, expertise and knowledge to share throughout the course.

Due to the openness of topic as students are encouraged to bring trend forecasting and contemporary issues such as new media applications, this course is also an opportunity to be engagingly relevant in solving communication problems, conceptualizing, exploring and experimenting. The research component lies in the proposal section in which the students must incorporate research methods and data into the design process. Research-driven design not only helps to define an audience, support a concept, advocate an aesthetical or conceptual approach but it can also measure the effectiveness of a solution.

In short, the course provides the opportunities for you, through the essential steps in the creative processes and methods of creative visual thinking to explore and experiment with ideas that matter to your profession or background. In 13 weeks, we will explore the 4 main components of the course:

- Proposal and Research from weeks 2 - 5 (Idea searching)
- Synthesis and Form generation 6 - 9 (Idea development)
- Portfolio from weeks 10-12 (Idea execution)
- Presentation on week 13 (Idea presentation)

Completion of all components (proposal & research, synthesis & form generation, portfolio, and presentation) is required to meet the passing of the course. Due to the openness in topic proposal by students, this course maintains a "open door" and flexible policy in its approach to the scheduling but in all, the class time will be used partly as seminar-based presentation and discussion. The idea is that learning takes place not just from drawing knowledge from book but also from each participant's

extensive pool of professional background and experiences.

Assessment Components

A continuous assessment course without any final examinations, you will explore different ideas to communicate a message to an intended audience by using applicable techniques and proper materials throughout the entire process of planning, developing, and executing your ideas to achieve the end result. These are series of exercises designed for you to understand and apply the elements and principles of design specific to strategic communications.

- Proposal & Research: (10 + 20) 30%
- Synthesis and Form generation: (10 + 30) 40%
- Portfolio (Documentation): 20%
- Presentation (including Q&A): 5%
- Studentship 5%

Other elements such as Attitude (Keeness to learn, involvement and contribution to a positive learning environment) and Attendance (Punctuality in lecture and tutorial sessions), are not graded but observed as these factorial considerations usually contribute to the quality of work performed and completed.

Course Policies

The following are some of the policies that you are expected to observe to maintain the decorum of the classroom. Others may be added to this list as the semester progresses and a need arises.

1. You are expected to attend all lecture and tutorial sessions. This is particularly important because of the nature of this course and the group assignment. Absenteeism will affect your grade. Group members should note this and consider it during peer evaluation purposes as well.
2. You are expected to be punctual to class. If you expect an interruption in your schedule, please notify the lecturer in advance. You are expected to find out from your classmates what you have missed. Your absence is by no means, an excuse for a late submission, unless it has been arranged with the lecturer.
3. You should expect that the lecturer needs a reasonable time to respond (at least two working days).
4. It is the student's responsibility to submit their MC to the Level 4 General Office and notify their course instructors if they have missed a class test. The CA component will be calculated based on the remaining class assignments and tests.
5. The deadline will not be extended for any assignments. There will be no "make up" opportunities for missed assignments. You will receive 0 for missed assignments. **Unless specified, assignments are at the beginning of tutorial sessions. In cases when a lecture session is substituted as tutorial, all assignments are due at the beginning of the lecture session. Unless specified, no assignments will be accepted after the due date.**
6. **Due to the combined hours of lecture and tutorial, the penalty for tardiness and absences for lecture and tutorial sessions are as follows:**
15 minutes after the start of the class is considered late.
30 minutes and beyond is considered an absent.
7. **Three unexcused absences equal a letter grade drop in the final grade.** Note that sending a notification email or a doctor's note does not necessarily exempt you from your obligations required by the course.
8. Your behavior in the classroom affects the environment as well as those around you. All hand phones are to be switched off during class sessions and kept away from sight (inside a bag, for example). Using hand phones while the class is in session (receiving or making calls or reading/sending SMS messages) is considered disruptive behavior. You will be dismissed from the class meeting if you engage in such disruptive behavior without warning.
9. Any reference material, the source, including the Internet, must be properly credited. All the work presented in the class must be the product of your own effort. Any student caught in presenting others work will face disciplinary action, which may include a zero for the assignment, or an F grade for the class. This applies to all works submitted, either through oral presentation, or written work, including outlines, briefings, group campaigns, evaluations, etc.

10. In preventing mishaps to the hardware and your artwork, please refrain from eating or drinking when in class. Do not make any offensive remarks, read inappropriate materials, sleep or engage in other forms of distraction such as talking while the professor is teaching, chitchatting, and so forth.
11. If you do not ask a question or seek clarifications, the lecturer assumes that you understood what has been presented.
12. Your engagement and participation is expected. Unless necessary, sites like YouTube are helpful to the course but social networking sites like Facebook are frowned upon.
13. During the lecture and/or tutorial sessions, permission must be obtained from the lecturer if the student wishes to record any presentation via any electronic or digital devices of any sort.
14. All written work such as creative strategy, analyses, and citations must be typed (word-processed) as hand-written materials will not be accepted unless they pertain to sketch-related explorations. Assignments may be delivered in a variety of ways - via PDF, Power Point, sketches, print-outs, portfolio binders, or web-based applications.
15. Always check for typos, misspellings, grammatical mistakes, and that your work is tightly executed as it is a reflection of you. Portfolios should be as flawless as possible.
16. Works from other classes may not be turned in as a substitute for this class. Apart from assigned chapters, lecture notes and handouts, you are encouraged to keep up-to-date with current news and to contribute and share information actively in class discussions since the lectures alone do not comprehensively cover all materials.
17. All the works explored must be kept as the importance of process is not to be underestimated. In preparing students for professional practice, the class is geared towards project-based assignments as students engage in the process of learning by doing. Therefore, you are encouraged to keep a separate scrapbook/journal to document your design process. A scrapbook may consist of mainly sketches of ideas, research data as well as any visual or written notations.

Policy on Plagiarism

The work that you submit for assessment in this course must be your own individual work (or the work of your group members, in the case of group projects). The NTU Academic Integrity Policy (<http://academicintegrity.ntu.edu.sg/>) applies to this course. It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the Policy and to uphold the values of academic integrity in all academic undertakings. As a matriculated student, you are committed to uphold the NTU Honour Code (<http://www.ntu.edu.sg/sao/Pages/HonourCode.aspx>).

Acts of academic dishonesty include (source: <http://academicintegrity.ntu.edu.sg/policy/>):

- **Plagiarism:** using or passing off as one's own, writings or ideas of someone else, without acknowledging or crediting the source. This includes
 - Using words, images, diagrams, graphs or ideas derived from books, journals, magazines, visual media, and the internet without proper acknowledgement;
 - Copying work from the internet or other sources and presenting as one's own;
 - Direct quoting without quotation marks, even though the source is cited;
 - Submitting the same piece of work to different courses or to different publications.
- **Academic fraud:** cheating, lying and stealing. This includes:
 - Cheating - bringing or having access to unauthorised books or materials during an examination or assessment;
 - Collusion - copying the work of another student, having another person write one's assignments, or allowing another student to borrow one's work;
 - Falsification of data - fabricating or altering data to mislead such as changing data to get better experiment results;
 - False citation - citing a source that was never utilised or attributing work to a source from which the referenced material was not obtained.
- **Facilitating academic dishonesty:** allowing another student to copy an assignment that is supposed to be done individually, allowing another student to copy answers during an examination/assessment, and taking an examination/assessment or doing an assignment for another student.

Disciplinary actions against academic dishonesty range from a grade mark-down, failing a course to expulsion. Your work should not be copied without appropriate citation from any source, including

the Internet. This policy applies to all work submitted, either through oral presentation, or written work, including outlines, briefings, group projects, self-evaluations, etc. You are encouraged to consult us if you have questions concerning the meaning of plagiarism or whether a particular use of sources constitutes plagiarism. If you borrow artwork that is not your own for your artwork, cite it clearly in your accompanying report or on the back of the work itself. All works must be clearly labeled with your full name, course code, date, project name, credits as well as other relevant information on the lower right side on the back of a mounted/unmounted artwork, with at least half an inch for the margin on the edge.

A6916: STRATEGIC VISUAL COMMUNICATION
Course Outline & Assignments: Semester 2, 2013-2014

Weeks	<i>Material to be covered</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Special Notes /Deadlines</i>
Week 1 Jan 14	<i>Introduction and answering questions about the course.</i> <i>Getting to know each other</i>	None	<i>Assignments due, scheduled quiz, other deadlines, etc</i>
Week 2 Jan 21 <i>Idea searching</i>	21st century media: design in practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is design? - Media branding and identity - Cross-media approach 	Di Hand & Steve Middleditch's Design for Media: Pp. 17 - 43	<u>PROPOSAL & RESEARCH WEEK</u> Brainstorming for individual project proposal.
Week 3 Jan 28 <i>Idea searching</i>	Seminar sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formulating a goal - Asking the right kind of questions 	Mario Pricken's <i>Creative Strategies</i> : Pp. 169 - 174.	<u>PROPOSAL & RESEARCH WEEK</u> Researching for applicable topic.
Week 4 Feb 4 <i>Idea searching</i>	Seminar sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The creative process as a playground for originality - Criticism is good, but make it concrete - Every idea has an underlying pattern 	Mario Pricken's <i>Creative Strategies</i> : Pp. 205 -207; 235 - 239; 240 -244	<u>PROPOSAL & RESEARCH WEEK</u> Proposal presentation and revisions
Week 5 Feb 11 <i>Idea searching</i>	Content visualization and structure: Type <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing type - How to work with type - Emotive and interpretive type 	Di Hand & Steve Middleditch's Design for Media: Pp. 147 - 164; 165-192; 179.	<u>PROPOSAL & RESEARCH WEEK</u> Proposal approval
Week 6 Feb 18 <i>Idea development</i>	Content visualization and structure: Pictures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication through imagery - Image manipulation - Picture usage theories - Cropping 	Di Hand & Steve Middleditch's Design for Media: Pp. 194; 199 - 200; 201; 210 - 212	<u>SYNTHESIS AND FORM GENERATION</u> Project development: Creative Executions
Week 7 Feb 25	Content visualization and structure: Color	Di Hand & Steve	<u>SYNTHESIS AND FORM GENERATION</u>

<i>Idea development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Color in culture and society - The theory and science of color - How to work with color 	Middleditch's Design for Media: Pp. 238 - 242; 243 - 244; 245 - 267	Project development
SEMESTER BREAK March 3 - 7, 2014			
Week 8 Mar 11 <i>Idea development</i>	Pre-planning a design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to work with layout - Layout: placing content in a design - The principles of layout 	Di Hand & Steve Middleditch's Design for Media: Pp. 63; 101-116; 120; 121 - 145	<u>SYNTHESIS AND FORM GENERATION</u> Project development and finalization
Week 9 Mar 18 <i>Idea development</i>	Seminar sessions: Idea evaluation: Knowing versus feeling; The 100 ideas dilemma.	<i>Mario Pricken's Creative Strategies:</i> Pp. 252-255; 258 - 259	<u>SYNTHESIS AND FORM GENERATION</u> Project finalization
Week 10 Mar 25 <i>Idea execution</i>	Seminar sessions: Spaces/Things that stimulate our senses.	<i>Mario Pricken's Creative Strategies:</i> Pp. 274 - 277	<u>PORTFOLIO</u> Portfolio development
Week 11 Apr 1 <i>Idea execution</i>	E-LEARNING WEEK One on one consultation	E-LEARNING WEEK None	<u>PORTFOLIO</u> Portfolio development
Week 12 Apr 8 <i>Idea execution</i>	One on one consultation	None	<u>PORTFOLIO</u> Portfolio development
Week 13 Apr 15 <i>Idea presentation</i>	Final presentation of project	TBD	<u>FINAL PRESENTATION</u>