

**Question:**

Students will be fluent in the languages of graphic design and must be able to convey ideas both verbally and visually.

**Solution:**

*Through curriculum*

After the 2003 curriculum transformation, all newly transformed graphic design courses have intensified the theoretical understanding of visual communication, and uplift the students' capabilities of conveying ideas both verbally and visually.

Our beginning level courses explain the basic principles of visual communication and the methodology of problem solving through a sequence of coursework.

1. *Intro Graphic Design*: In this class, students will experience working with basic design elements, including forms, compositions, and the metaphorical meanings behind them; anatomical structure of letterform and its applications; perception of signage; visual language behind different scales, three-dimensional forms, and sequence.
2. *Intro Type*: After a brief exposure of letterform design from *Intro GD*, students will establish a profound understanding of how ideas can be conveyed through display and text type in this class. The historical development of printing type and the use of grid system will be addressed, and the students are expected to apply this information into their own creative practice.
3. *Word & Image*: As an experimental workshop, this class expands the students' visual language in the two basic elements of graphic design-“words” and “image.” Semiotic analysis between these two elements will be discussed.

Our junior level courses refine the visual theories the students have learned from their previous classes through a sequence of portfolio driven assignments.

1. *Identity*: The basic design skills they have learned, such as, typography, letterform, imagery, grid system, and signage, will be advanced. In addition, a new set of visual language will be established through research and creative exercises on branding development.
2. *Advanced Type*: After obtaining theoretical and historical understanding of typography from *Intro Type*, this class analyzes contemporary application of typography. Informative and poetic typographic structures will be explored allowing students to build their own unique visual language.
3. *3D Graphic Design*: This course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of how ideas could be conveyed through three-dimensional surfaces. Lectures and creative exercises explain how scale, form, space, material, movement, repetition, and texture affect the viewers and their environments.

The research and writing components of the upper-level classes seek out long-term career goals for the graduating seniors. Students will be able to develop an original area of interests for employment or graduate school applications.

1. *History of Graphic Design*: Students will observe how ideas were conveyed by the design masters throughout different political, social, and economical eras. It also allows them to adapt the concrete information they learn from the lectures into their own creative direction. To increase their knowledge of current design issues, critical writings from contemporary design critics will also be discussed.
2. *Senior Research*: This is the first semester of a two-semester senior capstone experience. Students will continue developing experimental visual languages through intensive reading, writing, discussion, lecture, and the challenging self-directed projects.
3. *Senior Seminar*: Students are expected to synthesize all their previous experience into well-developed portfolios, which demonstrate their personal voice in visual communication. At the end of the semester, the students will organize a Portfolio Review, a presentation of their portfolios to the public, which requires both visual and verbal skills.

*Through methods of instruction:*

In addition to the designated content for each course, the design faculty is also encouraged to explore alternative instructional methods to provide students fluency in the languages of graphic design, and the ability to convey ideas both verbally and visually.

1. Lectures: In addition to the junior level class *History of Graphic Design*, instructors should give historical references for all classes they teach, so the students will be able to accumulate the ideas they learned from the design genius into their own visual language throughout the years.
2. Critiques & Class Discussions: In order to stimulate learning experience, instructors should give insightful, constructive, and honest comments during critiques and class discussions. In addition, instructors must be open-minded and allow personal voices.
3. Research and Student Presentations: Graphic design exists through visual semiotics. It reveals the relationship between forms and content to designers and their audience, and sets the rules of visual communication. Therefore, design professionals often research on the language of semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic to ensure their creative work is not only beautiful but also useful. Research on historical and contemporary trends gives designers new inspirations. Besides, the ability to read and write has also become a desirable quality for job placement and a prerequisite for graduate studies. As a result, research and student presentations should be presented in all classes. Students can also take this opportunity to share what they found through verbal presentations.
4. Group projects: In the design profession, designers are always team players. Group projects allow students to improve their verbal skills through peer discussions.