



From lecture “What is Visual Communication?” | Ieshia Evans, #BlackLivesMatter Protestor by Jonathan Bachman/Reuters.

MEDIA 280 | Introduction to Visual Communications

Spring 2021 – 3 credits – Online Asynchronous – Regular Session 2, Feb. 1-March 23, 2021

Catalog Description

Introduces the basic concepts and approaches of visual communication, including its history, social impact, and industry developments. Students create a digital portfolio that uses advanced storytelling techniques and showcases digital media competency. The resulting portfolio builds a bridge from student work to professional practice.

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The current version of the course syllabus will be uploaded to BOLT with the revision date included in the file name



Instructor: Dennis Owen Frohlich, Ph.D.
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Office Hours

Mondays: 1-3 p.m.
 Wednesdays: 1-3 a.m.
 Thursdays: 10-11 a.m.

If these times do not work, please email me three (3) possible times that work better for you. [Please schedule online 2 hours ahead of time using HuskySuccess at this link.](#)

Readings

There are no required textbooks or materials to purchase for this class. Every week there will be several online readings which supplement the video lectures, video tutorials, and assignments. I endeavor to find readings and other online resources that are [freely available and easily assessable to reduce the financial cost of attending college](#). These materials have been selected with much thought and deliberation to give you the best educational experience.

General Education Points

Goal 1, Communication	1 GEP
Goal 6, Social Sciences	1 GEP
Goal 10, Citizenship	1 GEP



Required Materials

Photoshop is **REQUIRED** for this course. If you are on campus, the Media Hub in the Media and Journalism office, as well as the computer lab in McCormick 1146, both have Photoshop. You also have access to Adobe Creative Cloud software, which can freely be downloaded to your computer. More details will be discussed in class on how you can access Photoshop.

Course Objectives

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to specific image-making tasks
- Identify significant discoveries, theories, developments, and inventions in the history of photography and digital photography to explain current visual communication concerns in local, national, and international media
- Create images through the use of social communication theories, principles, concepts, and methods

- Demonstrate responsible citizenship by ethically producing digital images and logos
- Recognize and use images ethically and follow all intellectual property laws and policies for digital and print media

Class Meetings

Because this class is online, there are no set meeting times. There are, however, readings, assignments, tutorials, and lectures every week. This course requires a lot of work and it’s easy to fall behind if you take a week off. [Set aside 2-3 blocks of time each week to devote to this course.](#) Every Monday, I will send an email outlining what’s happening that week. **You should check your school email regularly,** as I may send grading and assignment updates. If you develop a routine for online learning, you will be most successful in this course.

Assignments

Your grade will be based on the following assignments.

Video Completion (3 times)	90
Image Discussions (6 times)	180
Photoshop Practice 1	20
Photoshop Practice 2-7	240
Visual Analysis Essay	90
Poster	100
LinkedIn Learning	30
<u>Branding Portfolio</u>	<u>250</u>
Total:	1,000

Grading Scale

Grades are based on total points:

A	925-1,000
A-	900-924
B+	880-899
B	820-879
B-	800-819
C+	780-799
C	720-779
C-	700-719
D+	680-699
D	600-679
F	0-599

The grading scale is non-negotiable. A final grade of 879, for instance, is a B. All grades are final unless questions about grades are addressed in writing within **2 weeks** after the grade is posted. If you have concerns about your grades check with me *sooner* in the semester rather than *later*.

The reason I do not round up grades is to remain fair for all students. If I round up a grade for a student who is one point below the cut-off, what do I do for the student who is 2 points below the cut-off? Three points? Five? At some point, there has to be a cut-off to ensure fairness.

Please check the START HERE module on BOLT for full Grading Policies, including the late work policy.

Assignment Descriptions

The following are brief descriptions of your assignments this semester. [More detailed directions will be provided on BOLT, along with grading rubrics.](#)

Video Completion (30 points each; 90 total)

Three times a semester, you will be assessed on your completion rate of online videos and tutorial videos. In a face-to-face class, you would have an attendance grade to incentivize you to make it to class: this is the online equivalent. To do well in this course, you need to watch the videos (i.e., attend class).

Discussions (30 points each; 180 total)

Most weeks you will have a short discussion prompt to respond to. You will be asked to share and analyze images related to that week's lecture topics. You will be broken into discussion groups of roughly 6-7 students and remain in these groups the entire semester. That way, you will get to know a few classmates in the course.

Photoshop Practice 1 (20 points)

In this brief assignment, you will learn how to compress and save files for the web. You will use these skills for each Photoshop tutorial this semester.

Photoshop Practice 2-7 (40 points each; 240 points total)

Practice assignments build off the skills you learn in the tutorial videos. These assignments are designed to familiarize you with the tools and techniques of Photoshop, which you will then apply in later assignments.

Visual Analysis Essay (90 points)

Visuals can communicate complex messages, and being able to interpret visuals in an analytical, thoughtful way is essential to developing media literacy. For this essay, you will write an analysis of an image of your choosing using the theoretical frameworks discussed in class.

Poster (100 points)

Whether used for promotion, information, or advertising, posters are a common media format. For this project, you will be given information about a hypothetical event on campus. Your job will be to present this information in a visually striking manner that effectively communicates to an audience. You may also design a poster for an actual event if you are involved in an organization, club, or student group that has an upcoming event.

LinkedIn Learning (30 points)

Throughout the semester, you will complete a Photoshop course on LinkedIn Learning. After completing the course, LinkedIn Learning will generate a PDF certificate. Download and submit this certificate to BOLT. Additionally, write a short reflection essay highlighting some of the techniques or practices from the course that you find useful.

Branding Portfolio (250 points)

For this assignment, you will design a visual brand for 1) yourself, 2) an organization such as a student group, or 3) a personal project, like a blog or fundraiser. It will include logos, graphics, a color palette, social media icons, and other relevant images for your brand.

The Academic Honesty, Discussion Guidelines, Grading, and Special Needs Policies are available on BOLT under the START HERE module. You should review these policies periodically.

Course Schedule and Checklist

How to Use: Please print off this checklist and use it week to week to keep track of assignments, readings, and other activities. I endeavor to never change due dates. The due dates for all assignments are included in the following schedule, as well as on BOLT. You should consider putting these due dates into a planner or digital device.

Week Begins	Topics
<p><u>Week 1</u> Monday, Feb. 1</p>	<p>Monday, Feb. 1: CLASSES BEGIN FOR SPRING Thursday, Feb. 4: DEADLINE FOR ADD/DROP</p> <p>Videos (47:22 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome to the Course (16:02) <input type="checkbox"/> Thriving in the Midst of COVID-19 (11:50) <input type="checkbox"/> What is Visual Communication? (19:30) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How to Use Visual Communication and Why It Matters <input type="checkbox"/> What is Visual Communication and Why is it Important <input type="checkbox"/> The Basics of Visual Communication: Marketing Strategies for a Visual World <input type="checkbox"/> Sturken and Cartwright, Chapter 2, Viewers Make Meaning from <i>Practices of Looking</i> [pdf reading] <p>Lab Video (7:03 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Using Photoshop This Semester (7:03) <p>Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Download and install Photoshop if you don't already have it on your computer. Contact Dr. Dennis if you are having trouble installing and opening Photoshop. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion 1, Images that Inspire. Initial post due by Thursday, Feb. 4 at 11:55 p.m. Minimum 2 replies due by Sunday, Feb. 7 at 11:55 p.m.

Week Begins	Topics
<p><u>Week 2</u> Monday, Feb. 8</p>	<p>Videos (1:21:18 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Visual Cues: Color and Form (17:08) □ Visual Cues: Depth (16:26) □ Ethically Using Images (24:26) □ Sensory Theories of Visual Communication (23:18) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Lester, Chapter 3: Visual Theories, from <i>Visual Communication: Images with Messages</i> [pdf reading] □ Color Theory for Designers: Understanding Concepts and Color Terminology □ 11 Ways to Add Depth to a Design □ Visual Hierarchy: How Well Does Your Design Communicate? □ Gestalt Principles: How Are Your Designs Perceived? □ Gestalt Laws of Perceptual Organization <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Complete Introduction thru Chapter 4 of the course “Photoshop 2021 Essential Training: The Basics by Julieanne Kost” (1:43:06). <p>Lab Videos (20:00 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Using LinkedIn Learning (8:42) [optional, if needed] □ Watermarking Your Assignment Submissions (11:18) <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussion 2, Controversial Images. Initial post due by Thursday, Feb. 11 at 11:55 p.m. Minimum 2 replies due by Sunday, Feb. 14 at 11:55 p.m. □ Photoshop Practice 1: Saving Files due to BOLT by Sunday, Feb. 14 at 11:55 p.m. □ Video Completion 1 due to BOLT by Sunday, Feb. 14 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 3</u> Monday, Feb. 15</p>	<p>Videos (1:37:21 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Perceptual Theories of Visual Communication (23:37) □ Visual Persuasion in Advertising (12:22) □ Propaganda and Persuasion (17:27) □ How Images Create Stereotypes (25:24) □ Racial Stereotypes (18:31) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Semiotics in Marketing: What It Means for Your Brand and Messaging □ 20+ Commonly Used Advertising Techniques in Visual Marketing □ 50 Powerful Examples of Visual Propaganda and the Meanings Behind Them □ Breaking Gender Stereotypes through Innovative Illustrations □ Cultural Appropriation: Can Designers Ever Responsibly “Borrow” From Other Cultures?

Week Begins	Topics
<p><u>Week 3</u> Continued</p>	<p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Complete Chapter 5 thru Chapter 7 of the course “Photoshop 2021 Essential Training: The Basics by Julieanne Kost” (1:12:28). <p>Lab Video (19:42 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Pumpkin Carving Tutorial (19:42) <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussion 3, Visual Stereotypes. Initial post due by Thursday, Feb. 18 at 11:55 p.m. Minimum 2 replies due by Sunday, Feb. 21 at 11:55 p.m. □ Photoshop Practice 2: Cropping Collage due to BOLT by Thursday, Feb. 18 at 11:55 p.m. □ Photoshop Practice 3: Pumpkin Carving (Layers) due to BOLT by Sunday, Feb. 21 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 4</u> Feb. 22</p>	<p>Videos (1:30:15 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Bloom’s Taxonomy and Learning Visual Communication (25:19) □ The Purpose of Visual Analysis (11:24) □ Analytical Lenses (21:16) □ Necessity of Typography (13:52) □ Understanding Typography (18:24) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Lester, Chapter 6: Visual Analysis, from <i>Visual Communication: Images with Messages</i> [pdf reading] □ Hagen and Golombisky, Chapter 6: Layout, from <i>White Space is Not Your Enemy</i> [PDF reading] □ Breaking Down an Image □ How to Analyze a Photograph □ The Do’s and Don’ts of Graphic Design □ What Is Typography? A Deep Dive into All Terms and Rules <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Complete Chapter 8 thru Chapter 10 of the course “Photoshop 2021 Essential Training: The Basics by Julieanne Kost” (1:21:20). <p>Lab Videos (14:25 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Layer Styles (14:25) <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussion 4, Analyzing Images. Initial post due by Thursday, Feb. 25 at 11:55 p.m. Minimum 2 replies due by Sunday, Feb. 28 at 11:55 p.m. □ Photoshop Practice 4: Selection due to BOLT by Thursday, Feb. 25 at 11:55 p.m. □ Photoshop Practice 5: Layer Styles due to BOLT by Sunday, Feb. 28 at 11:55 p.m.

Week Begins	Topics
<p><u>Week 5</u> Monday, March 1</p>	<p>Videos (1:51:58 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Beginning Graphic Design (15:03) □ Effective Posters (14:30) □ The Power of Photography (16:21) □ Views that Reveal and Conceal (14:52) □ Development of Digital Images (16:16) □ Consequences of Image Manipulation (19:11) □ Preparing for the Branding Assignment (15:45) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Goldstein, Chapter 3: All Photos Lie: Images as Data, from <i>Visual Research Methods: Image, Society, and Representation</i> [pdf reading] □ Williams, Chapter 7: Extra Tips and Tricks from <i>The Non-Designer’s Design Book</i> [pdf reading] □ How and Why Deepfake Videos Work – and What is at Risk □ What are Deepfakes, and How Can You Spot Them? □ 10 Deepfake Examples that Terrified and Amused the Internet □ Photoshop, Models, and the Law: How Far is Too Far? □ What’s Brand? <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Complete Chapter 11 thru Chapter 14 of the course “Photoshop 2021 Essential Training: The Basics by Julieanne Kost” (1:06:36). <p>Lab Videos (37:38 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Coloring (37:38) <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussion 5, Branding Analysis. Initial post due by Thursday, March 4 at 11:55 p.m. Minimum 2 replies due by Sunday, March 7 at 11:55 p.m. □ Photoshop Practice 6: Coloring due to BOLT by Thursday, March 4 at 11:55 p.m. □ Visual Analysis Essay due to BOLT by Sunday, March 7 at 11:55 p.m. □ Video Completion 2 due to BOLT by Sunday, March 7 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 6</u> Monday, March 8</p>	<p>Videos (1:33:07 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Seeing is Believing (17:05) □ Sight and Sound (17:32) □ Truth and Memes (21:56) □ What Makes a Logo Powerful? (19:55) □ Designing a Logo (16:39) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Why Do We Trust Online Images and Video? □ Why Videos Featuring Humans Are Easier to Trust □ Wiggins, Chapter 4: Political Memes, from <i>The Discursive Power of Memes in Digital Culture</i> [pdf reading]

Week Begins	Topics
<p><u>Week 6</u> Continued</p>	<p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ What Defines a Meme? □ Know Your Meme: Internet Meme Database [reference] □ Unity in Design: Creating Harmony between Design Elements □ How to Design a Poster: 10 Pro Tips □ How to Design a Poster: The Ultimate Guide □ How to Make an Eye-Catching and Effective Poster <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Complete Chapter 15 thru Conclusion of the course “Photoshop 2021 Essential Training: The Basics by Julieanne Kost” (1:06:20 total). Submit certificate and reflection to BOLT by Sunday, March 14 at 11:55 p.m. <p>Lab Videos (54:32 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Adjusting Image Colors (30:06) □ Poster Tutorial (24:26) <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussion 6, Photography that Reveals and Conceals. Initial post due by Thursday, March 11 at 11:55 p.m. Minimum 2 replies due by Sunday, March 14 at 11:55 p.m. □ Photoshop Practice 7: Replace Color due to BOLT by Thursday, March 11 at 11:55 p.m. □ Poster due to BOLT by Sunday, March 14 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 7</u> Monday, March 15</p>	<p>Friday, March 19: Last Day of Classes/Last Day to Withdraw from a Course</p> <p>Videos (44:52 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Creating Supplemental Images (20:51) □ Examples of Supplemental Images (11:50) □ Expanding Your Skillset After the Course Concludes (12:11) <p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ How to Design a Logo: The Ultimate Guide □ Vital Tips for Effective Logo Design □ Google’s New Logos are Bad □ Things Every Designer Should Know about Intellectual Property and Copyright Infringement <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Video Completion 3 due to BOLT by Sunday, March 21 at 11:55 p.m. □ Branding Portfolio due to BOLT by Monday, March 22 at 11:55 p.m.