GRPH 53A BEGINNING TYPOGRAPHY (3)

A) COURSE CATALOGUE INFO:
Lec-3, lab-1, field trips
Prereq: GRPH 21 or ART 125A or IDST 125; and GRPH 25 or IDST 120; Coreq: GRPH 99A

Beginning typography with a study of the history, classification, terminology, and use of type in communications. Students will develop an understanding of type mechanics and design issues through practical exercises and assignments. CSU

B) LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLASS):
• Gaining insight into the evolution and history of typography (beginnings of writing to Modern—Bodoni/Didot)
• Becoming familiar with the anatomy of typographic forms
• Becoming familiar with two type classification systems (basic, Adobe)
• Hand typesetting (cut and paste letters and/or letterpress)
• Executing creative typographic assignments (concrete and abstract)
• Beginning to understand and use type as image
• Manipulating structural aspects of type (syntax)
• Understanding communication aspects of type (semantics)
• Learning to construct and convey meaning via type
• Recognizing meaning as a social construct (including typographic compositions)
• Developing conceptual design skills in typographic compositions
• Developing presentation skills (visual, auditory, written, portfolio)
• Developing evaluation skills (constructive critiquing methods)
• Practicing to follow detailed instructions and project parameters
• Building and maintaining effective collaborations
• Becoming aware of different strategies for processing information (for audience analysis and generation of flexible delivery systems)
• Becoming aware of cultural frames (in relation to designing with type)

C) SYLLABUS HIGHLIGHTS:
Three phases divide the content of this class into logical segments with each providing a basis for the next. Students have a lot of options how to demonstrate their comprehension of the content (choice of relating back to one’s own life) as well as how to deliver assignments (flexible collaborative problem based learning).

PHASE I
Evolution and History of Typography (up to Bodoni/Didot)

Topics
• Invention of writing and three basic writing systems (logographic, syllabic, alphabetic)
• The Asian contribution (fieldtrip to Asian Art Museum with tour focusing on non-western writing systems)
• Alphabets (from Sumerian to Roman)
• Process of communication (role of designer, encoding, transmitting, decoding)
• Illuminated manuscripts
• Beginning of printing in Europe
• German illustrated book
• Renaissance graphic design (focus on type)
• Époche of typographic genius (closing type history with Bodoni and Didot)
• Opportunities for special topics such as handlettering (tools and craft), non-western writing systems (tour in Asian Art Museum, viewing original), traditional printed books (Public Library lecture from origins of the printed book to William Morris, viewing original), and large-scale typographic applications (under special conditions such as for graphic recording)

Assignments
generated throughout Phase I
submitted in one package at the end of Phase I:
• Type in Nature Project
• History of Type Project
• Phase I Reflection
• Phase I Study Guides

TYPE IN NATURE
Task:
• Photographing type (all 26 letters of Roman alphabet) in a particular environment
• Collaborations encouraged but not required
• Submitted as package

Objectives:
• to become aware of the fact that typographic forms are not arbitrary but relate to the human body in its context of nature

Project parameters:
• Content: specific
• Method: specific
• Product: semi-specific

History of Type
Task:
• Digesting and solidifying theoretical knowledge learned
• Collaborations encouraged but not required
• Submitted as package

Objectives:
• to deepen theoretical knowledge of a specific historical content
• to prepare information/design for a particular slice of audience (8 ways of knowing by Howard Gardner)

Project parameters
honors multiple cultural frames among student body:
• Content: semi-specific (one of three choices)
• Method: open (one of eight choices of processing information)
• Product: open (one of eight choices of flexible delivery)

Alternate project parameters:
Traditional test instead of problem based learning (project as described above) for those students who prefer the traditional format

Reflection
Task:
• Answering seven questions in form of self-reflection

Objectives:
• recognizing and validating one’s experience of the learnings during Phase I in order to properly complete a particular content area
• fringe benefit: feedback for instructor in form of self-assessment

Format:
• Written submission (typed, edited and proofread)

Study Guides
Task:
• Answering a variety of content related questions (submitted for extra credit)

Objectives:
• assist with comprehending of content, providing opportunities to succeed and collect extra points (especially useful for students who have difficulty absorbing and digesting information provided)

Format:
• Written submission (typed, edited and proofread)
D) FIELDTRIPS such as:
• Asian Art Museum for guided tour stressing non-western writing systems (specially arranged)
• Public Library Rare Book Section for lecture on the printed book (from Manutius to Morris)
• Mackensie & Harris Type Foundry

E) TEACHING, LEARNING, AND PRODUCTION METHODS:
Flexible delivery methods of content, from lecture format to interactive experiences, and community centered activities, honor various cultural frames within the student body.

All four of Kolb’s Learning Styles are continuously activated by teaching around the Kolb Wheel: Concrete Experience (learning by feeling and through relating with others), Reflective Observation (learning by watching and reflecting), Abstract Conceptualization (learning by thinking and logical analysis), and Active Experimentation (learning by doing and through interactivity).

Content is to build foundation for understanding of typographic elements, their evolution and historical significance, as well as their function in particular contexts. In addition to applying theoretical knowledge, practical applications include building familiarity with lettershapes, practicing hand-typesetting and type measuring, designing with type, individually and in collaborations, and in various methods but with an emphasis on hand-crafting.

Production methods primarily focus on developing conceptual and hand skills, while digital renderings are permitted for students who already have digital skills and want to develop those in addition to hand-crafting. Focus is given to type as a visual element (versus layout, and fine tuning of typographic design which is reserved for 53b).

F) RELATED CLASSES:
Ideally, students take these design classes together:
• GRPH 53a Beginning Typography
• GRPH 35 Beginning Graphic Design
• GRPH 99A Digital Page Layout (and/or new InDesign class)
• GRPH 151 Lettering
• GRPH 92A Letterpress

G) SPECIAL TOPICS:
Special topics are offered in order to enrich and enhance the learning experience for the students. They can be shared through a variety of opportunities and are dependent on availability thereof, for example:
• fieldtrips (several are outlined above)
• (guest) lectures on special topics (see each phase)
• sharing of special interests/expertise by the teaching faculty (see each phase)

PHASE II
Anatomy of Typography

Topics
• From handwriting to metal type
• Parts of letterforms (Nomenclature)
• Proportions of letterforms
• The typographic font
• Optical relationships and unity within a font
• Historical classification of typefaces
• Overview of Adobe classification system
• Typographic measurement
• Metal type measurement
• Spatial measurement
• Hand-typesetting (letterpress if possible)
• The type family (weight, proportion, angle, elaboration)
• Evolution of type with respect to the changing technologies
  (from handcomposition with metal type to linotype to monotype to Ludlow to display photosetting to keyboard photosetting to digital typesetting, scanning and laser systems, to software and user interface)
• Opportunities for special topics such as: the history of the Broadside women in the printing industry, printing in support of social justice, revival of letterpress, type foundry (fieldtrip to Mackensie & Harris Type Foundry)

Assignments
generated throughout Phase II
submitted in one package at the end of Phase II:
• Broadside Project
• Type Classifications Project
• Phase II Reflection
• Phase II Study Guides

Broadside

Task:
• Designing and producing broadsides with type (letterpress preferred because learning opportunities for comprehending anatomy of type is highest in this method, but can be accomplished with cut and past letters if letterpress is not a possibility)
• final product can be an accumulation of all students’ broadsides—bound with cover or loose as package
• partner work encouraged

Objectives:
• to apply theory learned (anatomy of type) to a practical assignment including design decisions
• to become familiar with traditional broadside format & history

Project parameters:
• Content: specific
• Method: specific
• Product: specific (class decision)

Type Classifications

Task:
• Digesting and solidifying theoretical knowledge learned by generating a designed piece/package dealing with the content of the basic type classification system
• Collaborations encouraged but not required
• Submitted as package

Objectives:
• to deepen and to solidify theoretical knowledge of basic classification system including details of typographic features
• to prepare information/design for a particular slice of audience (8 ways of knowing by Howard Gardner)

Alternate project parameters:
Traditional test instead of problem based learning (project as described above) for those students who prefer the traditional format

Reflection

Task:
• Answering seven questions in form of self-reflection

Objectives:
• recognizing and validating one’s experience of the learnings during Phase II in order to properly complete a particular content area
• fringe benefit: feedback for instructor in form of self-assessment

Format:
• Written submission (typed, edited and proofread)

Study Guides

Task:
• Answering a variety of content related questions (submitted for extra credit)

Objectives:
• assist with comprehending of content, providing opportunities to succeed and collect extra points (especially useful for students who have difficulty absorbing and digesting information provided)

Format:
• Written submission (typed, edited and proofread)
PHASE III

*Designing with Typography*

**Topics**
- Typographic syntax
- The letter
- The word
- The line
- Column and margin
- Typographic space
- Visual hierarchy
- ABA form
- Typographic grid
- Typographic message
- Visual/verbal equations
- Function and expression

**Assignments**
generated throughout Phase III
submitted in one package at the end of Phase III:
- Cultural Identity Project
- Type Puns Project
- Phase III Reflection
- Phase III Study Guides

**Cultural Identity**

*Task:*
- Designing and producing a typographic composition expressing a classmate's cultural identity (using initials of name, approximating a personal graphic/monogram)
- Creative brief and final rationale writing
- Classmates function as clients for each other
- Using cut and paste letters (moving to digital rendering is possible if students are interested and able to do so)

*Objectives:*
- to practice manipulating type elements in a composition with strict project parameters (playing with syntax and semantics) while considering cultural frames of client
- to practice interviewing client to obtain information necessary to solve visual project
- to practice profession-specific writing technique

*Project parameters:*
- Content: specific
- Method: specific
- Product: specific

**Type Puns**

*Task:*
- Digesting and solidifying theoretical knowledge learned throughout the entire semester by generating a series of type puns as a class
- Collaborations required (hand-crafted and/or digitally rendered depending on skills available in community of participants)
- Submitted as package

*Objectives:*
- taking designing with type to the next level by generating a sequenced piece that requires clever manipulation of syntax and semantics to yield a typographic pun that captures and challenges an audience

*Project parameters:*
- Content: specific
- Method: specific
- Product: specific

**Reflection**

*Task:*
- Answering eight final questions in form of self-reflection

*Objectives:*
- recognizing and validating one's experience of the learnings during Phase III in order to properly complete a particular content area and the class experience as a whole
- fringe benefit: feedback for instructor in form of self-assessment

*Format:*
- Written submission (typed, edited and proofread)

**Study Guides**

*Task:*
- Answering a variety of content related questions
  (submitted for extra credit)

*Objectives:*
- assist with comprehendng of content, providing opportunities to succeed and collect extra points (especially useful for students who have difficulty absorbing and digesting information provided)

*Format:*
- Written submission (typed, edited and proofread)