

Course Number: DIG 5487--0061
Digital Media: Principles of Visual Language
SVAD, University of Central Florida



COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor:	Anastasia Salter	Term:	Summer 2017
Office:	OTC 500 Room 189	Class Meeting Days:	Monday
Phone:	N/A	Class Meeting Hours:	6:00PM – 8:50PM
E-Mail:	anastasia@ucf.edu	Class Location:	CEM Room 126
Website:	Webcourses	Lab Location:	N/A
Office Hours:	Monday: 11 AM – 4 PM OTC, 5-6 CEM		

Course Overview

This course provides an introduction to visual language, including the nature of perceptions and cognitions of imagery.

Course Objectives

This course focuses on developing visual language literacy and theoretical frameworks through analyzing and creating a range of narrative media. We will examine a range of visual scholarly and creative works, starting with sequential art and moving into time-based and interactive media.

Students will:

1. Learn “close reading” strategies for visual culture
2. Engage with and perform original analysis of a range of visual works
3. Learn and apply frameworks of visual language
4. Develop expressive skills in original design across media
5. Conduct peer review of creative and scholarly works

Course Prerequisites

Graduate student standing

Required Texts and Materials

Ways of Seeing. John Berger.
Understanding Comics. Scott McCloud.
Unflattening. Nick Sousanis.
Picture This: How Pictures Work. Molly Bang.

In addition to these required texts, students will be required to access and analyze many works available freely online as well as acquire examples (such as comics) for their original projects.

Grading

Assessment	Percent of Final Grade
Creative Exercises (4 assignments)	40%
Visual Language Analysis (4 assignments)	40%
Final Project	20%
	100%

Grading Scale (%)

94-100 A	80-83 B-	67-69 D+
90-93 A-	77-79 C+	64-66 D
87-89 B+	74-76 C	60-63 D-
84-86 B	70-73 C-	0 - 59 F

Grade Dissemination

Graded tests and materials in this course will be returned individually only by request. You can access your scores at any time using the Grade Book function of Webcourses. Please note that scores returned mid-semester are unofficial grades.

Course Policies: Grades

Assignments in this course can be resubmitted once for re-grading. Late work is accepted within 24 with prior notice and discussion with the professor, and further extensions can be granted based on individual need and circumstances.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Email: Students can email at any time. All emails will receive a response within 24 hours. Laptops are welcome in the classroom and may be useful for in-class activities, please silence devices when entering the classroom.

Webcourses: All assignments and class materials will be managed through Webcourses. Plan on checking the site at least three times a week for updates and assignment information.

Backups: You are required to maintain your own backups. A cloud-based service such as Dropbox is highly recommended.

Copyright: This course may contain copyright-protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used consistent with the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Disability Access: The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Professionalism Policy: As this is a course on visual language and culture, we will be viewing material that includes difficult content, including topics of political and social contention. Please be respectful of others' opinions, and let me know in advance if you have any concerns regarding a particular topic or unit.

Academic Conduct Policy: Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University.

Class Schedule*

Date	Monday Topics	Assignments and Readings Due
8/21	Introduction to Visual Language	Complete Enrollment Verification
8/28	Picture Books and Learning Imagery	Read: Picture This (first half) The Eye and I, Perry Nodelman (PDF) Ways of Seeing (essay 1)
9/4	Labor Day (no class)	N/A
9/11	How Picture Books Work Bring the picture book (or books) you're considering for analysis to today's class!	Read: Picture This (second half) Selected articles, Maria Nikolajeva and Philip Nel (PDF) Ways of Seeing (essay 2)
9/18	Transitioning to "Sequential" Art	Picture Book Analysis Due Read: Understanding Comics (first half) The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, Walter Benjamin (https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm) Comics as Art (PDF) Ways of Seeing (essay 3)
9/25	Comics and/as Visual Culture	Creative Picture Book Due Read: Understanding Comics (second half) Oh My Goddess (https://www.comicsgrid.com/articles/10.5334/cg.bd/) What is Visual Culture, Nicholas Mirzoeff (PDF) Ways of Seeing (essay 4)
10/2	Flatland and Unflattening	Read: Unflattening (first half) Flatland (http://www.geom.uiuc.edu/~banchof/Flatland/) Studying Visual Culture, Irit Rogoff (PDF) Ways of Seeing (essay 5)
10/9	Comics to Time-Based Media	Comic Analysis Due Read: Unflattening (second half) Watch: Flatland

		<p>(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mfglluny8Z0)</p> <p>Ways of Seeing (essay 6)</p>
10/16	Cinema	<p>Creative Comic Due</p> <p>Read: Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, Mulvey (PDF) Cinema chapters 1 and 2, Deleuze (PDF)</p>
10/23	Making Time-Based Media	<p>Read: Sundance Tangerine (https://www.theverge.com/2015/1/28/7925023/sundance-film-festival-2015-tangerine-iphone-5s) Framed (http://www.zacuto.com/%E2%80%98framed%E2%80%99-short-film-on-iphone-4s) Tips (https://photography.tutsplus.com/tutorials/how-to-use-your-iphone-like-a-pro-video-camera--cms-23783)</p>
10/30	Making Time-Based Media	<p>Film/TV Analysis Due</p> <p>Read: Cinema chapters 3 and 4, Deleuze (PDF) Television Aesthetics (PDF) Watch / read a recap of a show of your choice</p>
11/6	Aesthetics of Games	<p>Creative Short Film Due</p> <p>Read: Spatiality in Journey (http://www.firstpersonscholar.com/4419-2/) Lara Croft (http://www.gamestudies.org/0202/kenedy/) Why Game (Culture) Studies Now? (PDF)</p>
11/13	Simulated and Virtual Landscapes	<p>Read: Simulacra and Simulations, Jean Baudrillard (http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Baudrillard_Simulacra_and_Simulations.html) Past as Future (http://www.journal.fibreculture.org/issue11/issue11_suominen_print.html)</p>

11/20	Developing your Final Project	Game Analysis Due
11/27	Final Project Progress Report	Creative Game Due
12/9	Final Projects Due Submit online or in person by 11:59PM	

* Note: The Schedule is subject to revision as needed

Assignments

Skills Survey

Due Date: August 25th

As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity no later than August 25th. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid. For this class, you are required to complete a short skills survey. Access your Webcourses@UCF (Canvas) course site following the directions below.

- Go to the myUCF portal (<https://my.ucf.edu>) and select the Webcourses@UCF button on the left side of the screen.
- Log in with your NID and NID password, then access each course by selecting it in the "Courses" drop-down menu at the top of the page.
- Find the "Skills Survey" under quizzes and complete all questions

Visual Language Analysis

1. Picture Book (choose between 2 and 5 pages to analyze)
2. Comic Book (choose between 2 and 5 pages to analyze)
3. Film or Television Clip (choose approximately 5-10 minutes to analyze)
4. Playable media (choose a game from the list to analyze an early play sequence)

Students will select four works for original analysis. This analysis should be a short (1000 – 1500 words) essay and should be submitted with detailed citation information for the work under examination (for picture books and comics, a scan of the analyzed pages; for time-based media, a link or source and timestamps). Students may use any formal citation style appropriate for their disciplinary background, including MLA, APA, or Chicago. Examples of this type of analysis will be conducted in class for each type of visual work studied.

Each assignment should include:

- A clear thesis statement on the significance of visual language elements in the work analyzed
- Contextual information positioning the excerpt relative to the larger work and visual culture
- Strong use of outside sources (primarily from course texts) to support the analysis

Students will have approximately 3 minutes to share their thesis and major insights with peers on the day each assignment is submitted, and should come prepared to provide a summary argument.

Rubric for Visual Language Analysis (10 points)

- 2 points – Overview and context for chosen sequence
- 3 points – Appropriate use of citations from course texts
- 2 points – Clear thesis statement for analysis
- 2 points – Evidence from visual work supporting thesis statement
- 1 point – Brief presentation of work to classmates

Creative Projects

Each project is an individual creative task using the specified platform to build an expressive work in dialogue with theoretical readings. While each project will have its own rubric with specific requirements, all projects share a focus on developing students' voices and understanding of visual language.