

# JOMC 712 Visual Communication and Multimedia

This course is designed to help you develop a deeper understanding of the role of visual communication and multimedia in journalism and mass communication. This class is not about learning software, but rather gaining a critical understanding – through reading, discussion, critiques and projects – of these forms of communication. By reading, viewing and discussing the writings and works of journalists, artists, Web developers, photographers, usability experts, graphic designers, educators and researchers you will develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of the principles and practices of communication through visual expression.

## **Class dates, Spring 2015 semester**

Wednesday, January 7 through Wednesday, April 29

Spring Break: March 7-15

## **Instructor information**

Lisa Villamil, assistant professor

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Google Chat/Video: villamil.lisa | Skype ID: lisavillamil

I am available for office hours by appointment. Please email me to schedule a time to talk, and I will respond within 24 hours.

## **Sakai**

All course materials and links will be available on the Sakai course site at

<http://sakai.unc.edu>.

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## **Required course materials**

### **Textbook**

The Non-Designer's Design Book, 4th Edition | Peachpit

ISBN-10: 0-13-396615-1 | ISBN-13: 978-0-13-396615-2

Available at <http://www.peachpit.com/store/non-designers-design-book-9780133966152>

All other course materials—PDF files and links to articles, multimedia presentations, videos and book chapters—will be accessible from the Sakai site.

**Applications:** While working with professional design and imaging software programs is ideal, coursework may be completed with various programs depending on your experience and comfort zone. We will discuss possibilities with each project.

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## AEJMC Course Values and Competencies:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
  - Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
  - Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
  - Think critically, creatively and independently;
  - Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
  - Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
  - Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
  - Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.
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## Grading criteria and scale

Your grade will be based on four components\*:

- **Discussion:** Class participation and professionalism, relating to class discussions in Sakai and also your interactions with the instructor and other students in all contexts. Students are required to participate in discussions per Discussion Guidelines located below. (20%)
- **Discussion Leadership:** Participation and facilitation of course discussion during assigned week. (10%)
- **Assignments:** Four assignments: visual research project, design project, infographic project, multimedia project. (40%)
- **Final Project:** Video project and pitch. (30%)

**Note:** Any student who earns four (4) “Low Pass” grades in the course, either for assignments or for participation (or lack of participation) in discussion, will automatically earn a maximum grade of a “Low Pass” for the course. Similarly, any student who earns or receives two (2) zeroes in the course, either for failing to submit an assignment or for a lack of participation in discussion, will automatically earn a maximum grade of a “Low Pass” for the course.

**Grades:** From the UNC Graduate School handbook (available in full as a PDF at <http://gradschool.unc.edu/handbook/pdf/handbook.pdf>), the grade scale used for graduate-level courses numbered 100 or above is:

H for High Pass  
P for Pass  
L for Low Pass  
F for Fail  
IN for work incomplete  
AB for absent from final examination

Simply put, engagement is required, participation is expected and deadlines are absolute.

*\* Thanks to Professor Brian Carroll for some of the wording used above.*

**UNC Honor Code:** It shall be the responsibility of every student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code (<http://instrument.unc.edu>), which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student, or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.

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## **Discussion Guidelines**

Meaningful and quality discussion is an essential part of online courses, and will be for this course. The asynchronous nature of the course allows you to carefully consider your contributions to the discussion board. Please read through these expectations and use them as a reference for guiding your discussion participation. It is important that you share your ideas, interact and participate regularly in class discussions. This can be an exciting, enriching experience.

**Quality over quantity:** All students are expected to make **at least five substantive posts** each week. You are expected to add to the discussion with each post. That means you should comment thoughtfully, expand the conversation, bring in your professional experiences, and share your viewpoints and solutions. The testing and challenging of theory is encouraged. You are *not* expected to respond to each and every comment. Posts that do not add to the discussion (e.g. “I agree.”) are not encouraged. Be concise and respectful in all of your comments, and, please, no casual chatter. (There’s a discussion forum for that—“Water Cooler”!)

**Don't delay:** Please begin participating in discussion early. Waiting until late in the discussion can be overwhelming. You may find that the points you’d like to raise have already been covered. Best practice is to check discussions daily or every other day.

**Organization of online discussions:**

1. Weekly discussion will open at 12:00 p.m./NOON on Thursdays and close at 11:59 p.m./MIDNIGHT Sundays. There will be three topics to discuss each week.
2. For the first week, the online discussion will be an introduction to visual communication and to each other. It will serve as a opportunity to meet, and to gain a broad perspective of our semester study. There will be no discussion leaders; so all students should follow the discussion prompts.
3. For each of the next 10 weeks of the semester, students will be assigned to lead the online discussion in pairs. Expectations are as follows:

**Student discussion leaders** will lead us in our discussion and understanding of the readings for that week. Discussion leaders are expected to “meet” with me to decide on discussion topics, then to kick off the week’s discussion on Thursdays. You should respond to comments made by your classmates as you facilitate the week’s discussion. Your comments should keep your classmates on-point and move the conversation forward.

**Students who are not discussion leaders** are expected to read the readings, make sure you understand the material and make substantive posts. A substantive post is one that responds to the prompt with additional insight to the readings from your personal experience and/or a supplementary reading or link. It is important for you to read and react to the course materials. You are always encouraged to respond to your classmates’ posts.

4. For the last four weeks, discussions will be optional and about the progress of your final projects. This is meant to take the pressure off as the semester comes to an end and you are collaborating and working diligently on your projects.

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## Course calendar

A link to the course calendar is located in Sakai. You can also visit the course Google calendar at <http://tinyurl.com/jomc712> and add it to your own Google calendar using the button in the lower right corner (shown here).



Below is a general week-by-week guide of the topics to be covered. Instructor comments and readings for each week can be found in the corresponding folder in Course Materials of the Sakai course site.

WEEK 1: Introduction to Visual Communication

WEEK 2: History of Visual Communication

WEEK 3: Future trends

WEEK 4: Theory and research

WEEK 5: Information design and visual language

WEEK 6: Typography and symbol

WEEK 7: Layout and usability

WEEK 8: Color and emotion

WEEK 9: Image and information graphics

WEEK 10: Storytelling and user engagement

WEEK 11: Multimedia

WEEK 12: Visual Thinking

WEEK 13: Innovation

WEEK 14: Problem-solving

WEEK 15: Final project pitches

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## **Online Course Statement**

1. By enrolling as a student in this course, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the Acceptable Use of online resources.

Please consult the Acceptable Use Policy (<https://help.unc.edu/help/unc-chapel-hill-network-acceptable-use-policy/>) on topics such as copyright, net-etiquette and privacy protection.

2. As part of this course you may be asked to participate in online discussions or other online activities that may include personal information about you or other students in the course. Please be respectful of the rights and protection of other participants under the UNC Chapel Hill Information Security Policies

([http://its.unc.edu/ITS/about\\_its/its\\_policies/index.htm](http://its.unc.edu/ITS/about_its/its_policies/index.htm)) when participating in online classes.

3. When using online resources offered by organizations not affiliated with UNC Chapel Hill, such as Google or YouTube, please note that the Terms and Conditions of these companies and not the University's Terms and Conditions apply. These third parties may offer different degrees of privacy protection and access rights to online content. You should be well aware of this when posting content to sites not managed by UNC Chapel Hill.

4. When links to sites outside of the unc.edu domain are inserted in class discussions, please be mindful that clicking on sites not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill may pose a risk for your computer due to the possible presence of malware on such sites.

5. Online courses may at times require Web-based assignments that are public in nature and may be viewed by third parties online. This is especially true in social media and blogging platforms. Be mindful of the information you choose to share publicly as part of your assignments. Under the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and UNC's FERPA regulation

([http://registrar.unc.edu/AcademicServices/PoliciesProcedures/StudentRights/CCM1\\_042762](http://registrar.unc.edu/AcademicServices/PoliciesProcedures/StudentRights/CCM1_042762)), a student's education records are protected from disclosure to third parties.

However, FERPA protection does not extend to material shared publicly by students.