

DES 299 Fall 09: Introduction to Letterpress

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Credits: 3 | Combination lab/lecture | Length of course: 11 weeks | Prerequisites: None

Course description: The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the terminology, process and context of letterpress printing within the graphic design discipline. The course will provide an introduction to the history of letterpress as well as how it is used today within the industry. Using hands-on projects, students will be taught how to properly compose hand-set type, lock up jobs and print using a Vandercook flat-bed cylinder press. They will also learn design for printing, basic preparation of film and photopolymer plates for use on the Vandercook flat-bed cylinder press.

Course outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Summarize basic letterpress processes.
- Design simple jobs using hand-set type and computer applications.
- Demonstrate knowledge of letterpress terminology.
- Lock-up and print using a flat-bed cylinder press.
- Create film and photopolymer plates for digital letterpress.
- Interpret written, verbal and visual instructions to produce effective projects.
- Safely utilize equipment, tools and materials.
- Demonstrate professionalism through leadership and team work.

Methods of presentation:

Instructor lecture and demonstration

Lab projects

Group work

I/I instruction

Methods of evaluation:

Studio group critiques

Self evaluation

I/I evaluation by instructor

ADA Conformation: (Americans With Disabilities Act) If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. I also urge you to make use of the Counselor/Disability Support Services. Contact Alfred M. Souma M.A., Tel 206-587 x 4169 or asouma@sccd.ctc.edu.

Text: No required text

Weekly Topical Outline. This weekly outline is subject to change at any time.

Week 1: 9/29 & 10/1

Subject: History of Letterpress printing. Introduction to the studio and equipment.

Homework: Research typefaces

Week 2: 10/6-10/8

Subject: Using the press

Homework: Handset type for note cards

Week 3: 10/13 - 10/15

Subject: Using the folding machine.

Homework: Finish printing and folding note cards

Week 4: 10/20 - 10/22

Subject: Paperstocks

Homework: Decide a theme and design a calendar page, choose proper paperstock.

Week 5: 10/27 - 10/29

Subject: Mixing ink, color matching. Critique calendar designs.

Homework: Refine and finish calendar design, choose and mix ink colors.

Week 6: 11/3 - 11/5

Subject: Digital Design and the Letterpress. Making film and plates.

Homework: Make film and plates. Start printing your calendar pages.

Week 7: 11/10 - 11/12

Subject: Making film and plates. Trouble shooting a print job.

Homework: Finish printing calendar project,

Week 8: 11/17 - 11/19

Subject: Collating and finishing: Calendars.

Homework: Design Personal Identity Project.

Week 9: 11/24 - 11/26

Subject: Critique Identity projects.

Homework: Refine/Finish design for identity projects.

Week 10: 12/1 - 12/3

In class: Make film and plates. Working 1 on 1 with the instructor

Homework: Print identity project

Week 11: 12/8 - 12/10

In class: Make film and plates. Working 1 on 1 with the instructor

Homework: Print identity project

Week 12 (Finals Week, TBA)

Final projects due

Grading and Attendance:

Students are expected to work cooperatively with other students to effectively maximize use of laboratory time and share equipment. Students will be expected to demonstrate professional work habits. Participation, professional attitude, performance and attendance are all factors that determine your grade. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior instructor approval. Three absences in one class will result in a 0.0 final grade. An absence will be recorded for every two tardies in a class. Students doing other work in a class, unless approved by the instructor, will be considered absent from the class. Assignments are due at the date and time specified.

Homework assignments: 50%, Attendance: 50%