PUCD 4210A / CORE 5: THESIS 2
Spring 2022 / CRN 2441
Caspar Lam (lamc@newschool.edu)
Fridays, 9:00am—2:40pm
2 West 13th Street, Room 1103
Backup Zoom: https://NewSchool.zoom.us/j/94277257769

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
In this senior level course, students will further develop the investigations of the first semester towards an articulated body of work built around the student's interest and curiosity. Emphasis is placed on the students' ability to contextualize their work within larger historical, cultural, social, and technological frameworks and translate their cumulative knowledge into effective visual communication. This course is taught through a multi-faceted, in-depth design thesis, which is supported by review sessions with peers and external critics, as well as a design lecture series. Thesis is initiated by research topics and not by media or technology, and students will be challenged to consider context and audience. The focus is on concept development, cross-media making, and critical thinking. Students will present their thesis to a panel of external design professionals and, in the process, demonstrate effective visual, verbal, and written presentation of work. Senior Thesis 2 culminates in an end-of-year online and printed presentation.

The work of thesis begins with inquiry / investigation / research / archiving / curiosity and leads to speculation about the world, which results in a public declaration. Throughout the thesis you will be coming to terms with your own work, thoughts, and goals regarding your relationship with your work, your relationship with the world, and your relationship with yourself. Lean into these curves.

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COURSE OUTLINE

UNIT 1: Iteration
       (WKS 1—11)
Students will begin the semester with a review of their first semester's work. Reflecting on this review, students will create one or more projects in greater depth that continue with their question and subject matter from the first semester. Each project will stand as an instance of the thesis, and together will describe the full arc of inquiry over the year.

UNIT 2: Presentation
       (WKS 12—13)
Students will submit writing and documentation for the thesis catalogue and website. At the same time, they will create a presentation that identifies and document precedents and present their thesis work fully considering context, history, and audience. Each student will present individually to 3—4 critics from outside the thesis faculty, including designers in industry.

UNIT 3: Professional Practice
       (WKS 14—15)
Students will debrief and review their existing portfolios and resumes in light of contemporary practice.

SOLO :: PAIR :: SMALL GROUP ::
SECTION :: COHORT
Students will sometimes learn alone, sometimes one-on-one with other students, sometimes one-on-one with their faculty, sometimes in a small group in their section, sometimes in a small group across sections, sometimes with their section, and sometimes with the whole cohort of Thesis 2022. All cross-cohort activities will be online, due to university guidelines that limit the size of in-person groups.

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1—Aesthetics
Demonstrate advanced aesthetic sensibility to manipulate typography, imagery, visual form, and media with communicative intent across various disciplines of design and evaluate the implications of those aesthetic decisions

2—Research
Develop critical questions in relation to historical and current practices of Communication Design and conduct primary and secondary research to broaden their understanding of the context in which they create work

3—Methods & Process
Demonstrate the ability to prototype and iterate a design project including brainstorming, user testing, evaluation, and implementation

4—Writing and Presenting
Speak and write critically and in an engaging manner about their work and the influences and materials that inform it

5—Technology
Independently study and apply current technologies to develop and implement design solutions across various media

6—Social Responsibility
Understand the importance of integrity and respect towards others and the community through cultural literacy and sensitivity to differences

7—Professional Practice
Represent and present their work outside of its original contexts—supported by a professional online portfolio and presentation skills

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ASSESSABLE TASKS
Over the course of the semester, students will demonstrate their learning through iteration and presentation.

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GRADING BREAKDOWN

1. Iteration  (5 Points x 10 Classes)          50 PTS
2. Final Presentation Document                 20 PTS
3. Guest Lectures                              10 PTS
4. Peer Critique                               20 PTS


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GRADING RUBRIC
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Throughout the semester students will receive feedback on the following criteria, which will be added up in the end to constitute the final grade. Even if you are unable to come to class, you are expected to make another iteration, share it using words, and give feedback to other students.

1. ITERATION (5 PTS/CLASS X 10 CLASSES) => 50 PTS

1 PT   MAKING SOMETHING
Something new was created to discuss in class and/or posted online

1 PT   RESPONSE
Responded to and reflected on previous critique(s)

1 PT   PRESENTATION
Used clear, design-focused language when sharing iterations

1 PT   RISK-TAKING
Was willing to explore new, unplanned directions, whether formal or conceptual

1 PT   VISUAL QUALITY
Demonstrated attention to craft, including typography, form, material, and structure

Note: if a student is absent from class, all of the above criteria still apply. For credit, work must be shared and articulated in detail, with an invitation to critique from the class.

2. FINAL PRESENTATION DOCUMENT => 20 PTS

5 PTS   WRITING
Project description that clearly describes the projects, what they respond to, and what they suggest in the future

5 PTS   CONTEXT
Appropriate contextualization of the work within the field of communication design, citing examples and influences that inform the work

5 PTS   DOCUMENTATION
Presentation design, and visual documentation of your work and process

5 PTS   VISUAL QUALITY
Devotion to craft and attention to detail including typography and form, layout, and polish of final product(s)

3. GUEST LECTURES => 10 PTS

Students are required to attend all CD Lectures throughout the Spring term and submit a response.

4. PEER CRITIQUE => 20 PTS

10 PTS   TONE AND FREQUENCY
Enthusiasm and responsiveness to others' work, demonstrated care for other students' intellectual and creative development

10 PTS   LANGUAGE
Consistent use of the language of design in both describing and critiquing other students' work, including vocabulary and design-specific references

TOTAL => 100 PTS

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SCHEDULE

Semester schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the
class online schedule for the most up-to-date schedule.


WEEK 1: 1/28 - THESIS KICK-OFF
Introduction with alumni panel
Review of Thesis 1 work
Setting up a work plan


WEEK 2: 2/4 - ITERATION 1
Discussion
Small group meetings

CD Lecture: Archie Lee Coates IV


WEEK 3: 2/11 - ITERATION 2
Discussion
Individual meetings


WEEK 4: 2/18 - ITERATION 3
Discussion
Small group meetings

CD Lecture: Keller Easterling


WEEK 5: 2/25 - ITERATION 4
Individual meetings


WEEK 6: 3/4 - ITERATION 5
WORKSHOP 1: How to write about your work* (Async/before class)
Discussion
Small group meetings

CD Lecture: Ayham Ghraowi


WEEK 7: 3/11 - ITERATION 6: THESIS FAIR
WORKSHOP 2: How to document your work* (Async/before class)
Discussion


SPRING BREAK: 3/18
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WEEK 8: 3/25 - ITERATION 7
WORKSHOP 3: How to present your work* (Async/before class)
Discussion
Small group meetings

CD Lecture: Lisa Strausfeld


WEEK 9: 4/1 - ITERATION 8: THESIS SUBMISSION
WORKSHOP 4: How to submit your work* (Async/before class)
Discussion
Submit documented work and writing for catalogue


WEEK 10: 4/8 - ITERATION 9
Dry run of final presentation + feedback

CD Lecture: Ruben Pater


WEEK 11: 4/15 - ITERATION 10:
FINAL CRITIQUES w/ GUEST CRITICS


WEEK 12: 4/22
WORKSHOP 5: How to find a job
Thesis Review Debrief
Discussion

CD Lecture: TBD


WEEK 13: 4/29
WORKSHOP 6: Freelancing
WORKSHOP 7: Intellectual property
Discussion


WEEK 14: 5/6
WORKSHOP 8: Visas
WORKSHOP 9: Grad school
Discussion


WEEK 15: 5/13 - RESUME & PORTFOLIO REVIEW
Celebration
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NO LATE WORK AND MISSED CRITIQUES

Work that is submitted past the assignment due date, with no communication with faculty prior to the deadline, will result in automatic failure for the assignment. For work presented in a final or midterm critique, absence at critique will result in automatic failure for the assignment.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

Class participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, assignments, projects, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, active participation in group work, and attending synchronous sessions regularly and on time.

Parsons' attendance guidelines were developed to encourage students' success in all aspects of their academic programs. Full participation is essential to the successful completion of coursework and enhances the quality of the educational experience for all, particularly in courses where group work is integral; thus, Parsons promotes high levels of attendance. Students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly and in compliance with the standards stated in this course syllabus.

While attendance is just one aspect of active participation, absence from a significant portion of class time may prevent the successful attainment of course objectives. A significant portion of class time is generally defined as the equivalent of three weeks, or 20%, of class time. Lateness or early departure from class may be recorded as one full absence. Students may be asked to withdraw from a course if habitual absenteeism or tardiness has a negative impact on the class environment. I will assess each student's performance against all of the assessment criteria in determining your final grade.

COMMUNICATION DESIGN ATTENDANCE POLICY*

In order to foster a studio learning environment where we all learn from peers and through dialogue, timely and regular attendance is a strict expectation for all Communication Design students. Students who are not present in class are unable to meet the learning outcomes of a Communication Design course. Thus, it is an expectation of the program that students attend all classes. We recommend that students reserve the use of absences for unexpected situations.

Should students need to miss class for personal reasons, students are allowed the following number of absences:

For classes meeting once a week, students are allowed 2 absences. Any absence beyond the allowed absences will result in an automatic failure (F) for the course. There are no excused absences, and doctor's notes are not necessary.

A student is deemed tardy if a student fails to arrive within 15 minutes past the beginning of class. 2 tardies will result in an automatic absence. A student who arrives an hour past the beginning of class will be deemed absent.

Per Parsons policy, faculty are asked to notify the student's advisor and program director if the student has missed a significant portion of class time: 2 absences for a once/week class.

* All courses will follow the COVID testing and result scenarios outlined here. Faculty will work with students to continue to hold class and share knowledge via Zoom during various potential isolation and/or quarantine events. In light of the pandemic, accommodations to the attendance policy will be made in a case-by-case scenario at faculty discretion. Students will not be penalized for missing class due to illness. In the event this happens, a doctor's note is not required.

RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS

Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent. Late assignments, failure to complete the assignments for class discussion and/or critique, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions, presentations and/or critiques will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

CANVAS AND OTHER ONLINE TOOLS

Use of Canvas, Slack, Dropbox Paper, and other online tools will be an essential resource for this class. Students should have notifications on for Slack and follow instructor guidelines. If you need to be absent from class meetings, it is your responsibility to review the class site and make up the necessary work to be aligned with the class at the next session.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops, cameras, etc.) is permitted when the device is being used in relation to the course's work. All other uses are prohibited in the classroom and devices should be turned off before class starts.

COMMUNICATION DESIGN APP

Information about upcoming CD Lectures, events from AIGA NY/TDC, the CD Library, and the CD Paper Store can be found on the CD App:

https://cdparsons.glideapp.io/

GRADING STANDARDS

This class is focused on concept and process, both of which are visible in your work. Your grade for projects and for the course will communicate to you whether you have demonstrated that you have mastered the thinking and making necessary for being self-directed in your work.

A [4.0]: WORK OF EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY, WHICH OFTEN GOES BEYOND THE STATED GOALS

OF THE COURSE
A- [3.7]: WORK OF VERY HIGH QUALITY

A grade in the A range means superior work. You have clearly demonstrated an enthusiasm for the projects, and an understanding of the concepts that guide your decisions. Your work demonstrates original and creative thinking and your projects are consistently and cleanly executed with a high level of attention devoted to craft and clarity of writing. You're able to explain your own work and offer insightful critique of your class-mates' projects. You are present in class and participate in discussions.

B+ [3.3]: WORK OF HIGH QUALITY THAT INDI-CATES HIGHER THAN AVERAGE ABILITIES
B [3.0]: VERY GOOD WORK THAT SATISFIES THE GOALS OF THE COURSE
B- [2.7]: GOOD WORK

A grade in B range means good work. You've completed all of the projects with a sufficient level of quality. Your projects are less conceptually clear, but you have displayed clear effort in attempting an understanding of the concepts that guide your decisions. Your projects are cleanly executed with a good level of attention devoted to craft and clarity of writing. You're able to ex-plain your own work and offer insightful critique of your classmates' projects. You are present in class and participate in discussions.

C+ [2.3]: ABOVE-AVERAGE WORK
C [2.0]: AVERAGE WORK THAT INDICATES AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE COURSE MATERIAL; PASSABLE SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF A COURSE IS CONSIDERED TO BE A GRADE OF C OR HIGHER.
C- [1.7]: PASSING WORK BUT BELOW GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING

A grade in the C range means satisfac-tory work. You've shown that you can interact with the concepts presented in class, but you have not demonstrated a deep understanding or enthusiasm for your work. You do not demonstrate a high level of attention to craft. You are present in class and participate in some discussions but have not added insight-ful critique.

D [1.0]: BELOW-AVERAGE WORK THAT INDI-CATES A STUDENT DOES NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND THE ASSIGNMENTS. PROBATION LEVEL THOUGH PASSING FOR CREDIT

Your work adheres to each project's guidelines, but you have not demonstrat-ed original thought or depth of under-standing of the concepts presented in class. You are present in class but have not participated in class discussions.

F [0.0]: FAILURE, NO CREDIT; FAILING GRADES ARE GIVEN FOR REQUIRED WORK THAT IS NOT SUBMITTED OR FOR INCOMPLETE FINAL PROJECTS.

GRADE OF W
The grade of W may be issued by the Office of the Registrar to a student who officially withdraws from a course within the applicable deadline. There is no academic penalty, but the grade will appear on the student transcript. To withdraw, a student must write to their Student Advisor.

The deadline for withdrawal occurs in mid-November for the autumn semester and mid-April for the Spring semester. Please consult the academic calendar for official deadlines: https://www.new-school.edu/registrar/academic-calendar/

UNOFFICIAL WITHDRAWAL (GRADE OF Z)
This grade is to be assigned to students who have never attended or stopped attending classes. Exceptions can be made if the student has completed enough work to warrant a grade (including a failing grade), and arrangements have been made with the instructor(s) and the Dean's Office prior to grade submission. The Z grade does not calculate into the student's GPA. Though a Z grade does not have a failing penalty it still carries a myriad of consequences for students on visas or receiving financial aid. Only issue the Z grade when a student meets the above criteria.

GRADE OF I: TEMPORARY INCOMPLETE
The grade of I, or temporary incomplete, may be granted to a student when an unusual and extenuating circumstance occurs during the last 2 weeks of the course (such as when the student's aca-demic life is suddenly interrupted by a grave medical emergency or sudden death of a family member at the end of term).

This mark is given only upon the stu-

dent's request and at the discretion of the instructor with approval from the BFA CD Director/Associate Director. If an Incomplete is given for a prerequisite course, a student may not register or continue in courses that depend on that prerequisite course.

INITIATING A REQUEST FOR INCOMPLETE
Before the last day of class, a Request for Incomplete form must be completed by the instructor, and submitted to the BFA CD Director/Associate Director. Approval is not automatic and is at the discre-tion of the BFA CD Director/Associate Director.

If the request is approved, the student has 21 calendar days past the official end date of the semester to submit work to the instructor. A student may request an extension within the 21 calendar day period by writing to the instructor AND the BFA CD Director/Associate Director. At that time, the student will be granted an extension to complete work no later than the seventh week of the current semester. A student may not request a partial extension (e.g. an extension of one week, etc.). If an extension is given for a prerequisite course, this automatically means that a student may not register or continue in courses that depend on that prerequisite course. Grades of "I" not revised in the pre-scribed time will be recorded as a final grade of "F" by the Registrar's Office. Thus, a student that does not request an extension and does not submit work, or a student that requests an extension and does not submit work will automatically receive an "F".

GRADE APPEALS
Students may appeal a grade per the pol-icies set forth in the Academic Catalog. Until the appeal process is completed, the original grade will be used to determine whether a student may proceed into their next-level Communication Design courses. Students who initiate a grade appeals process for a failed/incomplete/unsatisfactorily-completed prerequisite course should have no expectation of immediately continuing into courses which depend on a passing grade of that prerequisite course.

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UNIVERSITY POLICIES

A comprehensive overview of policy may be found under Policies: A to Z: (https://www.newschool.edu/about/university-resources/policies/). Students are also encouraged to consult the Academic Catalog for Parsons: (https://www.newschool.edu/provost/academic-catalogs/).

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found on the university website under Policies: A to Z. Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the Learning Center's website.

The New School views "academic honesty and integrity" as the duty of every member of an academic community to claim authorship for his or her own work and only for that work, and to recognize the contributions of others accurately and completely. This obligation is fundamental to the integrity of intellectual debate, and creative and academic pursuits. Academic honesty and integrity includes accurate use of quotations, as well as appropriate and explicit citation of sources in instances of paraphrasing and describing ideas, or reporting on research findings or any aspect of the work of others (including that of faculty members and other students). Academic dishonesty results from infractions of this "accurate use." The standards of academic honesty and integrity, and citation of sources, apply to all forms of academic work, including submissions of drafts of final papers or projects. All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the standards of academic honesty and integrity. Please see the complete policy in the Parsons Catalog.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

The New School (the "university") seeks to encourage creativity and invention among its faculty members and students. In doing so, the University affirms its traditional commitment to the personal ownership by its faculty members and students of Intellectual Property Rights in works they create. The complete policy governing Intellectual Property Rights may be seen on the university website, on the Provost's page. https://www.newschool.edu/provost/accreditation-policies/.

STUDENT COURSE RATINGS (COURSE EVALUATIONS)

During the last two weeks of the semester, students are asked to provide feedback for each of their courses through an online survey. They cannot view grades until providing feedback or officially declining to do so. Course evaluations are a vital space where students can speak about the learning experience. It is an important process which provides valuable data about the successful delivery and support of a course or topic to both the faculty and administrators. Instructors rely on course rating surveys for feedback on the course and teaching methods, so they can understand what aspects of the class are most successful in teaching students, and what aspects might be improved or changed in future. Without this information, it can be difficult for an instructor to reflect upon and improve teaching methods and course design. In addition, program/department chairs and other administrators review course surveys. Instructions are available online at http://www.newschool.edu/provost/course-evaluations-student-instructions.pdf

RESOURCES

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

UNIVERSITY (AND ASSOCIATED) LIBRARIES: http://library.newschool.edu (See also Reserves)

UNIVERSITY LEARNING CENTER: http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center

UNIVERSITY DISABILITY SERVICES: https://www.newschool.edu/student-disability-services/

If you are a student with a disability/disabled student, or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Student Disability Services (SDS) at studentdisability@newschool.edu, or 212-229-5626, to coordinate all reasonable accommodation requests.

THE NEW SCHOOL FOOD ASSISTANCE

More information on food assistance and additional resources can be found: https://www.newschool.edu/student-support/food-assistance/

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Additional services and support available to New School students: https://www.newschool.edu/cam- pus-community/health-wellness-support/

MAKING CENTER

The Making Center is a constellation of shops, labs, and open workspaces that are situated across the New School to help students express their ideas in a variety of materials and methods. We have resources to help support woodworking, metalworking, ceramics and pottery work, photography and film, textiles, printmaking, 3D printing, manual and CNC machining, and more. A staff of technicians and student workers provide expertise and maintain the different shops and labs. Safety is a primary concern, so each area has policies for access, training, and etiquette with which students and faculty should be familiar. Many areas require specific orientations or trainings before access is granted. More information can be found at: https:// makingcenter.parsons.edu/

THE DESIGN LAB

The Communication Design Lab (10th Floor, 2 West 13th Street) is a specially designated space available to all Communication Design students. Here,

you can work, find inspiration, and produce projects for your classes. The Design Lab houses the CD Library and the CD Paper Store, and is the home of the CD Tutors for your coding needs. Please check the CD App for more information.