



**PALAZZI FLORENCE ASSOCIATION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION  
FLORENCE UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS  
DIVA - SCHOOL OF DIGITAL IMAGING AND VISUAL ARTS (DI)**

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SCHOOL OF DIGITAL IMAGING AND VISUAL ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION  
**COURSE TITLE: DIGITAL GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION**  
**COURSE CODE: DIVCGI210**

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3 semester credits

### **1. DESCRIPTION**

The course explores illustration as an instrument of communication (i.e. advertising) and narration (i.e. comic books). It aims at improving drawing and design skills by teaching image making with an emphasis on edge, shape, color and value. Students will learn how to apply composition and design, color, and conceptualization to a wide range of materials and techniques. Students will use illustration software to enhance traditional work and acquire important knowledge in the digital domain. Idea development within real-world parameters, originality, aesthetics, and technical proficiency are emphasized. This class includes experiential learning with CEMI.

### **2. OBJECTIVE**

Students will be able to demonstrate proficiency in illustration software, apply design principles and create software specific illustration enhancements. They will learn about the process from both hand drawing and use of the capabilities specific to vector (object oriented) drawing software to manipulate both text and graphics with emphasis on the use of Bezier curves to create complex illustrations. Students will also develop the use of the basic elements of good layout and design principles.

### **3. REQUIREMENTS**

Introduction to Computer Graphics is recommended. Please submit unofficial transcript to comply with course prerequisite.

Basic drawing skills are necessary. Introduction to Graphic Design is useful but not mandatory.

Examples:

- Lectures are held in English.
- A questionnaire is distributed on the first day of class to inform the instructor about the general background and characteristics of the students. Students are not required to answer all questions.
- Students will be asked to research, read and study quite often at the School Library. Please make sure you are familiar with it (know how it works, opening and closing times, facilities, etc.) from the very start of the course.
- For the material you will need to type, please check the school computer facilities.
- No eating is allowed in class.
- A responsible and active class participation is expected at all times and activities.
- At all times cell phones must be turned off (both during lectures and/or visits).
- Please consider strict guidelines regarding attendance and behavior during scheduled visits/field trip (as described in pertinent paragraphs).
- Please also consider important notes on attendance, participation and assignments (as

described in pertinent paragraphs).

#### **4. METHOD**

This class will be taught with a combination of theory and practice. Understanding how to apply basic design concepts to the presentation of informative or persuasive materials is crucial to communicate with an audience. The class begins with an introduction as to how design has helped to shape and influence this visual culture. Topics covered include: Intro to Photoshop CS, Fonts and Typefaces, Laser and Inkjet outputs, Page layout and design. Two dimensional design principles that we will explore include: form, repetition, structure, similarity, gradation, anomaly, contrast, concentration, texture, and space.

#### TOPICS

pen tool - Bézier curves – type – selection – 3d effects – filters – graphic styles – live trace – live paint

#### PROJECTS

Editorial Illustration  
Carnival Poster  
Fantasy Self Portrait

#### ILLUSTRATORS/ARTISTS

Daumier  
Alphonse Mucha  
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec  
Leonetto Cappiello  
Gil Elvgren  
Norman Rockwell  
Mirko Ilic  
Shepard Fairey  
Tezuka Osamu  
Dmitry Ligay  
Ruben Scarelli  
David Sossella  
Powl Goudsmit  
Zutto  
Iain Macarthur  
Dilka Bear  
Alex Andreyev  
Constanze Moll

#### **5. TEXT BOOK – FURTHER READINGS – INTERNET RESOURCES**

##### **TEXT BOOK:**

**Digital Illustration: A Masterclass in Digital Image-making**, by Lawrence Zeegen. Rotovision (2005)

**ISBN-10:** 2880467977

**ISBN-13:** 978-2880467975

**Vector Graphics and Illustration: A Masterclass in Digital Image-making**, by Steven Withrow, Jack Harris. Rotovision (2008)

**ISBN-10:** 2888930110

**ISBN-13:** 978-2888930112

The textbooks are required for successful completion of the course. You will be informed by you instructor on the first day of class regarding how to purchase your copy.

## **FURTHER READINGS:**

"Understanding Comics" Scott McCloud

"A Smile in the Mind: Witty Thinking in Graphic Design" Edward de Bono

"The Art of Looking Sideways" Alan Fletcher

"The Design of Dissent: Socially and Politically Driven Graphics", Milton Glaser

"Wall and Piece", Banksy

"Designers are Wankers" Neville Brody, Karim Rashid, Piers Roberts, and Paul Smith

"Materials, Process, Print" Daniel Mason

"100 Habits of Successful Graphic Designers" Josh Berger

"Forms and Counterforms" Adrian Frutiger

"Drawing as Design Process" Themes and Projects at the Basel School of Design

"How To Be a Graphic Designer Without Losing Your Soul" Adrian Shaughnessy and Stefan Sagmeister

"Drawing for Designers" Alan Pipes

The Fundamentals of Illustration, by Lawrence Zeegen

Hand to Eye: Contemporary Illustration, by August Highland

Illusive: contemporary illustration and its context, by R. Klanten

**Please refer to the FUA / Fairfield Library for further individual research.**

## **INTERNET RESOURCES:**

[www.sourcemap.com](http://www.sourcemap.com)

## **6. FIELD LEARNING**

This course does not include a field learning activity.

## **7. COURSE MATERIALS**

Even if there are basic materials available in class, each student should have the following tools for personal use (full description will be provided in class):

Cheap brown draft/construction paper, Pre cut or in roll

A4 or Letter plain white sketching book

Black ink pens of different point sizes.

Pencils of varying hardness in at least 3 colors.

A3 "UltraJet" Glossy quality digital printing paper.

Storage devices: A large USB key or portable hard drive is fundamental

A2 black mounting boards (available at "cartolerie" - paper stores) such as "Orsolani", "Lory", "Salvini" and "Zecchi".

## **8. COURSE FEES**

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

In addition students may be required to leave a **deposit** for equipment that will be loaned to them during the semester. The deposit will be returned at the end of the course, provided the equipment has been returned in the same condition it was loaned.

Lockers are available for storing materials at **10 Euro** (given back after returning the key).

## **9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM**

Attendance 10%

Participation: 10% (including exercises and homework)

Growth and improvement: 10% (Sketchbook)

Project 1/Midterm: 20% (Sketched ideas, development, choice & execution)

Project 2: 15% (Sketched ideas, development, choice & execution)

Project 3: 15% (Sketched ideas, development, choice & execution)

Final Exam/Final Critique/Portfolio review: 20%

A = 95-100 %, A- = 90-95%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B- = 80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C = 73-76%, C- = 70-72%, D = 60-69%, F = 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

#### Academic dishonesty:

Using someone else's ideas, art, project and/or phrasing and representing said ideas art project and/or phrasing as your own, either intentionally or through carelessness, is a serious offense known as plagiarism. Should issues of academic dishonesty arise (plagiarism and so on), the professor will refer to the FUA written policy on such matters.

#### Standards for grading Papers / Projects:

Projects will be graded according to the following criteria:

- How clearly and specifically the guiding concept sets forth the subject and purpose of the project; and/or assumes the appearance of a guiding idea and angle.
- How well the project demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the material covered.
- How well the essay deals with the topic completeness of thought, understanding complexity of the ideas.
- How well the artwork supports and illustrates the points made and how extensive and thorough the use of such support material is.
- How coherent, logical and organized ideas, thoughts, and examples are.
- How original the ideas are.
- How competent the written and oral presentation is: grammar, sentence structure, diction, punctuation, pronunciation and spelling.

#### Grading Criteria

##### The "A" project.

The "A" project is outstanding, it excels in all areas but particularly in its thoughtful or thought-provoking analysis of the selected topic. It demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the concept; it develops complex ideas; on the whole it surprises and delights the audience . Concepts are challenging, original; and well organized. They are summarized simply, yet filled with detail, and demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the idea. An "A" is given for exceptional and notable work.

##### The "B" Project.

The "B" project meets all the requirements of competency and demonstrates excellence in at least one area. The "B" project indicates that the artist has given thoughtful consideration to the concept and has developed his/her ideas and angle. The presentation is well organized, containing some supporting detail, and demonstrates an above average knowledge of the topic. Artwork is above average, containing only occasional layout errors. A "B" is given for above average work.

##### The "C" Project

The "C" project demonstrates competency in organization, the use of support material ideas and in artwork. It also reveals a competent knowledge and understanding of the concept and the ideas under discussion. You should always consider the significance of the concept you are discussing. Concepts are acceptable, but simple. Layout is poorly structured, containing inadequate detail, demonstrating only partial knowledge of the concept (focusing only on one small angle or some minor aspect of it). Artwork is average or below, and layout errors are numerous. Project does not appear to have been assembled carefully. A "C" is given for average work.

The "D" Project

The "D" project is for choosing inappropriately a concept that does not demonstrate more minimal comprehension of the guiding concept. Concepts contain unsupported ideas. Artwork is poor, filled with layout errors. The project was poorly constructed. A "D" is given for barely acceptable work.

The "F" project

The "F" project is incomplete. The concept is unacceptable because does not cover more than an incidental (or unassigned) portion of the work or does not reveal a satisfactory ideas and/or angle. Co are unsupported with artwork. Writing is not acceptable college level quality. Essay does not appear to have been proofread: An "F" is given for unsatisfactory work.

## **10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION**

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the FUA academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

On the **second absence** the attendance and participation grade will be impacted. Please note that missing certain field learning activities may count for more than one absence.

On the **third absence** the instructor may lower the final grade by one letter grade. (Example: Final grade average of 93% or A will become a B).

**The fourth absence constitutes automatic failure of the course. Students with excessive absences will be asked to withdraw with a W (if before the deadline) or leave the course with a WF.**

### **Late Arrival and Early Departure**

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

**Travel (or delays due to travel) is NEVER an excuse for absence from class.**

It is always the student's responsibility to know how many absences he or she has in a course. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

**Participation:** Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work and in-class activities, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed.

## **11. EXAMS – PAPER**

There will be three projects in this course:

Project 1: Editorial Illustration

Project 2: Carnival Poster

Project 3: Fantasy Self Portrait

The course contains a midterm critique and a final critique. In light of the fact that this is a studio course the critique will take the form of a presentation.

The Midterm exam will consist of a written test, an individual presentation and group discussion examining Project 1 and the Sketchbook development. Particular attention will be paid to outside readings and study. The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.

Final Exam/Final Critique: counts for 20% of the final course grade.

The final exam will consist of a written exam, an individual presentation and group discussion, examining Projects 2 and 3.

Students that fail to attend the critique day will receive an "F" as relative grade for the exam.

Remember that the dates of the exams cannot be changed for any reason, so please organize your personal affairs accordingly.

Note: the date and time of the exams cannot be changed for any reason.

## **12. LESSONS**

Lesson 1	
Lecture	Introduction and orientation. Informational questionnaire filled out and returned. Discussion of assignments and exams.  Brief introduction into illustration.
Objective	Understand how the lab works, become familiar with the course content.
Reading	<i>Digital Illustration</i> , Section 1 Chapter 1 p. 18 - 39
Homework	Post examples of previous work on FB group page.

Lesson 2	
Lecture	Introduction to Illustrator, basic Illustrator tools and overview. Bitmap vs. vector graphics.
Objective	Start to understand the Adobe Illustrator basic tools and how to apply them to our illustration process.
Reading	<i>Digital Illustration</i> , Section 1 Chapter 2 p. 41 - 63
Homework	Research for the first project – in sketchbook!

Lesson 3	
Lecture	Andy Warhol, Robert Lichtenstein and Robert Rauschenberg
Objective	Start to understand the evolution of illustration and its importance and audience reach in contemporary world of visual communications.
Reading	<i>Digital Illustration</i> , Section 1 Chapter 3 p. 66 – 87 Reading provided by instructor via course website on topics not covered in course textbook
Homework	3 concepts/3 versions for the first project – 9 drafts total!

Lesson 4	
Lecture	Text, Glyphs and characters communicate with the human being differently than other illustrations. Type in Illustrations.

Objective	Thoroughly understand type and how to use it individually and within the context of an object in Illustrator.
Reading	<i>Digital Illustration</i> , Section 1 Chapter 4 p.89 - 111
Homework	Practice on assigned exercises

Lesson 5	
Lecture	Certain tools in Adobe Illustrator make the creation of complex forms much easier. This week we will concentrate on using paths and the pathfinder along with a series of tricks to realize beautiful objects quickly.
Objective	Thoroughly understand the Pathfinder and objects manipulation in Illustrator.
Reading	<i>Digital Illustration</i> , Section 1 Chapter 5 p. 113 - 135
Homework	Complete 3 final compositions for the first project

Lesson 6	
Lecture	Color and Light.
Objective	Comprehend tone, saturation and value.
Reading	Read most recent issue of <i>Communication Arts</i> , hard copy available in FUA library – <a href="http://www.commarts.com">www.commarts.com</a> Further reading provided by instructor via course website on topics not covered in course textbook
Homework	Research for the second project in the sketchbook

Lesson 7	MIDTERM EXAM
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Lesson 8	BREAK
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Lesson 9	
Lecture	Students will present all materials created thus far. Client presentations.
Objective	Thoroughly understand how to create a client presentation and communicate clearly during that presentation.
	<i>Digital Illustration</i> , Section 2 p. 137 - 169
Homework	Design and develop 3 concepts/3 versions for the second project – 9 rough drafts total

Lesson 10	
Lecture	Pen tool and Bezier curves.
Objective	Learn to apply pen tool and Bezier curves to produce curves which appear reasonably smooth at all scales.
Reading	<i>Vector Graphics and Illustration</i> , Section 1: Introducing vectors p. 9-20, Section 2: Nuts and Bolts p. 22 - 46

Homework	Complete 3 Final compositions for the second project
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Lesson 11	
Lecture	Live Trace: How to turn real world images into illustrated masterpieces.
Objective	Understand and learn to apply Adobe Illustrator vectorization tools and how to convert scanned line art and bitmap images to scalable, editable vector paths.
Reading	<i>Vector Graphics and Illustration</i> , Section 3: Engineering p. 48-70, Section 4: Aesthetics p. 72 - 94
Homework	Research for the third project in the sketchbook

Lesson 12	
Lecture	Painting with Illustrator. Live Paint and Graphic Styles.
Objective	Start to understand Adobe Illustrator painting tools and how to apply them to our illustration process. Understand how blend modes can enhance an illustration.
Reading	<i>Vector Graphics and Illustration</i> , Section 5: Text Support p. 96 – 114, Section 6: The Assembly Line p. 116-136
Homework	Complete 3 concepts/3 versions for the third project – 9 rough drafts total

Lesson 13	
Lecture	Advanced Techniques: 3D effects and texturing
Objective	Learn how to apply 3D effects and textures to various objects in illustration process.
Reading	<i>Vector Graphics and Illustration</i> , Section 7: Other Common Applications p. 138-162, Additional Resources
Homework	Complete 3 Final compositions for the third project.

Lesson 14	
Lecture	Portfolio Revision Present comps – critique. Learn how to present to a client. Finals of all compositions due.
Objective	Thoroughly understand how to create a client presentation and communicate clearly during that presentation.
Reading	Study all previous readings for Final Exams
Assignment	Review for Final Exam

Lesson 15	
Lecture	Final Exam, Final Critique Individual drawing. Final Portfolio Review with Instructor.