

**CST 112 VISUAL COMMUNICATION
SUMMER TERM II 2005**

INSTRUCTOR: Gerald Curtsinger, Associate Professor of Communication Studies, UDM.

OFFICE: Briggs 116, McNichols Campus.

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REQUIRED TEXT: Seeing Is Believing, by Arthur Asa Berger.

BULLETIN DESCRIPTION: This course draws from film, television, photography and graphic arts for its raw materials to introduce students to basic concepts of visual literacy: the elements of effective visual images and the sequencing of visual images into scenes. Most of the course is oriented towards the appreciative consumption of visual materials rather than their production.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: To discover different ways of viewing and interpreting various types of visual images and sequences. Students should be able to understand a variety of different perspectives concerning the analysis, creation, and reception of different visual works and their associated messages. The course introduces the student to the language of visual images and aesthetics.

Upon course completion, students should be able to:

1. Become aware of the possibilities, limitations, and “grammar” of individual images as communication.
2. Build on the above groundwork by adding the concept of perceived movement.
3. Explore the development of visual language inherent in building image sequences (commonly known as editing).
4. Utilize a variety of different and often conflicting perspectives when analyzing various types of visual communication.
5. Improve their overall “media literacy” and critical thinking skills.
6. Better understand the ethical problems associated with the imagery found in a variety of visual mediums.

In addition, there are two secondary elements which are present throughout the course, the underlying elements of technologies (formation/manipulation/perception) and personalities who utilize technology in the creation of visual communication. CST 112 provides the student with a solid foundation for further study in film, graphic design, multi-media, photography, and video production.

METHODOLOGIES AND GRADING: The course relies heavily upon visual presentations (films, slides, and videotapes). Lectures, discussions, and handouts will be used to supplement the visual materials and assigned readings.

There are three individual assignments during the term. The first is an experiment with visual language requiring a short (3-5 page) paper along with appropriate supporting materials. The second challenges you to relate visual communication to your major area of study (4 page minimum paper). The final paper is intended to tie together much of what you have learned in the course through a (4 page minimum) paper complete with bibliography analyzing the work of one specific visual communicator. All papers must be TYPED double-spaced using a standard size font with one inch margins; hand written work will not be accepted. Work submitted that does not adhere to the above standard will be returned to the student and will be considered as **late** until resubmitted in the proper format.

Assignments submitted late will be penalized a portion of a grade for each class session beyond the due date. For example, an A- paper late one class session becomes a B. The same A- paper late two class sessions becomes a C+. The importance of meeting due dates increases if one substitutes a C paper for the above mentioned A paper **NO PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE END OF CLASS ON 08/01/05.**

There is a written mid-term and final exam. Typically, exams consist of a mixture of true-false, multiple choice, and short answer questions. A breakdown of course grading is listed below:

ASSIGNMENTS = 45%
MID-TERM EXAM = 20%
FINAL EXAM – 20%
ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION = 15%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Please see the 2003-2005 Undergraduate Catalog (p. 285) for the University's policy; the policy of the College of Liberal Arts is attached to the syllabus. In this class, plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in, **at minimum**, the student receiving a failing grade for the assignment or exam.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY: Attendance is mandatory and particularly important as we lose one class session due to the July 4 holiday. If you miss a class session your grade will be affected accordingly. For example, one absence eliminates the possibility of an **A**, two absences eliminate the possibility of a **B** etc... An attendance sheet will be placed at the front of the classroom; it is your **responsibility** to sign the attendance sheet. REGULAR ON-TIME ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED. In addition, students should come to class prepared to discuss the material covered in the assigned readings or handouts. Remember, quality participation in class activities is very important and is quite different from merely attending class.

There is a benefit to attending class on time and remaining until class has concluded. **At least one exam question and its answer will be given to the class at each meeting, either at the beginning or near the end of each session.**

GENERAL NOTES: In order to maintain a positive and disruption-free classroom environment, please disable the audio alert (i.e. ringing/beeping) of all pagers and cell phones during class time. If you are compelled by an emergency to communicate with the outside world, please do so outside of the classroom. Should you arrive late for class, please make your entrance as inconspicuous as possible.

CST 112 TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

Note: Schedule subject to change at instructor's discretion.

- 06 / 27 Introduction to course and discussion of syllabus; discuss the functions of images; "Cut Loose: New American Furniture Makers;" Frank Gehry clips; discuss technological variables that affect images; "A Picture's Worth A Thousand Words," part 1; **assign EXERCISE #1, DUE 07/18;** (read [Berger] introduction, ch. 1, 2, 3).
- 07 / 04 HOLIDAY, NO CLASS MEETING.**
- 07 / 11 Discuss ways in which we understand images; "Learning To See And Understand: Impressions," part 2; "Viewing Graphics;" discuss elements of visual vocabulary; "Learning To See And Understand: Expressions," part 1; "Fundamentals of Photographic Composition;" **assign EXERCISE #2 DUE 07/25;** (read [Berger] ch. 4).
- 07 / 25 "History of the Comic Strip;" "Masters of Comic Book Art;" discuss film animation; "Walt Disney's History of Animation;" discuss various methods of animation; "The Light Fantastick;" Prime-time TV Animation, "The Making of the Simpsons;" "Computer Visions;" begin discussion of computer animation; computers and video editing; "Video Cube Demo;" various short animation segments; (read [Berger] ch 5).
- 08 / 01 Collage Films: "Braverman's Condensed Cream of the Beatles," "Frank Film;" "Dictionary of Basic Film Terms;" discuss concept of continuity, filmic time/space, linear narrative continuity, treatments, scripts, and storyboards; Avant-garde, "Rendezvous;" "Archeology of the Cinema;" "Great Train Robbery"; and montage along with non-linear continuity; Eisenstein's, "Battleship Potemkin" (Odessa steps sequence); work of Abel Gance (read ch. 6).
- 08 / 08 Playback and discussion of sequence building exercise; news interviews; expansion of time in film and TV; postmodern TV; **FINAL EXAM (NO MAKE-UPS).**