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program overview



THE COMMUNICATION DESIGN (ComDes) program is divided into two major components: the ComDes Foundation (ARTC 1301, ARTC 1302, ARTC 2303, and ARTC 2304) and the ComDes Upper Division.

The Foundation

The ComDes Foundation serves as the ComDes major's introduction to the field including: basic issues in composition; basic tools, techniques, and working methods; opportunities and expectations in the field; a sound rational approach to conceptual problem solving; and the role of concept in design.

Upon completion of the first two foundations courses (ARTC 1301 and ARTC 1302), the student will be required to submit a portfolio to apply for admission into the program. The portfolio primarily consists of work selected from those two classes. Admission to the program is contingent upon receiving a passing grade in this endeavor.

The Upper Division

The emphasis in Upper Division classes is to apply the skills learned in the foundation (conceptual, technical, typographical) in problem-solving situations and for the production of finished portfolio pieces.

The Upper Division of the program prepares the student to enter the professional field, and the upper division student should be expected to perform to the standards of a professional in the field. At or before the semester prior to the student's final semester, the student should have assembled a portfolio—a collection of 12–20 finished pieces including single-execution pieces, as well as extended executions or campaigns. The emphasis of the final semester and during the Senior Portfolio Review class (ARTC 4315) should be upon refinement of current pieces and the addition of new pieces.

ComDes Classroom Rules

These facilities are meant to provide a professional environment for pursuing ComDes work. The computer equipment in these rooms is naturally sensitive and protecting it is our priority.

1. Keep the rooms orderly and clean.
2. Don't cut on the work tables or use messy media on the tables.
3. Don't alter any of the resident data on any drive (this includes adding or deleting fonts, applications, and the system software).
4. The use of cell phones in the classrooms is prohibited.
5. No eating in classrooms unless permitted by the instructor.
6. Use the Production Room for all mounting. (No spraying in hallways or classrooms.) Open hours will be posted.

These labs are paid for and maintained by your course fees. Treat them with the respect, and if you see someone violating a policy, you should let the Production Room monitor or your instructor know.

The software in the computer labs, including applications and fonts, is licensed by the university and available for student use for school projects only.

The Faculty

The full-time faculty teaching in the program manage the structure, content, and daily operation of all aspects of the program. If you have questions concerning any of the following, the full-time faculty are your first resource:

- Basic issues of creative process and production
- ComDes program policy and resource management
- General career advice
- Job placement
- Internships
- Review and portfolio development

Adjunct faculty are an indispensable asset to the program and the university. They are generally professionals who dedicate a portion of their time to teaching. Therefore, they bring to the classroom first-hand and up-to-date knowledge of the practices in the field of communication design.

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Textbooks & Reading List

Graphic Design Solutions, Robin Landa

A Type Primer, John Kane

Thinking With Type, Ellen Lupton

Graphic Design Thinking: Beyond Brainstorming, Ellen Lupton

Creative Advertising, Mario Pricken

Creative Workshop: 80 Challenges to Sharpen Your Design Skills,
David Sherwin

100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know about People,
Susan Weinschenk

A History of Graphic Design, Phillip Meggs

resources

The background of the slide features a decorative arrangement of white lights and a banner. The lights are strung across the top and middle sections, with some appearing as bright circles and others as soft, out-of-focus bokeh. A banner with a scalloped edge is visible in the upper right and middle right areas. The overall aesthetic is clean and celebratory.

THERE ARE great resources available in the JCMitte building to aid ComDes students in both the Upper Division and Foundation classes. The following pages highlight a few that you can use to complete your coursework as you progress through the program.

Art & Design Resource Center (ADRC)

JCM 3102-A
512-245-8470

MON – THUR: 8AM – 10PM SAT: CLOSED
FRI: 8AM – 4PM SUN: 4PM – 8PM

finearts.txstate.edu/Art/resources/ADRC.html

Located on the third floor of the JCMitte Building, the ADRC welcomes all Art & Design students and faculty. The facility is open six days a week and provides an Apple computer lab, scanning equipment, and numerous additional resources.

ADRC STUDENT RESOURCES

- Apple workstations with Adobe Creative Suite software
- Black-and-white laser printers
- Scanners (regular and large format)
- Table for laptop use and study area
- Reserved textbooks and reading resources
- Digital still and digital video camera checkout
- Access to Lynda.com for software video tutorials
- Pantone color system library
- Online access to videos of visiting designer & visiting artist lectures

Hand Fabrication Room

JCM 3107-K

HOURS VARY BY SEMESTER

The ComDes Hand Fabrication Room is a place where ComDes students can trim, mount, and bind their printed work. You must be trained on the equipment by your class instructor or by the production room monitor before you are allowed to use it on your own.

The Production Room is overseen by a monitor, but it is each student's responsibility to clean up after yourself in order to keep the room in an orderly condition for everyone who comes after you.

HAND FABRICATION EQUIPMENT

- Work tables with cutting mats and metal straight edges
- Two guillotine cutters
- A rotary paper cutter
- A scorer/perforator
- A spray booth
- Heavy-duty hole punch
- Saddle stitcher (long-arm stapler)
- Two wire-o binding machines
- Book presses (for use ONLY in the Production Room)

Print Center

JCM 3101, ACCESS THROUGH ADRC

SEE ADRC OPEN HOURS

finearts.txstate.edu/Art/resources/print-center.html

The Print Center is a service bureau for Art & Design students and faculty. For more information about printing services and payment procedure, see the Print Center webpage.

Open Computer Lab

JCM 3102-C

HOURS VARY: CHECK SCHEDULE POSTED OUTSIDE OF LAB

The lab is open to all ComDes students. You must sign in to use a computer. Scanners and black-and-white laser printers are also available.

Camera Check-out

ADRC, JCM 3102-A

SEE ADRC OPEN HOURS

Digital still and video cameras are available to ComDes students for 24-hour checkout. You must present an ID to sign out equipment.

Photography Studio

JCM 3107-L

HOURS BASED ON FACULTY AVAILABILITY

The studio is available to all ComDes majors, however it is necessary to schedule a specific time with a ComDes faculty member to admit students into the studio and lock up behind them. The studio includes lighting equipment, tables, seamless stands, ladders, tripods, etc.



Academic Advising

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finearts.txstate.edu/Art/resources/advising.html

Academic Advising can assist with general education, major exploration, graduation requirements, and academic probation and disqualification. Academic Evaluations provides information regarding transfer credit, fulfillment of graduation requirements, and information on graduation. Credential Services facilitates finalizing your credential requirements.

The Academic Advising Center provides accurate and timely advice to prospective and current students regarding their progress toward completion of degree programs administered by each of the University College. Services include preparation of degree audits, assistance with degree planning, scheduling of classes, counseling for probation and suspension holds, evaluation of transfer work, and application for graduation.

Please visit or call the Art & Design office to make an appointment with one of the academic advisors. Be mindful that the busiest times are during fall and spring registration, when same-day appointments may not be available. There is a “no show” policy that limits the number of missed appointments to 3 during your college career. Students who exceed the maximum number of no-shows will lose their ability to schedule an advising appointment and will be required to attend a walk-in day in order to access our services.

Scholarships

finearts.txstate.edu/Art/resources/scholarships.html

There are numerous scholarship opportunities available through the School of Art & Design to support your ComDes studies at Texas State. Applications are due in March of each year. Check the website above for more details; there will be posters around the building and info posted on the ComDes Facebook page as the date approaches.



'basic supplies

The background of the slide is a grayscale, semi-transparent image of a computer keyboard and mouse. The keyboard is on the left side, and the mouse is on the right side. The text 'basic supplies' is overlaid on the top left of the keyboard area.

THE FOLLOWING is a basic supply list for the program. In some specific instances, an assignment may call for a specialty item not on the list, but generally these are the supplies and tools you will need to execute work in the program.

Required Supply List

You should purchase and maintain a supply of these items. Just as importantly, you should have the appropriate supplies with you when you work in the labs in or out of class. The faculty and/or the lab monitors will not “loan” you these materials. Come to the labs prepared.

- Drawing paper pad: 11" × 14"
- Tracing paper pad: 11" × 14"
- A roll of tracing paper
- #1 Xacto knife & a box of No. 11 blades
- A utility knife & blades
- Assorted drawing pencils
- Several fine point black felt tip pens
- USB flash drive or portable USB external hard drive
- Letramax black display board
- Foamcore
- Scotch Super 77 spray adhesive
- A metal T-square at least 24"
- Clear plastic triangle 30/60/90
- A precise, transparent graphic ruler with points and picas

Art & Graphic Supply Vendors

San Marcos

- The University Bookstore
- Colloquium

Austin

- Asels
- Miller BluePrint
- The University Co-op
- Jerry's Art-a-Rama


San Antonio

- Asels

Hobby and craft suppliers often carry many of these items as well.

For real price breaks, check out the large retail, office supply, hardware, and home improvement stores such as Furrow's, Home Depot, Lowe's, Office Depot, Staples, Wal-Mart, or many online retailers.

creative process



THE FOLLOWING section describes the traditional phases of the creative/design process and the standards for projects created in the ComDes program, unless specifically altered by the instructor (which may be dictated by the scope of each project).

Throughout the creative process, your instructor may ask you to label your work with a ComDes label, which can be found on the ComDes page of the Art & Design website:

finearts.txstate.edu/Art/academics/undergrad/ugrad-comdes.html

Creative Brief

The starting point for all class projects is the creative brief or assignment outline given to the student at the beginning of a new project. The content of these documents can vary, but generally the information will include:

1. General client/sponsorship information
2. Information about the product or service
3. Goals and objectives for the creation of the piece
4. A description of the intended audience for the piece
5. Type of media to be utilized (app, print, package, etc.)
6. A description of the projected budget for the piece
7. A description of the intended production process
8. A description of the intended distribution method

A creative brief should serve as a guide for the solutions you pursue. In Foundations classes, many assignments are exercise-related and therefore do not conform to the criteria listed above. Many may not include a client, or service, or audience. In the professional world, the creative brief may be crafted by marketing personnel, and/or creative directors in consultation with the client. If a designer is working in a freelance capacity, he/she may be crafting this information, if even in an informal way.

Research

The cornerstone of any successful design is the research stage. In this stage, you will be expected to independently seek all of the information you will employ in shaping the message and/or concept behind your piece. Information gathered may vary from academic information to visual resources.

Your instructor may request documentation of any or all of this information in evaluating the initial stages of your solution. We recommend the keeping of a separate, detailed journal for each class as the primary organizational and record-keeping tool for this and all other phases of the process. You will begin the research process by collecting:

1. Visual/verbal information from print or digital sources
2. Visual references for drawings, conceptual influences, or stylistic approaches
3. Visual/verbal content gathered for inclusion into the final piece
4. Visual documentation of similar or competing products or services
5. Formatting references. (e.g., If you are assigned a book cover, you might go to a bookstore to sketch out the design elements commonly included on a book cover, as well as the placement of these elements)

In the Foundation, the research phase is often formally evaluated in critique as a means of helping you identify your strongest general concepts and directions. In the Upper Division, your ability to evaluate the outcome of your research process is often assumed based upon the quality your statement of intent and your thumbnail sketches.

BRAINSTORMING PROCESS

After you have gathered your research materials, you may find some of the following strategies useful before you start to sketch thumbnails:

1. A word list ❶
2. A separate list of related phrases, idioms, or clichés

❶

PAUL RAND / COFFEE SERVICE BRANDING					
NAME OF COFFEE	FEELINGS ABOUT COFFEE	THINGS THAT COFFEE DOES	SERVING COFFEE	DESCRIBING WORK	DELIVERY WORDS
JOE CUP OF JOE JAVIA MUD <u>GRIND</u> <u>GRINDER</u> ROUGH BLACK	ADDICTED TREAT BUZZ BUZZING HUPER OBSESSED ATTRACTED TO DINLINE	WAKE UP CALL SMELL AROMA COMFORT ALERT ADDICTION SACRED TRANSPORT	CUP SAUCER COFFEE SERVICE SILVER SERVICE SILVER CUPS PERSONAL MUG MUG	<u>GRIND</u> NOSE TO GRINDSTONE CUBE DESK TACTICAL AUTOMATION OFFICE	DELIVER HOUSE WORK TRUCK MAIL SPECIAL DELIVERY PACKAGE
CREAM SUGAR LATTE MOCHA CAPPAICINO CUP GROUND ROAST FRENCH ROAST PERCOLATE STEAM RICH ROASTED FINE GROUND GRIND WHOLE BEAN BEANS MAKE COFFEE SOUP BREW BROWN LIQUID MUG COFFEE POT CARAFE POUR COFFEE SPOON	FLAVOR WAKE UP CALL GIVE YOU A TICK MAKES YOU TICK SET UP & GO SHAKE JUMPY FASTER SHAKE JITTERS WIDE-EYED TALK TO MUCH FINE GROUND GRIND SMOKE TO MUCH CONVERSATION COFFEE BREATH SOUP BREW BROWN LIQUID MUG COFFEE POT CARAFE POUR COFFEE SPOON	SMELLS GREAT AWAKENS SENSES GETS YOU OUT OF BED GETS YOU STARTED GETS YOUR MOTOR RUNNING CRANK START ROAR MAKES YOU MONEY KICK JUMP DANCE HOP AWAKE BANT SLEEP SOPHISTICATED GROWN-UP TRENDY	PERMITTISE SPOON TRAY WAITER WAITRESS STIR SUGAR CREAM SUGAR CUBES BLACK POLLUTED HALF-HALF <u>RITUAL</u> COFFEE CAKE PASTRY CINNAMON FLAVORED IRISH CREAM STEAMING PRESS LITTLE CUPS COFFEE STAINS MUG RINGS	TUBE BUILDING COFFEE FUND TRAY WAITER WAITRESS STIR SUGAR CREAM SUGAR CUBES BLACK POLLUTED HALF-HALF <u>RITUAL</u> COFFEE BREAK TIME OUT TEN MINUTES PUNCH THE CLOCK 9 TO 5 OFFICE	WAKE UP CALL TO YOUR DOOR TO YOUR KITCHEN CROW EARLY LINES NO LINES NO DRIVING FROM YOUR CHAIR RACE FAST SHOT BULLET SERVISE PREDICTABLE SET YOUR WATCH <u>RITUAL</u>

NAME IDEAS
HIGHER GROUNDS
9 TO 5 COFFEE
COFFEE SHOTS

UNCOMMON GROUNDS
DAILY GRIND

3. A visual brain dump ❷; basically a cross of note-taking and sketching—a visual exploration of objects or situations suggested in the word list or independently, which have a visual quality that may suggest a solution
4. Visual exploration of objects or situations from direct observation
5. Exploration of style, form, or combined forms
6. Exploration of media or materials



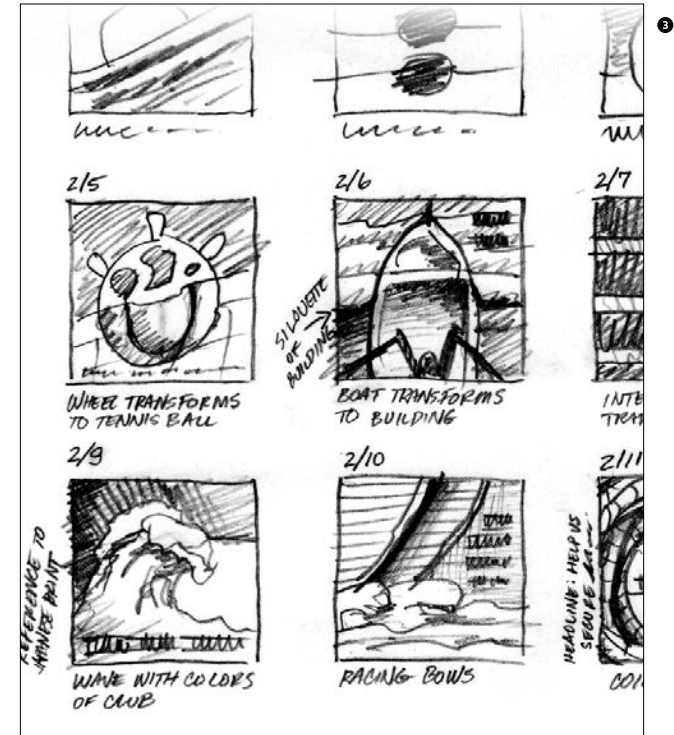
Thumbnail Sketches

Thumbnails ① are the traditional method of articulating ideas into visual form. However, other means may be used, such as cut paper or collage, that may be appropriate for the specific project given. Thumbnails occur several steps into the creative process, but are the first step in the design process. In the process of thumbnailing, the objectives are to refine the general concepts generated in the research phase into specific individual concepts for solving the problem, and to begin to explore a specific visual representation of the concepts you have generated.

In general, thumbnails should be small and quick, yet descriptive and communicative. They are the primary demonstration of your ability to think through every possible angle and approach to a piece.

Specifically, your thumbs should meet the following criteria:

1. Each thumbnail should represent a unique concept.
2. Thumbs should be rendered in pencil.
3. Thumbs should be executed at a small size to eliminate the temptation to include unnecessary detail. Your instructor may specify a certain size.
4. Thumbs should be proportional to the final piece.
5. Thumbs should articulate placement, shape structure within the picture plane, and the basic value structure.
6. Thumbs should be numbered, and presented in an organized manner on the page.
7. Thumbs should include keywords, notations, concepts, or any necessary information not easily discernible in the thumb.

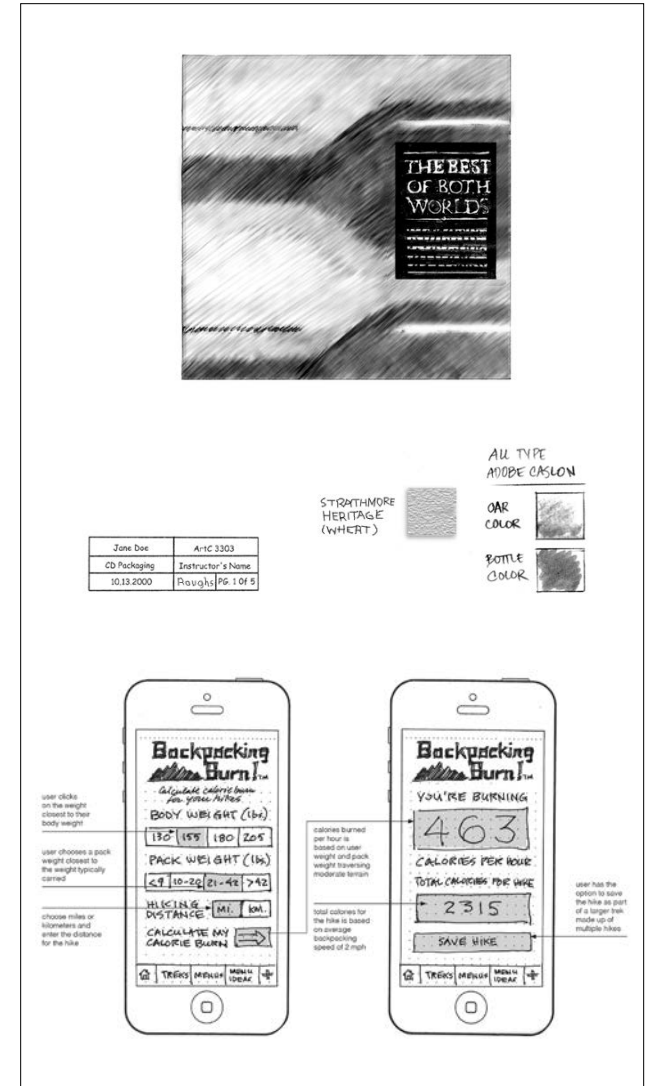


The thumbnail critique is usually the most important critique of the entire creative process. The goal of this critique is to clearly identify and articulate your most powerful and appropriate concepts and to identify the most viable design approaches to those concepts. Only those concepts which clearly have the potential to uniquely and dynamically solve the problem should be pursued in the next phase.

Rough Layouts

Having narrowed the range of approaches you will consider for the final piece from those presented in the thumbnail stage, the rough stage provides a chance to more fully explore and represent the visual expression of your best concepts. Roughs **4** are much more specifically focused on design than any stage of the process so far. Your roughs should meet the following criteria:

1. Roughs may be executed by hand in pencil or ink, or on the computer, as determined by your instructor.
2. Roughs should be proportional to the final piece.
3. Roughs should be rendered near or at the final size of the piece except in instances when the piece will be oversized (such as posters). All design elements should be accurately described, including:
 - Accurate size and positioning
 - Recognizably rendered illustrations or photos.
 - Recognizably rendered type, relative visual weight size, and general style, except in the case of body copy which should be primarily accurate in overall block size and visual weight.
4. Roughs should include any supplemental materials which will describe media, materials, or processes.



Each rough should include these primary two elements:

(1) the message or objective, and (2) the design concept (or conceptual strategy).

1. *The message or objective:*

Based upon your research you should be able to verbalize a clear and concise message to communicate through your design, or a clear objective for your design. In some instances, very general messages/objectives are defined by the creative brief, but it is up to you to craft your specific message/objective.

2. *The design concept or how you want to say it:*

The concept is the compelling, memorable, and creative way you communicate the message through your design. What is your intended concept, and what is the basis for this concept?

At the conclusion of the roughs stage and critique, you will have identified your final concept and the most promising design approach for that concept. At this point in the process, production becomes a major factor in your solution. From this point forward, you will generally have a number of challenges to overcome, from the execution of photography and illustration to the acquisition of materials, to outputting digital files, and many more. In order to allow the time to meet these challenges and achieve a fine-tuned final product, it is essential to finalize the concept at this point.

CONSIDERATIONS

After your roughs critique, you should be at a stage in the creative process where you can definitively answer the following questions. Your instructor may ask you to present this information as a written statement or as a verbal presentation. Please consult your instructor to see which of the following sections apply to your project:

Rationale

- What is being created?
- To whom is this piece targeted?
- What are the unique qualities of this product or service?

Message/Objective

- What is the intended message/objective of this piece?
- What is the basis for this message/objective?

Design Concept

- What is the design concept of this piece?
- What is the basis for this concept?
- How will typography be handled in the piece?
- Will the piece contain photography and/or illustration?
- From where will this imagery be acquired?
- What style will be utilized in the piece?

Production Information

- What is the underlying design structure of the piece?
- What media will be utilized in the work?
- Where will the piece be displayed?
- What is the format of the finished piece?
- Printed pieces: On what paper stock or media will the piece be printed? What is the printing process?
- Screen-based pieces: On which device(s) will the project be viewed? What programming languages will be used?

Comprehensive Layouts


Comprehensive layouts (comps) are the next stage of the process and the first predominantly concerned with layout and production. In the ComDes Foundation, this is often the finished piece. In the Upper Division, this is the last stage of the process before the final piece, and is your best opportunity to closely scrutinize all production issues and final content in a nearly finished form.

In light of the wide variety of forms print and screen-based media can assume, comps will likewise assume a wider variety of forms than the previous steps in the process. Please follow these guidelines, and the requests of your instructor, in constructing your comps:

1. Comps should be mechanically produced, usually on the computer.
2. Printed comps may be presented in black and white (halftone), but you must also present accompanying materials which demonstrate your color choices where color is applicable. Digital comps should be presented in full color.
3. Comps may be presented in many formats, as specified by the instructor. While the materials used to construct the comp may vary, they should always be constructed with the precision of the finished piece and presented at 100% scale. All elements should be accurately rendered with the possible exception of color as described above.

This includes the high-fidelity depiction of:

- Typography
 - Final copy/content
 - Photographic and illustrative elements
 - Layout
 - Functionality
4. All production details for the final piece should be decided and represented in your presentation.

Each physical comp should include a completed ComDes  label attached to the bottom left-hand corner on the back (except 3-D pieces).

At the conclusion of the comp stage and critique, the design of your solution should essentially be complete. At this point, you should also have a clear idea of how the final will be produced.

COMMUNICATION DESIGN • TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY		
Jane Doe	ARTC 3303	
CD PACKAGING	Instructor's Name	
10.13.2000	SuperComp	Page 1 of 1

Final Presentation

The focus of this stage is to produce finished pieces which very closely represent all aspects of the actual work, which would be delivered to the client or the client's target audience. The pieces produced in this stage should be those which primarily compose your final portfolio.

The process leading to the final critique should be one of refinement. Fine-tuning suggested by the comp critique should be carried out along with a high degree of technical and presentation polishing. All the elements listed in the requirements at the comp stage should be present and perfected.

There are three acceptable formats in the ComDes program for the presentation of final pieces:

PRESENTATION FOR FLAT MATERIALS

In general, pieces created for use in a larger context independent of the piece should be presented mounted on Letra-Max SuperBlack presentation board. This includes ads, identity marks, paper systems, and individual components of larger dependent pieces such as publication spreads. The piece or assembly of pieces should be permanently mounted on a piece of board large enough to allow a margin which isolates the pieces from the surrounding environment without overwhelming the work itself, usually 3" on the top and sides, with 4" on the bottom.

For larger flat pieces intended to stand alone in their environment, such as posters, outdoor boards, and flat signage, the piece(s) should be mounted on foamcore and trimmed flush to the dimensions of the piece.

In some cases, such as small comps of outdoor boards, the piece may additionally be mounted on Letra-Max SuperBlack as described above.

Some instructors may require you to add a flap to your finished work for grading purposes; please follow specific class instructions.

PRESENTATION FOR DIMENSIONAL PIECES

For complete dimensional pieces intended to stand alone in their environment, such as multi-page or panel publications, packaging, and dimensional collateral, the piece should be presented assembled and fulfilled.

For multiple pieces that represent a system, such as an advertising campaign or an environmental graphic design project, the pieces should be presented in a bound book.

PRESENTATION FOR SCREEN-BASED PIECES

Websites will be presented on-screen and should include the completion of all assigned pages. Programming files will be required to turn in.

Mobile websites or responsive websites will be presented on desktop, mobile phone, and tablet screens.

Mobile applications will be presented as interactive prototypes on the devices they are designed to operate on. This may include mobile phones, tablets, or wearable devices. Additionally, a PDF presentation may be required.

Additionally, you may at times be asked to present some combination of the formats above to achieve a more complete representation of the piece.

evaluation

THE CRITERIA by which work is evaluated in the ComDes program will vary to some extent depending on the problem and the level of the class. This section describes the various criteria.

Design Concept

Concept in its universal definition refers to the content or idea of the piece. In the field of communication design, a design concept or conceptual approach or conceptual strategy is a broader term that includes not only the intended content or message, but also how one intends to arrive at that message through the elements and principles of design. A design concept is defined in the textbook Graphic Design Solutions, by Robin Landa, as “the creative reasoning underpinning a design. It is the guiding idea that determines how you design—how you create or select imagery or typefaces or lettering and the reasoning for color palette selection.”

In this program, concept is primary. Even the most beautiful piece of design means nothing unless it is the expression of a dynamic concept in the service of a powerful, specific, and appropriate objective. From the first foundation course, ComDes students begin the process of first understanding conceptual thinking and then developing a dependable method of crafting conceptual solutions in any design situation.

Entry into the Upper Division is primarily based upon a basic mastery of this process. In the Upper Division you will utilize this process to create powerful, challenging, and visually arresting design solutions.

Concept factors heavily at all levels of project evaluation.

Formal Design

We are all here to continuously refine our ability to create visually dynamic work. At all levels of the program, your ability with composition, color, and hierarchy is a major component of the evaluation of all aspects of the course or assignment. In the ComDes program, however, these qualities are not evaluated for their own sake. The real measure of your ability as a designer is in the appropriateness of the design to the objective, concept, mode of delivery, and intended audience. Success is achieved only when original, interesting, and effective concepts are executed in masterful compositions.

Craft/Technique

At a base level, all ComDes students must demonstrate a highly refined mastery of the process of assembling and presenting work. If you are searching for a succinct way to measure your own mastery of this process, consider the idea that in a well-crafted piece this process is invisible. To the client or your instructor, the process which led to the final physical piece should be undetectable. Always present yourself as someone who is organized, precise, thoughtful, creative, and professional.

A major component of the foundation is a mastery of the tools, techniques, and methods necessary for professional presentation at all levels of the process. Therefore, this process is an important part of evaluation.

At the advanced level, mastery of this portion of the process is largely taken for granted.

Process & Participation

Every student in every class is expected to be an active participant in every aspect of that class. One of the most eye-opening experiences for many ComDes majors is the degree of group interaction required in and out of class. Group work is an ever-present reality of the professional workplace. The ability to work effectively with others in the creative process is one of the primary skills you are expected to master in this program.

Critique

Your ability to function productively in group critiques is particularly important. As you enter the field you will be expected to actively contribute to large creative projects involving the ideas of many individuals.

You should arrive at critique with your work completed. You should have a clear idea of what you are about to say, and what opinions you need to gather from the class. You should make every effort to clearly articulate concise background information on the project and your ideas in order that the group may more clearly evaluate your work. You should be prepared to present your work to another individual, a small group, or an entire class.

portfolios



COMDES STUDENTS have three goals in common: first, striving to become a rational, articulate, flexible, and dynamic problem-seeker and problem-solver; second, seeking your own personal visual expression for the ideas you generate; and ultimately, everyone must complete a body of work that provides the most powerful representation of your abilities — a portfolio.

Admission Portfolio (ARTC 2000)

All students are required to submit an Admission Portfolio at the end of your first year in the program. This review occurs twice each year at the end of the semester and only after successfully passing this review will you be admitted into the ComDes program as an approved major.

Portfolios are reviewed by tenured and tenure-track members of the ComDes faculty and are evaluated according to the guidelines in the Admission Portfolio Review documentation. Documents detailing the evaluation process and the content of the portfolios will be given to students the first day of the ARTC 2000 course, and will also be available on the course TRACS site and on the ComDes web page:

finearts.txstate.edu/Art/academics/undergrad/ugrad-comdes.html

Admission Portfolios will be judged on the merit of your creative work and your ability to demonstrate the expertise required for successful completion of the program.

You must register for ARTC 2000 (concurrently with ARTC 1301 and ARTC 1302) and attend the orientation and an information session in preparation for submitting your portfolio.

Senior (Graduating) Portfolio

The graduating portfolio is the primary tool you will use to get a job in the field. Your portfolio is an ongoing project throughout your experience in the Upper Division. In the end, your portfolio should consist of 15–20 of your finest finished pieces presented in one consistent display format.

For online portfolios, student discounts are available from the following sites if you use your .edu email address:

bluehost.com/hosting/education

domain name and hosting for hand-coded websites

squarespace.com/students

domain name and customizable templates

The ComDes program follows a simple strategy for building your portfolio. You should approach each project in your advanced (3000 or 4000 level) classes with the goal that the product will be a finished portfolio piece. At a minimum, you should complete at least one project per advanced class that is ready—as is—to go in your graduating portfolio.

By the time you enter your next-to-last semester here, you should have a collection of 8–10 pieces that are finished. The work in your portfolio up to this point will be the primary work you will use in competitions and in your search for internships—two essential components of your résumé.

Your final two semesters should be spent adding what should be your best work to your portfolio, finding ways to expand your projects into systems, interning, and fine-tuning the presentation of your work.

Senior Portfolio Class (ARTC 4315)

All students are required to enroll in ARTC 4315, the Senior Portfolio class, during their last semester. It is in this class that you will refine your portfolio for graduation and prepare for the competitive job market.

Senior Exit Review (ARTC 4000)

The Senior Exit Review is an event that showcases the portfolios of our graduating students. All ComDes majors must participate in the review to fulfill the requirements for the BFA in Communication Design. You must register for ARTC 4000 in your last semester. Register for the Fall semester if you graduate in December, and for the Spring semester if you will graduate in either May or August.

Meeting times will be determined by the faculty of record for the Exit Review each semester. It is the sole responsibility of the graduating student to seek out the information regarding meetings. Attendance at this meeting is mandatory for all Seniors graduating in that semester. Preparation for the event is on-going throughout the semester. The review generally takes place in the last two weeks of the semester.

At the completion of each review, a list of the seniors who have fulfilled this requirement is submitted to the Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication. Students cannot receive the BFA in Communication Design without fulfilling this requirement. Plan ahead and set aside the time necessary to participate in order to avoid any postponement in your graduation date.

résumé building



BEYOND YOUR work for class, joining the Texas State student chapter of AIGA, interning, and entering design competitions are three of the most productive avenues for increasing your understanding of the professional workplace, heightening your profile to potential employers, and measuring your preparedness against your peers.

Texas State AIGA Chapter

Hannah Park

Faculty Liaison

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[facebook.com/aigatxstate](https://www.facebook.com/aigatxstate)

@aigatxstate

Founded in 1914 as the American Institute of Graphic Arts, AIGA remains the oldest and largest professional membership organization for design and is now known simply as “AIGA, the professional association for design.” The student group at Texas State is allied with the Austin AIGA chapter, but there is an active AIGA chapter in San Antonio as well, so you are encouraged to participate in events sponsored by both chapters.

AIGA encourages the formation of student groups at colleges and universities and is committed to developing these groups as a way of encouraging students to take the first step in demonstrating a commitment to your professional interest and assisting you in understanding the profession. The goal of the student groups is to get students involved in the local design community, to create a community of your own, and to help you build leadership skills that will be valuable as you move into the professional world.

Internship Practicum (ARTC 4310)

Holly Sterling

Intern Coordinator

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The internship is open to all Communication Design majors who have been accepted into the upper division. To gain credit for an internship, students must work in an approved design/advertising firm for a minimum of 140 hours. Although most of our interns work with Austin and San Antonio firms, ComDes students have held internships all over the United States and in Europe. The internship course will replace an ARTC upper division elective.

Competitions

finearts.txstate.edu/Art/academics/undergrad/ugrad-comdes/comdes-news

There are many opportunities for competition at the local, regional, and national/international levels. As the calls for entry arrive, they are posted on the ComDes Facebook page as well as on fliers in the hallways, usually on the third floor, opposite the Production Room. We usually provide copies of entry forms and gather the work for shipping. The rest is up to you. These venues are an irreplaceable opportunity to have your work seen and recognized. Job offers based on work spotted at competitions are commonplace. ComDes students are generally well represented at all levels in nearly every major competition we enter, from the District 10 Addys, to the Dallas Society of Visual Communications Student Competition, to the *Graphis* New Talent Annual, to the *CMYK* competition.



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