

**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATION**

CMI 3308 – Visual Communication  
Number of Credits: 3  
Semester: Summer 2020

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the ways in which we use visual communication in our everyday lives. It clarifies the function that this type of communication has in shaping our understanding of culture and in our own identity formation.

We tend to privilege text and speech in communication. This is understandable as using both is intrinsic and automatic. However, since the advent of photography and the moving picture, and more recently with the rise of digital media, the study of visual communication has gained prominence. This is because a fully-formed understanding of communication requires not just text and speech but the visual as well. During this course we will examine the various ways the image is used to communicate, explore how we perceive images, and investigate what those images “say.” Further, we will examine visual communication in conjunction with other kinds of communication in the hopes of gaining a more well-rounded and richer view of the communication process.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Visual Communication: Images with Messages 7<sup>th</sup> Edition by Paul Martin Lester  
ISBN: 978-0692926314

LEARNING OBJECTIVES (IN RELATION TO TTU CORE CURRICULUM PERSPECTIVES)

Students will:

1. Identify parts of the eye and brain relevant to visual communication (Perspective D).
2. Recognize sensual and perceptual theories of visual communication (Perspective D).
3. Critically analyze and determine visual stereotypes linked to race, class, and gender. (Perspectives A and D).
4. Explore the role the visual communicator plays in the media industry (Perspective B).
5. Apply principles of visual communication theories to various media texts, current media culture, and their own lives (Perspective A, B, C).
6. Explore the various visual elements that contribute to social and cultural practices (Perspective A).
7. Critically analyze visual images (Perspective C).
8. Understand how visual communication helps shape personal and social identity (Perspective A, B and D)
9. Determine various ways that visual communication helps shape culture and society (Perspective A, B and D)

Assessments for all objectives: Quizzes, Exams, Discussions, Visual Riffing Project.

Perspectives

- A. Establish broad and multiple perspectives on the individual in relationship to the larger society and world in which (s)he lives, and to understand the responsibilities of living in a cultural and ethnically diversified world.
- B. Stimulate a capacity to discuss and reflect upon individual, political, economic, and social aspects of life in order to understand ways in which to be a responsible member of society
- C. Develop the ability to make aesthetic judgments
- D. Integrate knowledge and understand the interrelationships of the scholarly disciplines

LATE WORK

No late work will be accepted unless there is an excused absence.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

*Discussion Posts (100 – 10 points each)*

Each week on Blackboard, there will be a discussion post for the current chapter. You will be required to respond to ten of the thirteen discussion posts. Your post should be engaging and can include your thoughts on the chapter as well as any

questions you may have. You may also respond to your fellow classmates' posts for credit. Posts should be at least a paragraph long.

### *Reflection and Application Essays (200 – 50 points each)*

At the end of each section there will be an extended essay assignment that offers application, personal reflection, and further comprehension of the material covered. These are each worth 50 points. Details on Reflection and Application Essays are available on Blackboard.

### *2 Exams (150 – 75 points each)*

This class is divided into two broad sections. The first half of the class will provide you with foundations of visual communications—theories about the brain and the mind and ways to analyze visual media. The second half of the class will focus on various visual media. You will have 2 exams. One exam will cover the foundational/theoretical components of the class and one exam will cover the various visual media. Each exam will be worth 75 points each.

### *Final Course Video Essay (150 pts)*

In project, you will create a 7-10-minute video essay based on one of the following: a graphic designer, photographer, animator or filmmaker. Possible subjects will be included in the more detailed prompt on Blackboard. Although you are free to choose someone else pending my approval. The video essay will include a brief history of the subject in question, an analysis of key examples of the subject's work, and your "riff" on the subject's work (not necessarily a re-creation of the work, but critical mimicry that plays with the subject's visual style, mood, etc.). Details for the final course essay are available on Blackboard.

### Grades (Point Distribution)

600-540	A
539-480	B
479-420	C
419-360	D
Under 360	F

### UNIVERSITY POLICIES

#### *Holy Day Observance*

A student who is absent for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time before or after the absence with no penalty.

#### *Officially Approved Trips*

A student who is absent from class due to representing the University on an officially approved trip is responsible for material missed. (S)he will be allowed to make up work with no penalty. The University official responsible for the trip should notify me in advance of the student's departure and return schedule.

#### *Disability Accommodation Information*

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note: instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact Student Disability Services in West Hall or call 806.742.2405.

#### *Resources for Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Violence*

Texas Tech University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from gender and/or sex discrimination of any kind. Sexual assault, discrimination, harassment, and other [Title IX violations](#) are not tolerated by the University. Report any incidents to the Office for Student Rights & Resolution, (806)-742-SAFE (7233) or file a report online at [titleix.ttu.edu/students](http://titleix.ttu.edu/students).

Faculty and staff members at TTU are committed to connecting you to resources on campus. Some of these available resources are:

TTU Student Counseling Center, 806-742-3674, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/scc/> (Provides confidential support on campus.)

TTU Student Counseling Center 24-hour Helpline, 806-742-5555, (Assists students who are experiencing a mental health or interpersonal violence crisis. If you call the helpline, you will speak with a mental health counselor.)

Voice of Hope Lubbock Rape Crisis Center, 806-763-7273, [voiceofhopelubbock.org](http://voiceofhopelubbock.org) (24-hour hotline that provides support for survivors of sexual violence.)

The Risk, Intervention, Safety and Education (RISE) Office, 806-742-2110, [rise.ttu.edu](http://rise.ttu.edu) (Provides a range of resources and support options focused on prevention education and student wellness.)

Texas Tech Police Department, 806-742-3931, <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ttpd/> (To report criminal activity that occurs on or near Texas Tech campus.)

### *Academic Integrity*

The following is a statement on Academic Integrity at Texas Tech University. It can be found in its entirety at <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/studentconduct/academicinteg.php>

“Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one’s own work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior...Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures that grades are earned honestly and gives added value to the entire educational process. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers.”

Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor) or the attempt to commit such an act. The Code of Student Conduct contains the definitions of Academic Integrity Code violations on pages 33-35.”

All of this is to say the following:

You have at your disposal access to a tremendous amount of information and can, conceivably, find the resources that you need to take shortcuts to pass this course. However, please note that passing a class is not the same thing as coming out of the class with a deeper understanding of the subject. In your career, the fact that you passed a class will matter much less than the fact that you truly understand the material and can apply your understanding to everyday situations. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty might prove the easy way out now but please note that to do so would be to commit a disservice to yourself in the future. That said, if I find tangible proof of academic dishonesty in your work (e.g., cheating on exams, plagiarizing assignments, etc.), you will receive an automatic “F” on that assignment and, possibly, receive a failing grade in the course as well.

COURSE OUTLINE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READING/ASSIGNMENTS</u>
7/7/20	INTRODUCTION	
7/8/20	WHAT IS VISUAL COMMUNICATION?	READ CHAPTER 1
7/9/20	VISUAL CUES	READ CHAPTER 2
7/10/20	VISUAL THEORIES	READ CHAPTER 3
7/13/20	REFLECTION PAPER #1 DUE	REFLECTION PAPER #1 DUE
7/14/20	VISUAL PERSUASION	READ CHAPTER 4
7/15/20	VISUAL STEREOTYPES	READ CHAPTER 5
7/16/20	VISUAL ANALYSIS	READ CHAPTER 6
7/17/20	REVIEW DAY	REVIEW DAY
7/20/20	REFLECTION PAPER #2 DUE	REFLECTION PAPER #2 DUE
7/21/20	EXAM #1 DUE	EXAM #1 DUE
7/22/20	TYPOGRAPHY	READ CHAPTER 7
7/23/20	GRAPHIC DESIGN	READ CHAPTER 8
7/24/20	PHOTOGRAPHY	READ CHAPTER 11
7/27/20	REFLECTION PAPER #3 DUE	REFLECTION PAPER #3 DUE
7/28/20	MOTION PICTURES	READ CHAPTER 12
7/29/20	ANIMATION	READ CHAPTER 10
7/30/20	TELEVISION	READ CHAPTER 13
7/31/20	THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE MORE YOU SEE	READ CHAPTER 16
8/3/20	REFLECTION PAPER #4 DUE	REFLECTION PAPER #4 DUE
8/4/20	REVIEW DAY	REVIEW DAY
8/5/20	EXAM #2 DUE	EXAM #2 DUE
8/7/20	VISUAL RIFFING PROJECT DUE	VISUAL RIFFING PROJECT DUE