

course description & policies

This project considers the formal qualities of typography as it relates to composition. Students will be introduced to letterform anatomy, type classifications, typefaces, and type terminology.

students will:

- demonstrate knowledge of letterform anatomy
- demonstrate ability to identify typefaces & classifications
- demonstrate ability to compose dynamic layouts using 2D principles of design
- improve hand-skills (drawing letterforms) and digital skills (working in illustrator)

project details

You will choose 4 glyphs (characters) using the font list below to explore interesting and dynamic compositions. These compositions should remain black & white only and consider principles of foreground/background relationships, rhythm, juxtaposition, movement, and tension. Experiment with white on black and black on white.

You will create 3 final compositions for critique, each following different parameters. You will work on them simultaneously.

Examples

Composition 1: open

Composition 2: corners

Composition 3: strips



4 letters overlapping, cropping, touching, etc to create a strong and interesting composition considering negative space, positive space, etc.



4 letters each in their own individual "corner" of the composition. Each area should be 4" inches wide by 4" tall.



4 letters each in their own individual "strip" of the composition. Each strip should be 2" inches wide by 8" tall.

getting started

Begin by examining multiple typefaces from the list below. Look at different characters in different faces and notice the formal characteristics and how they vary and/or how they feel similar. Specifically, consider counters, ascenders, descenders, capitals, lowercase, x-height, bowls, brackets, serifs, styles and stress. Choose letterforms that have different anatomy. Print some of your favorites and trace them to understand their forms. Narrow down typefaces and letterforms that you find the most interesting to move forward with.

list of typefaces (14)

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| DIN | Adobe Garamond | Chaparral Pro |
| Futura | Adobe Caslon | Rockwell |
| Franklin Gothic | Bodoni (URW) | Clear Sans |
| Bell Centennial | Didot (Linotype) | News Gothic |
| Baskerville | Clarendon (URW) | |

m/w schedule

- w 8.21** due: pen tool exercises
in class: letterform exploration
begin sketches on tracing paper at 1/2 scale (4"x4")
- M 8.26** due: 60 sketches due on tracing paper at 1/2 scale (20 for each approach)
in class: feedback, begin next step
- w 8.28** due: 12 B&W versions printed with .5pt rule around composition (4 for each approach)
in class: feedback, begin next step
- M 9.2** no class, work on your own
- w 9.4** due: 6 B&W versions printed with .5pt rule around composition (2 for each approach)
in class: feedback, begin final refining
- M 9.9** due: 3 final compositions (1 for each approach), mounted in illustration board. digital files and process books.

t/r schedule

- R 8.22** due: pen tool exercises
in class: letterform exploration
begin sketches on tracing paper at 1/2 scale (4"x4")
- T 8.27** due: 60 sketches due on tracing paper at 1/2 scale (20 for each approach)
in class: feedback, begin next step
- R 8.29** due: 12 B&W versions printed with .5pt rule around composition (4 for each approach)
in class: feedback, begin next step
- T 9.3** due: 6 B&W versions printed with .5pt rule around composition (2 for each approach)
in class: feedback, begin final refining
- R 9.5** due: 3 final compositions (1 for each approach), mounted in illustration board. digital files and process books.

project parameters

- Final compositions will be digitally produced using Adobe Illustrator, printed b&w laser (color optional)
- Print, trim, mount (flush), 8" x 8" on illustration board (x3)

evaluation criteria

- Completion of assignment
- Composition
- Craftsmanship
- Attention to Detail