

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

EDIT 571 C01: Visual Design & App: Photoshop (2 credits)  
Summer Semester/2014

Online

June 30, 2014 through August 8, 2014

**PROFESSOR:**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A. **Pre-requisites:**

None

B. **Course Description:**

Provides basic knowledge of the range of capabilities of available graphic and visual design applications. Students learn to cultivate effective visual design practices for creating instructional products.

C. **Expanded Course Description:**

This course provides an overview of the visual design capabilities of Adobe Photoshop CC for instructional design practice. Through a series of technical assignments and a culminating portfolio project, you will demonstrate skill in editing and combining images, selecting and adjusting color, basic lighting effects, basic photo retouching, applying selective filters to images, and creating a basic project wireframe using Photoshop. Each week, you will engage in a peer critique of one of your technical assignments. This course is ideal for a instructional design or technology professional looking to learn some basic visual design strategies within Photoshop or expand upon basic skills to continually add to a repertoire of technical and creative skills.

**DELIVERY METHOD:**

This course will be delivered online using an asynchronous format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before "@masonlive.gmu.edu") and email password. The course site will be available on June 20, 2014.

Materials used to support instruction include video tutorials from Lynda.com, weekly technical assignments, threaded discussions used to conduct peer reviews and a final project. Weekly content is described in detail and course topics, activities and assignments are posted on our Blackboard course site.

Another key detail of this course is the flexibility and options around the software used in the course. Students are encouraged to select projects that push their own ability with the software tools being explored in the course.

#### **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard;
- Consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of the course requirements.
- Students will need access to Adobe Photoshop CC throughout the duration of the course
- The following software plug-ins for Pcs and Macs respectively, available for free downloading by clicking on the link next to each plug-in:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - A headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool

#### **EXPECTATIONS:**

- **Course Week:** Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will **start** on Monday and **finish** on Sunday
- **Log-in Frequency:** Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, at a minimum this should be 3 times per week.
- **Participation:** Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence:** Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students are expected to seek assistance if they are struggling with technical components of the course.
- **Technical Issues:** Students should expect that they could experience some technical difficulties at some point in the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:** Expect to log in to this course **at least 3 times a week** to read announcements, participate in the discussions, and work on course materials. Remember, this course is **not** self-paced. There are **specific deadlines** and **due dates** listed in the **CLASS SCHEDULE** section of this syllabus to which you are

expected to adhere. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

- **Advising:** If you would like to schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues, we can meet via telephone or web conference. Send me an email to schedule your one-on-one session and include your preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:** Our goal is to be **collaborative**. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be misconstrued. I suggest that you always re-read your responses carefully before you post them to encourage others from taking them as personal attacks. **Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.** I will do the same. Remember, you are not competing with each other but sharing information and learning from one another as well as from the instructor.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, the student should be able to:

- Implement basic visual design strategies to an instructional design process
- Use the tools and features of the Adobe Photoshop for their optimal uses in instructional design
- Edit, modify, combine, and enhance bitmap and vector graphics in Photoshop
- Demonstrate use of basic visual design strategies, including the use of contrast, alignment, repetition, and proximity to emphasize information
- Implement the use of a color scheme in a project and adjust color in images using Photoshop
- Incorporate the use of lighting to create a focal point
- Publish graphics in a variety of formats, particularly for use on the web
- Synthesize design and editing skills with Photoshop to create an instructional design project

### **REQUIRED TEXTS/RESOURCES**

#### **A. Lynda.com tutorials:**

The required instructional resource for this course is multimedia tutorials at Lynda.com. A package of tutorials will be compiled for the course at a significantly discounted rate.

#### **B. Adobe Photoshop CC Software:**

You will need access to Adobe Photoshop Creative Cloud. The one-month trial will get you through 30 days of the course, but you will need a subscription for at least one month. Education pricing is available on Adobe's site:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/creativecloud/buying-guide-education.html>

The option for a one-year subscription to one Creative Cloud application might be a good option for those who intend to keep using Photoshop after the course.

## **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **Professional Standards – Instructional Design and Technology**

#### 1. Instructional Design Competencies (IBSTPI)

This course adheres to the standards for instructional design competency of the International Board of Standards for Training, Performance, and Instruction (IBSTPI). The complete list of IBSTPI standards is located at [http://www.ibstpi.org/Competencies/instruct\\_design\\_competencies.htm](http://www.ibstpi.org/Competencies/instruct_design_competencies.htm)

#### 2. Code of Professional Ethics (AECT)

This course adheres to the code of professional ethics for the field of educational technology set down by the Association for Educational Communication and Technology (AECT). The full text of the AECT Code of Professional Ethics is located at <http://www.aect.org/About/Ethics.asp>

#### 3. Other Professional Standards/Guidelines

The ASTD Certification Institute has published standards that focus on competency models for corporate and government trainers at <http://www.astd.org/content/research/competency/competencyStudy.htm>

## **GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>).
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- c. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- d. The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social

workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance (See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>).

- e. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester (See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- f. The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing (See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).

### **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS**

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### **CORE VALUES COMMITMENT**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website <http://gse.gmu.edu/>.**

## Evaluation and Grading

1) Weekly Technical Assignments	10 * 4 points	40
2) Weekly Peer Critique	5 * 4 points	20
• Group Synthesizer	1 * 4 points	4
3) Learning Reflections	2 * 2 points	4
4) Quiz	1 * 7 points	7
5) Final Project	1 * 25 points	25
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- 1) **Weekly Technical Assignments:** There will be two technical assignments submitted each week in weeks 1-5.
- 2) **Weekly Peer Critique/Discussion:** In Week 1, everyone will participate in an icebreaker activity that will feature one of the first technical assignments. In weeks 2-5, you will post one of your two technical assignments for the week to the discussion board for peer review and critique.
  - **Group Synthesizer:** A responsibility of the peer critique process will be serving as your **group synthesizer**, a role which will rotate during Weeks 2-5. For this role, you will be responsible for gathering 2-3 best practice tips to share with the class at the end of that week's peer critique.
- 3) **Learning Reflections:** You will have two learning reflections- one at the beginning and one at the end of the course to document your goals in taking this course and self-assess the progress you have made toward these goals.
- 4) **Quizzes:** There will be one brief quiz that covers conceptual content outlined in the course.
- 5) **Final Project:** The final project in Week 6 will be a choice of a storyboard or webpage wireframe that incorporates the principles and skills you have learned throughout the course. You will start thinking about the theme of that project early in the course so you can plan your technical assignments and tailor them to contribute to your work on this project. In Week 5, you will submit drafts of both of these technical assignments and you will revise your Final Project for Week 6.
  - **Option 1: Webpage Wireframe**

The second option for the final project is a webpage wireframe. A wireframe is a helpful tool for laying out interactive content such as a webpage in a static page to communicate the general look, feel, and functionality of a design. For this project, it will be helpful to have an instructional design project in mind. You could use an existing project or site and conceptualize a redesign. You will need to incorporate at least three images into your wireframe.

File size can potentially be an issue with this project, so one of the issues you should be cognizant of is balancing image quality with file size.

Accompanying your project, you should include citations of any borrowed images and a brief statement (~250 words) that includes:

- How you addressed the criteria in the rubric
- Changes you made to your final project based on peer review feedback
- How you optimized the file size of your final project file

- **Option 2: Storyboard**

One of your options for the final project is to create a visual storyboard. Your storyboard should address an instructional problem or sequence. You could compose a series of instructional steps or you could craft a visual story connected to the creation of instructional materials, such as a case study or role play.

A visual storyboard can be a helpful tool for conceptualizing an instructional design project. As you map out the best way to communicate your concept to the learners, and plan the best way to communicate your message. Your storyboard should contain at least 5 images and no more than 10 images. You can compose the storyboard completely in Photoshop or you can use another software tool (such as PowerPoint or Word) to arrange the images.

File size will potentially be an issue with this project, so one of the issues you should be cognizant of is balancing image quality with file size.

Accompanying your project, you will include citations of any borrowed images and a brief statement (~250 words) that includes:

- How you addressed the criteria in the rubric
- Changes you made to your final project based on peer review feedback
- How you optimized the file size of your final project file

### **Grading Scale**

The grading scale used in this course is the official George Mason University scale for graduate-level courses. Decimal percentage values  $\geq .5$  will be rounded up (e.g., 92.5% will be rounded up to 93%); decimal percentage values  $< .5$  will be rounded down (e.g., 92.4% will be rounded down to 92%).

**Please note that the highest grade possible to earn in this course is an A.**

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Total Points Earned</b>
A	93%-100%
A-	90%-92%
B+	88%-89%

B	83%-87%
B-	80%-82%
C	70%-79%
F	<70%

### Overview of Weekly Topics and Learning Objectives

Week	Week of	Topics / Assignments
1	June 30	<p><b>Topic:</b> Image formats and Basic Corrections</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigate the basic structure of Adobe Photoshop</li> <li>• Crop and resize an image</li> <li>• Import an image to Photoshop</li> <li>• Describe the differences between gif, jpg, png and raw image formats</li> <li>• Use layers to maintain original image integrity</li> <li>• Crop images using rule of thirds as guideline</li> <li>• Identify common aspect ratios for images such as 4:3 and 16:9</li> <li>• Identify sources for creative commons images</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Assignment #1 “Introductions” by Friday</li> <li>• Technical Assignment #2 “Basic Image Corrections” by Sunday</li> <li>• Responses to peers on Technical Assignment #1 by Friday</li> <li>• Learning Reflection #1 by Sunday</li> </ul>
2	July 7	<p><b>Topic:</b> Photo-collage &amp; Text</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combine two or more images in Photoshop</li> <li>• Delete specific selected portions of an image</li> <li>• Add text to an image</li> <li>• Identify basic characteristics of various fonts in messaging</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Assignment #3 Poster</li> <li>• Technical Assignment #4 Photo-collage</li> <li>• Peer Review Due by Sunday</li> <li>• Final Project Proposal by Sunday</li> </ul>
3	July 14	<p><b>Topic:</b> Photo Retouching and Filters</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform basic photo retouching including red eye correction, using healing brush, correcting subtle portrait elements</li> <li>• Apply filter to photo for visual effect</li> <li>• Demonstrate understanding of rule of thirds to impact composition</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Assignment #5 Photo Retouching</li> <li>• Technical Assignment #6 Fun with Filters</li> <li>• Peer Review Due by Sunday</li> </ul>
4	July 21	<p><b>Topic:</b> Color &amp; Lighting</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply tone and color correction strategies to enhance a photo</li> <li>• Identify the focal point in an image created by lighting</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply principles of <b>contrast</b> and <b>repetition</b> to composition</li> <li>• Create a color palette to inform your final project and adjust images to match that color scheme</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Assignment #7 Color Scheme</li> <li>• Technical Assignment #8 Lighting and Contrast Focal Point</li> <li>• Peer Review Due by Sunday</li> <li>• Final Project Update by Sunday</li> </ul>
5	July 28	<p><b>Topic:</b> Storyboarding and Webpage Wireframe</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design a webpage wireframe to mock up a potential user interface</li> <li>• Create a visual storyboard to illustrate an instructional sequence or narrative arc</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Assignment #9 WebPage Wireframe</li> <li>• Technical Assignment #10 Storyboarding</li> <li>• Peer Review Due by Sunday</li> <li>• Quiz by Sunday</li> </ul>
6	August 4	<p><b>Topic:</b> Final Project</p> <p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Project Due</li> </ul>

## Assessment Rubrics

### Technical Assignment Rubric

4 points	<p>Assignment addressed all of the criteria stated in the assignment description.</p> <p>Assignment was submitted on time.</p> <p>A detailed summary of the steps taken to create the technical assignment is included.</p> <p>Jpg (png or gif) file is included along with attached psd file.</p>
3 points	<p>Assignment addressed all of the criteria stated in the assignment description, except for one.</p> <p>Assignment was submitted on time.</p> <p>Summary of the steps taken to create the technical assignment is included, but lacks some details.</p> <p>Jpg (png or gif) file is included along with attached psd file.</p>
2 points	<p>Assignment addressed most, but not all of the criteria stated in the assignment description, lacking at least two of the criteria.</p> <p>Assignment was not more than one day late.</p> <p>Only a brief description of steps taken to complete project is included.</p> <p>Only an attached compressed file (jpg, gif, png) is included.</p>
1 points	<p>Assignment missed several of the criteria stated in the assignment description.</p> <p>Assignment was submitted more than one day late.</p> <p>Only a brief description of steps taken to complete project is included.</p> <p>Only an attached compressed file (jpg, gif, png) is included.</p>
0 points	<p>No technical assignment was completed.</p>

### Peer Review Rubric - 4 point rubric

4 points	<p>Draft of technical assignment was posted on time for others to review.</p> <p>Embedded JPG was included in discussion for easy viewing, along with attached psd file in case additional detail is needed.</p> <p>All assigned peer reviews are completed on time.</p>
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	<p>All questions on peer review form are addressed in detail.</p> <p>Substantive and constructive comments are made that can help guide the designers' work forward.</p> <p>Concrete examples and suggestions are provided.</p> <p>Feedback demonstrates thorough understanding of the concepts for that weeks' assignment.</p>
3 points	<p>Draft of technical assignment was posted on time for others to review.</p> <p>Image was attached to the discussion forum, but not embedded.</p> <p>All assigned peer reviews are completed on time.</p> <p>All questions on peer review form are addressed with detail, though some more thoroughly than others.</p> <p>Substantive and constructive comments are made.</p> <p>Concrete examples and suggestions are provided.</p> <p>Feedback demonstrates a good understanding of the concepts for that weeks' assignment.</p>
2 points	<p>Either draft of assignment or peer reviews are late.</p> <p>Substantive and constructive comments are made that can help guide the designers' work forward, but not all feedback items addressed.</p> <p>Feedback demonstrates some understanding of the concepts for that weeks' assignment.</p>
1 points	<p>Both draft of the assignment or peer review materials are late.</p> <p>Not all questions on peer review form are addressed in detail.</p> <p>Comments are evaluative but don't provide enough detail to be helpful in moving the work forward.</p> <p>Feedback demonstrates major gaps in understanding the concepts for that weeks' assignment.</p>
0 points	No peer review was completed.

### Learning Reflection Rubric

2 points	<p>Synthesis of course concepts and application to personal experience is demonstrated.</p> <p>Description and assessment of progress based on personal goals is described.</p> <p>Grammar and spelling are without error.</p> <p>Reflection is submitted on time.</p>
1 points	<p>Synthesis of course concepts and application to personal experience is demonstrated, but only briefly.</p> <p>Description and assessment of progress based on personal goals is described.</p> <p>Grammar and spelling errors</p> <p>Reflection is submitted more than one day late.</p>
0 points	No reflection was submitted.

### Final Project Rubric

	0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
Photo Editing	Photo editing has significant “rough” edits that distract from the overall visual message.	Photo editing has one or two “rough” edits that distract from the overall visual message.	Examples of photo editing and modification are appropriate and professional in appearance.
Information Architecture	Principles of contrast, repetition, alignment, and proximity are not consistently used to reinforce important information and guide the viewer through information.	Principles of contrast, repetition, alignment and proximity are somewhat evident in reinforcing important information and guiding the viewer through information.	Principles of contrast, alignment, repetition, and proximity are used to reinforce important information and guide the viewer through information.
Organization and Telling the Story	There is no clear focal point in selected images. Design of visual information does not	Most images have a clear focal point and/or an appropriate design has been selected that	There is a clear focal point in selected images and/or an appropriate design has been selected

	demonstrate an understanding of how viewers will process the information. The presentation of the information does not convey a cohesive story.	demonstrates some understanding of how viewers will process the information, but with 1 or 2 confusing aspects. The story conveyed by the visuals is fairly clear.	that demonstrates a thorough understanding of how viewers will process the information. The visual presentation of the information tells a cohesive story.
Use of text	The use of text undermines the overall visual message.	Use of text overall contributes to the overall design, but there are 1 or 2 instances where there should be less text.	Text used in the project enhances and contributes to the overall design.
Consistency	Significant consistency issues are evident.	Minor consistency issues exist.	Font size, style and colors are consistent. Spacing and alignments are consistent.