

Advanced Typography Syllabus

ATLS 4519-040/041 & 5519-040/041

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00–3:50 p.m.

ATLS1B31

Instructor: Joel Swanson joel.swanson@colorado.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. ATLS101 (Starting September 1st) or by appointment. If you are coming to office hours, send me an e-mail just to make sure I'm not overbooked.

PRE-REQUISITES

ATLS2300, *Text* (or equivalent) You should be familiar with the basics of typography and Adobe Illustrator.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an advanced investigation of typography for visual communication and expression. Emphasis is placed on the analysis of meaning as conveyed through, materials, technology, and design. Projects are experimental and are designed to challenge you to expand your understanding of the function of typography plays in design, art, and the culture.

REQUIRED TEXTS

None, but I will provide various readings throughout the semester as handouts and/or PDFS. I encourage you to print out the readings and keep them in a folder or binder as a way to organize the readings from the class.

Viewings and Readings are to be completed BEFORE the day that they are listed on the schedule.

WHAT WE WILL DO

The course combines many modes of learning: lectures, readings, writings, creative projects, guest speakers, and field trips. This is a projects-based course which means we will primarily be making things. I am here as a resource to help you make the best work that you possibly can. I will give lectures, readings, technical demos, and organize field trips--all of which are designed to inform, equip, and inspire you to reach your full potential within this course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To teach you how to design text across a broad range of technologies, media, and contexts
- To further your education about the historical, technical and aesthetic aspects of text and typography
- To practice the design, selection, and placement of language for effective and compelling communication
- To experiment with materials, technologies, and solutions
- To critically analyze your solutions--and those of yours peers--and make modifications for improvement
- To gain familiarity with the histories and theories of text and typography, from both commercial and non-commercial disciplines (e.g. commercial designers, academics, artists, poets, etc.)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understand how type can be used as a primary method of visual design and communication
- Utilize type and form to create dynamic, meaningful compositions
- Work with a grid to organize information and establish an effective hierarchy
- Appreciate the nuances and apply the techniques involved in professional typesetting
- Clearly articulate ideas and thought processes in relation to your work

PRO TIP: I doubt that many--if any--of you will end up being full-time typographers or typesetters, but all of you will design language on a daily basis. My goal for you is that in whatever context you use design language (professionally, personally, artistically) that you do it thoughtfully and effectively.

GRADES

Project 1:	Alternative Typography	10 points
Project 2:	Abcederian	30 points
Project 3:	Kinetic Typography	30 points
Various Projects		10+ points
Sketchbook / Blog:		15 points
Project Conferences:		5 points

COURSE CONTENT

In this class I reserve the right to show a broad range of course materials, some of which may be offensive to some people. It is not my goal to intentionally offend anyway, but should you feel offended by something you have seen or heard, I would appreciate you staying to be part of a dialogue as I welcome your perspective. If you feel that you cannot stay, feel free to discretely excuse yourself from the classroom.

PROJECT CONFERENCES

This class is organized around two major projects. You are required to meet with me twice during the semester to discuss your ideas and progress on these two projects. I am not going to assign a specific time for you to meet with me but I encourage you to schedule a time to meet with me when it will be beneficial to you. For most students, this is either in the early conceptualizing stages or in the storyboarding / rough draft phase.

“SKETCHBOOK”

I want you to keep a sketchbook as a synthesis of your activities in this class. You can choose the medium of this sketchbook (e.g. a real book or a blog), but it should contain a record of your thoughts, sketches, inspiration, challenges related to this course. At the end of the course, this sketchbook should tell a story of your progress in this class. The sketchbook should be for this course only and each entry must be dated. It will be graded on completeness, so don't wait until the end of the semester to do this. I will also ask to see your sketchbooks at the Project Conferences.

IN CLASS WORK/OUT OF CLASS WORK: Give someone a fish vs. teach them how to fish

I want to use in-class time as effectively as possible. To be blunt, technical demos during class are a waste of your time, therefore the bulk of technical instruction will happen outside of class time via assigned readings, viewings, and tutorials. This approach will also help you become familiar with the vast amount of resources available to you, so that you can continue to learn technical topics after this class has concluded (e.g. learning how to teach yourself as a valuable life skill).

PRO TIP: This class is about ideas, not technical mastery! Today's technical landscape changes rapidly, and you will get left behind if you feel you need to “master” a technology or software before you start a project. For this reason, I endorse a “just in time” approach or “soft mastery” of technical skills, which means you learn what you need to in order to execute your ideas and concepts. If you wait to be a master of a technology before you do something with it, you will forever limit yourself!

Technology follows ideas. If all you want is technical skills, then I encourage you to drop this course and I can instead offer you technical skills resources.

TECHNOLOGY

If you have one, bring your own laptop! The software that we are using can be downloaded for a trial period, or even better, buy yourself an education license of Adobe CC. It is around \$20 per month for students, and since I'm not asking you to buy big expensive textbooks, it should be affordable.

PRO TIP: Make sure to backup your work! Lost and/or corrupted work is not an acceptable excuse for late work.

TALENT VS. HARD WORK This is a gross generalization, but in western culture, we tend to value talent, in the east, hard work. Success is a mixture of both; they are symbiotic. Sure, someone who is naturally gifted in math won't have to work as hard in Calc 1, but that doesn't mean that someone who isn't as "naturally" talented won't succeed, they just have to work harder. What does this mean for you? We often gravitate to things we are good at and shy away from things that are difficult or challenging. This class might come easily to you, or it might be a challenge, but no matter who you are you can be successful!

PRO TIP: Don't be afraid of hard work! Don't let talent limit your destiny! There are a lot of reasons why some people are more talented than others, but that doesn't mean you don't have hidden talent, or can't succeed through hard work and determination.

E-MAIL

You must use your Colorado.edu E-mail account for this course. Please check your E-mail and the class website regularly. I will notify you of all class cancellations and scheduling changes via the class website and/or e-mail. It is my goal to respond to all E-mails within 24 hours. If I fail to reply within 24 hours, feel free to resend.

Also, do your best to send me E-mail from your Colorado.edu account. I am not allowed to respond to non Colorado.edu E-mail accounts.

For the sake of efficiency (and sanity), I only check class-related E-mail during certain times during the day, typically in the late afternoon.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance will be taken in this class and can negatively affect your final grade. You are allowed three absences* after which your final grade will be lowered by a letter grade for each additional absence. Note that repeated and/or significant tardiness will be considered as absences.

**All absences fall under these three absences (e.g. illnesses and injuries, oversleeping, vacations, job interviews, ski-days, family obligations and situations, etc.) so it isn't wise to use them all at the start of the semester. Exceptions will be made for religious holidays, severe illnesses, and prolonged family emergencies.*

COURSE WEBSITE

For this class, we will be using D2L. On this site you will find a course calendar, assignments, resources, and grades. Additionally, this is where you will submit your projects.

PROJECT EVALUATION RUBRICS

All major projects will be evaluated according to the following categories. Detailed rubrics will be provided for each project, but my general method for evaluation creative projects is:

- Technical (33%)
- Design/Aesthetic (33%)
- Creative/Conceptual (33%)
- 1% remainder: discretionary point

GRADING SCALE

A = excellent work

B = above average work

C= average or competent work

D = below average work

F = unsatisfactory work

In order to counteract grade inflation, I do not give out A's easily. If you turn in all your work on time (and if it is satisfactorily completed), and if you attend class and participate, you are ensured a C. A's and B's are reserved for students who excel beyond average and competent work.

LATE WORK

Late work will not be accepted. If you have not finished a project, you will need to show what you have to avoid getting a "0" for the project.

DIGITAL DISTRACTIONS

Part of learning how to be an adult is learning how to manage various digital distractions such as texting, E-mailing, and using social media. I am not going to prohibit these activities because you need to learn how to integrate these tools into your life, and prohibitions will not help you learn how to manage these activities professionally. However, during class-time, I ask that you refrain from texting, checking your E-mail, and using social media, as it creates a distraction for you, and more problematically, for your classmates. In the event that these activities become problematic, I reserve the right to amend this policy.

CRITIQUES

I highly value critiques and take them seriously. Even if your project is not completed, it is required that you come to class to offer feedback on your classmates' projects. It will negatively affect your project grade if you are not present for critiques.

Tips for effective critiques:

- Absolutely no "it's cool" or "I like it" comments. It might be cool, but why it is cool? Comments must have substance and depth.
- Be descriptive: describe what part of the project you're talking about rather than commenting on the thing as a whole.
- Be specific: tackle specific issues about the project / trouble shooting.
- Be critical: there is little in the world that we like every feature of and that's ok. (We will critique a corporate project first to get in the groove)
- Be nice: this is a crit of a project not a person.
- Be articulate: Use the terminology we've learned in class.

PARTICIPATION

Being "present" means that you have completed all the required reading, viewings, exercises, and assignments before class begins, and that you arrive to class on time. Being present also means that you are mentally and physically engaged with the class.

This course is designed for seniors and graduate students! I will expect all students to handle themselves accordingly. I expect that:

- You can manage your time well
- That you will respect your classmates and the learning environment
- That you are committed to your education and that you won't make excuses
- That you attend class regularly and arrive on time ready to fully participate

I understand that as college students you are extremely busy and over-extended. But please realize that your behavior affects the learning environment and do your best to avoid causing distractions and disruptions.

I believe strongly that a classroom experience should be compelling, challenging and relevant. I also believe that we should take full advantage of being with each other in a physical space. I pledge to you my intent to create the best classroom experience that I can. I will be fully present for you, I will be highly prepared, I will be flexible and responsive to your questions and interests. I will know your names and your concerns. I will begin each class on time.

In exchange, if you are going to commit to this class, you need to fully commit. This means taking responsibility for your own learning experience, and as well as the experience of your peers.

ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITIES

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your professor a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Injuries](#) guidelines under the Quick Links at the [Disability Services website](#) and discuss your needs with your professor.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, *(insert your procedures here)*.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and [the student code](#).

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND/OR RELATED RETALIATION

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. CU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking or related retaliation. CU Boulder's Discrimination and Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment or related retaliation based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct under either policy should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127. Information about the OIEC, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation can be found at the [OIEC website](#).

HONOR CODE

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the [academic integrity policy](#) of the institution. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. All

incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council(honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at honorcode.colorado.edu.

By enrolling you signify your awareness and understanding of the policies contained within this syllabus and your agreement to conduct yourself in accordance with these policies.