

Open Studio

Description

Open Studio is an advanced course in graphic design. Classes are a blend of conversation and creating. We'll use a loose framework of working backwards to help us complete projects. Students are encouraged to work in whichever medium they feel most comfortable in. We'll work together as if we were in a real studio. The teacher (that's me) will work as a creative director and the students (that's you) will work as designers, owning and delivering on creative work.

Storytelling is a core theme of this course. We'll use our time to investigate the answers to these questions: What is the story you want to tell? Why is it urgent? What do you want the audience to take from it? What does your visual voice look like? What things change from the story you've told? You are encouraged to drive each other's work through discussion and critique.

Structure

Each class will start off with an open discussion on various works. Most often these will be films, but occasionally — largely depending on cultural events that will naturally occur during this course — it will be an article, album, or tv show.

Participation in these discussions is imperative and will have a large impact on your grade, so it's mandatory that you watch these films.

Evaluation Criteria

This class is evaluated by projects and participation. Attendance is mandatory. You should be ready to work at the beginning of class.

60% Projects: There are three main projects. Each one will require writing, researching, and designing. The first counts for 5% of your final grade. The second is 20%. The third is 35%.

40% Participation: Sharing your thoughts, viewpoints, and hot takes are critical for growing as a designer. Discussion is critical to your final grade, which is why your attendance is mandatory.

Projects

Project 1: Zine

Due: Week 3

Tell a story. Any story.

A zine entails pieces of paper stapled and folded. It needs to be at least 8 pages in length and no longer than 16. They often include original content as well as appropriated text and images. Your zine can be designed on screen and printed, handwritten, or a mixture of both.

Project 2: Second Story

Due: Week 8

Maybe you want to create a magazine that includes stories addressing the complexities of immigration. Maybe you want to do a series of illustrations about identity — using characters to help you navigate the subject. Maybe you want to make a slice-of-life film about the wonders of cooking in a kitchen.

You'll begin with researching — learning what you need to tell the story. From there, you'll sketch out a rough architecture of the story. Finally you'll focus on delivering a hi-fi project. There will be weekly check-in's. Be prepared to defend your work in crit.

Project 3: Third Story

Due: Week 14

By now you should have a foundation for the stories you want to tell. Students are free to evolve on previous stories or tackle a new subject all together. Maybe the story you told about the complexities of immigration has opened up to wanting to tell stories about family. Maybe the illustrations you were doing about identity have ignited a curiosity for how class impacts identity. And maybe that slice-of-life film about cooking is really a story about relationships..

Once again, you'll begin with researching — learning what you need to tell the story. From there, you'll sketch out a rough architecture of the story. And then finally you'll focus on delivering a hi-fi project. There will be weekly check-in's. Be prepared to defend your work in crit.

Project 4: Journal

In this course we are going to tackle challenging problems. The work that students will do is bound to bring up some stuff. It is paramount, as a designer and human being, that you are taking care of yourself. **I will never read your journal.** It is only for you. I encourage you to write in it as often as you want.