

Parsons School of Design

Communication Design

PUCD 4205 Core 4: Thesis 1 - CRN XXXX

Fall 2021 Fridays, 9:00 a.m.–2:40 p.m., Building and Room

Faculty First and Last Name

Email address@newschool.edu

Course Description

Thesis 1 & Thesis 2 are year-long self-driven investigations into the research, prototyping and design of an identified question, critique, or point of view. It provides an opportunity for design innovation and inquiry through the rigorous research and development of a capstone project, through various pathways across multiple platforms. The goal of the first semester is to research, develop and articulate a thesis concept and create experimental prototypes, including designed presentations of research and process. Thesis 1, in particular, focuses on process, which includes primary and secondary research, ideation, prototyping, documenting and writing about one's own work.

Thesis is as much about the design process as design projects. By moving through the design process—research, ideation, prototyping, iteration, and presentation—students will begin to develop projects by way of exploration across multiple media. Students will be asked to reflect on how their ideas—as expressed through design—sits alongside historical precedent and shapes culture in the present. It provides an opportunity for visual innovation through the development of a rigorous design process. This includes articulation of research, which contextualizes how one's work posits itself within larger historical, cultural, social, and technological frameworks.

Course Outline

Week 1-4: Research and form exercises (Unit 1)

Students will begin the semester with two “why” questions: Why do I make certain decisions around form? Why am I interested in what I'm interested in? By the end of this period, students will identify and document a question, critique, or point of view that they would like to address, and be able to articulate how they will approach giving form to their subject matter during the semester and the year.

Week 5-9: Experiment 1 (Unit 2)

Students will create a prototype in one medium that explores their question, critique, or point of view from Unit 1 and with a specific audience in mind. They will identify and document precedents in all media that pose a similar exploration, and give other students feedback on approach, context, history, and audience.

Week 10-14: Experiment 2 (Unit 3)

Based on the experience of the first experiment, students will create a second prototype or series of prototypes in a **different** medium to explore an alternative approach, again with an audience in mind, which may or may not be the same as the audience in Unit 2.

Week 15: Final Presentation (Unit 4)

Students will gather their research, prototypes, feedback to share in a final critique with peers, faculty, and guests. Students will write a reflection statement about the subjects they chose, the concepts created, and where their thesis sits in the larger world of communication design.

Solo :: pair :: small group :: section :: cohort

Students will sometimes learn alone, sometimes one-on-one with other students, sometimes one-on-one with their faculty, sometimes in a small group in their section, sometimes in a small group across sections, sometimes with their section, and sometimes with the whole cohort of Thesis 2022. All cross-cohort activities will be online, due to university guidelines that limit the size of in-person groups.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Conceive of ideas and learn to narrow and direct energies towards something that makes sense.
2. Develop a design process and working methodology.
3. Demonstrate comprehensive awareness of design systems, critical thinking, historical awareness.
4. Articulate design decisions and concepts for both their own work and the work of others using the language of communication design.
5. Refine formal presentation skills.
6. Understand type as image and its use in conjunction with image to successfully convey a chosen concept or idea.
7. Demonstrate a comprehension of skills, methods, techniques, and processes to typeset for various media.
8. Manipulate typographic components in a way that demonstrates knowledge of anatomy, form, space, scale, hierarchy, and composition.
9. Demonstrate integrity and respect towards others and the community through cultural literacy and sensitivity to differences.

Assessable Tasks

Over the course of the semester, students will demonstrate their learning through presentation of research and form exercises, experiments 1 and 2, and reflections on guest lectures and other students' work. Language, exploration, and interaction with your peers and the field are as important as "finished" experiments. Rubrics for each are below.

Grading breakdown

Research and form Exercises	20 points
Experiment 1	25 points
Experiment 2	25 points
Guest Lectures	10 points

Grading Rubric

Throughout the semester students will receive feedback on the following criteria, which will be added up in the end to constitute the final grade.

Research and Form Exercises (20 points)

- | | |
|-------|--|
| # / 5 | <u>Critical Thinking</u>
Original and creative thinking, depth of investigation, research, and clarity of post-analysis |
| # / 5 | <u>Response</u>
Appropriateness of final project to original intention, problem, or question |
| # / 5 | <u>Presentation</u>
Public speaking, presentation design, and visual documentation of your work and process |
| # / 5 | <u>Visual Quality</u>
Devotion to craft and attention to detail including typography and form, layout, and polish of final product(s) |

Experiment 1 (25 points)

- | | |
|-------|--|
| # / 5 | <u>Critical Thinking</u>
Original and creative thinking, depth of investigation, research, and clarity of post-analysis |
| # / 5 | <u>Response</u>
Appropriateness of final project to original intention, problem, or question |
| # / 5 | <u>Presentation</u>
Public speaking, presentation design, and visual documentation of your work and process |
| # / 5 | <u>Visual Quality</u>
Devotion to craft and attention to detail including typography and form, layout, and polish of final product(s) |

Experiment 2 (25 points)

- | | |
|-------|---|
| # / 5 | <u>Process</u>
Iteration, risk-taking, and refinement of ideas and skills towards your final project |
| # / 5 | <u>Critical Thinking</u> |

Original and creative thinking, depth of investigation, research, and clarity of post-analysis

/ 5

Response

Appropriateness of final project to original intention, problem, or question

/ 5

Presentation

Public speaking, presentation design, and visual documentation of your work and process

/ 5

Visual Quality

Devotion to craft and attention to detail including typography and form, layout, and polish of final product(s)

Guest Lectures (10 points)

/ 10

Guest Lectures

Students are required to attend all CD lectures throughout the Fall term. A 200-word response should be submitted for each lecture attended, along with screenshots of what you are discussing in your response.

Peer critique (20 points)

/ 10

Tone and frequency

Enthusiasm and responsiveness to others' work, demonstrated care for other students' intellectual and creative development

/ 10

Language

Consistent use of the language of design in both describing and critiquing other students' work, including vocabulary and design-specific references

Class schedule

Cohort-wide activities are in italics

Week 1: 9/3

All-cohort introduction

All-section introduction

In-section exercise (who are we?)

regroup

Week 2: 9/10

Research and Form

Exercise 1: Time

All-section discussion

Small group meetings

CD Lecture Series Guest Lecture

Week 3: 9/17

Research and Form

Exercise 2: Space

Small group meetings

Week 4: 9/24

Research and Form

Exercise 3: 256

Small group meetings

Week 5: 10/1

Research and Form

Exercise 3: 256

Begin Experiment 1

Individual meetings

Week 6: 10/8

Experiment 1

Small group meetings

CD Lecture Series Guest Lecture

Week 7: 10/15

Experiment 1

Individual meetings

Week 8: 10/22

Experiment 1

Small group meetings

CD Lecture Series Guest Lecture

Week 9: 10/29

All-section: Experiment 1 review

Week 10: 11/5

Experiment 2

Small group meetings

CD Lecture Series Guest Lecture

Week 11: 11/12

Experiment 2

Individual meetings

Week 12: 11/19

Thesis fair: Experiments 1 & 2

11/26 Fall break - NO CLASS

Week 13: 12/3

Experiment 2

Small group meetings

CD Lecture Series Guest Lecture

Week 14: 12/10

Experiment 2

Individual meetings

Week 15: 12/17

Experiments 1 & 2

All-section: final review

Communication Design Anti-Racism Pledge

In the Communication Design program, we are committed to creating a more inclusive, equitable and anti-racist community. We must continue to advance our teaching pedagogy and expand our curriculum to address issues of white supremacy, racial discrimination and other forms of systemic oppression. As part of our Communication Design Anti-Racism Pledge:

The Communication Design Program Commits to the following:

- 1—Providing historical context for a diverse and international student body that addresses the history and legacy of racism in the United States and how it influences dynamics of power, classroom discussions and our ability to create socially conscious and ethical design work.
- 2—Challenging and responsibly expanding the design canon to include voices and narratives outside of solely Eurocentric views, and will work towards providing a range of design histories that broaden the scope of who has contributed to our discipline.
- 3—Creating more open classroom and faculty meeting atmospheres that honor a diversity of ideas, perspectives, voices, and opinions to ensure that no one's voice is devalued or diminished.
- 4—Exploring new terrain and learning new bodies of knowledge, along with our students, in order to implement systemic changes within our community and curriculum.
- 5—Supporting students to have thoughtful, challenging, inclusive dialogue in their classrooms and establishing inclusive learning spaces that support equity, respect, and thoughtfulness.
- 6—Actively invite guest speakers, critics, workshop facilitators of diverse backgrounds, with different ways of working and thinking (racial, ethnic, gender, cultural, socioeconomic, disability, sexuality, etc.)

We support and advocate for the needs of all CD students, staff and faculty of color regardless of ethnicity, race, disability, gender or sexual orientation. We are committed to building an ongoing list of resources that include anti-racist pedagogy, and we invite all members of our community to contribute any additional resources to cd@newschool.edu.

Resources

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

[The University \(and associated\) Libraries](#)

[The University Learning Center](#)

[University Disabilities Services](#)

If you are a student with a disability/disabled student, or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Student Disability Services (SDS) at studentdisability@newschool.edu, or 212-229-5626, to coordinate all reasonable accommodation requests.

The New School Food Assistance

More information on food assistance and additional resources can be found [here](#).

Making Center

The Making Center is a constellation of shops, labs, and open workspaces that are situated across the New School to help students express their ideas in a variety of materials and methods. We have resources to help support woodworking, metalworking, ceramics and pottery work, photography and film, textiles, printmaking, 3D printing, manual and CNC machining, and more. A staff of technicians and student workers provide expertise and maintain the different shops and labs. Safety is a primary concern, so each area has policies for access, training, and etiquette with which students and faculty should be familiar. Many areas require specific orientations or trainings before access is granted. More information can be found at: [https:// makingcenter.parsons.edu/](https://makingcenter.parsons.edu/)

The Design Lab

The Communication Design Lab (10th Floor, 2 West 13th Street) is a specially designated space available to all Communication Design students. Here, you can work, find inspiration, and produce projects for your classes. The Design Lab houses the CD Library and the CD Paper Store, and is the home of the CD Tutors for your coding needs. Please check the CD App for more information.

Health and Wellness

Additional services and support available to New School students: <https://www.newschool.edu/campus-community/health-wellness-support/>

Grading standards

This class is focused on concept and process, both of which are visible in your work. Your grade for projects and for the course will communicate to you whether you have demonstrated that you have mastered the thinking and making necessary for being self-directed in your work.

A [≥ 97.5]: Work of exceptional quality, which often goes beyond the stated goals of the course

A- [≥ 92.5]: Work of very high quality

B+ [≥ 90]: Work of high quality that indicates higher than average abilities

B [≥ 87.5]: Very good work that satisfies the goals of the course

B- [≥ 82.5]: Good work

C+ [≥ 80]: Above-average work

C [≥ 77.5]: Average work that indicates an understanding of the course material; passable Satisfactory completion of a course is considered to be a grade of C or higher.

C- [≥ 72.5]: Passing work but below good academic standing

D [≥ 67.5]: Below-average work that indicates a student does not fully understand the assignments.

Your work adheres to each project's guidelines, but you have not demonstrated original thought or depth of understanding of the concepts presented in class. You are present in class but have not participated in class discussions.

F [0.0]: Failure, no credit

Grade of W

The grade of W may be issued by the Office of the Registrar to a student who officially withdraws from a course within the applicable deadline. There is no academic penalty, but the grade will appear on the student transcript.

The deadline for withdrawal occurs in mid-November for the autumn semester and mid-April for the Spring semester. Please consult the academic calendar for official deadlines:
<https://www.newschool.edu/registrar/academic-calendar/>

Unofficial Withdrawal (Grade of Z)

This grade is to be assigned to students who have *never attended or stopped attending classes*. Exceptions can be made if the student has completed enough work to warrant a grade (including a failing grade), and arrangements have been made with the instructor(s) and the Dean's Office prior to grade submission. The Z grade does not calculate into the student's GPA. Though a Z grade does not have a failing penalty it still carries a myriad of consequences for students on visas or receiving financial aid. Only issue the Z grade when a student meets the above criteria.

Grades of Incomplete

The grade of I, or temporary incomplete, may be granted to a student under unusual and extenuating circumstances, such as when the student's academic life is interrupted by a medical or personal emergency. This mark is not given automatically but only upon the student's request and at the discretion of the instructor. A Request for Incomplete form must be completed and signed by the student and instructor. The time allowed for completion of the work and removal of the "I" mark will be set by the instructor. Work must be completed no later than the seventh week of the following fall semester for spring or summer term incompletes and no later than the seventh week of the following spring semester for fall term incompletes. Grades of "I" not revised in the prescribed time will be recorded as a final grade of F by the Registrar's Office.

This mark is given only upon the student's request and at the discretion of the instructor with approval from the BFA CD Director/Associate Director. If an Incomplete is given for a prerequisite course, a student may not register or continue in courses that depend on that prerequisite course.

Initiating a Request for Incomplete

Before the last day of class, a Request for Incomplete form must be completed by the instructor, and submitted to the BFA CD Director/Associate Director. Approval is not automatic and is at the discretion of the BFA CD Director/Associate Director.

If the request is approved, the student has 21 calendar days past the official end date of the semester to submit work to the instructor. A student may request an extension within the 21 calendar day period by writing to the instructor AND the BFA CD Director/Associate Director. At that time, the student will be granted an extension to complete work no later than the seventh week of the current semester. A student may not request a partial extension (e.g. an extension of one week, etc.). If an extension is given for a prerequisite course, this automatically means that a student may not register or continue in courses that depend on that prerequisite course.

Grades of "I" not revised in the prescribed time will be recorded as a final grade of "F" by the Registrar's Office. Thus, a student that does not request an extension and does not submit work, or a student that requests an extension and does not submit work will automatically receive an "F".

Grade Appeals

Students may appeal a grade per the policies set forth in the Academic Catalog. Until the appeal process is completed, the original grade will be used to determine whether a student may proceed into their next-level Communication Design courses. Students who initiate a grade appeals process for a failed/incomplete/unsatisfactorily-completed prerequisite course should have no expectation of immediately continuing into courses which depend on a passing grade of that prerequisite course.

Canvas and other online tools

Use of Canvas, Slack, Dropbox Paper, and other online tools will be an essential resource for this class. Students should have notifications on for Slack and follow instructor guidelines. If you need to be absent from class meetings, it is your responsibility to review the class site and make up the necessary work to be aligned with the class at the next session.

Electronic Devices

The use of electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops, cameras, etc.) is permitted when the device is being used in relation to the course's work. All other uses are prohibited in the classroom and devices should be turned off before class starts.

Responsibility

Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent. Late assignments, failure to complete the assignments for class discussion and/or critique, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions, presentations and/or critiques will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

No Late Work and Missed Critiques

Work that is submitted past the assignment due date, with no communication with faculty prior to the deadline, will result in automatic failure for the assignment. For work presented in a final or midterm critique, absence at critique will result in automatic failure for the assignment.

Active Participation and Attendance

Class participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, assignments, projects, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, active participation in group work, and attending synchronous sessions regularly and on time.

Parsons' attendance guidelines were developed to encourage students' success in all aspects of their academic programs. Full participation is essential to the successful completion of coursework and enhances the quality of the educational experience for all, particularly in courses where group work is integral; thus, Parsons promotes high levels of attendance. Students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly and in compliance with the standards stated in this course syllabus.

While attendance is just one aspect of active participation, absence from a significant portion of class time may prevent the successful attainment of course objectives. A significant portion of class time is generally defined as the equivalent of three weeks, or 20%, of class time. Lateness or early departure from class may be recorded as one full absence. Students may be asked to withdraw from a course if habitual absenteeism or tardiness has a negative impact on the class environment. I will assess each student's performance against all of the assessment criteria in determining your final grade.

Communication Design Attendance Policy*

In order to foster a studio learning environment where we all learn from peers and through dialogue, timely and regular attendance is an expectation for all Communication Design students. Students who are not present in class are unable to meet the learning outcomes of a Communication Design course. Thus, it is an expectation of the program that students attend all classes. We recommend that students reserve the use of absences for unexpected situations.

Should students need to miss class for personal reasons, students are allowed the following number of absences: For classes meeting once a week, students are allowed 2 absences. For classes meeting twice a week, students are allowed 4 absences. Any absence beyond the allowed absences will result in an automatic failure (F) for the course.

A student is deemed tardy if a student fails to arrive within 15 minutes past the beginning of class. 2 tardies will result in an automatic absence. A student who arrives an hour past the beginning of class will be deemed absent. Per Parsons policy, faculty are asked to notify the student's advisor and program director if the student has missed a significant portion of class time: 2 absences for a once/week class or 4 absences for a twice/week class.

** All courses will follow the COVID testing and result scenarios outlined here. Faculty will work with students to continue to hold class and share knowledge via Zoom during various potential isolation and/or quarantine events. In light of the pandemic, accommodations to the attendance policy will be made in a case-by-case scenario at faculty discretion. Students will not be penalized for missing class due to illness. In the event this happens, a doctor's note is not required.*

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found on the university website under Policies: A to Z. Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the Learning Center's website.

The New School views "academic honesty and integrity" as the duty of every member of an academic community to claim authorship for his or her own work and only for that work, and to recognize the contributions of others accurately and completely. This obligation is fundamental to the integrity of intellectual debate, and creative and academic pursuits. Academic honesty and integrity includes accurate use of quotations, as well as appropriate and explicit citation of sources in instances of paraphrasing and describing ideas, or reporting on research findings or any aspect of the work of others (including that of faculty members and other students). Academic dishonesty results from infractions of this "accurate use." The standards of academic honesty and integrity, and citation of sources, apply to all forms of academic work, including submissions of drafts of final papers or projects. All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the standards of academic honesty and integrity. Please see the complete policy in the Parsons Catalog.

Intellectual Property Rights

The New School (the "university") seeks to encourage creativity and invention among its faculty members and students. In doing so, the University affirms its traditional commitment to the personal ownership by its faculty members and students of Intellectual Property Rights in works they create. The complete policy governing Intellectual Property Rights may be seen on the university website, on the Provost's page.

Student Course Ratings (Course Evaluations)

During the last two weeks of the semester, students are asked to provide feedback for each of their courses through an online survey. They cannot view grades until providing feedback or officially declining to do so. Course evaluations are a vital space where students can speak about the learning experience. It is an important process which provides valuable data about the successful delivery and support of a course or topic to both the faculty and administrators. Instructors rely on course rating surveys for feedback on the course and teaching methods, so they can understand what aspects of the class are most successful in teaching students, and what aspects might be improved or changed in future. Without this information, it can be difficult for an instructor to reflect upon and improve teaching methods and course design. In addition,

program/department chairs and other administrators review course surveys. Instructions are available online here.

Communication Design App

Information about upcoming CD Lectures, events from AIGA NY/TDC, the CD Library, and the CD Paper Store can be found on the CD App: <https://cdparsons.glideapp.io/>

To install the app on your phone:

For iOS users:

1. Visit the link in Safari, tap on the "Share" icon located at the bottom of the page
2. Tap the "Add to Home Screen" button
3. Tap the "Add" button at the top right corner of the screen

For Android users:

1. Tap on the notification banner at the bottom of the page (alternatively, you can tap the "Add to Home Screen" option inside the menu at the top right corner of the screen)
2. Tap the "Add" button on the modal