



SYLLABUS

FALL 2011 MICHAEL J. HILDEBRAND

OFFICE HOURS : TUE & THUR 7-8

MICHAEL@KILLINGCLIPART.COM

IL460 ILLUSTRATION 5: VISUAL ESSAY; PORTFOLIO & PRESENTATION

Students will focus on creating a professional body of work reflective of their personal and artistic interests in preparation for graduating and seeking work in their field.

GRADING

These courses involve of both in-class and out-of-class assignments. Out-of-class projects will be graded on research (including sketches and visual reference), composition (the design of the picture plane), communication (whether or not your image reads as you intended it to), technique (your use of the various art media), & personal development.

Additionally, participation in critiques, adherence to deadlines, and attendance will be factored into the final grade. Every absence sets a student back dramatically.

ATTENDANCE

There is no penalty for a single absence. // The semester's final grade is lowered by a letter each for the second and third absence. // Upon a fourth absence, the student is automatically failed. // There is no such thing as an excused absence. Save your single absence for an emergency. // If you come to class late, return from lunch late, or leave early, you will be marked as tardy. You can receive multiple tardies for a single class.

// Three tardies equals one absence.



PROFESSIONALISM

Late work is lowered 1 letter grade per week after deadline.

// A project will be reduced by one letter grade for late or incomplete thumbnails or sketches. // When size or format is specified, projects not meeting those requirements will be reduced by one letter grade. // All projects will be turned in for final review on the last day of class. // If you wish to rework any projects, these will be viewed on the final day of class, and may be reconsidered for a grade. Please provide the original piece for comparison. Grade penalties from late work cannot be raised.

PARTICIPATION

All students are expected to participate meaningfully in critiques, discussions, and in-class exercises. You will receive a Participation grade at the end of the semester equivalent to one project.

Please make sure that your cell phones are turned off during class. If you have an ongoing family emergency (meaning birth, death, or catastrophic illness), you may turn your phones to vibrate.

GRADES

A // Exemplary work, professionally acceptable

B // Solidly good work

C // Acceptable work, meets assignment expectations

D // Flawed, does not successfully meet expectations

F // Failing grade, work is unacceptable



HEALTH & SAFETY

All students must comply with health and safety regulations. Of particular relevance to this class will be the disposal of art materials. The classroom is provided with a sink, but only water should be poured down the sink's drain. All other materials should be collected for appropriate processing. You will be required to have an MSDS (material safety data sheet) with any and all materials you bring to class. MSDS sheets can be found online at DickBlick.com. Keep the sheets with your materials when you bring them to class. Some materials require latex gloves, goggles, or even masks. If you're using such materials you will be required to take such safety measures in class.

LECTURES

Each student is expected to attend at least three artist's lectures this semester. These may include events outside the MCA Lecture series, with permission. Each lecture attended should be documented by posting a short reaction piece (around 250 words long), along with any images or links you find relevant.

REQUIRED TEXT

The Graphic Artists Guild Handbook of Pricing & Ethical Guidelines (13th Edition) I have not reserved this book at a local store, because it is much cheaper online. If this presents a problem for you, let me know. You are required to have a copy by 9/8.



PROJECTS

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PROJECT 1 : BLOG

A web presence is an absolute necessity for the modern Illustrator. It is highly recommended that you get a web page as soon as possible. A regularly updated blog is also advisable, and extremely easy to set up. For this class, you will be expected to maintain a blog documenting your research and development as an artist. You will be expected to post an entry to your blog at least once a week on whatever you are working on that week. These posts can include sketches, pieces in progress, writings on your subject, or on your artistic influences, or anything that is relevant to your work as an illustrator.

PROJECT 2 : *The STATE of the UNION*

Review the work you have created in the past three years, both in Illustration classes and out. Answer the following questions on your class blog. Post one section a day for the next week. Answer thoroughly and thoughtfully. Make the posts attractive and interesting: illustrate them with relevant images, and link to informative materials. You will receive a grade on each post.

POST 1 (*due 8/25*)

What media do you like working in? List them.

What media do you hate working in? Why?

What media would you like to try, but haven't?



List three non-Illustration classes that have influenced you and/or your work positively. Explain. // How has the work of your peers influenced you and your work? // What sort of subject matter do you like to create work about? // What sort of subject matter do you like to read about? // What kind of music do you like? Why? // What non-art related interest/hobbies/skills do you have? // What is something that you like that nobody else likes? // If you had the run of the world's museums, what three works of original art would you like to own?

POST 2 *(due 8/26)*

Of the artwork that you have done, what is your personal favorite piece? Why do you like it? // What piece do other people like most? Do you agree? Why do you think they like it? // What piece surprised you the most? // Choose five doodles or sketches that you like as much as any of your finished pieces.

POST 3 *(due 8/27)*

Describe your typical creative process, from getting an assignment to finished piece. // Describe what you think your creative process should be like. // Research and describe a professional creator's creative process (this person need not be a visual artist. Dancers, writers, film directors, and so on, may have equally illuminating views on creation).

POST 4 *(due 8/28)*

List ten illustrators whose work you admire, or whose career you would like to emulate. Provide images. // Who are their clients? What sort of work do those clients look for?



Go to a bookstore with a large magazine section, like Barnes & Noble or Borders. Find at least ten magazines that you think you could work for. Consider both the content of the magazine and the type of illustration, if any, that they use. Record the names of the art director and any assistant art director's listed, and their contact information. // If you were starting your own magazine and your livelihood depended on it selling well and your sanity depended on it being something you wanted to spend all your time on, what would it be? What sorts of writers and artists would you hire? What subject matter would it deal with? How would you want it to look? // List ten non-magazine clients that you would like to work with. Why are these dream clients? Find and record their contact information.

POST 5 (*due 8/29*)

If you had to spend the rest of your life illustrating one book, what would it be? Why? // If you could go apprentice with any two artists in the history of the world, who would they be? Why? // If you were banned from the art world, but could have any career you wanted that wasn't in art, what would it be? Why? // Describe the project you would propose under the following circumstances. Describe the project in detail: what would it be, how would you spend the money, how would you schedule the time allotted, and how would the work be presented upon completion?

- 1.) You have one month and one thousand dollars (all of which must be spent on art expenses).
- 2.) Six months and ten thousand dollars.
- 3.) One year and one hundred thousand dollars.



POST 6 (*due 8/30*)

Review your responses to the above questions.

What sort of an illustrator are you?

What sort of career do you want to have?

Does your present body of work reflect your aspirations?

Could it do so more strongly?

List ten images/themes/techniques/subjects/formats that your portfolio needs in order to become more in line with your aspirations.



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PROJECT 3 : ILLUSTRATION 1: WHAT'S MISSING

Create an illustration in response to the State of the Union. Consider what you have declared/discovered about yourself and your identity as an illustrator. You may have uncovered areas or subjects that are very important to you but which are not represented in your portfolio. This piece can be the first attempt to remedy that. Subject, technique, size, and format are open. Critiqued 9/8, due 9/15.

PROJECT 4 : VISUAL ESSAY 1

You will create two visual essays this semester. Each will consist of a written element, multiple images, and a format intended to support communication of your visual essay's thesis. For your first visual essay, select one of the two subjects below:

A. CURRENT DEBATE

List 10 subjects open to current debate. Examples might be as weighty as abortion, animal rights, civil rights, the death penalty, genetic engineering, or as light as "wet or dry barbecue?" The issues may be local, global, or personal. Select the subject that seems most compelling to you as an illustrator. Create a mind-map of associations based on this subject.

Write a 500-word opinion statement on your topic.

Your opinion may be pro, con, or passionately ambivalent, but it should be informed. Cite at least 4 sources in support



of your statement. Add to your mind-map, based on the research for your statement. Generate ten tangents or sub-sections to your subject. Prepare at least 50 thumbnails illustrating the tangents or sub-sections developed from your mind-map.

B. DOCUMENTARY ILLUSTRATION

Choose a place, event, or organization in Memphis to document. Examples might include a nursing home, a night club, a Buddhist temple, a political protest, or a cooking class. Think of yourself as a journalist: find a subject which interests you and which you think other people would be interested to know more about. Through a series of images, tell us as much as you can about your subject. What is going on? Who is involved? Why?

Write a 500-word statement detailing your proposed subject. Be sure that your subject is accessible to you: don't just barge into a kindergarten and start drawing the kids. They will call the police, and I will not bail you out.

Visit your location every week. Prepare drawings on location. You may take photo-reference if you want. Write about your experiences there. Interview at least two people regarding your subject. Make sure you sketch your interviewees. The location drawings and interview sketches may be done with the idea of using them as your final pieces, or as preparation for works executed in your studio.

Subject Statements due 9/15. The completed visual essay is critiqued on 10/6, and will be turned in on 10/13.



PROJECT 5 : VISUAL ESSAY 2

The subject and format of Visual Essay 2 will be decided based on the needs of your portfolio and the successful completion of Visual Essay 1. This visual essay will be critiqued 11/17 and will be turned in on 12/1.

PROJECT 6 : NPDA POSTER

It's back. Dates to be announced.

PROJECT 7 : ILLUSTRATOR RESEARCH PROJECT

Research 45 contemporary Illustrators. Resources for finding contemporary Illustrators include Drawn! The Blog(drawn.ca), The Society of Illustrators Annual Showcase, and the Communication Arts Illustration Annual. Research due: 10/13

PAPER

After you have researched all these Illustrators, select one as the subject for a paper. At least five sources must be cited in your bibliography. Use at least two non-internet sources. Select a living artist, as you must contact them by email and arrange an interview (note that some artists will not respond, give yourself time to discover this and find a new subject). Write a 2000 word paper about the artist: who they are, who their influences are, what their art training was like, what sort of work they do and for what sorts of clients, how they promote themselves, and what sort of techniques they use. The final paper should be emailed to my MCA account the morning of the presentation.



PRESENTATION

Prepare a 15-minute slide or Powerpoint presentation based on your paper. It should include at least twenty images of your artist's work, and at least five of an artist who influenced your artist. You may wish to also include images that set the time and place that your artist worked in.

Paper and Presentation due: 12/3

PROJECT 8 : 25 BASIC PROMO PACKAGES

Research how 5 different artists promote their work. There are books on this subject, and design magazines often run annual issues on designer and illustrator promotions.

Design, prepare, and send out 25 promotional packages to 25 clients with whom you would like to work. The packages can take any form you wish, so long as they can be mailed. They must include: examples of your illustration work, a stamped response postcard, and your contact information, including your web presence.

Please note that this project is worth as much, gradewise, as either of your Visual Essays, and is just as important. These promos must look absolutely professional, and be absolutely captivating. Put a lot of work into them. The packages must be addressed, stamped, and ready to mail in order to receive a passing grade.

Research due: 10/20 // Promo Packages due: 12/18



PROJECT 9 : CORE PORTFOLIO

One of the key tools of the professional illustrator is the core portfolio. While the web makes it easy to share everything you have ever done with anyone sufficiently interested to look through it all, you need a strong, concise collection of images to snag their attention in the first place. This should be group of images that clearly communicates who you are and what sort of illustration work you do. Every image should be one that you are proud to be represented by. Developing and tending the core portfolio is an ongoing concern of nearly all professional illustrators.

9/1: Bring into class every piece you have created over the past four years that you like at all. This may include work from non-Illustration classes, personal work, and even nice sketchbook pages. There should be a minimum of 20 pieces. Looking through these images, and using the State of the Union as a guide, we will attempt to establish a preliminary core portfolio. Any shortcomings in this portfolio's ability to represent you as an illustrator should be addressed by the proposed Semester Project.

12/1: Having completed the Visual Essays and your Basic Promotions Pack, review the preliminary Core Portfolio. Bring into class 15-25 images that you are now considering for your Core Portfolio.

12/8: Based on the previous week's discussion, post good, clean scans of the 15-20 images that will make up your Core Portfolio to your blog before class meets.



SCHEDULE

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ILLUSTRATION 5 SCHEDULE

- 8/23** Mind-Mapping / Begin State of the Union.
- 9/1** State of the Union Due.
Discuss preliminary Core Portfolio.
- 9/8** P&E Guidelines Open Book Quiz 1.
Illustration 1: What's Missing critiqued.
- 9/15** Visual Essay 1 Subject Statement due.
Illustration 1: What's Missing due.
- 9/22** P&E Guidelines Quiz 2: Chapters 1 and 2.
- 9/29** P&E Guidelines Quiz 3: Chapter 3.
- 10/6** Visual Essay 1 critiqued.
- 10/13** Mid-Term.
Illustrator Research due.
Visual Essay 1 due.
- 10/20** Advising.
P&E Guidelines Quiz 4: Chapters 4, 5, and 6.
Promotions Research due.
- 10/27** P&E Guidelines Open Book Quiz 5.
- 11/17** Visual Essay 2 critiqued.
- 11/24** Thanksgiving Break.
- 12/1** Illustrator Paper and Presentation due.
Discuss proposed Core Portfolio.
Visual Essay 2 due.
- 12/8** Final Class.
Promo Packages due, mailed.
Final Blog Post: Core Portfolio.