

**College of San Mateo**  
**Official Course Outline**

1. **COURSE ID:** DGME 103    **TITLE:** Fundamentals of Two-Dimensional Design    **C-ID:** ARTS 100  
**Units:** 3.0 units    **Hours/Semester:** 40.0-45.0 Lecture hours; 24.0-27.0 Lab hours; and 80.0-90.0 Homework hours  
**Method of Grading:** Grade Option (Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass)
  
2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**  
**Degree Credit**  
**Transfer credit:** CSU; UC  
**AA/AS Degree Requirements:**  
    CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5d. Career Exploration and Self-Development
  
3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**  
**Catalog Description:**  
    This course emphasizes critical examination of basic principles and elements of design. Students acquire fundamental design and compositional skills, while exploring basic theoretical and practical concepts of 2-D design. Students apply visual solution strategies to solve design problems in a series of projects. A materials fee as shown in the Schedule of Classes is payable upon registration.
  
4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**  
    Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:
  1. Discuss, critique and evaluate their own compositions and the work of others using the appropriate vocabulary and terminology.
  2. Design and assemble a body of two-dimensional work that utilizes the design process.
  3. Independently produce visual compositions that successfully incorporate the basic elements and principles of two-dimensional design.
  
5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**  
    Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:
  1. Discuss, critique and evaluate their own compositions and the work of others using the appropriate vocabulary and terminology.
  2. Design and assemble a body of two-dimensional work that utilizes the design process.
  3. Independently produce visual compositions that successfully incorporate the basic elements and principles of two-dimensional design.
  
6. **COURSE CONTENT:**  
**Lecture Content:**
  1. THE PHYSICS OF LIGHT, THE BIOLOGY OF VISION
    - A. Test your visual acuity: a series of visual eye openers
    - B. How we see: the properties of light, the nature of vision, and why it matters
  2. IMAGE COGNITION AND COMPREHENSION
    - A. How the brain "sees" and why it matters to a visual artist
    - B. Eye traces, fMRI's, and what they reveal about how the brain decodes images; applying that knowledge to 2D design
  3. COMMUNICATION
    - A. Expression of content and meaning
    - B. Levels of communication: representational, symbolic, abstract
    - C. Symbolology
    - D. Photography / Illustration / Video
    - E. Typography
    - F. Time and motion
  4. THE DESIGN PROCESS
    - A. Problem definition
    - B. Research
    - C. Ideation, thinking strategies
    - D. Development
    - E. Refinement, analysis

- F. Production
- G. Presentation
- 5. SEEING FORM AND SPACE
  - A. Form and content
  - B. Form conveys meaning
  - C. The nature and quality of space: active, passive, neutral
  - D. The shape of space: formats
  - E. Formats and media
- 6. DESIGN ELEMENTS
  - A. The dot
  - B. Line: imagined and concrete
  - C. Shapes positive and negative
  - D. Geometric and organic shapes
  - E. Surface activity: texture and pattern
- 7. COLOR AND COLOR RELATIONSHIPS
  - A. Hue, hue relationships
  - B. Saturation, saturation relationships
  - C. Value, value relationships
  - D. Temperature, temperature relationships
  - E. Color's use in form and space
  - F. Coding with color
- 8. GESTALT PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN
  - A. Equilibrium; symmetry and asymmetry; felt axis, horizontal referents
  - B. Continuation
  - C. Closure
  - D. Figure and ground
  - E. Proximity; separation and grouping
  - F. Isomorphic correspondence
  - G. Similarity and anomaly (grouping and contrast)
- 9. BREAKING SPACE
  - A. Use of negative space
  - B. Passive and dynamic space
  - C. Edge tension
- 10. IMPLYING DEPTH
  - A. Layering
  - B. Overlap and transparency
  - C. Scale
  - D. Perspective
  - E. Atmospheric perspective/value relationships
  - F. Texture
- 11. COMPOSITIONAL STRATEGIES
  - A. Contrasts
  - B. Tension
  - C. Grouping and separation
  - D. Alignments, masses, and voids

**Lab Content:**

During the lab portion of the course, students will work on series of digital art and design projects under the guidance of the instructor. All of the course projects contain technical and conceptual components in order to help students develop their software skills and understanding of design fundamentals. In addition students will learn new technologies such as laser cutting and engraving.

**7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Lab
- C. Critique
- D. Discussion
- E. Field Trips
- F. Guest Speakers
- G. Other (Specify): Lectures with supporting visuals and audio. Reading and practical textbook assignments

to be completed and turned in. Projects created by the instructor to test student comprehension will be completed by the students and turned in. Students will discuss material presented in lectures and critique each other's work using newly acquired design terminology. Lectures by visiting artists and field trips will be organized by the instructor to enhance learning experience.

#### 8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

##### **Writing Assignments:**

Students write very brief amounts of subordinate copy for some projects.

In lieu of writing assignments students do utilize critical thinking skills, applied creativity, and visual storytelling strategies. They must convey a message using typography, images, colors, formatting and layout decisions. It is not writing by any means, but it certainly is the expression of meaning, albeit much more abstractly.

##### **Reading Assignments:**

Reading and practical textbook assignments to be completed and turned in.

#### 9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Field Trips
- C. Group Projects
- D. Homework
- E. Projects
- F. Quizzes
- G. Research Projects
- H. Letter grades are determined by analyzing the quality of execution, attention to detail, level of craft, successful application of design principles, effectiveness of final solution on projects and assignments.

#### 10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Poulin, Richard. *The Language of Graphic Design Revised and Updated: An illustrated handbook for understanding fundamental design principles*, 2nd edition ed. Rockport Publishers, 2018
- B. Samara, Timothy. *Design Elements, Third Edition: Understanding the rules and knowing when to break them - A Visual Communication Manual*, ed. Rockport Publishers, 2020

**Origination Date:** November 2021

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**Effective Term:** Fall 2022

**Course Originator:** Vera Fainshtein