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Co-/Prerequisites: Junior standing or permission of the instructor.

Course Description: Since the invention of the printing press, Western societies have tended to view the written word as the optimal communication mode. Indeed, as a history of book burnings and bannings attest, the written word has long been viewed as dangerously powerful. And it is highly likely most students in this class have received far more instruction in writing, spelling, and grammar than in communicating via images.

What roll does the visual play in communications? How has that roll changed over the centuries? What do we need to know about visual communication to be effective communicators in this age of digitization? What theories and empirical strategies have been used to understand visual communications?

This course is an attempt to even the score between words and images. It is important to understand, however, that our emphasis on visual messages DOES NOT mean that words are less important. The most powerful, meaningful, and culturally important messages combine words and pictures in mutually respectful ways.

Course Goals:

- Gain an understanding of the physiological and cognitive aspects of seeing.
- Learn theories scholars have developed to explain visual communication.
- Learn to analyze and critique visual messages.
- Develop skills in producing visual messages.

Required Text:

Lester, Paul Martin. 2011. *Visual Communication: Images with Messages*, 5th Edition.
Wadsworth/Cengage Learning.

Materials posted to Moodle site for the class.

Course Format: Lecture, discussion, application, research and critique of visual communications.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Class meetings will include lecture, discussion, and a variety of exercises and activities. Attendance, preparation, and participation are required.

Tentative Evaluation Plan:

Visual Analysis Assignment	15%
Visual Production Assignment	15%
Quizzes/Exams	15%
Term Project w Presentation	45%
Class Participation	10%

The visual analysis exercise requires a 3-5 page typed, double-spaced analysis of a visual message of your own choosing, which must be submitted with your paper. Be prepared to share your analysis with the class.

The visual production assignment requires you to produce a visual message in print/poster form—something that can be carried to class and shown without aid of technology.

The term project can be either analysis or production oriented. An analysis project might focus on a carefully defined category of visual messages, e.g., car ads in young men's magazines. A production project might be your own extended visual examination of a subject. In both cases, your final report must include both text and images. You will report on your progress several times throughout the semester, and we will spend the last few weeks of class hearing class presentations of your project.

Students taking the course for graduate credit must complete a research-based visual communication case study. It is to be presented to the class in "lesson" format; that is, you are to "teach" your project to the class.

Policies: See Syllabus Addendum

Course Topics/Schedule:

- Week 1: Introduction: syllabus, requirements, APA & AP style
Writing Exercise: Where is meaning?
- Week 2: Seeing; How We See
Reading: Lester, Chs. 1 & 2
- Week 3: Visual Theories; Persuasion
Reading: Lester, Chs. 3 & 4
- Week 4: Stereotypes; Visual Analysis
Reading: Lester, Chs. 5 & 6
DUE: Visual Analysis Exercise
- Week 5: Roundtable: Semester Projects
Application: Typography
Reading: Lester, Chs. 7
- Week 6: Application: Graphic Design & Info Graphics
Reading: Lester, Chs. 8 & 9
- Week 7: Application: Cartoons
Reading: Lester, Ch. 10
DUE: Visual Production Assignment (to be shared with class)
- Week 8: Application: Photography & Movies
Reading: Lester, Ch. 11 & 12

Week 9: Application: Movies & TV
 Reading: Lester, Ch. 12 & 13

Week 10: Spring Break – No Class

Week 11: Application: Computers & the Web
 Reading: Lester, Ch. 14 & 15

Week 12: Knowing & Seeing
 Reading: Lester, Ch. 16
 Undergraduate Presentations

Week 13 - 15: Student Presentations
 Final Projects Due: My office by noon.