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Fall 9-1-2021

GDSN 149A.50: Digital Imaging I

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Recommended Citation

Costello, Jordan Alec, "GDSN 149A.50: Digital Imaging I" (2021). *University of Montana Course Syllabi*. 12477.

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Course Syllabus - GDSN 149A Digital Imaging I

Course Information:

GDSN 149A, Section 50, Digital Imaging I, 3 credits, prereq: none, Fall 2021

This is a fully online, asynchronous course.

Instructor Information

Instructor: Jordan (Jo) Costello

Contact: jordan.costello@mso.umt.edu *Email is the best way to reach me.*

Office Hours: Thursdays 12-1 pm via Zoom (<https://umontana.zoom.us/j/4062436833>)

Instructional Assistants: TBD

Course Description

Offered autumn and spring. Introduction to the fundamentals of digital imaging and composition principles, primarily using Adobe Photoshop. Emphasis on formal 2D design components, typography, and digital compositing. Consideration of historical and contemporary approaches.

Gen Ed Attributes: Expressive Arts Course (A)

Overview

GDSN 149A Digital Imaging 1 provides a foundation in the fundamentals of graphic design, digital imaging, and composition principles. We will primarily explore these fundamentals using Adobe Photoshop.

This course is a revision of "MART 111: Intro to Photoshop" and includes many of the same concepts and assignments. This course is intended for people **who have not taken** the Intro to Photoshop course in the past.

Students are presented with visual problems to solve in a clear sequence of exercises and projects to introduce the formal components of the 2-D picture plane, including; unity, balance, shape, line, emphasis, figure/ground relationships, repetition, scale, and color. We will also explore typography, digital compositing, logo design, and animation using Photoshop. We will work to develop fluency in the handling of digital processes and an increased awareness of craftsmanship. In addition to emphasizing formal graphic design strategies, the course introduces aspects of visual literacy and content development.

No prior experience is required, only a dedication to growing as an artist and learning in a self-motivated environment are necessary.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

- Utilize best practices for file management.
- Understand the concept of resolution.
- Understand learning strategies for successful online learning.
- Demonstrate understanding and ability to apply basic concepts of color theory. Demonstrate awareness of the potential for color to express meaning, narrative, or content within visual art.
- Utilize basic design and composition theory in their work.
- Demonstrate familiarity with basic concepts, vocabulary, and design terminology.
- Competently work in Photoshop to create a range of original art, photo manipulations, and typography work.
- Understand and utilize concept development within their design work.
- Have the ability to discuss and critique others' work and their own via knowledge of design and color theory.
- Create basic animations in Photoshop.
- Seek their own answers to technical skill questions by utilizing online searches and learning through video tutorials.

Course Format

GDSN 149A is a fully online course. A wide variety of resources are provided to help you along your way to completing the required assignments and projects.

The Course Website

The website is your go-to spot for the majority of course content. Go here first for each assignment and watch all of the videos and tutorials suggested for each session. You can also find assignment details, guest artist videos, helpful tips, links, and other still image artists' work for inspiration.

Moodle

This is where your assignments are turned in and where important assignment information lives. All assignments must be uploaded to the course Moodle to receive credit.

Having issues with Moodle? The [UM Online Tech Support](#) staff can help 8 am - 5 pm Mountain Time, Monday - Friday.

Required Materials

You will need access to Adobe Photoshop Creative Cloud. You are not required to purchase any books for this course.

Photoshop is a powerful processing/robust software program. Please review the [minimum system requirements to run Photoshop](#) on your own computer before you sign up for a Creative Cloud subscription.

If your computer doesn't match the minimum requirements and you're on campus, you don't need to buy a new computer! The Mansfield Library has several computers with Photoshop installed and a full Mac lab with Adobe CC for student use is in Fine Arts Room 208.

You must also always back up your work to multiple storage devices. You can access 50GB of free storage through your free [UM Box account](#). You may also want to purchase an external hard drive for backing up your work. You can also use Google Drive, Dropbox, or Adobe Creative Cloud Files to backup and store your files.

Photoshop Plans

You will need to purchase a [subscription to Adobe Photoshop](#) for this course. When purchasing Photoshop, there are several different payment plans. Choose the plan that will be best for your courses and personal needs.

With the "Single App, Monthly Plan" for \$31/month, you can cancel anytime without being charged a fee. Depending on how long you want to keep Photoshop, this might be a better option for you.

The "Photography Plan" for \$10/month might be a good option for you if you want Photoshop for an entire year, but if you plan on canceling your plan when the course ends, please know that you will be charged a fee that would be for 50% of the remaining yearly price. For example, if you canceled the Photography Plan immediately after this course, the fee would be around \$55. The Photography Plan is a better option if you want Photoshop for a full year.

You can also purchase the entire Creative Cloud, which includes all of the Apps, for \$20/month under the "Students & Teachers" tab. This is a good option if you have multiple School of Visual and Media Arts courses and need access to multiple Adobe programs. Keep in mind that this plan will also charge a cancellation fee if you cancel before the year is over.

Recommended Materials

A graphics tablet is also strongly recommended when working in Photoshop. More information about graphics tablets is available in the [Additional Tools & Apps section](#).

Class Policies

Communication – Very Important!

All communications for the course must take place via your University of Montana email address. I cannot contact personal email addresses, so it is essential for you to regularly check your UM email to be successful in this course. I will not check Moodle comments or notes on assignments – all information or questions **must be communicated via University of Montana email.**

The online learning environment presents some special concerns and challenges in communication. Please don't be afraid to be in touch with concerns or questions – better to address any issues quickly and directly than to let them build up over time. Though there is a chance we may never meet face to face – remember when you email, I am a real person. I will always address you with respect in our communications and request the same of you.

A note about due dates: if something comes up and you know that you will not be able to submit an assignment by the due date, contact me as soon as possible. I will be willing to work with you if I know ahead of time, rather than after-the-fact.

Like you, I have many responsibilities. I will work to respond as quickly as I can, please plan for a minimum of 24 hours response time when you email on weekdays. Messages sent **after 5 pm will not be read until the following day. I cannot always respond to emails on the weekends. If you email on the weekend, expect a response on Monday.** If you haven't heard back after 48 hours, please don't hesitate to send a follow-up message.

Course Workload

When you complete the course, you will earn 3 university credits. For each assignment, you should budget a minimum of 2 hours of work per credit earned (6 hours per assignment). The time it takes each of you to complete your assignments will vary. You may find that some assignments require more effort, but if you put in that effort, it will be noticed and rewarded.

Assignments & Projects

Please see the assignment pages in Moodle each week for detailed information each week. All assignments must be submitted via Moodle. *All assignments are due on Moodle by 11 pm on their due dates unless otherwise noted.

For all project assignments, the student will find the conceptual entry point and be responsible for acquiring all source material. Once completed, you will submit to the Upload Area in Moodle. After reviewing the projects, I will upload them to student project galleries on Moodle.

*Please note – assignments are subject to change, due to software updates, holidays, or other adjustments. You will be alerted via University of Montana email to any significant changes.

The assignments are listed below:

Section 1: Fundamentals

- **Assignment 1: File Management (14 points):**
 - A1 Course Introductions | 2 points
 - A1 Student Contract | 2 points
 - A1 Quiz: "Course Basics" | 4 points
 - A1 Project: File Management | 6 points
- **Assignment 2: Program Basics (14 points):**
 - A2 Quiz: "Design Fundamentals Chapter 2: Unity" | 4 points
 - A2 Project: Getting Ready | 10 points
- **Assignment 3: Working with Layers (15 points):**
 - A3 Project: Layered Collage (10 points) + Artist Statement (2 points) | 12 points
 - A3 Peer Review 1: Part 1 | 3 points
- **Assignment 4: Design Concepts: Part 1 (17 points):**
 - A4 Quiz: "Design Fundamentals Chapter 3: Emphasis + Focal Point & Chapter 5 Balance" | 4 points
 - A4 Project: Design Concepts Part 1: 12 Designs | 10 points
 - A3 Peer Review 1: Part 2 | 3 points
- **Assignment 5: Design Concepts: Part 2 (13 points):**
 - A5 Project: Design Concepts Part 2: Album Art | 10 points
 - A5 Peer Review 2: Part 1 | 3 points

Section 2: Techniques

- **Assignment 6: Design Concepts: Part 3 (17 points):**
 - A6 Quiz: "Design Fundamentals Chapter 13: Color" | 4 points
 - A6 Project: Design Concepts Part 3: Color Photobooth | 10 points
 - A5 Peer Review 2: Part 2 | 3 points

- **Assignment 7: Expressive Color (12 points):**
 - A7 Project: Expressive Color (10 points) + Artist Statement (2 points) | 12 points
- **Assignment 8: Emotional Impact (15 points):**
 - A8 Project: Emotional Impact (10 points) + Artist Statement (2 points) | 12 points
 - A8 Peer Review 3: Part 1 | 3 points
- **Assignment 9: Typography (13 points):**
 - A9 Project: Typography | 10 points
 - A8 Peer Review 3: Part 2 | 3 points
- **Assignment 10: Logo (10 points):**
 - A10 Project: Logo | 10 points

Section 3: Applications

- **Assignment 11: Graphic Elements (15 points):**
 - A11 Project: Graphic Elements (10 points) + Artist Statement (2 points) | 12 points
 - A11 Peer Review 4: Part 1 | 3 points
- **Assignment 12: Compositing (20 points):**
 - A12 Quiz: No Logo/Adbust Reading | 4 points
 - A12 Project: Compositing | 10 points
 - A11 Peer Review 4: Part 2 | 3 points
 - A12 Peer Review 5: Part 1 | 3 points
- **Assignment 13: GIF Animation (13 points):**
 - A13 Project: GIF Animation | 10 points
 - A12 Peer Review 5: Part 2 | 3 points
- **Assignment 14: Self-Portrait (12 points):**
 - A14 Project: Self-Portrait (10 points) + Artist Statement (2 points) | 12 points

Course total: 200pts

Grading & Assessment:

70% of Final Grade: Projects

Projects are longer, sustained pieces that bring together several concepts and skills. They employ technical, formal, and conceptual skills.

10% of Final Grade: Quizzes (based on reading assignments and comprehension)

There are regular reading assignments of pertinent chapters from design textbooks. These readings are deceptive, as they seem fairly short with lots of illustrations. You must read them carefully and completely, however, to fully understand the subtleties

and nuance. Each set of readings will be accompanied by a short quiz that verifies the completion and comprehension of each reading. These quizzes are “open book” and you may take them multiple times to improve your grade.

15% of Final Grade: Peer Review

For commentary on the work of your peers, and to be interesting and helpful, your participation in peer review critiques is vital. There will be five such peer reviews in our semester. Complete and submit your assignment on time, and be ready to make comments and give responses to your peers.

5% of Final Grade: Artist Statements

To accompany some projects, students write a brief artist statement describing their themes and process. Crafting an Artist Statement helps an artist, and their viewers, to understand the ways in which formal design choices like media, color, scale, and emphasis, combined with subject matter, work together to form content.

Grading Scale

Points (decimals will be rounded to the nearest whole number) will translate into the following letter grade:

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	86-89
B	83-85
B-	80-82
C+	76-79
C	73-75
C-	70-72
D+	66-69
D	63-65
D-	60-62
F	0-59

Grading Policy

Grades will be based primarily on the student's ability to follow directions, demonstrate technical skills, utilize the design elements and principles, and develop strong concepts and ideas. This will take into account visual expression areas such as the use of color, composition, and balance as well as personal expression areas. We will take into account your application and consideration of design and composition concepts introduced in the course, as well as your personal vision and conceptual foundations for your work. Points will be given for proper and punctual delivery of the .PSD /.JPEG files and project organization.

There will be a total of 200 points for the course, making it easy to track the progress of your grade. Check your grade regularly throughout the semester. **Please keep in mind that your grade will be represented as a number of points, not a percentage.**

Peer Reviews

Over the course of the semester, there will be five Peer Reviews. The Peer Reviews contain two parts that you will need to participate in -- Part 1 (the phase where you create your post) and Part 2 (the part where you assess your peers).

During Part 1, you will create a new discussion where you will upload the .jpg file from the corresponding assignment. This Peer Review submission is separate from the individual assignment upload areas, where you will also upload your .jpg file.

You will have until the first due date to create your discussion with your .jpg file and brief description of your work (sometimes this will be a formal Artist Statement). You will have until the second due date to assess your peers' work. Specific directions are given in the Peer Review section.

IMPORTANT: Because the second part of the Peer Review is dependent on everyone completing the first part, it is imperative that you complete Part 1 on time. Failure to submit your .jpg file to the Peer Review and failure to complete the assessment before the due date will result in a 0 for the entire Peer Review. You must wait for the allotted timeframe to begin Part 2. This will ensure that everyone who posts Part 1 on time will have a fair chance to get reviewed by everyone in their group.

Grade Feedback

Grade feedback will be provided in a rubric format. The gradebook is located inside of "Course Dashboard" in the bottom right of the main menu. If you click on the links to each assignment, you will see your grading rubric. If you would like detailed feedback on your assignments, please don't hesitate to email your instructor (jordan.costello@mso.umt.edu).

Upload Notes

Please **do not** upload a zipped folder unless otherwise instructed. The uploads on Moodle may take a while, **please be patient and plan accordingly**. Make sure to save your submissions and double-check that your submission was added to Moodle. **Projects submitted late because of Moodle errors will be treated the same as any other late submission.**

Late Submission Policy

IMPORTANT: Projects handed in after the due date and time will have points deducted from the assignment. Those that are uploaded late, but within 24 hours of the due date will automatically lose 2 points. For those uploaded after that, the number of deducted points will be at the discretion of the instructor. **Late submissions will not be accepted for quizzes or Peer Reviews.**

Revisions

It is possible to earn back missed points if you submit project revisions. Project revisions must demonstrate a clear improvement to earn points. The number of points received for revisions is at the discretion of the instructor. **Important! Points deducted for late work, missing .jpg files, and Peer Reviews cannot be recovered.**

Original Work Requirement

All assignments you turn in for this course must be comprised entirely of your own original work, fully created by you. You may use appropriated images from outside sources, but you must manipulate the images to make them your own original work, indeed we study "Fair Use" and copyright issues in our very first unit. Work created for another class may NOT be used in this course and will not receive credit.

Sensitive Subject Matter & Censorship

This course operates under a no-censorship policy, and you should feel free to experiment with challenging topics in your projects. That said - if you submit work with violent or sexually explicit themes, containing hate speech, racial slurs or other sensitive subject matter, I might contact you to request more background information on your choices and to evaluate if your projects violate the University of Montana Student Conduct Code.

Be Kind

Be respectful to each other, help each other, and be considerate in your communications with your instructor. No trolling shared work. Be constructive with any critical feedback you give.

Incompletes

Students are responsible for completing the required coursework within the time frame of the semester. Students are NOT entitled to an Incomplete grade if the coursework is not completed. Incomplete grades are only given in cases of utmost emergency and are only assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Withdrawals

If you need to drop the course, visit the following link for the official dates and deadlines this semester:

[Calendar - Important Dates and Deadlines](#)

[2021-22 Academic Calendar](#)

Accessibility

We are currently in the process of transitioning the course to increase accessibility for all students. Please be in touch if you have any questions or would like to speak about accessibility concerns. I'm happy to work with you and provide reasonable accommodations.

School Statements

Land Acknowledgement

The University of Montana acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people. Today, we honor the path they have always shown us in caring for this place for the generations to come.

Inclusion Policies

The University of Montana values leadership, engagement, diversity, and sustainability, because our institution is committed to respect, welcome, encourage, and celebrate the differences among us. As members of the University of Montana community, we aspire to:

- Respect the dignity and rights of all persons.
- Practice honesty, trustworthiness, and academic integrity.
- Promote justice, learning, individual success, and service.
- Act as good stewards of institutional resources.
- Respect the natural environment.

The College of the Arts and Media at the University of Montana, has chosen to actively pursue equity and access for all persons. In this charge we will be researching,

planning, and implementing ways in which our culture can be more accessible, inclusive, equitable, sustainable. It is not enough to be anti-bias in principle without being equitable in action. We will implement these actions organized by a group of students, faculty, and staff across the entire College in an ongoing way.

Student Support Resources

Academic Misconduct & Student Conduct Code

This Code of Conduct embodies and promotes honesty, integrity, accountability, and duties associated with citizenship as a student in our community at the University of Montana. This Code exists to protect the interests of the community and dignity of its members, and to challenge those behaviors which are not in accordance with our policies. The [Student Conduct Code](#) is available for review online.

Accommodations

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact the ODE at: (406) 243-2243, ode@umontana.edu, or visit www.umt.edu/disability for more information. Retroactive accommodation requests will not be honored, so please, do not delay. As your instructor, I will work with you and the ODE to implement an effective accommodation, and you are welcome to contact me privately if you wish.

The Writing and Public Speaking Center

[The Writing and Public Speaking Center](#) provides one-on-one tutoring to students at all levels and at any time in the writing process. Visit now. Visit often. We're ready when you are.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

The University of Montana is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, visit the [Mental Health Resources webpage](#).

Stay Connected

Please join SVMA social media to stay informed about events and happenings in our school.

- [SVMA Instagram](#)
- [SVMA Facebook](#)