Digital Design Practicum

SYLLABUS, SPRING 2021

CEP 473 (3 credits)
University of Washington
Department of Urban Design & Planning

Max Guther

Meeting	Mondays & Wednesdays, 1:30 – 3:50pm, Remotely via Zoom
Instructor	Peter Dunn Doctoral Candidate, Interdisciplinary PhD in Urban Design & Planning ptdunn@uw.edu
TA	Lamis Ashour Doctoral Student, Interdisciplinary PhD in Urban Design & Planning lamis21@uw.edu

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

Welcome to CEP 473, Digital Design Practicum! In this class you will learn basic skills with software tools for graphic design and communication, with a focus on their applications in urban design and planning. Besides learning the tools themselves, you will also be introduced to foundational principles of graphics. Our goal is to communicate ideas about people and place effectively and beautifully. This class is only an introduction, but it will prepare you to continue to learn digital design independently.

This class is adapted with permission from a previous version of Digital Design Practicum taught by Mackenzie Waller, a Lecturer in the UW College of Built Environments. Thank you!

We will use the following software:

- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe InDesign
- SketchUp 3D Modeler
- SketchUp LayOut

At the completion of this class, you will be able to:

- Perform basic operations in the specified software with confidence.
- Independently seek additional help when needed.
- Produce professional deliverables that demonstrate principles of excellence in visual communication.
- Evaluate styles, techniques, and quality of graphics used in urban design and planning.

Class Structure

This is a lab-based class in which you will learn by doing. We will use brief lectures and readings to introduce important concepts. The majority of class time will be divided between hands-on guided demonstrations of the software and open lab time for you to work on your assignments. Although you will author your assignments individually, you are encouraged and expected to work together with your peers in a supportive learning community.

NORMS & EXPECTATIONS

These are not normal times

We recently marked one year since the University of Washington first closed campus and shifted the vast majority of its classes to online instruction in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Since then, we have (sort of) gotten used to Zoom classes. But these are not normal times. The dispersion of students and teachers from the shared space of the classroom to our separate homes is a reminder that each of us has always come to class from a different place, with our unique perspectives and histories. The threat of the virus has reminded us of the vulnerability of our bodies. The absence of so much physical contact has reminded us of our need to connect with one another.

Only you know what this crisis means for you. In our class, it means that expectations are different. It is OK to expect less of ourselves in terms of the traditional metrics of productivity and quality. At the same time, we must expect more of ourselves as we take care to approach one other with kindness, respect, and humanity.

Student Responsibilities

To make this class as a success, your responsibilities are to:

- Actively attend each class meeting.
- Take class assignments seriously; complete assignments on time and to a high standard.
- Respect your classmates and their work.
- Think about how *you* can get the most out of this class.

If you do all of these, you will learn a lot, you will get a good grade, and you might even have fun.

Instructor Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the instructor and TA mirror yours: to arrive prepared for all classes; to provide timely and constructive feedback on assignments; to create an environment in which all students can learn; and to take your academic goals, your work, and the class material seriously.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The University of Washington's Department of Urban Design and Planning, the institutional home of this class, has included the following statement as part of its mission:

> Urban Design and Planning is striving to shift the culture of planning to engage and enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion, not just within the academic context, but also in the profession. We aspire to drive change not merely by responding to trends, but also by leading the change we seek.

Further, the department has defined the following three values:

> *Equity*: Striving for fairness of results or outcomes, rather than equal access to opportunity.
>
> *Diversity*: Recognizing and supporting differences that create vibrant and healthy communities
>
> *Inclusion*: Creating an environment where everyone can participate and everyone belongs.

I wholeheartedly agree. In this class, we will value and honor diverse experiences and perspectives and strive to create a welcoming and respectful learning environment for all students. In this class, we will also respect the general goals of academic freedom and ensure that they are maintained. Differences of opinion, critical analysis, and honest feedback are welcomed, and should be expressed in a manner that supports the learning process.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Hardware

Access the following hardware is required:

- A **computer** during class and to complete your assignments.
- Reliable high-speed **internet access**.
- **An external hard drive** for backing up your work. 8GB or so will be plenty for this class, but larger is better for you to keep all of your current and future work together in one place.
- A **mouse** is strongly recommended. For laptop users, this is a small investment in your comfort and productivity.
- A **webcam** and **microphone** are strongly recommended. If for whatever reason circumstances prevent you from speaking and appearing on camera in class, please let the instructors know and we can make appropriate accommodations.
- **Paper and drawing instruments** for making hand sketches of your designs. Trace paper is especially helpful, and is inexpensive. A variety of drawing tools (pens or pencils in various weights and colors) is nice if you have them, but is not necessary for this class.
- **A scanner or camera** (your phone is fine) to take and upload digital pictures of your hand sketches.

If you do not have access to the appropriate computing hardware, there are several resources at the university that can help get you properly equipped.

- The Student Technology Loan Program has laptops available for loan: https://stlp.uw.edu/
- The College of Built Environments has laptops with all appropriate CBE software available for loan (see more info below): https://be.uw.edu/spaces/computing/student-loaner-program/

If you are worried that your computer does not have sufficient processing power or memory to use the graphics programs in this class, consider using the CBE remote desktop option discussed below.

Software

Access to the following software is required:

- **Canvas, Zoom, Miro**. These are free and supported by the university. You are surely already familiar with Canvas and Zoom. Miro is a web-based tool for sharing work with the class, and we will learn it together in the first week of class.
- **Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, and Acrobat.** If you want to use these on your own computer, you will need to purchase a license for Creative Cloud. The student license is $19.99 per month and requires an annual contract. Note that the license includes lots of

programs, but you'll only need to install these for class. https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html.

- **SketchUp Pro** (including 3D modeler and 2D LayOut). If you want to use these on your own computer, you will need to purchase a license. The free version of SketchUp is insufficient for this class. The student license for SketchUp Studio (which includes more than you need) is $55 per year. https://www.sketchup.com/plans-and-pricing#for-higher-education

If you cannot afford or do not want to purchase this software for your own computer, you have two other options:

- **CBE loaner laptop.** These are available through CBE Computing and come loaded with all of the CBE design software, including everything needed for this class. Supplies are limited, and my understanding is that students who do not already have their own computer are prioritized. (If you have a computer and want the software, see the remote desktop option below.) More info at https://be.uw.edu/spaces/computing/student-loaner-program/
- **CBE remote desktop through VPN**. This requires a couple steps to get set up, but once you do, you can use one of the powerful desktops in the Digital Commons, with all necessary software, from your home computer. Some students have experienced connectivity issues, but others have reported no problems. More info at https://be.uw.edu/spaces/computing/software-application-server/

Note that the CBE Citrix Application Server is not helpful for this class, since it does not include the applications we will use.

Readings

Required readings and optional additional resources will be made available through the class website. There is no class textbook and you will not need to purchase any text.

WORK & EVALUATION

Assignments

You will complete six assignments for this class, listed below with their primary applications. Detailed instructions will be provided in class and on Canvas.

- A1 Circulation Diagram (Illustrator)
- A2 Axonometric View (SketchUp 3D)
- A3 Plan View (Sketchup LayOut)
- A4 Infographic (Illustrator)
- A5 Edited Scene (Photoshop)
- A6 Portfolio (InDesign)

Team Trivia

Our class includes a bit of friendly competition. Most Mondays we will begin class with team trivia. Questions will be based on lectures and readings from the previous week, and perhaps other sources too. Your trivia performance has zero impact on your grade. However, there will be prizes for the winners.

We will create trivia teams in the first week. Your trivia teammates will also be a resource for you during the quarter. You are encouraged to work together with your trivia team during open lab time and to ask your teammates for help when you are stuck.

Participation

If you attend class regularly, participate in team trivia, demonstrate effort and engagement with assignments, and help create a productive learning environment for your peers, you will get full points for participation.

Grade

Your final grade will be calculated based on your assessed performance on the above elements according to the following weights:

90%	Assignments (6 × 15% each)
10%	Participation

Percentages will be converted to a grade on the 4.0 scale as follows:

A: Excellent		**B:** Very Good		**C:** Competent		**D:** Passable	
99%+	**4.0**	89%	**3.4**	79%	**2.4**	69%	**1.4**
98	**4.0**	88	**3.3**	78	**2.3**	68	**1.3**
97	**3.9**	87	**3.2**	77	**2.2**	67	**1.2**
96	**3.9**	86	**3.1**	76	**2.1**	66	**1.1**
95	**3.8**	85	**3.0**	75	**2.0**	65	**1.0**
94	**3.8**	84	**2.9**	74	**1.9**	64	**0.9**
93	**3.7**	83	**2.8**	73	**1.8**	63	**0.8**
92	**3.7**	82	**2.7**	72	**1.7**	62	**0.7**
91	**3.6**	81	**2.6**	71	**1.6**	61	**0.7**
90	**3.5**	80	**2.5**	70	**1.5**	60	**0.7**

The instructor reserves the right to deviate from this scale as circumstances warrant. Final scores below 60% will not receive credit for the class.

POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance at every class meeting is expected. If for any reason you are unable to attend class, please inform the instructors in advance.

If your personal circumstances prohibit you from attending class regularly, please reach out to me and I will be happy to discuss an accommodation.

Readings

The course website includes a list of readings and resources for each week. These are meant to be helpful *during* the week they are listed, and you should consult them in parallel with that week's class lectures and lab activities. While some of these materials are resources for you to refer to as needed, others you are recommended to read in full. These have been chosen to be accessible and useful, but when you are crunched for time you should prioritize your assignments over the readings.

Any of the readings listed in previous weeks are fair game for team trivia.

Assignment Submission and Deadlines

Assignments must be submitted digitally on the class Canvas site *and* posted to the class Miro board by the assignment deadline.

Respect deadlines. In professional contexts, deadlines are very often not flexible. Learn now to meet them. Late work will be penalized 10% of total available points for each day (or portion thereof) after the deadline it is submitted. Assignments received more than 7 days after the deadline will not receive credit.

If an *extraordinary* circumstance prevents you from meeting a deadline, please discuss the possibility of an accommodation with the instructor as soon as possible. You will not receive an accommodation for lost or damaged files.

Assignment Revisions

You may make revisions to any assignment. In order to revise an assignment, you must first email the T.A. with an assignment revision plan describing specifically how you propose to improve your work. The T.A. must then approve this plan. Once approved, you should revise your work accordingly and resubmit on Canvas. Revisions are due no later than one week after initial grades are posted. Late revisions will not be accepted. Revisions will be re-graded without penalty; you have the potential to earn full credit for the assignment. (However, deductions due to late initial submission will continue to apply.)

Accommodations and Support

I am committed to creating an environment in which all students are included and have the opportunity to learn.

If you require an accommodation for a religious observation or practice, please let me know. The UW's policy, including more information about how

to request an accommodation, is available at https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/. Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the form at https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/.

If you would benefit from accommodations for a disability, let me know and we will work with Disability Resources for Students to ensure you get the most out of this class. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, me, and DRS. You can reach DRS at 206-543-8924 (V) or 206-543-8925 (TTY). More information is available at disability.uw.edu. Please note that I am unable to provide accommodation for a disability without prior notification from DRS.

Finally, life as a student can be challenging even in the best of times, and these are not the best of times. If any personal circumstances are preventing you from bringing your best self to class, please do not hesitate to reach out to your community for support. The university has many amazing resources available to you, and I too am ready to support you in whatever way I can.

Conduct and Academic Integrity

As always, students are expected to adhere to the UW's code of conduct. Be respectful of each other, and think carefully about your role in making our class a safe and welcoming space for everyone.

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in all of their work. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. In the first weeks of class, we will discuss some concerns about intellectual property and copyright infringement particular to graphic design work. If you are not sure what is OK, just ask!

Course Feedback

There is no need to wait until course evaluations at the end of the quarter to provide feedback to the instructors. If you have any concerns or suggestions related to teaching, assignments, organization, classroom environment, or other elements of the class, you are welcome and encouraged to let me know at any time. This gives me the opportunity to make improvements as we go.

If you prefer to give feedback anonymously, you may do so online here: https://forms.gle/jHJgoWqkrfymepEM6. This form will remain open all quarter, and I will see responses as soon as they are submitted.

You may also raise any concerns directly with the chair of the Department of Urban Design and Planning, Christopher Campbell (ccamp1@uw)

SCHEDULE

Beginning in Week 2, every class will have open lab time.
Assignments are due at the start of class on the day listed.

	In Class	Deadlines
Week 1		
Monday March 29	Welcome and introductions Learning Miro	
Wednesday March 31	Lecture: File organization, graphic design basics Miro Activity: Trivia Teams	Preliminary Survey
Week 2		
Monday April 5	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe Illustrator Introduce Assignment 01: Circulation Diagram	Select study area
Wednesday April 7	Demo: Adobe Illustrator	
Week 3		
Monday April 12	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe Illustrator	
Wednesday April 14	Lecture: Cartography	
Week 4		
Monday April 19	Team Trivia Demo: SketchUp 3D Modeler Introduce Assignment 02: Axonometric View	A1: Circulation Diagram
Wednesday April 21	Demo: SketchUp 3D Modeler	
Week 5		
Monday April 26	Team Trivia Demo: SketchUp LayOut Introduce Assignment 03: Plan View	
Wednesday April 28	Demo: SketchUp LayOut	A2: Axonometric View

	In Class	Deadlines
Week 6		
Monday May 3	Team Trivia Demo: SketchUp LayOut with Adobe Illustrator	
Wednesday May 5	Lecture: Data visualization and infographics Introduce Assignment 04: Infographic	
Week 7		
Monday May 10	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe Illustrator	A3: Plan View
Wednesday May 12	Demo: Adobe Photoshop Introduce Assignment 05: Edited Scene	
Week 8		
Monday May 17	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe Photoshop	A4: Infographic
Wednesday May 19	Demo: Adobe InDesign Introduce Assignment 06: Portfolio	
Week 9		
Monday May 24	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe InDesign	A5: Edited Scene
Wednesday May 26	Open lab day	
Week 10		
Monday May 31	*Memorial Day – no class*	
Wednesday June 2	Gallery walk and celebration	A6: Portfolio