2009 Academic Summit

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Educational Program Summary Outline

University of Colorado
School of Architecture and Planning

Program Summary
Introduction to Environmental Graphic Design, Upper Level Elective
• Reserved for upper, junior and senior year students
• Students are introduced to basic graphic design skills (concept, typography, symbolism, color, etc.)
• Course was designed as an introductory class to enhance the Design Studies Major of the architectural department
• Students are shown how they can apply their architectural design and communication skills to the profession of Environmental Graphic Design.
• Only EGD course at the University of Colorado School of Architecture and Planning.

Faculty
George Lim, Adjunct Professor

Course Goals
This Class is presented as an introduction and survey of the principles and profession of EGD. It is constructed to be a meaningful component of the University of Colorado School of Architecture and Planning and to compliment the classes already offered in the architecture and planning department. This course is to be considered a lecture/lab class. Students will produce three projects that will reflect their base understanding of the fundamentals of EGD and introduce to them the concept of communicating, telling stories, and guiding the public visually in the built and natural environment.

• Initiate an architectural EGD vocabulary.
• Introduce the understanding of the architectural scale.
• Use of typography in the environment.
• Understanding the human factors of information in the physical space.
• Interact with other students in discussions and critiques.
• Utilize verbal, writing and visual presentation skills.
• Clearly explain the concept in the three-dimensional realm.
• Use dimensions and measurable scales to convey sizes.
• Learn about basic sign materials and fabrication methods.
• Understand the process of research and analysis, schematic design, design development and documentation.
Lesson Plan Outline

Exercise 1: Setting type in a large scale and putting it up in an open environment.
This class exercise is to get students to start looking at and setting type larger than 12pt. The students are to set their first name centered horizontally onto an 8.5x11 piece of paper at a two (2") inch cap height. They will select a typeface that best visually describes them (i.e. if they are quiet, soft and shy then they may want to choose a serif font that is thin or light or if the student’s personality is more loud, assertive or aggressive they may want to select a san serif font in bold or black. After the students’ names have been typeset and evaluated, they will then increase it up four times to an eight (8") inch cap height. Depending on their name some students may need to tile two or more 8.5 x 11 print outs together.

Parameters:
• Must be an actual typeface.
• How they increase it is up to them.
• Must be exactly 8” in height.
• Variety of expression is important.

Learning Objective
This exercise is to get students to recognize the importance of kerning letterforms in a large scale.

Assignment 1: Dimensional Letterform
Start with the total number of students in your class. Have the students come up with a phrase that will include the total number of letters equal to the amount of students in the class. For example, a class of 15 may come up with the phrase “RELIGION DIVIDES.” Once a phrase has been decided upon cut up the phrase and have the individual letters put into a hat. Each student will select a letter out of the hat at random.

Using their given letterform, students are to create a three-dimensional, sculptural interpretation of the chosen phrase with the following constraints:
• Must start with an actual typeface.
• Must have some physical reference to the “edges or limits” of a 10” x 10” x 2” volume.
• Can be made from any material to fit the concept.
• Must clearly and visually represent your concept of the chosen phrase.
• Must use all surfaces.

Evaluation Criteria:
• Concept.
• Verbal presentation.
• Written concept brief.
• Balance of typographic fidelity and sculptural presence
• Three-dimensional richness.
• Craftsmanship.

Presentation Format:
Express your design in a well-crafted model of any media.

Learning Objective:
The project is to work with an overall team concept while expressing their own individual concept.
Assignment 2: Name Sign/Self Portrait
The students must use their legal name, either first, middle or last, to design a front entry sign of a business that he or she would love to own and operate if they had the opportunity to do so. They should pick a business that characterizes their personality, interests and design aesthetic preferences. (i.e. If they chose to create a sign for a bar, the student should conceptualize what type of bar it would be, such as a sports bar, music bar, or thinking bar etc. The bar should also reflect their personality and the type of people they would want to see patron the establishment).

Parameters:
• Students must use their legal name.
• Variety of visual expression and illustration to convey the concept and students’ personality is encouraged.

Evaluation Criteria:
• Concept.
• Verbal presentation.
• Written concept brief.
• Three-dimensional richness.
• Quality of design intent illustration of the sign.

Presentation:
The Name Sign/Self Portrait should be presented in scaled drawings with full design intent, scaled measurements, and material specifications.

Final Report
This course outline was successful in introducing to the class a sense of how to think and work in the profession of Environmental Graphic Design, by demonstrating a real EGD process experience. Everyone was pleased with the results and students achieved many of the learning outcomes. This course showed how graphic design and graphic designers could be a big part of place-making and to inspire students to learn more on their own. I believe this course makes them become better conceptual problem solvers and, perhaps, much more aware of their community, current affairs and physical environment.
Samples of Student Work – Dimensional Letterform
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Samples of Student Work – Name Sign Self Portrait
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Conclusion

The Academic Workshop served as a call to action for a number of SEGD initiatives that are being developed because of the success and maturity of the academic programs involved in EGD. Theses include:

- An Academic Advisory Committee made up of academics, professionals and board members that can provide recommendations on how schools can meet EGD competencies, evaluate and assist new programs and create new resources to support school curriculums.

- A revised grant program that focuses on a combination of ongoing resource support for schools and experimentation grants for new programs.

- A peer reviewed journal profiling achievements in academia including projects, articles, research reports and thesis studies.

- A yearly SEGD workshop focused on providing academic resources, inspiration and review for schools interested in developing EGD programs.

Next year’s workshop will be in Washington D.C. If you would like to be involved in the event or receive additional information on SEGD Academic Programs go to the SEGD website at [www.segd.org](http://www.segd.org) or contact Craig Berger at craig@segd.org.