

NEWSPAPER DESIGN

J 464/564 | WINTER TERM | STEVEN ASBURY

Winter 2012, Tu-Th, 4:00-5:50 p.m.

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Books

The Newspaper Designer's Handbook 6th ed.,
Tim Harrower, (McGraw-Hill, 2007).

Note: If you already have the 5th edition, that should
work fine.

Amazon.com is offering free 2-day shipping for students.

Software/Labs

The majority of the coursework will require you to
create pages using Adobe InDesign and/or Quark XPress.
It is very important that you take the time to learn these
programs early in the course as several class exercises
will require you to use this software to create pages "on
deadline."

Course overview

The class will cover ...

- News design: Learn how to manage breaking-news design. Plus, how to make ordinary pages look stunning, design effective centerpieces, and plan news packages.
- Features design: How to think outside the grid and approach design from an artistic perspective. Learn how to create cutouts and other special effects.
- Sports design: How to keep sports pages as exciting as the game.
- Typography: Your computer comes with hundreds of fonts. Learn how to choose the right typeface and how to get professional-looking typography.
- Photography: How to get better photos on your pages

– from the photo assignment to the editing process. Understand image formats (tiff, PSD, gif, jpeg) and what works best. How to crop a photo for greater impact, color-correction, and how to set up images for the printing press.

- Color: Basic color theory, how to build a color palette and how to get sophisticated, professional-looking results.

Philosophy

News design is about **information** as much as **decoration**. Think of yourselves as visual journalists, not just decorators. You'll be the newsroom experts on how to combine text, graphics and photos to explain stories to readers.

Grading

Grades will be based on the following formula:

Participation/Discussion *	25%
Design projects/in-class exercises	25%
Quizzes	25%
Final project **	25%

* At the beginning of each class, you'll be asked to show an example of an outstanding page design. This can be a page from a local paper, a magazine, or found online.

Attendance is mandatory, and it's important that you contribute to class discussions and critiques. I'll also be looking for improvement in your designs each week.

** At the end of the term you will turn in a portfolio of at least 10 newspaper pages in tabloid size. It can include pages from class exercises, but the section flags and design style should be unique to your fictional newspaper. Your portfolio should include at least one front page, inside page, sports page, food page and feature page. This should be a professional-looking presentation you could take to a job interview.

Design projects

Grading for design projects will be based on the same criteria that newspapers use. This includes ...

- **Typography.** We'll discuss this in depth the second week of class. I expect to see professional-looking typography in all your projects.
- **Readability.** Remember that we're designing for newspapers — not magazines. Printing on newsprint is like putting ink on wet sponge. Small reverse type (white letters on black backgrounds) and small type in color won't print well on newspaper printing presses.
- **Visual communication.** How well does the page explain the story? How well does the design communicate to the reader?
- **Overall aesthetics.** How does it look? Is there a hierarchy of images and headlines?
- **Grammar/spelling.** Readers don't see the difference between errors committed by writers and those from page designers. All your graphics and headlines need to be grammatically correct.

Grading scale for page designs

F - Page is late

D - Page has serious flaws and/or grammatical errors

C - Page is generally well designed, but has some flaws

B - Page is clean, well-designed and some elements exceed expectations for publication.

A - Page goes the extra mile. Designer has met all basic standards AND added extras to enhance readability and overall aesthetics.

Please note that a C is considered the baseline grade. Your work will need to be exceptional to get a higher grade.

For ease of production and printing, all design projects in class will be done on tabloid-sized pages (11x17). You need to bring 2 copies of each assignment to class – one for group critiques and one for the instructor.

Deadlines

In the real world of journalism, a missed deadline by a page designer can cost a newspaper thousands of dollars (overtime paid to the press crew and delivery people and cancelled subscriptions by angry readers). Breaking news, computer crashes, power outages, missing artwork, and late stories happen in newsrooms across the country, but designers are still expected to always make deadline. Except in rare extraordinary circumstances, late work will not be accepted.

Please note that you need to allocate time

for technical problems, closed computer labs, computer problems, printing problems and other contingencies. Late work will NOT be accepted.

Your work needs to be completed before class begins. Assignments that are being printed after class has started will be considered late and will not be accepted.

Attendance

Attendance is required. **In professional journalism, you're expected to show up for work no matter how much partying you did the night before.** Makeup work will be allowed in the case of unavoidable circumstances, but I need to be told about this before the class is scheduled to meet, either in person or e-mail. Acceptable excuses include a religious holiday, family emergency, or a job interview that cannot be rescheduled. Missing classes without a valid excuse will lower your grade.

- Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken daily. The instructor's gradebook is the official record.
- Come to class on time. Being late for class or leaving early will count as partial absence at the instructor's discretion.
- **No missed classes without a doctor's note, proof of a job interview or verification of a family emergency or religious holiday. All other absences will be considered unexcused and result in an automatic, one-letter-grade reduction for the course.**
- Three tardies is considered equal to one class absence.
- Three absences results in failure of the course.
- If a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to contact the instructor prior to the class and be up-to-date for the next class.

Special Needs

If there is any student in this class who has special needs because of a disability of any kind, please see me to discuss it.

Academic dishonesty

You're expected to do your own designing in this class. Copying designs from other publications will result in an F in this course. Important passages in the Student Conduct Code are in the Schedule of Classes.

On the other hand, I encourage you to solicit feedback on your designs from the instructor, other designers and your peers in class. Design should be a collaborative process.

NEWSPAPER DESIGN

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JANUARY

10

INTRODUCTIONS

- Review of class syllabus

BASIC DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Modular design and grids
- Points and Picas
- Content-driven design
- Modular layout, grids
- Dominance
- Pages without art

WORK ASSIGNED

- Read Ron Reason's "Please stop that."
- Read New Rules for Newspapers

WORK ASSIGNED

- Order the Newspaper Designer's Handbook
- Bring an example of newspaper design to class.

JANUARY

12

TYPOGRAPHY

- Postscript vs. bitmap
- Fonts, size, leading,

kerning, alignment

- Serif, transitional, modern (Didone), slab-serif, sans-serif, and novelty typefaces.
- How to choose a font and how to get professional-looking typography
- Designing display headlines
- Using typography in headlines, decks and quotes

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding newspaper design

WORK ASSIGNED

- Study typography handouts from class
- Read Harrower Chapter 1

JANUARY

17

NEWS PAGE DESIGN

- Quiz #1 (Typography)
- Page critiques
- Redesign a national news page.

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding design

JANUARY

19

PHOTOS AND ART

- Color models and formats for images (jpeg, tiff, eps, psd, etc.)
- Resizing images
- Getting good photos into the paper
- Working with photographers
- Good and bad photo assignments
- How to crop a photo for greater impact
- Color-correction and setting up images for the printing press
- Photo ethics
- Stand-alone photos • Color theory
- Color models
- White space
- In-class lab time

WORK ASSIGNED

- Local news page
- Harrower chapters 1-3

WORK DUE

- National news page
- Example of outstanding design

JANUARY

24

CRITIQUE SESSION

- Quiz #2 (layout)
- Local page critiques

WORK DUE

- Local news page design
- Example of outstanding design

WORK ASSIGNED

- Harrower Chapter 4



JANUARY

26

PAGE 1 DESIGN

- Quiz #3 (photos)
- Examples of page one design
- Sidebar types

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding design

WORK ASSIGNED

- Page 1 design

WORK ASSIGNED:

- Harrower - Chapter 4
- Page one design

JANUARY

31

CRITIQUE SESSION

- Page one critiques

WORK DUE

- Page 1 design
- Example of outstanding newspaper design

WORK ASSIGNED

- Harrower - Chapters 5-6
- Read "How to sell more newspapers" at BrassTracks Design.

FEBRUARY

2

CURRENT TRENDS

- New newspaper design
- The future of newspapers

MAESTRO PROCESS

- Maestro process
- Being proactive
- How to draw a map

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding newspaper design

WORK ASSIGNED

- Page 1 design (second version)

FEBRUARY

7

CRITIQUE SESSION

- Page critiques

WORK ASSIGNED:

- Read "New Rules for Newspapers"

WORK DUE

- Page 1 design

FEBRUARY

9

SPORTS PAGES

- Sports design
- Quiz #4 (sidebars and the maestro process, Harrower chapters 4-6.)

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding newspaper design

WORK ASSIGNED

- Sports page

FEBRUARY

14

CRITIQUE SESSION

- Sports page critique
- InDesign tips

FEBRUARY

16

FEATURE PAGES

- Feature design
- Cutouts and other special effects.

WORK ASSIGNED

- Harrower - Chapter 7
- Food page

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding design



FEBRUARY

21

CRITIQUE SESSION

- Food page critiques

WORK DUE

- Food page
- Example of outstanding design.

FEATURE PAGES

- Feature page assignment

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding newspaper design

WORK ASSIGNED

- Feature page assignment

FEBRUARY

23

Guest speaker

FEBRUARY

28

DESIGN

- Feature pages
- Promo design
- How to write effective promos and teasers
- How to approach breaking news
- Resume design

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding newspaper design

WORK ASSIGNED

- Nameplate and promos

MARCH

1

BREAKING NEWS

- Breaking news assignment

MARCH

6

BREAKING NEWS REVIEW

- Group critiques
- Discussion - What worked and what didn't
- Tabloid covers
- Quiz #5

WORK ASSIGNED

- Read Bakersfield Californian Breaks New Ground Again

MARCH

8

FEATURE PAGES

- Feature page design

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding design

WORK ASSIGNED

- Tabloid cover

MARCH

13

CRITIQUE SESSION

- Page critiques

REDESIGNS

- Approaching a redesign

WORK DUE

- Example of outstanding design
- Feature page

WORK ASSIGNED

- Final project

MARCH

15

FINAL PROJECT

WORK DUE

- Final project.

