

APPLIED TYPOGRAPHY

MOLLY HAWTHORNE

molly@digitalcase.net
www.tamutype3.tumblr.com/

OFFICE HOURS

By appointment and for special occasions only

CLASS TIMES

6:30 p.m.–10:30 p.m.
August 25–December 3
Wednesdays, Room 320

SUMMARY

Applied typography provides a foundation to understanding the structure of letterforms along with the context and creativity that shape expressive and experimental type to make letterforms interesting. The course enables students to interpret and flex a variety of guidelines, principles, and processes relative to type design and lettering. Through a series of studio exercises and at home projects that introduce concepts of structure, optical compensation, legibility, formal relationships, and hand skills, students will explore a variety of design problems that hinge upon conceptual approaches to typography that leverage existing skills to negotiate solutions resulting in exemplary craft, solid technique, successful hierarchy, appropriate use of grid structures, etc. Lectures and demonstrations expand exposure to historical, theoretical, and practical uses of type and lettering.

OBJECTIVES

- Expand understanding of the semantics of typographic messages
- Apply existing knowledge of history, theory, technique, and form to projects
- Explore typographic and lettering systems and classification
- Develop understanding of conceptual alphabets
- Learn the complexity of letter structure
- Experiment with contemporary approaches to lettering and type design process
- Customize type for editorial contexts
- Combine custom letterforms with traditional typesetting
- Continue to develop critical thinking, research and writing skills
- Successfully communicate meaning visually
- Demonstrate exemplary digital and hand craft
- The emphasis of the class is typography—not software or artifact format

STRUCTURE

- Three assignments with learning objectives presented in sequential phases
- One final summary presentation
- Emphasis on iterative and exploratory problem solving, idea generation, and skill building
- Dedicated in-class time for individual and group critique, work time, and discussion
- Assigned readings from required, recommended, on-line, or reserve texts
- Emphasis on studio production, sketching, thinking, and project construction/documentation outside of class
- Instructor maintains the right to employ quizzes on typefaces, terminology, readings, lectures, etc.
—especially if overall class participation is lackluster.

MATERIALS

Access to the following:

- Laptop or computer with design software
- Digital camera
- Production materials (xacto, metal ruler, adhesive, etc.)

- Flash drive or hard drive to preserve files
- Dropmark account
- Four color printer or print center

Required for most classes:

- Note taking materials
- Tracing paper and sketch pad
- Pencil and pen
- Sharpie (Fine tipped and thin)
- Calligraphy marker
- Type Specimen Handouts

Any additional items will be listed on class blog project posts.

DIGITAL RESOURCES

Project updates, deadlines and schedules—along with helpful resources and points of inspiration—are listed on the class blog at www.tamutype3.tumblr.com/.

PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

Students must activate and maintain a free Dropmark account with open sharing permissions to a folder designated for this class. Process images and final projects will be uploaded at the instructor's request each week. All imagery must be documented at actual size at a resolution no lower than 300 dpi. The file naming conventions below should be strictly adhered to.

- All process files should be labeled: lastname_projectXX_weekXX
- All final projects should be labeled: lastname_projectXX_final
- All exercises should be labeled: lastname_exerciseXX
- All quizzes should be labeled: lastname_quizXX

Failure to post requested materials by a given due date results in the following:

- Missed exercises and quizzes result in a lower project participation score.
- Missed project posts result in a lower project process score.

Given digital tools available via smart phone and tablet, digital project documentation is easier than ever. With respect to absences, make-up quizzes are at the discretion of the professor. Make-up exercises or progress posts should be posted to Dropbox per blog instructions asap.

EVALUATION

Grading for this course is points based. Major projects are evaluated on multiple criteria:

OBJECTIVES: Meets stated objectives as outlined in each project.

Did the student follow instructions and meet project parameters?

(20 points)

CONCEPT: Exhibits learning through risk taking and considered decision-making.

Did the student problem solve creatively within given parameters and was the concept executed well?

(25 points)

PRESENTATION: Achieves quality and refinement in final presentation with respect to digital and hand craft.

Did the student give special attention to construction, detail, and sense of craft?

(25 points)

PROCESS: Demonstrates lateral thinking and follows intelligent and thorough path from research and concept to refinement and completion. Maintains an up-to-date project documentation account.

Did the student undertake a generative process and consistent level of effort?

Did the student share documentation as requested?

(15 points)

PARTICIPATION: Participates in group critique and articulates thoughtful dialogue with the instructor verbally and in writing. Maintains up-to-date documentation of exercise participation and quizzes.

Did the student contribute to a positive and critical atmosphere while maintaining a professional and respectful demeanor?

Did the student share exercise and quiz results as requested?

(15 points)

All areas will be totaled for a final project grade with 100 points being the maximum possible grade.

GRADING SCALE:

A 90 to 100 points: Excellent (superior effort and results above and beyond)

B 80 to 89 points: Good (significant effort and hard work)

C 70 to 79 points: Average (minimal class requirements met)

D 60 to 69 points: Below Average (below class average expectations)

F 50 to 59 points: Poor (inferior work and attitude)

90% of the final grade is an average of all project scores. The remaining 10% reflects the execution of a final summary presentation and overall course participation. Participation reflects dedication to methodology application, conceptual thinking ability, daily class involvement with contributions that provide insightful and critical feedback, the capacity to grow and show progress, and meeting deadlines. Grades will be discussed on an individual basis by appointment or email only—not in class.

PROJECT RESUBMISSIONS

Any project submitted for final critique is subject to improvements based on instructor and peer critique. Permission for resubmitting projects is at the discretion of the instructor. Grades from resubmissions will be averaged with the original project grade and will be exhibited during the final summary presentation. The appropriate form must accompany the resubmission.

LATE AND INCOMPLETE PROJECTS

Projects that are submitted late or are notably incomplete without permission from the instructor will be reduced one full letter grade each day the project is overdue.

COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Respect your peers, guests, and instructor—keep cell phones off and refrain from texting, instant messaging, and surfing during class unless otherwise specified.

ATTENDANCE

Students who miss class must make up all studio work, exercises, quizzes and process assignments with no extensions granted to project deadlines. If you have a serious illness or need an extended absence from class, email the instructor and Lee Whitmarsh to request special arrangements. At the start of each class, students must sign-in via a paper roster. Failure to sign-in will result in an absence. Please note the following:

ABSENCE: Students may miss class twice. There is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. After the *first absence* students receive an e-mail warning, which is copied to Lee Whitmarsh. After the *second absence* students receive an e-mail and will be contacted by Lee Whitmarsh. Upon a *third absence*, students receive an **F** in the class. Subsequently, students wishing to drop the class will receive a drop/fail.

TARDY: Late by 10 minutes or more (at the start of class or following a break), asleep, disengaged, leaving early without permission, or gross lack of participation. Two tardies of 10 minutes or more equals one absence. A tardy of 60 minutes equals an absence. Two late returns from break of more than 10 minutes equals one absence.

CLASS FINAL: If a student is over 10 minutes late for the final, a full letter grade will be deducted from the final course grade. Absence during the course final will result in automatic failure.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY

Though they might appear similar, plagiarism and appropriation are actually two different practices. While it is true that appropriation involves taking possession of something, like an image, often without permission; it is also true that an appropriated image is not presented as the original. Likely, the appropriation artist desires the viewer to recognize the referenced image as a comment on the original—sometimes using critique, parody or homage—a practice that falls under the realm of “fair use” in copyright law.

Plagiarism is a serious offense and illegal in the context of our nation’s copyright law. Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one’s own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

STATEMENT ON STUDENT BEHAVIOR

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (see Student’s Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct). All students must show respect toward the instructor and the instructor’s syllabus, presentations, assignments, and point of view. Students should respect each other’s differences. If the instructor determines that a student is not being respectful towards other students or the instructor, it is the instructor’s prerogative to ask the student to leave, to refer the student to the department head, and to consider referring the student to the Dean of Students who may consider requiring the student to drop the course. Please refer to pages 42–46 of the Texas A&M University-Commerce Student Guidebook’s Codes of Conduct for details.

STUDENT CONDUCT & CITIZENSHIP

Students are expected, at all times, to recognize constituted authority, to conform to the ordinary rules of good conduct, to be truthful, to respect the rights of others, to protect private and public property, and to make the best use of their time and effort toward the educational process. Within the context of this class, students may be required to find source material for various typesetting exercises. This is intended to create an emotional connection to the work and to keep students engaged in their individual assignments. As such, students may source copy materials that reference or are appropriated from a breadth of authors, historical references, tweets, lyrics, poems, etc. Therefore, students must be mindful of the affect language choice, or author, can have on an audience—which, in this case, includes the instructor and class. Source material should not be purposefully polarizing: violent, overtly sexual, overly political, or in any way derogatory on the basis of race, gender, orientation, etc. At base, be mindful of the generally accepted cultural and social guidelines of *NSFW*.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library, Room 132
903-886-5150 or 903-886-5835

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

SAFETY

This class is relatively safe compared to many courses within studio art. Still, please be health conscious in studio as some activities require special mindfulness with respect to safety—especially cutting using knives or a paper cutter. Read the safety information on all products and use only as advised. Bring any questions regarding safe conduct within the studio to an instructor.