

MPro Visual Journalism: J-380V 07850 & 07845

Faculty: Dr. Mary Bock, BMC 3.384
Phone: 512.471.0673
e-mail: Mary.Bock@Austin.UTexas.Edu

Lab Instructor: Eun Jeong Lee
e-mail: eunjeonglee0323@gmail.com

Blog: bockmedia.net
On Twitter: professorbock (one word)

Facebook Group: J380VF13
Class Twitter: #UTVISJ

Lectures: Mondays, 11:30-1:30, BMC 3.208

Labs: Mondays (07850) *OR* Wednesdays (07845): BMC 3.208,

Dr. Bock's Office Hours: Mondays, 10-11, Wednesdays 1-2, Fridays, 10-11

Eun Jeong's Office Hours: *TBA*

Why take this course? Images can persuade us at an emotional and visceral level in ways the words do not, and in combination with words, images can be extraordinarily powerful. For all these reasons, it is essential for journalists to know how images operate rhetorically, how to interpret them critically, and how to use them responsibly.

Description: This course is designed to present you with the “what” and the “why” of visual communication, that is, we will go over the basic skills for digital visual journalism and design, as well as the theory behind how it conveys meaning. We will explore the principles of photography, design, typography and color theory. Along the way, you'll learn some basic skills with *Final Cut*, *InDesign*, *SoundSlides* and web page design.

And yet: this is not a course in *Final Cut*, *InDesign* or *Soundslides*. The digital world is moving too fast to try to master any particular program at this stage of your career. Our focus will be on the principles of good design and communication, not advanced proficiencies with any particular software. This means you should count on devoting a significant amount of time EVERY WEEK in the lab to practice.

You will be expected to work as a 21st Century internet citizen, which means doing a certain amount of self-education. Learn how to practice your skills in the lab, read the support materials for your programs, consult online tutorials and watch educational videos. Take advantage of the College Fresh-Up courses. Practicing with the software will be the best way to learn.

This course explores three broad questions:

1. How do human beings make meaning from images?
2. How does the relationship between the creator and the resulting artifact affect our understanding of a visual artifact?
3. How does technology affect our ability as humans to communicate visually?

Why should anyone take this course?

1. To be able to better appreciate, interpret and understand media images
2. To be able to defend oneself from manipulation by visual rhetoric
3. To know the principles necessary for creating informative, ethical, useful and attractive visual artifacts

How will students be assessed? By the end of this course, students should

1. be able to analyze and critique images using the language of art criticism and design
2. be able to analyze and critique images from a rhetorical and ideological perspective
3. be able to demonstrate knowledge of the history of image-creation and the relationship between technology and image-creation
4. be able to demonstrate knowledge of the ethical considerations in the processes of image creation and media production
5. Be able to apply the concepts of design, narrative and aesthetics to the creation of visual media projects

Required Textbooks:***Available for sale at the Coop:***

Lester, P. (2011). *Visual Communication: Images with Messages* (6th ed.). Boston: Cengage Learning.

Available online through Google Books:

Williams, R. (2008). *The Non-Designers Design Book* (3rd ed.). Berkeley, CA: Peachpit Press

Available as an e-book from the University of Texas Library System:

Barry, A. M. S. (1997). *Visual Intelligence : Perception, Image, and Manipulation in Visual Communication*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Other required readings will be available online.**Also Helpful:**

McCloud, S. (1993). *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. NY: Harper Perennial.

Brummett, B. (2010). *Techniques of Close Reading*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Learning Management System:

In this class I will be using *Canvas* — a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give you online quizzes and surveys. You can find support in using Canvas at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday-Thursday 8am-10pm, Friday 8am-6pm, and Sat-Sun 12pm-5pm.

I also make every effort to post my slides to *Canvas* by 9pm each night before class so that you can download and print them. This allows you to actually listen and participate during lectures and you don't have to over-do your note-taking. If you do print slides, please print more than one per page using the "pure black & white" option – saves the trees.

Classroom Policies

I am dedicated to your success – but it remains your success, not mine. If something in your life is interfering with your studies, if you are ill, if you are having trouble with the material or if you are somehow encountering anything else that is getting in the way of your learning, please let me know as early as possible so that I can help.

Deadlines: Without *prior* arrangements, work can be submitted up to one week later for 50% credit. For example, if it's a 100-point assignment and you turn it in up to a week late, the most you can receive is 50-points. ***After a week, the work is not accepted and is graded as a zero.*** It is your responsibility to work on your assignments in a timely manner and to avoid last-minute problems. It is your responsibility to take care of your computer, your flash drive, and know where the printers are on campus. It is your responsibility to back up your work.

Cell phones & Computers: I love my phone too, but there is great value in our face-to-face interaction. For our lecture sessions, turn off your cell phone, your iPod, your Blackberry and your laptop. The distractions of the computer outweigh the advantages.

E-Mail policy: E-mail is the best way to reach me. I check it at least every 24 hours. I will always try to answer e-mails quickly, *but not necessarily immediately*. At the very most a response might take 48 hours (weekends, etc. may slow me down.) During the work week, YOU are expected to check your e-mail every 24 hours.

Attendance: I do not take roll-call, but I do make note of your attendance for every class, and this is folded into your participation grade. While I do not wish to know about day-to-day attendance issues, I DO require documented excused in the cases of exams or assignment deadlines. As in the professional world, it is better to make arrangements for an absence BEFORE a test or deadline – keep track of your obligations in a planner. But emergencies do happen. Legitimate reasons for missing a test or deadline might include:

- Medical care (written documentation required – not an elective appointment!).
- Absence due to participation in an authorized University activity (written documentation required).
- Absence due to attendance at legal proceedings requiring your presence (advance notification and written documentation required).
- Absence due to the death or serious illness of an immediate family member (written documentation required).

An excused absence involves something that's *not under your control*. Appointments you make, such as a routine dental or medical appointment, are under your control and are *NOT* legitimate.

Religious Holy Days: By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Make-Up Work: You must make arrangements with me in advance to make up work, and you must provide me with a documented, legitimate excuse to do so. If you are ill, or facing an emergency, you must call me (just as you would a boss at work) to notify me. In the case of a missed exam or presentation, we can re-schedule once you provide me with a document that explains your legitimate excuse.

Grade Discussions: I do not discuss grades via e-mail. I post your grades to Blackboard and expect you to monitor your grades and make sure my records match yours. If you want to discuss a grade, you may visit during office hours or make an appointment to do so face to face.

My Phone: I will check for messages on my office phone once a day.

Food: Food is not allowed in the lab, for obvious reasons.

Course Format: Classes will consist of lectures, presentations, audio-visual presentations, group work and discussion sessions.

Participation is graded every day, with points awarded for presence & preparedness.

Grading: Grades are distributed according to a point system. Students will be assessed according to their ability to demonstrate a mastery of the material (knowledge) and their ability to demonstrate thoughtful synthesis of the material (critical thinking skills). Assessment items will be distributed as follows:

The percentages for the grade scale, and the points necessary for the various grades in this 400 point course, are listed in the table at the right.

Take note: students must earn a 61% to pass.

Failure to complete ALL assignments risks an F, no matter what the percentage earned.

An assignment chart is provided on page 9 to keep track of your grades.

Grade Scale, 400 Point Course

A	92% & above	368-400
A-	90-91 %	360-367
B+	88-89 %	352-359
B	82-87 %	328-351
B-	80-81 %	320-327
C+	78-79 %	312-319
C	72-77 %	288-311
C-	70-71%	280-287
D+	68-69%	272-279
D	62-67%	248-271
D-	61%	244-247
F	60% & below	243 and below

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS POLICIES AND INFORMATION

University of Texas Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Scholastic Dishonesty: The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor. By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

Special note on plagiarism: It bears repeating: using material that is not yours without proper attribution is *plagiarism*. For clarification, the library has a module:

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/>

Course Evaluation:

During this course I will be asking you to give me feedback on your learning in informal as well as formal ways, including through anonymous surveys about how my teaching strategies are helping or hindering your learning. It's very important for me to know your reaction to what we're doing in class, so I encourage you to respond to these surveys, ensuring that together we can create an environment effective for teaching and learning.

At the end of the semester, there will be a formal survey as well. These course instructor surveys are required by school policy and reviewed by senior faculty administrators as an important component in annual faculty evaluations. I will use the electronic option, which means that toward the end of the term you'll receive an email from the university instructing you how to carry out your evaluation online. I will also remind you several times in class. These surveys are strictly confidential, and I have no access to the results until I get a summary after the semester is completed. I also encourage you to take time to write your open-ended feedback in the space provided. These comments are often the most informative.

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students: All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. (I recommend daily during the work-week). A complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/utmail/1564>.

Q drop Policy: The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

“Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”

Student Veteran Services: If you're a vet – thank you for your service! Here are some UT resources:

Office of the Dean of Students: <http://utstudentveteranservices.org>

Academic Support Resources: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/veterans/academicsupport.php>

Documented Disability Statement: Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD.

Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.). Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).

Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD's website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Emergency Evacuation Policy: Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin:

The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning. You are particularly encouraged to use the Learning Skills Center on campus for help on writing assignments. Also, the PCL reference librarians can assist you with online news retrieval and other information finding tasks.

- The UT Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>
- Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>
- Oral presentation: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/sig/propose/requirements/communication>
- Writing: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/sig/faculty/writing>
 - <http://www46.homepage.villanova.edu/john.immerwahr/UTAustin.htm>
- Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>
- Career Exploration Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/>
- Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>
- Safety issues: <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/terms/>

Tentative Schedule

Week	Date:	Material	Read this ahead:	Assignment Due
1	Mon. Sept. 9	How does Vision Work?	Lester CH 1, Barry Intro	
	Lab:	legal questions, shooting tips, checking out cameras		
2	Mon. Sept. 16	Vocabulary of the Visual, Design Principles, Gestalt	Lester CH 2,3	
	Lab:	PhotoShop Essentials		
3	Mon. Sept. 23	Typography, Erin Mayes	Lester CH 7 & CH 8	<i>Response 1: Camera Exercise</i>
	Lab:	Photoshop	Williams 1-7	<i>Photos from Camera exercise</i>
4	Mon. Sept. 30	Semiotics, Visual Persuasion	Lester CH 4	
	Lab:	Photoshop		<i>PhotoShop Project due Oct. 4, 5pm online</i>
5	Mon. Oct. 7	Political Cartoons, Maps, Explanations	Lester CH 9 & CH 10	<i>Response 2</i>
	Lab:	Soundslides		
6	Mon. Oct. 14	History of Photography & Film	Lester CH 11, CH 12, Sontag	<i>Visit One by 11am</i>
	Lab:	SoundSlides	Williams 8-10	
7	Mon. Oct. 21	VJ Speaker	Lester CH 5	<i>Response 3</i>
	Lab:	Video		<i>Sound Slides due online Friday Oct. 25, 5pm</i>

	Date:	Material	Read this ahead:	
8	Mon. Oct. 28	Metaphor, Semiotics, Context SEO Speaker	Lester CH 14 & CH 15	
	Lab:	Video		
9	Mon. Nov. 4	Visual Narrative	Lester CH 12, 13	<i>Response 4</i>
	Lab:	Video	Greg Lewis	<i>Video due Friday, November 8th, 5pm</i>
10	Mon. Nov. 11	Inter & Intra-Textuality	Lester CH 6	<i>Visit Two by 11am</i>
	Lab:	InDesign		
11	Mon. Nov. 18	Visual Ethics, Stereotyping	<i>TBA: on Canvas</i>	<i>Response 5</i>
	Lab:	InDesign, Web Page		<i>InDesign due Friday, November 22nd, 5pm</i>
12	Mon. Nov. 25	Image Effects	<i>TBA: on Canvas</i>	
	Lab:	Web Page		
13	Mon. Dec. 2	Images & Ideology & Career Panel	<i>TBA: on Canvas</i>	<i>Professional Submission</i>
	Lab:	Webpage, Lab Evaluations		<i>WebPage with Graphic due Friday, Dec. 6th, 5pm</i>

**Sept. 12th is UT's official enrollment day*

***Oct. 23 is the last day to switch from credit to non-credit for graduate students*

Assessment Opportunities

Participation in lecture and in lab will be assessed according to your attendance and preparedness. Note that it is possible to miss ONE DAY with no penalty, but that perfect attendance & preparedness yields extra credit. You are also required to visit me twice during the semester – this is an all or nothing grade.

Colleague Critique: Our work will be online and available for our colleagues to view. Your well-considered, knowledgeable and constructive criticism will help your lab colleagues improve. You will be graded on your participation in the online discussion of each-others' work. Details on how to comment and how you'll be graded will be on *Canvas*.

Response Journaling: You will have the opportunity to write five short online responses to what we are covering in lecture. Use these response essays to demonstrate what you are learning in lecture, lab, and from our readings. Avoid writing about your feelings and opinions; craft good arguments, with logic, reasoning, and evidence.

Visual Projects: You will create five projects during the semester: a photo-shopped image, a sound-slide story that blends stills and audio; a pamphlet design; a web page with an interactive map/graphic and a video. A rubric with the grading criteria will be provided for each project.

	Assignment	Due Date	Points Possible	Points Earned
Participation	Lecture Participation		26*	
	Lab Participation		26*	
	Colleague Critiques		10	
	Visits 1 & 2		6	
	Professional Submission		10	
Critical Thinking	Journal Response 1		25	
	Journal Response 2		25	
	Journal Response 3		25	
	Journal Response 4		25	
	Journal Response 5		25	
Projects	Camera & Photoshop		25	
	Sound-Slides		50	
	Video		50	
	InDesign		25	
	Web Page		50	
	Total		400	

*The point system is designed to give you one "free" day off if needed

Assessment

Grading in this class is on a point system. It's perfectly possible for everybody in the class to earn an "A" – there is no curve. Every visual project will have its own rubric. But here are some general guidelines for letter grades:

Visual projects:

A: outstanding work of exceptional quality. Such work goes above and beyond expectations and is strong in every category. Such work could be published with few or no changes. Both the concept and execution are excellent.

B: superior work with many strong points. Such work could be published with minor revisions. The idea might be excellent with a weak execution.

C: satisfactory work. It might have some strong points and is fair in the concept or execution.

D: this work has problems, and has a poor concept and/or poor execution

F: this work fails to meet the requirements in any way or missed the deadline.

Written Assignments (Journal Responses):

Weekly posts should be about 500 words long, plus or minus 50. These essays should present a coherent argument, with a thesis statement (proposition) supported with evidence (facts) connected logically. You will be graded for spelling, grammar and syntax. Your response should reflect your understanding of the assigned readings and incorporate relevant concepts. Posts are expected by the time lecture starts on their due date.

Letter Grade Guidelines:

A: no grammatical errors, presents a clear and organized argument, and uses appropriate examples from the class lectures and readings.

B: might have a mechanical error or two, but presents a clear and organized argument using appropriate examples from the class lectures and readings.

C: the post answers the question but is occasionally unclear, disorganized, or uses poor syntax and grammar.

D: the post has multiple grammatical or syntax errors, is unclear, disorganized, and does not use appropriate examples from the lectures and readings.

F: the post does not meet the requirements or misses the deadline.

Remember that late work is assessed a 50% penalty up to a week after a deadline. After a week, the grade is zero.