

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL FOR
CREATIVE INQUIRY:
FROM IDEATION TO IMPLEMENTATION

by Mary Stewart and Colleagues from around North America, 2021

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Rationale

Creative Inquiry: From Ideation to Implementation is primarily comprised of seventeen assignments that are accompanied by extensive descriptions of strategies that can strengthen creativity.

Why, then, is an Instructor's Manual needed?

Creativity coursework appears in First Year Intensives and Liberal Arts electives, plus courses in Business, Art, Design, Education, Engineering, and other disciplines. The range of courses that might adopt this book is unusually broad, as are the backgrounds of instructors and students who might read it. While concentrated at the freshman and sophomore levels, the courses can also occur in graduate or medical schools or be presented in intensive workshops. Because one size cannot fit all, the additional resources presented here can help instructors from various disciplines teach creative inquiry successfully.

Format

This manual begins with a sample syllabus and sample assignments for a lower-division general education or liberal arts course. It is based on a course I developed and taught at Florida State University. It is difficult for an instructor in one discipline to oversee a student project in a different discipline, so extended work with a biographical research project titled *The Hero's Journey* was a major assignment for my course and is described in this manual. In the syllabus provided here, a preliminary Capstone proposal (as described in *Creative Inquiry*) is still developed, but with the expectation that it will serve as a springboard into an extended project in a *subsequent* course in the student's major.

The next section presents a sample syllabus for a creativity course for visual and performing arts majors. The contact hours have been increased to five per week; the studio work is more challenging and an investigation of narrative, called True Lies: Designing Fiction, is the major assignment for the term. The Capstone has again been presented as a springboard into a subsequent course.

Four sequential assignments follow. These are designed to help students build their creative capabilities step by step. Because each of them requires work with words and images, they may be especially attractive to graphic design or communications students.

The final section consists of creative thinking exercises from colleagues across North America. Because *Creative Inquiry* is a new publication and the contributors haven't read it, these contributions offer diverse approaches to creativity instruction rather than assignments that are tightly aligned to the book itself. Many of these inventive assignments require research,

extensive iteration or variations on a theme and several connect multiple disciplines, such as art, writing, theatre and music. I am most grateful to each contributor!

Interpretation and Implementation

Whether you are reading first section (which I wrote) or the second section (colleagues' contributions), all of the examples should simply serve as a springboard for the courses and assignments you wish to develop. Confident and inspired teaching requires deep understanding of both the process and the purpose of every aspect of instruction and each of us will interpret every idea differently. Furthermore, every academic institution has its own mission, audience, and means of instruction. Just keep in mind that creativity can be cultivated, and that every assignment must offer a balance between structure and exploration. Experiment!

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SAMPLE SYLLABUS/ASSIGNMENTS FOR ART/DESIGN COURSE

SEQUENTIAL CREATIVITY ASSIGNMENTS

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS FROM MULTIPLE INSTITUTIONS

Sarah Archino, PhD and Ross McClain, Furman University

Mary Blatherwick, PhD, University of New Brunswick, Canada

Charles Carbia, Professor, Savannah College of Art and Design

Chemeketa Community College Faculty: Deanne Beausoleil, Art History, Kay Bunnenberg Boehmer, Studio Art, Laura Mack, Studio Art, Josie Wood, Communications

Jeffrey Galle, PhD, University System of Georgia

M. Michelle Illuminato, Portland State University

Mathew Kelly, Central College

Sandra Reed, Marshall University

Jeremy Waltman, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Michelle Wilcox, Flagler College and University of North Florida

FURTHER READING

SAMPLE SYLLABUS/ASSIGNMENTS FOR A GEN ED COURSE

2.5 weekly contact hours

SAMPLE SYLLABUS FOR AN GEN ED COURSE: 2.5 weekly contact hours

Professor Sample Instructor Room 1002 10:10-11:45, Tuesday/Thursday

Course Description: In this 200-Level Liberal Arts course, we will investigate the theory and practice of creativity. Hands-on work will be combined with readings and lectures on creativity. We will experiment with four ideation strategies, define and then envision solutions to a wide range of problems, and use critical thinking to heighten our problem understanding and seek the best solutions.

In the final assignment, you will create a presentation celebrating a creative “hero” in your discipline and will produce an 11” x 17” poster describing the education, influences, accomplishments, and significance of this person. These posters can be displayed in various sites around campus.

Finally, this course fulfills a Liberal Arts writing credit. Basic assignments plus a 1500-word research paper and a 250-word Capstone proposal will add up to over 3500 written words.

Class Format: Lectures, active learning exercises, critiques, facilitated discussions, demonstrations. Analysis of readings and videos are generally due on Tuesdays; main assignments are due on Thursdays. All assignments will be submitted to Blackboard Discussion Boards.

Course Fulfills Liberal Arts requirements. Students will:

- Think creatively and flexibly by envisaging new approaches to real-world scenarios or questions.
- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information from within your discipline and across peer disciplines.
- Examine existing problems from a variety of perspectives, formulate novel questions and ideas, and explain these questions and ideas in written, visual, and oral formats.
- Learn, think, and solve problems independently and in teams, fostering both personal and cooperative solutions.

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify connections between creative and critical thinking
- Use research as an essential aspect of innovation
- Improve an idea through multiple iterations
- Demonstrate competence with multiple ideation strategies
- Identify and overcome obstacles to innovation
- Begin to connect current coursework to a potential career.

Assessment Criteria: Overall grades will be based on five equally important factors.

- Exploration: What variety and number of ideas do you develop? What is the breadth and depth of your research into exemplars of creativity?
- Experimentation: What is the depth and breadth of ideation strategies have you used? Do any of your strategies surprise us, offering unexpected interpretations of course content?
- Examination: What do your own and your peers' problem solutions have in common? How do they differ? Which best fulfills problem criteria?
- Collaboration. Based on attendance, motivation, and participation, are your contributions to team sessions, critiques, and discussions substantial, insightful, and supportive?
- Communication. How substantial are your papers and contributions to class discussions? Are your writing assignments clear, concise, and compelling?

Assignment Points: 1000 Total

- Warm Ups 1, 2, 3 and Self Reflection 1: 50 points each x 4 = 200 points
- Creative Challenges 1, 2, 4 and Self-Reflection 2: 75 points each x 4 = 300 points
- Ideation Strategies: 50 x 3 = 150 points
- 4 Attention Studies (written or photographic) = 50 points
- Hero's Journey paper and poster = 200 points
- Capstone Proposal = 50 points.
- Final Self-reflection = 50 points

(Each Institution will require specific policies and possibly rubrics. These might be inserted here. Creative Inquiry is well suited to serve as a first-year writing course, and so I have included a sample rubric.)

CRITERIA for Written Work	1	2	3	4	5	COMMENTS
<u>Analytical Strength</u> . Is your comprehension expressed through specific examples using appropriate vocabulary?						
<u>Interpretive Strength</u> . How deeply did you understand and explore assignment content?						
<u>Compositional Structure</u> . Does your writing have a clear beginning, solid development, and conclusion to each paragraph and to the paper as a whole?						
<u>Spelling, Grammar, Citations</u> Is the sentence structure grammatically correct and intentional? Do you generally use the active voice?						
<u>Inspiration and Invention</u> . Economy. Wit. Insight. Is your paper a chore to read, or a joy?						

CONCISE LIST OF PROJECTED ASSIGNMENTS: FALL 20XX

The homework may seem extensive, but much of the work is actually begun in class.

WEEK 1: The Power of Curiosity: Warm-Up 1

Homework: Read & complete WU 1, complete Past, Present, Future

WEEK 2: Variations on a Theme: Warm-Up 2

Homework: Read & complete WU 2, read Self-Reflection.

WEEK 3: Criteria for Success; Reflection: Warm-Up 3 and Self-Reflection.

Homework: Read & complete WU 3, complete Self Reflection.

WEEK 4: Paying Attention.

Homework: Complete five attention essays or present 5 photographs

WEEK 5: Challenge 1. Amos Winter TED Talk

Homework: Read & complete Challenge 1

WEEK 6: Incremental and Transformative: Challenge 2

Homework: Identify 3 sample courses/programs, read & complete Challenge 2

WEEK 7: Problem Definition: Designing a Capstone

Homework: Read Challenge 3; develop an initial draft for a Capstone assignment

WEEK 8: Individual Appointments. Arrive with answers to three questions:

- What do you know now that you didn't know when we started this course?
- How does your work in this course affect work in your other courses?
- What do you need to learn to push your creativity further?

Homework: Read & complete Challenge 4 and Self-Reflection #2.

WEEK 9: Convergent and Divergent Thinking

Homework: Read & complete Convergent and Divergent Thinking

WEEK 10: Analogies and Technological or Material Transfer; begin Hero's Journey research

Homework: Read Analogies and Tech Transfer exercises, complete one of them

WEEK 11: Hero's Journey paper or interview, poster ideas.

Homework: Begin paper or interview; poster design ideas.

WEEK 12: Hero's Journey paper or interview; Poster design

Homework: Continue paper or interview; complete draft 1 of your poster

WEEK 13: Expanding the Bandwidth and completion of Hero's poster

Homework: Complete poster. Complete well-developed draft of paper/interview.

WEEK 14: Hero's paper/interview and poster due. Revise Capstone begun at midterm

Homework: Review anything as necessary, revise Capstone Proposal

WEEK 15: Capstone Proposal presentations and discussion. How can ideas from this course provide a springboard into a subsequent course?

Textbook: *Creative Inquiry: From Ideation to Implementation* - Stewart

Additional Recommended Readings

- *A More Beautiful Question* - Warren Berger

- *Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know* - Adam Grant
- *Sparks of Genius: The Thirteen Thinking Tools of the World's Most Creative People* - Michele and Robert Root-Bernstein
- *Uncommon Genius: How Great Ideas Are Born* - Denise Shekarjian
- *Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World*, by David Epstein

Discussion Board “Netiquette” (based on text by Chalet Commelas at Florida State University)

- Check the discussion frequently. Respond appropriately and on topic.
- Address the person you are responding to by name, for example, begin your post: "Hi Adrian! I enjoyed your take on"
- Focus on one subject per message. Use meaningful subject lines when starting new messages.
- Use appropriate sentence case and capitalize additional words only to highlight a point. Capitalizing otherwise is known as SHOUTING. Ouch!
- Cite all quotes, references, and sources; this way, everyone can have access to good information.
- Ask permission before forwarding a class message to anyone outside of the class—and never send spam of any kind.
- It is fine to use humor but be careful. The absence of face-to-face cues can cause humor to be misinterpreted as criticism or flaming (angry, antagonistic criticism).

Your posts should be:

- Substantial (related to the course material)
- Concise (generally under 200 words)
- Provocative (encourages others to respond)
- Critically engaging (expands concepts or connects ideas in new ways)
- Grammatical (well written)
- Cited (where appropriate read at least one scholarly article to support your analysis; then cite it.)
- Logical (supports point of view with reasons and evidence)

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

POSSIBLE OPENING ASSIGNMENT: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

To engage your skills effectively, I need to understand your background and aspirations.

Assignment: In 250-500 words, please describe your background (your past), current motivations (your present) and your long-term aspirations (future).

Please end your paper with at least three questions or ideas you would like to explore in this course.

Consider: What about your primary discipline most attracts you? What do you most want to learn in this course? We will do quite a bit of team-based learning. What can you contribute?

Structure and Submission: Post to BlackBoard Discussion Board, as Past, Present, Future.

Write anything you think necessary, double-spaced, using 12-point type. Please spell-check and proofread—we want to understand your background, not correct your typos! Example follows.

PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

Adriann Garcia

agarcia@fromanyuniversity.edu

PAST: My family moved from Cuba to New York when I was twelve years old. As a teenager, I was already confused and anxious; as an exile in New York with limited English, I badly needed a way to express myself. I was immediately drawn to astronomy and photography. The logic of physics combined with the beauty of the sky was exhilarating, and the Hayden Planetarium soon became my second home. Through photography, I heightened my visual acuity and turned the city into a treasure trove of experiences. Fascinated by the city's swirling cultural activity, I took pictures of street vendors, graffiti and storefronts.

PRESENT: I am now a dual major in political science and art. I have strong research skills, especially in the areas of statistics, economics, and historical research. I am also fluent in Spanish and hope to visit Cuba in 2023. As a collaborator, I am a bit quiet—but I am organized, reliable, listen well and can often ask questions that help clarify a discussion or stimulate new ideas.

Photography remains my primary creative activity. When I work with my camera, I can concentrate on composition, timing, and the beauty of the subject rather than worry a lot about technique. I enjoy viewing things from unusual angles, so that I can expose the unseen possibilities in everyday life. I am most inspired by the photographs of Robert Frank, Danny Lyons, Sally Mann and Karolina Trapp.

FUTURE: I would like to combine my expertise in political science, non-fiction writing, and photography to become a travel writer and political commentator. Thomas Friedman (author of *The World is Flat* and columnist for the New York Times) is my idol. I also love shooting and

editing video and am eager to expand my skills in this area. Following this course, I hope to develop a series of “man on the street” interviews or photographic essays that can illuminate the different perspectives we have on life.

QUESTIONS I would like to explore in this course include:

- What are the major characteristics and motivations of the most creative people?
- How can I broaden and deepen my own creativity—in writing and poli-sci as well as photography?
- How can my research skills help to deepen my creativity?
- How can my curiosity feed my creativity?

ATTENTION EXERCISE, OPTION 1: TEN ATTENTIVE MINUTES

Becoming more attentive can enrich our personal experience. Helping others to become more attentive can enrich everyone's experience. Heightening attentiveness and avoiding distractions permits creative people to see inventive possibilities in any situation.

Assignment: Find a moderately active setting. Sit quietly for at least 3 minutes, just taking in every detail, from visual movements to conversations to sounds, smells colors and textures. Then, remaining in the same spot, write for at least 7 minutes, trying to capture every detail of your experience. We will practice this in class, and then expand on it as a series of at least four discussion board posts.

Structure: Each Attention Study is likely to be 100 -250 words long. As you become more adept, the studies may turn into prose poems; see the examples that follow.

Consider: What do you notice when you slow down and sit still? How many aspects of “attention” did you experience? Was all of your attentiveness external (sounds, smells, etc.) or was some of it internal?

EXAMPLES OF ATTENTION WRITING

“To stand at the edge of the sea, to sense the ebb and flow of the tides, to feel the breath of a mist moving over a great salt marsh, to watch the flight of shore birds that have swept up and down the surf lines of the continents for untold thousands of years, to see the running of the old eels and the young shad to the sea, is to have knowledge of things that are as nearly eternal as any earthly life can be.”

Rachel Carson, *Under the Sea Wind*

“The mockingbird took a single step into the air and dropped. His wings were still folded against his sides as though he were singing from a limb and not falling, accelerating thirty-two feet per second, through empty air. Just a breath before he would have been dashed to the ground, he unfurled his wings with exact, deliberate care, revealing the broad bars of white, spread his elegant, white-banded tail, and so floated onto the grass. I had just rounded a corner when his insouciant step caught my eye; there was no one else in sight. The fact of his free fall was like the old philosophical conundrum about the tree that

falls in the forest. The answer must be, I think, that beauty and grace are performed whether or not we will or sense them. The least we can do is try to be there.” Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker’s Creek*

“The police attacked with tear gas, with Mace, and with clubs, they attacked like a chain saw cutting into wood, the teeth of the saw the edge of their clubs, they attacked like a scythe through grass, lines of twenty and thirty policemen striking out in an arc, their clubs beating, demonstrators fleeing. Seen from overhead, from the nineteenth floor, it was like a wind blowing dust, or the edge of waves riding foam on the shore.” Norman Mailer, *Miami & the Siege of Chicago*

I’m sitting in a hard plastic chair, quietly waiting for my 8AM class to begin. Everyone is bundled up against the cold; few students are even alert enough to check messages on their phones. The room is silent. It’s too early for talking and too cold for moving. Even the air in the room seems frozen in place. The only indicator of time passing is the quiet ticking of the clock on the wall in the front of the classroom. Every time the door opens there is a break in the silence everyone glances that way, waiting for the professor to arrive. It seems like years have passed in this room and the day has yet to begin. Finally, the professor arrives, cheerfully greets the students, and everyone begins to sit up, take notes and ask questions. Action, at last! (example inspired by a student submission)

Note to Instructors: When I first devised this assignment, I wondered how students would respond. Could they actually put down their phones and sit still? To my delight, the students loved it and pushed it far further than I expected.

ATTENTION EXERCISE OPTION 2: THE WORLD IS A STAGE

Learning to see more and communicate visually can heighten creative thinking

Assignment: Using photography, seek out and transform the everyday world into a world of magic, mayhem or mystery.

Consider: What distinguishes everyday experience from heightened, focused experience? How can our heightened awareness be transformed into visual communication?

Structure: Shoot at least 50 images, then post the 5 best.

Strategy: Use natural or artificial light. Time of day, angle and direction of light, and the effects of shadows are essential aspects of natural lighting. A single light source tends to be emphatic and dramatic, while multiple sources can create more complex effects. Experiment!

Search out extraordinary images in an ordinary world. How can a simple glass of water become a shimmering study in light and shadow? Can a brick wall become a beautiful composition? What everyday dramas occur between people? Compose each image carefully, framing the moment as well as the shapes.

NOTE: A boundary is the point at which images; objects, ideas or experiences separate or connect. Lines and edges create boundaries quickly and easily. To improve your compositions, consider:

- How is the edge of the format being used?
- How are we visually directed around the composition?
- Are there any surprises presented by perceptual reality?
- How can architectural fragments be transformed into emotional statements?

Note to Instructors: While students may spend several hours finding subject matter or adjusting lighting, the actual recording process is fast. Lighting can increase or decrease the illusion of space, emphasize an object or an action, and strongly influence our emotional response. When working photographically we actually draw with light. By taking multiple shots at different settings, students can choose among many options—and often reveal something special.

For examples, show street photographs by Leann Staples (<https://www.shootnewyorkcity.com/photography>) and Karolina Trapp (<https://www.karolinatrapp.com/>)

Other examples include photographs by Robert Frank, Sally Mann, Diane Arbus, Abelardo Morell, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Lee Friedlander, Garry Winogrand, Bruce Gilden, Vivian Maier, Alex Webb, Daidō Moriyama, Helen Levitt or google *street photography*.

THE HERO'S JOURNEY: Combining the Verbal and the Visual

Verbal Assignment: Research a hero in your discipline and write a 1500+ word paper including the education, influences, accomplishments, and significance of this person. Or research a hero in your discipline and then conduct at least two conversations that result in an informative and inspiring interview.

Interview Guidelines

1. Read or listen to at least ten interviews, including the seven Innovator Insights in *Creative Inquiry* and three more that are closely associated with your discipline. The *TED Interview* (which focuses on big ideas about innovation) and *Fresh Air* (focusing more on politics and the arts) offer helpful podcasts.
2. Identify someone you can interview. They need to be accessible (live or via Zoom), willing to give you their precious time, and quite accomplished. There must be a significant story; otherwise, you really won't have enough to talk about. Generally, professors, grad students or members of your arts or business community are promising possibilities.
3. Find out as much as you can about that person. Read at least one book, story or research paper they have published; visit one of their exhibitions in person or online; attend at least one of their lectures.
4. Send them a concise description of your assignment, including a series of "start-up questions" you plan to use to get the conversation going. Some questions I sent to Jillian Acreman, an independent filmmaker in New Brunswick, Canada, are provided as an example. During the interview, you don't need to follow your questions exactly but sending some possibilities ahead of your first meeting helps provide a conversational springboard.
 - How did you first become interested in film? Were you initially drawn to other mediums?
 - What qualities of film most attracts you?
 - I just love film and felt especially engaged when I took several video workshops years ago. But there are so many pieces of the puzzle, so many skills to master! Effective screenwriting, directing, producing and editing seem to require very different capabilities. How do you shift between these roles? What skills does each role require?
 - It has often been said that "theatre is life with the boring parts left out." Are you really distilling lived experience into film? If so, how do you maximize the impact of a story?
5. I record the interview on my phone and on Zoom if the interviewee is willing. Generally, around 75 minutes is my limit for the initial conversation. Both parties have to be fully engaged and I take notes like mad; the process is demanding.
6. Write up the results. Do not simply transcribe the conversation word for word; that never results in a good interview. Instead, distill and re-organize the conversation as necessary to produce a coherent story.

7. Send the draft to your interviewee, possibly adding a couple of new questions or asking for clarification or expansion of some sections.

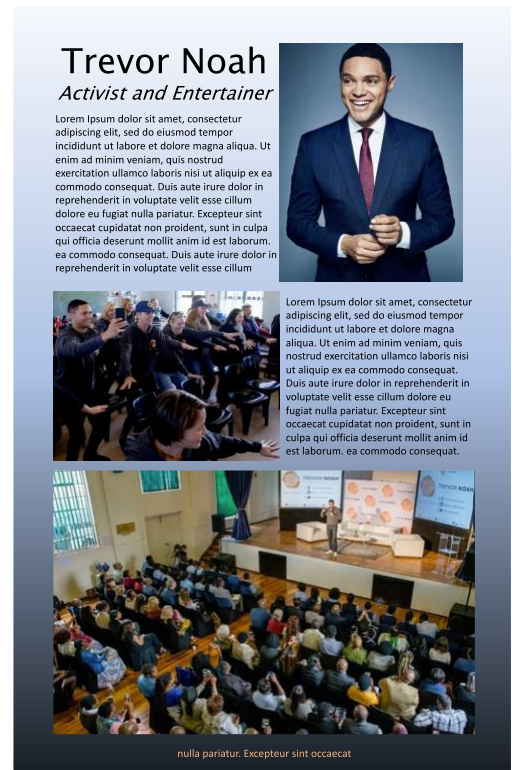
8. Arrange a final meeting to fine-tune the interview. Because the interviewee has had a chance to look review the draft, this meeting is likely to be shorter.

9. Cite sources, where necessary.

10. Write a final draft and send it to your interviewee with a thank you note.

Note to Instructors: If this exercise is unlike anything you have done yourself, seek out a mentor on campus to help you get started. You might test-drive the process by completing the assignment yourself before assigning it to a class.

Visual Assignment: Create a 17x11” poster including a photo of your hero and at least two images of his/her work. Distilled content from your paper or interview can be included, creating a rich dialog between words and images. Using Powerpoint allows the class to focus on communicating content rather than battling computers. Go to the Design tab and create a custom size of 10.5 x 16.5.” Files can be exported to PDF and then printed on any decent color printer. If you need more space, create a pair of posters or double the format to 17x22.”



POSTER DESIGN GUIDELINES

(inspired by Professor Max Hein, Santa Rosa Junior College, California)

1. Posters are basically pictorial statements. Visual communication precedes verbal communication. About 60% of the total area for pictorial imagery and 40% for the verbal text usually works well.
2. Consider the context in which it will be shown. Including a border in the design helps make a poster stand out on a cluttered wall.
3. A vertical format is more familiar and makes good use of display space.
4. Strong contrast (light/dark) is essential for readability and can increase impact.
5. All elements must reflect the story to be told.
6. Photographs often must be modified. A poster is a graphic statement—not reality.
7. Distinctive or exotic type styles are best used for the main heading. Neutral fonts, such as Helvetica, Arial, or Optima are usually used for most of the copy.
8. Lower case letters are easier to read than all capitals.
9. Avoid clutter. Let one element or idea dominate.

TARGETS	1	2	3	4	5	COMMENTS
How informative is your text?						
How effectively have you selected and distilled the text included in the poster?						
Are fonts compatible and appropriate to the subject?						
Are colors compatible and appropriate to the subject?						
Do words and images work together well?						
What is the overall visual impact?						

Note to Instructors: Students tend to love this assignment and are remarkably effective in pushing Powerpoint to achieve the effects they want. However, if this exercise is unlike anything you have done yourself, again seek out a mentor on campus to help you get started. Any graphic designer and most artists can provide advice and may even be willing to lead a critique of the project. Basically, the posters need to be varied enough to be interesting and unified enough to be coherent.

Common pitfalls include:

- Inaccurate or excessive content. Too many words result in clutter and loss of impact.
- Too many fonts. Generally, one font for the main title and a second for the body text works best.
- "Artsy" rather than effective. Communication is more important than expression here, so it is generally best to avoid as layers or vertical lines of text.
- Insufficient light/dark contrast. High contrast increases readability.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS/ASSIGNMENTS, ART/DESIGN COURSE

5 weekly contact hours

SAMPLE SYLLABUS FOR ART/DESIGN: 5 weekly contact hours

Professor Name and Email Room 1002 9:05-11:35, Tuesday/Thursday

Course Description: In this first-year studio art course, we will investigate the theory and practice of creativity. Hand-on work will be combined with readings and lectures on creativity. We will experiment with five ideation strategies, define and then envision solutions to a wide range of problems, and use critical thinking to heighten our problem understanding and seek the great solutions.

All of this will set the stage for a major assignment exploring visual narrative. Titled *True Lies: Designing Fiction*, this seemingly simple assignment is remarkably complex. A minimum of twelve photocopies or digital prints must be organized to express an emotion or communicate an idea. This may result in a visual book, a website, an installation, a deck of cards, and so forth. Building on ideas developed through *True Lies*, the take-home "final exam" for the course will consist of a proposal for a self-designed capstone project to carry over into your second-year coursework.

This course fulfills a Liberal Arts writing credit. Basic assignments plus a 2000-word research paper and the 250+ word Capstone proposal will add up to over 5000 written words.

Class Format: Lectures, active learning exercises, critiques, facilitated discussions, demonstrations. Analysis of readings and videos are generally due on Mondays; main assignments are due on Tuesdays. In class discussions will be extended by posting them on Blackboard Discussion Boards.

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Describe and employ multiple forms of ideation.
- Employ collaborative as well as individual approaches to ideation and implementation.
- Critically examine an artifact (such as an artwork or object) from any cultural context using formal analysis.
- Speak and write critically about personal and peer assignments and propose alternatives:
- Analyze your own learning process/progress and propose improvements.

Course Fulfills Liberal Arts requirements. You will:

- Think creatively and flexibly by envisaging new approaches to real-world scenarios or questions.
- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information from within your discipline and across peer disciplines.
- Examine existing problems from a variety of perspectives, formulate novel questions and ideas, and explain these questions and ideas in written, visual and oral formats.
- Learn, think, and solve problems independently and in teams, fostering both personal and cooperative solutions.

Assessment Criteria: Overall grades will be based on five equally important factors. These aspects of the course will recur throughout the term.

- Exploration: What variety and number of ideas do you develop? What is the breadth and depth of your research into exemplars of creativity?
- Experimentation: What is the depth and breadth of ideation strategies have you used? Do any of your strategies surprise us, offering unexpected interpretations of course content?
- Examination: What do your own and your peers' problem solutions have in common? How do they differ? Which best fulfills problem criteria?
- Collaboration. Based on attendance, motivation and participation, are your contributions to team sessions, critiques and discussions substantial, insightful and supportive?
- Communication. How substantial are your papers and contributions to class discussions? Are your writing assignments clear, concise, and compelling?

Assignment Points: 1000 Total. Points will be posted on Bboard, which can turn them into percentages.

- Line to Labyrinth, Warmups 1, 2, 3, Self-Reflection 1: 40 points each x 5 = **200 points**
- Creative Challenges 1, 2, 3, 4 and Self Reflection 2: 60 points each x 5 = **300 points**
- Three Ideation Strategies: **150 points**; 4 Attention Studies = **50 points**
- True Lies: Designing Fiction = **200 points**
- Capstone Proposal = **50 points**
- Final Self Reflection = **50 points**

<i>Total Accumulated Points Equals the Following Grades.</i>		
1000-965	A+	Unusually inventive work, high level of exploration and experimentation. Exemplary communication skills that are clearly demonstrated through well-structured writing, contributions to critiques and use of appropriate art/design vocabulary. All projects submitted on time and in specified format. Actively initiates discussions and provides provocative thoughts and substantial input.
964-935	A	
934-900	A-	
899-865	B+	Very good work quality. Good communication skills that are clearly demonstrated through contributions to critiques, well-structured writing and use of appropriate art/design vocabulary. All projects submitted on time and in specified format. Good participation in discussions, initiating ideas and responding thoughtfully.
864-835	B	
834-800	B-	
799-765	C+	Average work that meets basic course requirements. Competent communication skills that are clearly demonstrated through contributions to critiques, well-structured writing and use of appropriate art/design vocabulary. Completes assignments on time, contributes to discussions; however rarely surpasses the basic demands
764-736	C	
735-700	C-	

		of the assignment. Mostly responds to others rather than initiating a fresh line of thinking. May have more than 3 absences.
Less than 700	D-F	Limited contributions to critiques, incoherent writing, low class participation. May have more than 4 absences; poor commitment to collaboration.

CONCISE LIST OF PROJECTED ASSIGNMENTS: FALL 20xx

The homework may seem extensive, but much of the work is actually begun in class.

WEEK 1: Line into Labyrinth.

Homework: Read Modules 1 and 2 and complete *Past, Present, Future*

WEEK 2: The Power of Curiosity: Warm-Up 1

Homework: Read and complete WU1, read *Sparks of Genius*, C1

WEEK 3: Variations on a Theme: Warm-Up 2

Homework: Read and complete WU2, read *Beautiful Question* C1

WEEK 4: Criteria for Success; Reflection: Warm-Up 3 and Self-Reflection.

Homework: Read and complete WU3, complete Self Reflection.

WEEK 5: Paying Attention and Challenge 1. Amos Winter TED Talk

Homework: Complete visual or verbal attention studies, complete Challenge 1.

WEEK 6: Incremental and Transformative: Challenge 2

Homework: Identify 3 sample courses/programs, read and complete Challenge 2.

WEEK 7: Targeted Research: Challenge 4.

Homework: Dig more deeply into research needed for Challenge 2; revise.

WEEK 8: Self-Reflection 2 read Challenge 3 and Module 6, Individual Appointments

WEEK 9: Frame Analysis and True Lies proposal due.

WEEK 10: True Lies: Rough Draft; read Module 4.

WEEK 11: True Lies: Read and apply Expanding the Bandwidth

WEEK 12: True Lies: Read and apply Overcoming Obstacles

WEEK 13: True Lies: Presentation and Critique

WEEK 14: Capstone Proposal

Homework: Read Challenge 3; re-read Module 6; develop a Capstone Proposal

WEEK 15: Capstone Proposal Presentations. How can ideas from this course provide a springboard into a subsequent course?

Textbook: *Creative Inquiry: From Ideation to Implementation* - Stewart

Additional Recommended Readings

A More Beautiful Question - Warren Berger

Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know - Adam Grant

Sparks of Genius: The Thirteen Thinking Tools of the World's Most Creative People - Michele and Robert Root-Bernstein

Uncommon Genius: How Great Ideas Are Born - Denise Shekarjian

Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World, by David Epstein

NOTE: Each Institution will require specific policies and possibly rubrics. These might be inserted here. *Creative Inquiry* is well suited to serve as a first-year writing course, and so I have included a sample rubric.

CRITERIA for Written Work	1	2	3	4	5	COMMENTS
<u>Analytical Strength.</u> Is your comprehension expressed through specific examples using appropriate vocabulary?						
<u>Interpretive Strength.</u> How deeply did you understand and explore assignment content?						
<u>Compositional Structure.</u> Does your writing have a clear beginning, solid development, and conclusion to each paragraph and to the paper as a whole?						
<u>Spelling, Grammar, Citations</u> Is the sentence structure grammatically correct and intentional? Do you generally use the active voice?						
<u>Inspiration and Invention.</u> Economy. Wit. Insight. Is your paper a chore to read, or a joy?						

A NOTE ON CRITIQUES: GIVING AND GETTING INPUT

As noted in our textbook, critical thinking is an essential component of creative thinking. We must be able to identify strengths and weaknesses in our work and the work of others if we are to pursue creative projects effectively.

In analyzing your studio projects, write a brief response to at least four of the following questions. For each answer, one well-considered sentence or a bulleted list is just fine. Adding a photo of the project you are discussing will be helpful!

- What strategies have you used to unify your composition?
- What gives your composition variety? Are there any surprises?
- How does the overall shape of your design (vertical, horizontal, circular) affect its compositional balance?
- Is there a dominant shape or element in your composition? If so, is it the shape you most *want* to emphasize?
- Is deep space or shallow space better for the idea you want to express? How can visual depth be increased or decreased? What happens when flat and spatially deep areas are combined in your design?
- Are your compositional shapes flat, gradated or transparent? What is the advantage of each?
- Can the illusion of movement enhance the idea you want to express? How can it be created?
- What happens when static (unmoving) and dynamic (moving) shapes are used together?
- How simple or distilled need your composition be? How complex or visually dense? Can 10% of the visual information be deleted? If so, what parts and why?
- What would happen if some of the visual information were dramatically enlarged?
- What would happen if your design were dramatically darker, lighter or dominated by a single color?
- Variations in focus can add mystery and create the illusion of space. Will your work benefit from such variation? If so, what areas might be softened or sharpened?
- Is the degree of representation appropriate to the idea or emotion you want to express?
- How effectively does your artwork/design address the problem you were assigned?
- What else can you do to express your idea more fully and effectively?
- What would be the ideal viewer response to your artwork/design?
- Add further thoughts or questions of your own.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

POSSIBLE OPENING ASSIGNMENT: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

Assignment: Using 250-500 words, please describe your background (your past), current motivations (your present) and your long-term aspirations (future). Please end your paper with several questions or ideas you would like to explore in this course.

Consider: What about your primary discipline most attracts you? What do you most want to learn in this course? We will do quite a bit of team-based learning. What can you contribute?

Structure and Submission: Post to BlackBoard Discussion Board, as Past, Present, Future. Write anything you think necessary, double-spaced, using 12-point type. Please spell-check and proofread—we want to understand your background, not correct your typos! Example follows.

PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

Adriann Garcia

agarcia@anyuniversity.edu

PAST: My family moved from Cuba to New York when I was twelve years old. As a teenager, I was already confused and anxious; as an exile in New York with limited English, I badly needed a way to express myself. I was immediately drawn to astronomy and photography. The logic of physics combined with the beauty of the sky was exhilarating, and the Hayden Planetarium soon became my second home. Through photography, I heightened my visual awareness and turned the city into a treasure trove of remarkable experiences. Seeking to capture the city's swirling cultural activity, I took pictures of street vendors, graffiti, storefronts, and policemen.

PRESENT: I am now a dual major in political science and art. I have strong research skills, especially in the areas of statistics, economics, and historical research. I am also fluent in Spanish and hope to visit Cuba in 2023. As a collaborator, I am a bit quiet—but I am organized, reliable, listen well and can often ask questions that help clarify a discussion or stimulate new ideas.

Photography remains my primary creative activity. When I work with my camera, I can concentrate on composition, timing, and the beauty of the subject rather than worry a lot about technique. I enjoy viewing things from unusual angles, so that I can expose the unseen possibilities in everyday life. I am most inspired by the photographs of Robert Frank, Danny Lyons, Sally Mann and Karolina Trapp.

FUTURE: I would like to combine my expertise in political science, non-fiction writing, and photography to become a travel writer and political commentator. Thomas Friedman (author of *The World is Flat* and columnist for the New York Times) is my idol. I also love shooting and editing video and am eager to expand my skills in this area. Following this course, I hope to develop a series of “man on the street” interviews or photographic essays that can illuminate the different perspectives we have on life.

QUESTIONS I would like to explore in this course include:

- What are the major characteristics and motivations of the most creative people?
- How can I broaden and deepen my own creativity—in writing and poli-sci as well as photography?
- How can my research skills help to deepen my creativity?
- What are the connections between creative and critical thinking?

LINE INTO LABYRINTH

Part 1 Assignment: Develop at least four dynamic, non-objective designs using line, shape, and texture.

Objectives/Assessment Targets:

- Fully engage the edges of each composition
- Create an illusion of space using overlap, size, and location.
- Demonstrate the distinctive characteristics of symmetrical and asymmetrical balance
- Use at least 4 strategies for increasing visual impact.

Materials: Three black water-based markers, 8 sheets of 18" x 24" paper, sketchbook.

Strategy: Use thumbnail sketches to rough draft at least twelve alternatives.

- Pay special attention to the edge of the composition. When a line or shape intersects this edge, the composition can visually extend beyond the page and into the viewer's world.
- Overlap, variations in size, and location can be used to increase the illusion of space. The illusion of space gives more room for movement, increasing the overall energy in the design.
- Experiment with forms and degrees of balance. Symmetrical balance is often used when stability is needed, while asymmetrical balance is generally more dynamic.

Part 2 Assignment: Keep the three best studies from Part 1 as evidence of your work. Then, working with up to three partners, tear up the other nine studies and draw additional material as needed to create a final "line labyrinth" measuring at least 6' in width or height. Or create a solo project, building a series of fears into your maze.

Key Questions:

- How deep is the space in each composition?
- How does spatial depth contribute to visual dynamism?
- Is there a dominant movement? If so, how was this movement created?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of adding a focal point?

Critique Strategy: Student A will select a study by Student B, then re-design it, making it 50% stronger. Student A then gets to focus on the improvements he or she made. This provides a form of critique without putting either Student A or B in a negative position!

Examples: Aubrey Beardsley, Franz Kline, Al Held, Jean Dubuffet, Judy Pfaff, Sol Lewitt, Picasso with flashlight, Agnes Martin, Wassily Kandinsky, Matthew Ritchie

Note to Instructors: The first line drawn is the fifth line in an 18x24" composition. It is framed by the edges and moves through the space they define. Dynamic designs are generally dominated

by diagonals and curves, which tend to suggest movement and imply change. This seemingly simple assignment can provide an overview of the elements and principles of design. To create a dynamic design, students must understand balance and use it effectively. By creating the illusion of space, they can suggest movement from foreground to background. A focal point can provide a dramatic pivot point for the entire composition.

CRIT WORKSHEET FROM _____ (your name) _____

YOUR "MISSION" STATEMENT: what were you most seeking to accomplish? _____

BASED ON TEAM INPUT, WHAT ARE 3-4 GREATEST STRENGTHS IN YOUR PROJECT?

WHAT ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES COULD BE USED TO ENHANCE OR INCREASE VISUAL COMMUNICATION?

BLUE SKIES THINKING: IF YOU HAVE NO LIMITATIONS IN TIME, COST OR SIZE, HOW COULD YOU PUSH THE LABYRINTH IDEA EVEN FURTHER?

ATTENTION EXERCISE, OPTION 1: TEN ATTENTIVE MINUTES

Becoming more attentive can enrich our personal experience. Helping others to become more attentive can enrich everyone's experience. Heightening attentiveness and avoiding distractions permits creative people to see inventive possibilities in any situation.

Assignment: Find a moderately active setting. Sit quietly for at least 3 minutes, just taking in every detail, from visual movements to conversations to sounds, smells colors and textures. Then, remaining in the same spot, write for at least 7 minutes, trying to capture every detail of your experience. We will practice this in class, and then expand on it as a series of at least four discussion board posts.

Structure: Each Attention Study is likely to be 100 -300 words long. As you become more adept, the studies may turn into prose poems; see the examples that follow.

Consider: What do you notice when you slow down and sit still? How many aspects of “attention” did you experience? Was all of your attentiveness external (sounds, smells, etc.) or was some of it internal?

EXAMPLES OF ATTENTION WRITING

“To stand at the edge of the sea, to sense the ebb and flow of the tides, to feel the breath of a mist moving over a great salt marsh, to watch the flight of shore birds that have swept up and down the surf lines of the continents for untold thousands of years, to see the running of the old eels and the young shad to the sea, is to have knowledge of things that are as nearly eternal as any earthly life can be.”

Rachel Carson, *Under the Sea Wind*

“The mockingbird took a single step into the air and dropped. His wings were still folded against his sides as though he were singing from a limb and not falling, accelerating thirty-two feet per second, through empty air. Just a breath before he would have been dashed to the ground, he unfurled his wings with exact, deliberate care, revealing the broad bars of white, spread his elegant, white-banded tail, and so floated onto the grass. I had just rounded a corner when his insouciant step caught my eye; there was no one else in sight. The fact of his free fall was like the old philosophical conundrum about the tree that falls in the forest. The answer must be, I think, that beauty and grace are performed whether or not we will or sense them. The least we can do is try to be there.”

Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker's Creek*

“The police attacked with tear gas, with Mace, and with clubs, they attacked like a chain saw cutting into wood, the teeth of the saw the edge of their clubs, they attacked like a scythe through grass, lines of twenty and thirty policemen striking out in an arc, their clubs beating, demonstrators fleeing. Seen from overhead, from the nineteenth floor, it was like a wind blowing dust, or the edge of waves riding foam on the shore.”

Norman Mailer, *Miami & the Siege of Chicago*

I'm sitting in a hard plastic chair, quietly waiting for my early morning class to begin. Everyone is bundled up against the cold and few students are alert enough to even check messages on their phones. The room is silent; it's too early for talking and too cold for moving. Even the air in the room seems

frozen in place. The only indicator of time passing is the quiet ticking of the clock on the wall in the front of the classroom. Every time the door opens there is a break in the silence everyone glances towards the doorway, waiting for the professor to arrive. Finally, the professor arrives, greets the students, and everyone begins to sit up, take notes and ask questions. (example inspired by student response)

Note to Instructors: When I first devised this assignment, I wondered how students would respond. Could they put down their phones and sit still? To my delight, my students loved it and pushed it far further than I expected.

ATTENTION EXERCISE OPTION 2: THE WORLD IS A STAGE

Learning to see more and communicate visually can heighten creative thinking

Assignment: Using photography, seek out and transform the everyday world into a world of magic, mayhem or mystery.

Consider: What distinguishes everyday experience from heightened, focused experience? How can our heightened awareness be transformed into visual communication?

Structure: Shoot at least 50 images, then post the 4 best.

Strategy: Use natural or artificial light. Time of day, angle and direction of light, and the effects of shadows are essential aspects of natural lighting. A single light source tends to be emphatic and dramatic, while multiple sources can create more complex effects. Experiment!

Search out extraordinary images in an ordinary world. How can a simple glass of water become a shimmering study in light and shadow? Can a brick wall become a beautiful composition? What everyday dramas occur between people? Compose each image carefully, framing the moment as well as the shapes.

NOTE: A boundary is the point at which images; objects, ideas or experiences separate or connect. Lines and edges create boundaries quickly and easily. To improve your compositions, consider:

- How is the edge of the format being used?
- How are we visually directed around the composition?
- Are there any surprises presented by perceptual reality?
- How can architectural fragments be transformed into emotional statements?

Examples: For examples, show street photographs by Leann Staples (<https://www.shootnewyorkcity.com/photography>) and Karolina Trapp (<https://www.karolinatrapp.com/>)

Other examples include photographs by Robert Frank, Sally Mann, Diane Arbus, Abelardo Morell, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Lee Friedlander, Garry Winogrand, Bruce Gilden, Vivian Maier, Alex Webb, Daidō Moriyama, Helen Levitt or google *street photography*.

Note to Instructors: While students may spend several hours finding subject matter or adjusting lighting, the actual recording process is fast. Lighting can increase or decrease the illusion of space, emphasize an object or an action, and strongly influence our emotional response. When working photographically we draw with light. By taking multiple shots at different settings, students can choose among many options—and often reveal something special.

FRAME ANALYSIS

Assignment: Select four to six pivotal screen shots from a film, video or television show. Provide a brief synopsis of the film, and then analyze the composition of each shot you have chosen. Write around 100-170 words about each shot.

Consider: What is the best narrative for this assignment? What moments are truly pivotal? Why? How does the composition, lighting, camera angle, distance and cropping of each shot advance the narrative and strengthen the emotional impact?

Structure: Brief synopsis, then screen shots (around 3 x 6" is fine), with text above.

FRAME ANALYSIS EXAMPLE: *THE HUNGER GAMES: CATCHING FIRE*



Image 1: Before the victory tour begins, President Snow, the supreme leader of Panem, cautions an apprehensive Katniss Everdeen against any sign of independence. She has become a symbol of rebellion and oppressed and starving people in the Districts are ready to fight back. Snow is always shown in cool

colors. In this shot, his serious face dominates the center of the frame as he leans forward and describes the hazards for Katniss and her loved ones if she fails to comply with his demands. Snow's power is accentuated by use of a close-up, slightly off-balance, with his head and shoulders positioned diagonally. Side lighting accentuates his features and makes his posture even more ominous.



Image 2: In a visit to District 11, Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Mellark put aside their prepared scripts and compassionately describe the deaths of two of their competitors. Katniss, who is apprehensive about public speaking, has remained silent while Peeta spoke briefly. She finally turns to face the projected images

of Rue and Thresh—and the silent crowd, including their families. Positioned at the center of the frame, she is flanked by Peeta on the left and a dark doorway on the right. Grays and blues dominate the scene. The two victors are serious and pale. The domineering microphone and sleeveless dress emphasize Katniss' youth and vulnerability.



Image 3: The grieving crowd has listened quietly—until an elderly man raises his hand to salute Katniss and Peeta. We first see the man at the center of the frame, one of many in the crowd. His is the only face we see fully. Blues and grays again enhance the somber ambience.



Image 4: The man then uses a salute previously employed by citizens of District Twelve, kissing his three extended fingers and extending his arm above the crowd. The faces are out of focus, giving the courageous gesture even more impact. We only see the salute at this point; like the members of the crowd, we cannot see the man himself. In this shot, his gesture is more important than his personality. He whistles the four-note theme associated with the rebellion.



Image 5: Many members of the crowd adopt the salute as they extend their arms one by one. Positioned behind Katniss, we see what she sees: the very rebellion she is trying so hard to avoid. Her blurred shoulder fills the left side of the frame; the crowd fills the rest. She is trapped by events that are beyond her control.

TRUE LIES: DESIGNING FICTION

Assignment: Use a minimum of 12 photographs to tell a significant story to a broad audience.

Objectives:

- Research a major issue
- Express the human consequences of inaction
- Explore visual narrative
- Strengthen time management skills

Materials: Photocopies or computer prints, and other materials as needed

Instructions to Students:

WEEK 1: Select a big topic of personal interest or historical significance, such as immigration, climate change, racism, extinction, domestic violence. Find out as much as you can, considering the following questions:

- What is (or was) it?
- Who or What is (or was) impacted?
- What are (or were) the primary causes?
- What are the potential solutions? If a historical event, what were the primary consequences?

Find twelve or more great photographs related to this topic and possibly excerpts of text.

WEEK 2: Then, narrow your focus. What human story can make a big issue or idea gripping? Using a copier or Photoshop, enlarge, reduce, superimpose and collage images as necessary to make a very rough draft of a story told from a human perspective. Consider:

- *Conceptual Sources.* Anything you have ever seen, read, or felt can provide the beginning point for this project.
- *Visual Sources:* Anything is fair game, including scans of actual objects.
- *Verbal Sources.* How can you make this more personal? Oral histories and documentary videos can be especially useful.

WEEK 3 and 4: Present your images and ideas in a small group discussion. Consider the strengths and weaknesses in each persons' research or visualization. Then, continue work, expanding and refining your idea. Consider various structures:

- *Narrative structure.* What sequential organization will best convey your idea? To what degree need characters be developed? How does the story of an eight-year-old girl differ from that of a fifty-year old man or a ninety-year-old woman?
- *Format.* What is the best structure? A book? A family album? A file folder? A triptych using three hinged panels? Consider what you want to show, how to show it, and when to show it.
- *Editing.* How many images are needed, and how complex need each be? What can be cut?

- *Openings and Closings*: where does the story begin and end? What happens when this changes?

In your small group discussion, present your final draft as a rough cut--all images and ideas developed and format determined. Final refinements and construction should be the only remaining tasks. Consider ways to increase drama:

- *Image manipulation*. How can the source images be transformed and integrated into the final piece? To what degree should images be enlarged, blurred, or combined?
- *Repetition*. Photocopies are inherently repetitive. Can this be used to increase visual or emotional impact?
- *Pivot points and focal points*. If you are working with a single large mural, is there a specific focal point? If you are working with a book or video, is there a pivot point, a moment in which the direction of the story is altered?

WEEK 5: Critique. The results will be extremely varied, and everyone will want substantial feedback on his or her project. Use this time to hone your critiquing skills! Consider:

- What stories most intrigue you? Why?
- How compelling are the images presented?
- Was the structure chosen appropriate for the idea or emotion presented?
- If you were to re-do the project, how might you strengthen the results?

Reading: Section on Targeted Research and Chapters 12 and 13 in *Launching the Imagination*

Timetable: 40 hours, in and out of class

SEQUENTIAL CREATIVITY ASSIGNMENTS

SEQUENTIAL CREATIVITY ASSIGNMENTS

Ideation often outruns implementation in creativity courses. So, to break problems down into a series of manageable steps, this section provides four assignments that build very directly on each other. This helps students tackle the course content step by step.

Let's start with a few basic guidelines. When communicating ideas they really care about, students are generally eager to explore compositional and technical variations as they seek the most powerful approach. Keep the following in mind:

- Start small. A concept may be defined as *a well-developed thought*. Even the most modest thought can be enhanced and expanded using one or more of the strategies presented in Module 4.
- Think big. Encourage students to explore their ideas fully, even when the results may be technically or financially impossible to implement immediately. Many freshmen have never been encouraged to dream big, and the opportunity to do so is exhilarating and enlightening. A big idea can always be distilled down to create a more feasible solution, whereas a truncated idea is just a tragedy. Really big ideas may also be divided into components that can be completed over several semesters, in subsequent courses.
- Try anything. The best way to have good ideas is to have a lot of ideas. Dismissing a seemingly weak idea prematurely discourages risk-taking and re-enforces self-criticism. With almost any problem, it is wise to start by inventing at least five to ten possible solutions. This helps to combat the "one right answer" mania students may have encountered in the past. Encourage them to use the strategies in Module 5 to help select the best solution from multiple options.
- Hitch the conceptual cart to the compositional horse. Developing a great idea less than half the battle. To reach an audience, the idea must be communicated verbally or visually, through composition and construction. Rough drafts, thumbnail sketches and model making can be used to connect concepts to composition right away. While they are often initially resistant to such preliminary work, students generally adopt this approach when they realize its value.

While each of the following assignments can stand alone, presenting them sequentially demonstrates ways in which one creative experience can build on another. Like climbing a ladder, each step builds on the previous step and prepares them for the next step.

- *The Mysterious Garden*
- *Word/Image Synergy: Exploring improbable juxtapositions*
- *Inside and Outside the Box*
- *Immersion and Engagement*

THE MYSTERIOUS GARDEN

Especially for non-majors, a blank page can be intimidating. Modifying or adding to something that already exists can get the ball rolling.

Assignment: You will be provided with source material to get you started. Working with two other students, organize at least twelve 8.5x11" photocopies of plants to create a lively visual garden. Cut out or fill in shapes and overlap sheets as necessary to create a cohesive design measuring 24x24."

Objectives:

- Explore continuity and discontinuity
- Work with positive and negative shapes
- Balance unity and variety
- Practice the power of selection in enhancing creativity
- Encourage collaboration and creative problem solving

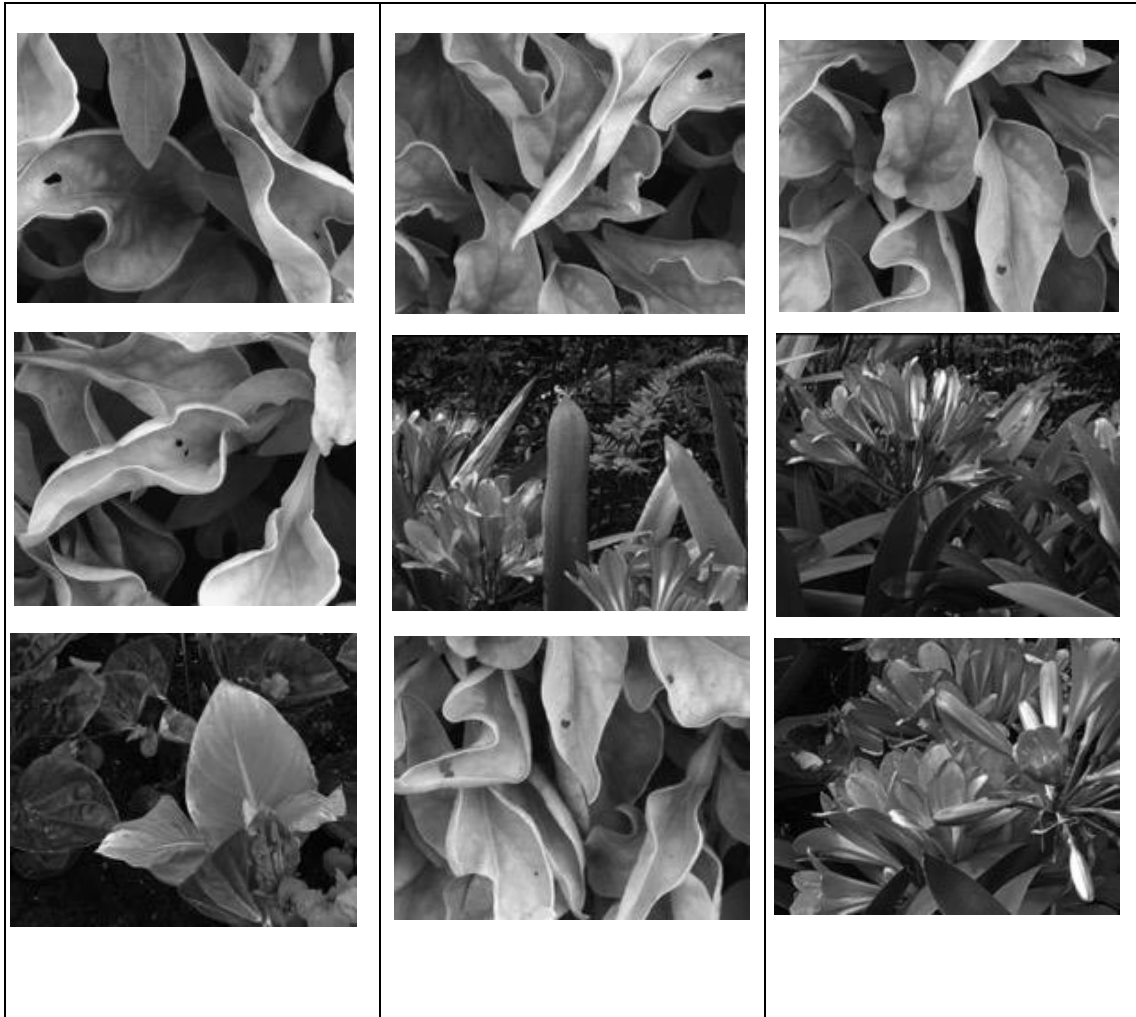
Materials: Starter images (4-6 copies of each), felt pen, marker, scissors, pencil, tape, tracing vellum

Process: Start by seeking potential connections among the images. Lay out several options, select one and then start trimming the pieces as needed to improve the fit. (Think of this as a jigsaw puzzle in which you can modify the shapes provided!)

1. Produce a rough draft that meets the size requirement and provides a cohesive composition-- then pin it up and consider your next steps, such as adding or subtracting imagery or filling in some shapes to create a more dramatic graphic result.
2. Critique the results. Which compositions are most cohesive? Which are most interesting? How can the project be taken further? What is the relationship between this project and the labyrinth exercise?
3. Cut the composition apart so that each collaborator gets a similar amount. Using the tracing paper, turn each fragment into a high-contrast line/shape/texture composition. This gives each student time to work more independently on a selected piece.
4. Re-compose the design, using all the available source material, and creating a result that is 2 square meters overall. This could result in a long, narrow scroll, a group of smaller images, a circle or other format.

Timetable: 4-6 hours, in and out of class

Note to Instructors: In a sense, this exercise presents a sequence of events that is like the dialog between divergent and convergent thinking. The possibilities expand (divergence) and then narrow (convergence) occur repeatedly. It also introduces many of the elements and principles of design, including work with line, shape and texture and finding a balance between unity and variety. At step 4, color could be added to push it even further.



WORD/IMAGE SYNERGY

(Inspired by assignment developed by Jesse Payne, Virginia Commonwealth University)

Assignment: Using Photoshop or photocopies, combine one or more images with a single word to create an unexpected message. Create at least ten 4"x 5.5" initial black and white studies at 300 dpi, then print out the best two to fit on 11 x 17" paper. Working in color can expand this assignment.

Objectives:

- Explore the implications of visual and verbal communication
- Introduce analogies and metaphors
- Increase awareness of typography
- Introduce additional Photoshop tools

Materials: Computer and flash drive.

Strategy:

1. Scan six thought-provoking images from books on photography or Internet sources and identify six of your favorite words. Examples: *paradox*, *independence*, *toxic*, *kindness*, *conviction*, *belief*. Put all the information into the online class folder, to be shared with everyone.

NOTE: As an educational project that is not for sale, this is an example of fair use of existing images. If you develop the idea further, take your own photographs!

2. Review the contributions of at least four other students, then select one folder to add to your personal collection of words and image. This just gives you more source material.

3. Insert one word. Experiment with typestyle and size to create the best effect. When combined, the word and image should have a stronger and more complex meaning than either would have had by itself. What happens when "cruelty" is combined with a photograph of children in a beauty pageant? Or "independence" is combined with a photograph of physicist Stephen Hawking, who was confined to a wheelchair yet explored the universe with his mind?



Consider:

- Why did you select each image? What made it stand out?
- Does a part of an image support your message, or do you need the whole thing?
- What happens when some parts of the design are out of focus?
- How big should the word be? Where should it be located? Should it be very prominent, or is a more subtle treatment more effective?
- What is essential? Are all visual elements adding to the message you want to convey?

Reading: Module 4 on analogical thinking

Timetable: 3 hours finding and reviewing sources; 9-12 hours for computer work and critique.

Note to Instructors: This assignment is deceptively complex. Any image can be used; any word can be used. Nouns are very powerful in this context, but words like “don’t” or “to sing” can also be used. Cropping, degrees of definition, and selection of typestyle can substantially change meaning.

INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE BOX

Assignment: Create an artwork that either invites the viewer into a mysterious world or that immerses the viewer using an installation. Use ideas and imagery from the initial Garden assignment if you wish.

Option 1: Build A Concept Generator. Create a cube that stimulates thought. When handled, this object should help the user generate a rich and varied response to the subject matter.

Objectives:

- Expand use of targeted research
- Explore non-linear narrative.
- Demonstrate the distinct power of a three-dimensional object.

Materials: Cube template, two-and four-ply chipboard, photocopies, double-sided tape and glue, acetate, if needed.

Process:

1. Read the section on Targeted Research. Select an object, event or idea you want to research and dig in, seeking words and images. A source file of at least twelve images works best.
2. *Part #1:* Organize six different images on the six exterior surfaces of a four-inch cube, with one image per side. When the cube is turned, the images should serve as a conceptual stimulus for the viewer, helping him/her think about the subject matter in six ways.
3. *Part #2:* Using a second four-inch cube, organize your images to create a more fluid design. Images can wrap around edges to create compositional and conceptual flow.
4. *Part #3:* Using a third four-inch cube, organize photocopies and up to twenty words to activate both the interior and exterior surfaces. Those who are more ambitious can expand the problem using multiple cubes, cubes within cubes, or other interior content, such as marbles, a diary, post-it notes, etc.
5. *Over the Top:* For those who want to push this further, invent a conceptual toy that is designed to generate the greatest number of concepts or evoke the most powerful emotions when manipulated. Invent boxes, puzzles, games, decks of cards, etc.

Reading: Modules 4 and 5; *Art in Boxes*, by Mogelon.

Timetable: 18 hours for Parts 1 to 4, 12 -18 more hours for Part 5

Note to Instructors: In a typical book or film, we use linear narrative to develop a story with a deliberate beginning, middle, and end. By contrast, this assignment gives students experience



with non-linear thinking. On a cube, the order in which the images will be seen is unpredictable, and thus any direction the viewer travels must offer rich possibilities and powerful implications. No longer telling a story, the *Concept Generator* serves as a stimulus for the thoughts the viewer develops him or herself.

The most inventive students will be able to create a great project using any word. Less confident students should be encouraged to start with an especially meaningful word. A Roget's International Thesaurus (the kind that is not alphabetical) can help students identify words with great potential.

Consider discussing the importance of archetypes and the recurrence of certain images across many cultures: why are circles so powerful and used so widely? How many images and meanings can be derived from the word "water?" or "hidden?" or "parallel?" Can a Concept Generator evoke irrational dream-images, rather than remaining in the rational world? This assignment offers endless possibilities: encourage students to play with all sorts of ideas!

IMMERSION AND ENGAGEMENT

Assignment: Place evocative images and texts on a unifying theme in a series of corridors of a well-traveled building. Each student should contribute at least walls of information. Use ideas and imagery from the previous Garden assignment if you wish.

Objectives:

- Review the preceding assignments considering our accumulated experience
- Expand communication beyond the classroom
- Redefine what art and design can do
- Bring this sequence of assignments to a resounding conclusion

Materials: Words and images that can be safely adhered to building walls; an interesting building.

Process:

1. First, let's review all the preceding assignments. What did you accomplish? How could it be pushed further?
2. Next, we will discuss possible sites and themes for this project and then choose the best for this project.
3. Then, consider what words and images might best resonate throughout and across the site.
4. Install the result and if possible, schedule a reception to encourage the first wave of visitors.

Timetable: 6-12 hours

Note to Instructors: Be sure to get permission before launching this exhibition and make it as student driven as possible. And, at the end of the show, remove all evidence of this project.

POSSIBLE EXTRA CREDIT BOOK REVIEW

As creativity and innovation have risen in prominence, more and more books have been published that explore various aspects of this subject. Many are excellent. An example of an extra credit book review follows.

Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World, by David Epstein

If you are determined to compete at the highest level--in athletics, academics or music-- shouldn't you commit yourself fully to a single sport, subject or instrument? Isn't it essential to study hard, practice faithfully, and apply rigorous self-discipline to stay on track? We all know that "winners never quit and quitters never win," right?

If you believe any of these maxims, perhaps you should read David Epstein's *Range*. While acknowledging the value of specialization and applauding self-discipline, Epstein offers an even more compelling argument for the value of breadth. Citing extensive scientific evidence, he notes that:

- Early specialization can encourage us to commit to disciplines that are mismatched to our core interests,
- Connections across disciplines can lead to more dramatic breakthroughs,
- "wasting time" on peripheral research areas can help us identify unexpected connections,
- For some tasks, older, simpler technologies can be better than newer ones,
- Deeper expertise in a discipline can narrow focus and reduce inventiveness,
- Walking away from an unproductive research direction or course of action can be the best expression of "grit."

The balance between scientific citations and compelling stories makes the book both readable and memorable. Epstein begins by contrasting the stories of golfer Tiger Woods (who specialized early and by the age of three was already beating older children) and tennis ace Roger Federer (who played multiple sports and only began focusing on tennis when he was in his teens.) Both became exemplars of excellence but achieved greatness by following very different paths. Other stories (especially from the fields of chess, science, entrepreneurship, the military, and music) personify the points Epstein is determined to make.

According to Epstein, specialization tends to be most effective when we tackle "kind" questions. These questions are clearly defined. The results are both clear-cut and easily measured. By contrast, today's "wicked" questions are often hard to define, cross disciplines, and elude conventional quantitative measurement. As a result, generalists who are curious about many things and view learning as an adventure really can "triumph in a specialized world."

This book is available in paperback, digital and audio form. Read by the author, the audio form is terrific.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS FROM MULTIPLE INSTITUTIONS

Contributors

Sarah Archino, PhD and Ross McClain, Furman University

Mary Blatherwick, PhD, University of New Brunswick, Canada

Charles Carbia, Professor, Savannah College of Art and Design

Chemeketa Community College Faculty: Deanne Beausoleil, Art History, Kay Bunnenberg Boehmer, Studio Art, Laura Mack, Studio Art, Josie Wood, Communications

Jeffrey Galle, PhD, University System of Georgia

M. Michelle Illuminato, Portland State University

Mathew Kelly, Central College

Sandra Reed, Marshall University

Jeremy Waltman, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Michelle Wilcox, University of North Florida and Flagler College

OBSERVATION ON THE MOVE

Contributed by Sarah Archino, PhD and Ross McClain, Furman University

Assignment: Students will work in teams to sketch an object hidden from view; one student will be charged with describing the object while two others will sketch, based solely on the information they receive. The students will then compare their sketches with the original object and transition into a conversation about the process of conveying, receiving, and interpreting information.

Objectives: Upon completion of this assignment, students will

- Experience the gaps between vision and language,
- Explore the interpretive missteps that can come from imprecise communication and assumptions about what seems obvious.
- Learn to prioritize their observations and think creatively about how to communicate.

Materials: Three-dimensional object, concealed in a box; drawing supplies; paper. This works best if students can be split into groups around the room, with a central location/tabletop for the box to be placed and easily accessed. (I have used figurines or stuffed animals as the hidden object, although they should not be of recognizable characters. These work well because they have a frontal view and because they are deceptively simple.)

Strategy: Have students break into groups – preferably groups of three with remaining student(s) split to make some groups of 4. Each group needs to select a delegate before the activity is explained to the group.

Bring all delegates (one from each group) to the center of the room to look at the object concealed inside the box. They will have three minutes to describe this object to their group members, each of whom will sketch their own interpretation of the object being described. The delegate can make as many trips back-and-forth as they wish and can use pantomime or bodily movements to help in their description; the only thing they cannot do is touch the box or the object inside. Their partners are not allowed to ask any questions during these three minutes, they must only sketch according to the directions of their delegate.

At the end of the three minutes, each student can ask one question of their delegate, who must answer from memory. After the questions have been asked and answered, the object in the box can be revealed to the whole group.

Instructor's Notes: The discussion is more important than the artwork in this case. Ask the students to consider the following questions and discuss them as a class:

- What information was well-explained? What made it effective?
- What information was lost in translation? What caused this?

- What did you realize halfway through the exercise that you wish you would have known in the beginning?
- If you were a delegate, what was the most frustrating part of your role? If you were a partner, what was the most frustrating part of your role?
- If you were to do this exercise again, what would you do differently?

CREATIVITY PERSONIFIED

Contributed by Mary Blatherwick, PhD, University of New Brunswick, Canada

Assignment: Research a creative person or a researcher in creativity and write a one-page bio or commentary on that person. Present your findings to the class--maybe acting as that person!

Materials:

The only materials are ones needed for recording the information the students research, such as notebooks and computers.

Strategy: This is both a research and experiential learning activity designed to engage students in finding out more about key figures from different disciplines who contributed to the body of knowledge that exists on creativity. Steps:

- Names of several creatives and/or creativity researchers are written down on individual pieces of paper and placed in a box.
- Each student then takes a name from the box and is asked to not show their classmates the name they have chosen.
- They are asked to research the person they have chosen to: a) find out about their personal background, and b) what they contributed to the field of creativity.
- They are instructed to only write one page.
- To complete their research, they are given one or two weeks.
- On the presentation day they are asked to present their findings in *first* person; not *third* person. This a surprise so there are few moments given for them to think about how they will do this. They are encouraged, if they feel comfortable, to get into 'character', and even have debates with other the 'creatives' or 'researchers' during the class if they discover they have conflicting views. These conversations require them to improvise, take risks and use their imaginations.
- As the instructor I also play along by acting as the host and inviting the various distinguished guest to the class that day. This shared learning experience adds an element of surprise and light heartedness to the learning process and encourages highly creative responses.

Key Questions for the Students:

- What are the lived experiences of the person I am researching?
- Why did they get involved in the field of creativity?
- What did they contribute to the knowledge of creativity we have today?

Assessment criteria: This assignment is graded on the following criteria:

- Completion of the short research paper
- Presentation of their research in first person
- Imaginative responses/reflections

Timetable:

- The research takes one to two weeks to complete.
- Recommended class size is 10 to 15
- Presentation length is approximately 5 minutes per student during the class.

Recommended Reading: Interviews in Module Seven of *Creative Inquiry*

Instructor's notes: At the beginning of a course on creativity I engage my undergraduate education students in this simple yet highly creative and interactive learning experience. This helps to establish an engaging and receptive atmosphere for using our imaginations and collectively exploring creative possibilities.

This assignment is an opportunity to establish a receptive and playful atmosphere in your high school, college or university classroom for learning about a wide range of creative ideas and theories. This can also be made into a longer assignment where students know ahead of time that they will be presenting in “first” person, and so they also spend time on creating costumes and accessories to add to their presentations.

PLACE AND TIME: THREE VARIATIONS

Contributed by Charles Carbia, Savannah College of Art and Design

Assignment: By combining their recollections and immediate experience, in unexpected ways students can investigate the place in which they live. Each of the three parts of this project takes one or two weeks to complete.

Objectives:

- Strengthen their capacity for observation
- Develop and demonstrate a heightened awareness of the emotional implications of objects, spaces and experiences.
- Determine and then use essential visual information while inviting substantial viewer engagement. This exercise is not designed to create a conventionally cohesive image, but one that is unexpected and evocative.
- Demonstrate ways in which photography can be suggestive, not simply descriptive.

Materials: Any drawing, writing and/or image creating materials, such as digital camera, smart phone, and other materials as needed.

Part 1 - PLACE RECOLLECTION

Create a single 2D image to be submitted as a JPG. It can be any size and two-dimensional medium.

Step 1: List 10 things you love/like about the place you reside and then list 10 things you hate/dislike about the place you reside.

Step 2: Go back through each list and note specific memories and details for each item. For example, if you listed 'friends' on your love list, note a specific favorite experience you had with them. If you listed 'miss my family' on your hate list, note a specific thing you miss most doing with your family. Also note sensory experiences from those memories: specific objects, sounds, smells, tastes, textures, colors/light, and so forth.

Step 3: **Choose one thing from you love list and one thing from your hate list.** Then select images that represent the love and hate choices. These images can be as specific or general as you want. Don't worry about the viewer understanding the full story behind your love and hate images. Use imagery that is interesting and visually engaging.

Step 4: Create a single image by combining at least one thing from your 'love' list and at least one thing from your 'hate' list together. Consider how the color palette, composition, texture, and materials used affect meaning. Spatial position can help at this stage: an object that you love

may appear in the foreground and one that you hate may appear in the background--or vice versa.

Part 2 - PLACE NOW

Investigate your immediate response to a place. Create one photograph and submit it as a JPG image. The chapter titled “Melancholy Objects”, from *On Photography* by Susan Sontag, will help you tackle this assignment.

Step 1: Make a list and photo document, considering:

- What is happening around you now?
- Who is around you and how do they make you feel?
- What objects do you use daily?
- How do your sensory experiences (sounds, smells, colors, light, textures, tastes, temperatures) make you feel?
- What is the time frame of these experiences? Do they last a minute? A few seconds? The entire day or for multiple days?

Tip: By shooting thirty or more shots, you greatly improve your chances of capturing a powerful image. Rather than using Photoshop, produce an unmanipulated photograph for this assignment. Please avoid selfies. They can become a cliché and are too self-referential. This image needs engage viewers in a deeper way.

Step 2: Find a good time to go on a *Dérive*. *Dérive* is a French term describing the opposite of ‘arrive’. It refers to ‘drifting’, with the intention of letting yourself discover. It does *not* mean to be lost, but to be completely comfortable and in tune with the act of walking through a place with no set destination. You can use the [Dérive app](#) or try to wander through your environment with no destination. The goal of this *Dérive* is to allow sensory experiences to lead you through the environment. You should not have a set destination (see *Dérive* Wikipedia post, under Resources).

During the *Dérive* take photos of anything interesting or unexpected, especially interesting objects, materials or fragments of information. You might even find a small object and take it with you, photographing it in different, unexpected places as you go. Seek experiences as well as objects, such as a conversation with someone you meet.

Step 3: **Create and/or choose one photograph that captures a specific immediate experience you had in the place you reside.** It can be a photo you took during your *Dérive*, or a photo you set up and captured.

Tip: Avoid the picturesque! Remember this important quote from Susan Sontag, “...essentially the camera makes everyone a tourist in other people’s reality, and eventually in one’s own.” This

photograph is not intended for a tour guidebook, or for a scrapbook collection. Seek the immediate and the unexpected.

Part 3 – PLACE FINAL

Combine your discoveries in Place Recollection and Place Now to create one final artwork about the place where you live. Size and medium are up to you. The result should be a more complex and resolved idea that combines and builds on the discoveries made in the previous two projects.

Consider:

- What were your most important discoveries from Parts 1 and 2? How can they inform your final image?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses in your previous work for this assignment? How can you combine the strengths of each part and resolve the weaknesses in the final?
- How can juxtaposition create a more evocative image? Are you trusting the viewer by using unexpected objects or combinations of objects?
- Do all your compositional choices heighten the meaning and emotions you want to express?

Resources:

- Read *Creative Inquiry* section titled "Expanding the Bandwidth." How many variables (such as lighting, time of day, cropping, and image format) can you explore?
- If you haven't done much photography of this kind, look at photographs by Abelardo Morell, Karolina Trapp, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Garry Winogrand, Bruce Gilden, Vivian Maier, Alex Webb, Daidō Moriyama and others who focus on time and place.
- If your background with visual composition is limited, review Chapter 2 in *Launching the Imagination*, by Mary Stewart.
- Learn more about Derive and practice it several times. You are likely to see more each time you use this skill.
- (From Wikipedia: The *dérive* ("drift") is a revolutionary strategy originally put forward in the "Theory of the Derive" (1956) by [Guy Debord](#), a member at the time of the [Letterist International](#). Debord defines the *dérive* as "a mode of experimental behavior linked to the conditions of urban society: a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances." It is an unplanned journey through a landscape, usually [urban](#), in which participants drop their everyday relations and "let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there". Though solo *dérives* are possible, Debord indicates that the most fruitful numerical arrangement consists of several small groups of two or three people who have reached the same level of awareness, since cross-checking these different groups' impressions makes it possible to arrive at more objective conclusions.)

FRUGAL INNOVATION AT CHEMEKETA

A collaborative project and presentation by Chemeketa Community College Faculty:
Deanne Beausoleil, Art History, Kay Bunnenberg Boehmer, Studio Art, Laura Mack, Studio Art
Josie Wood, Communications

Assignment: Identify a problem with a system or service at your school. Then, develop a frugal solution to that problem and pitch the idea to others.

Objectives:

- Learn about global approaches to Frugal Innovation.
- Gain collaboration skills, a necessary component to creative innovation.
- Apply brainstorming techniques to systems, services, and beyond.

Strategy and Process:

- Watch Navi Radjou's TED talk "Creative Problem Solving in the Face of Extreme Limits."
https://www.ted.com/talks/navi_radjou_creative_problem_solving_in_the_face_of_extreme_limits?language=en
- Consider: What drives frugal innovation? How does it differ from "Western" notions of innovation? What are the most notable differences between the approaches of the Global North and the Global South?

1. **Form Groups.** Do a favorite icebreaker, a "get to know each other" exercise.
2. **Brainstorm (group work/collaboration).** To find a question/issue that needs to be resolved at your institution of learning, conduct *Questions Only* brainstorming process to uncover a promising (or irritating) issue to resolve. Go to the location if necessary to clarify. Questions Only Brainstorming¹ determines the problem that your group will solve with the rules of Fugal Innovation. Select a notetaker and a facilitator and use a digital document or paper to record the following steps.
 - a. Start with this question, "What is not working well at our school?"
 - b. Ask and record 50 questions. Questions only. (Think, Jeopardy.) Do not answer the questions, just pose them.
 - c. After number 50, reread each question to categorize it as open or closed. Open questions start with who what where when how why. Closed questions can be answered with a simple yes or no.
 - d. Now, rewrite each question. Turn open questions into closed questions and vice versa.
 - e. Review the list of questions and circle the most interesting issue.

¹ This approach uses the Question Formulation Technique originally developed by Luz Santana and Dan Rothstein and currently taught through the nonprofit, *Right Question Institute* (<https://rightquestion.org/>).

- f. This is the question your group will attempt to solve. Rewrite the question and take it to the next, solo step. “_____ is not working well at our school. How can we fix it following the rules of Frugal Innovation?”

3. Brainstorm (solo work)

Working alone, sprout ideas using the Random Verb Brainstorming Technique and the rules of Frugal Innovation.

- Keep it simple
- Do not reinvent the wheel
- Think and act horizontally

Problem to Solve	+	Random Verb (online generator)	+	Frugal Innovation Rule	=	Idea
Example:						
How can we help kids enjoy online learning?	+	“DERIVE”	+	Keep it Simple	=	Derive from chalkboard tablets used in early 20th century schools: portable, tactile, sturdy AND easy to use.

4. Discuss and Blend (group work/collaboration) Ideas about working collaboratively occur throughout *Creative Inquiry*. Keith Sawyer’s *Group Genius*¹ and *The Art of Innovation*² by Tom Kelly are also great resources.

- a. Use the concepts below to collaborate and combine your solutions to the problem. How will these concepts help your group be successful?

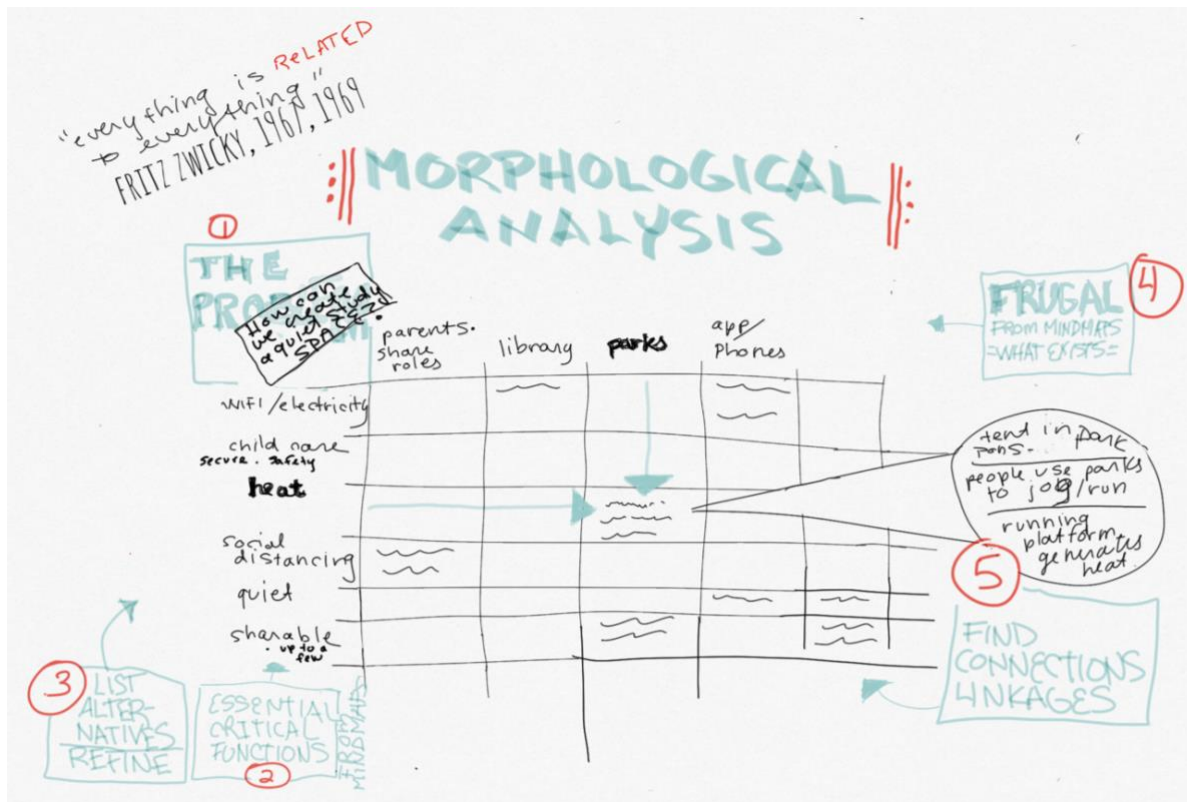
- Clear goals
- Listening
- Familiarity
- Complete concentration
- Equal participation
- Agency
- Blending egos
- Communication
- Keep it moving forward
- Potential for failure

(All conditions suggested above are from “Conditions for Group Flow” developed by Keith Sawyer in *Group Genius*.)

- b. Share solo ideas with your group. To discuss all ideas and see potential combinations, use the Morphological Analysis note taking process (developed by Fritz Zwicky³).

1. In the top left corner, identify the problem

2. Below, list CRITICAL FUNCTIONS (from solo and group work)
3. Refine, edit, and look for alternatives.
4. Across the top row, list TAPPABLE FRUGAL RESOURCES (from solo work)
5. Finally, meet the top and left lists INSIDE THE MATRIX (like a multiplication table) to find new solutions. The entire grid does not need to be filled.
6. Use the matrix to bring all ideas together but use discussion to organically uncover solution(s).



8. Refine. Present your Frugal Innovation idea to the whole class for feedback and refinement.

9. Develop Deliverables. Assign tasks (research, writing, visuals, slide deck, etc.) for the required deliverables: written proposal and presentation which must include:

- a catchy and appropriate title
- group introduction and why you are pitching
- a clear audience
- a description of the problem
- the solution: describing how it is frugal and uses the innovation of the global south; using what you have rather than new materials.

Key Questions:

- Compare the solo and group brainstorming steps. Identify one tool you will use again in work, school or life. How will you tweak it for that other context?
- Assess the collaboration. What did you do to support the success of your group?

- Make a pie chart to list and visualize the contributions of each group member.
- Using the language of Group Flow, articulate 2 successes and 2 challenges in communication, timeliness, virtual tool usage, task distribution, research, etc.
- If you did this project again, what changes would you make to improve the collaborative process?

Notes to Instructors:

- Set a quota for all brainstorming. (For example, Random Verb solo work = 25)
- To ensure focused group work during the second group meeting, students do divergent thinking for the problem/issue, working *solo first*.
- Invite college administrators from identified areas to the presentations or forward written proposals to the correct department. This is a great opportunity to raise the stakes for students and connect classroom learning to the real world.

¹ Sawyer, Keith. 2007. Group Genius: The Creative Power of Collaboration. New York, NY: Basic Books

² Zwicky, F., Discovery, Invention, Research - Through the Morphological Approach, Toronto: The Macmillan Company, 1969.

WRITING THE SELF THROUGH THE STUDY OF THE MEMOIR

Jeffrey Galle, PhD, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Faculty Development, University System of Georgia

Assignment: Students will write successive drafts of a central life experience while concurrently studying professional memoirs. The dozen issues in life writing discerned in exploring the professional memoirs will serve as guides for producing the personal essays.

Objectives: Students learn the decisions professional writers face are the issues they themselves face in writing the personal narratives. Questions of loyalty, betrayal, the fictional elements in nonfiction writing, recreating dialogue that is ‘close to’ but not a transcription, all of these issues take on greater significance as students do the work that professional writers do in the memoir.

Materials: The class develops the list of ‘Issues in the Memoir’ by reading and analyzing professional memoirs. This list of some 12 issues and a corresponding rubric will serve as the guideposts for the student writing during the semester.

Strategy and Process: The work of the semester involves reading/discussing four professional memoirs, the first of which serves to provide students ample opportunity to identify the dozen or so issues in life-writing as manifested in the first memoir. As they are creating this list, students produce short writing assignments, short pieces, that lead up to the personal essays after the first memoir has been analyzed. Successive life writing essays become the work of the course as students continue to read/discuss successive memoirs and produce successive drafts of their personal essays.

Key Questions: While students are developing their life writing ability, they do so by asking and addressing key questions applied to the books and their personal essays:

1. By necessity and by function, how does fictionalization occur in the nonfiction memoirs?
2. How do issues of race, or class, or gender figure into the text of the memoir and the personal essays?
3. What drives decisions on what is included or excluded in the narrative? Do these relate to privacy issues, to loyalty or betrayal?
4. How do individual members of the family play a part in the development of the central figure of the memoir or personal essay?
5. What determines when to employ—dialogue, description, or summary—the specific kinds of narrative language?

Assessment criteria: The elements of the writing course rubric in conjunction with the changes of successive drafts of the personal essays will provide the assessment criteria.

Timetable: From the zero draft through final draft, students produce a weekly draft and in consultation/conference with the writing instructor and peer feedback, submit the finished essay within three weeks of the zero draft.

Notes to Instructors: Typically, the memoir course is separate from a writing course. Using a practitioner's model, students study professional memoirs (Kalanithi, Jobs, ...) to identify the actual decisions professional writers have made and concurrently produce multiple drafts of personal essays focusing on central life experiences. Placing personal narratives of the student alongside and within the forms of the professional memoir serves two purposes: 1) students acquire greater confidence from the association of issues professional writers face with their own life-writing essays, and 2) the issues in life writing crystallize and focus the decisions that students make in writing their own experiences.

Recommended Reading: Section on Targeted Research and Developing A Capstone Assignment in *Creative Inquiry*.

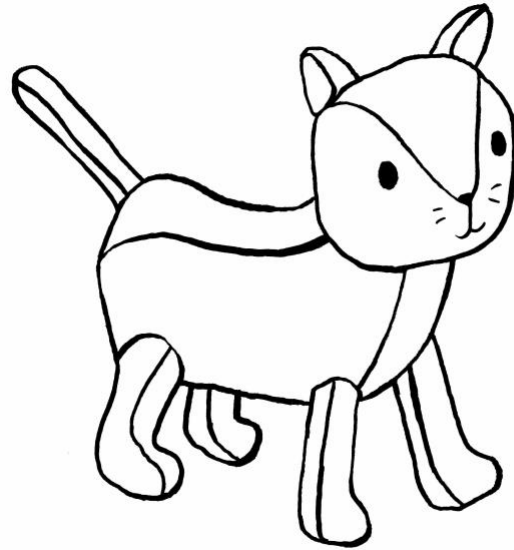
DECONSTRUCT//RECONSTRUCT: A NEW LIFE FOR A STUFFIE

Contributed by M. Michelle Illuminato, Professor Portland State University

Assignment: Using a stuffed animal as a starting point, create a soft sculpture that abstracts and extends the toy physically and conceptually. This new sculpture can express an action, a word or an idea; it might tell a story.

Objectives:

- Use deconstruction to better understand construction
- Learn new sewing, patternmaking and textile skills
- Recognize the meaning inherent in objects
- Practice shifting, abstracting or amplifying meaning
- Research related contemporary artists
- Increase creativity through play and exploration



Materials:

- **One medium-sized stuffed animal** (must be at least 12 inches in one direction, avoid snakes or carrots. Should be old, unwanted, furry. Do not buy new.)
- **Seam ripper** or sharp small scissors
- **Spools of thread** (any color, one or more)
- **Needle/s** (at least one with a larger eye)
- **Embroidery floss** or pearl cotton floss
- **Colorful fabric**, or old clothes or wool sweaters for reuse, 1-2 yards total
- **Sharp scissors** or rotary cutter and cutting board
- **Ruler, paper, pencil**

Other useful but optional things

- Fabric dye, bleach or natural dye (such as beets)
- Embroidery hoop
- Thimble
- Crochet hook and yarn

Process and Strategy:

Part 1: GET TO KNOW YOUR STUFFIE

Set up a lighted area and take a portrait of your stuffed animal. Write a 200-word description of its character, its physical assets, and/or a story about it. Look at it closely. Make quick drawings of how it might be transformed and what that might mean.

Part 2: DECONSTRUCT

Deconstruct the stuffed animal using a seam ripper or a sharp pair of small scissors. Be careful not to cut the fabric. Can choose to leave **one or two** pieces together (not more than 10%), all other parts should be deconstructed into individual fabric-pattern pieces.

Part 3: DO ONE THING

Do one thing to your some or all of your stuffie pieces. What might you do? Dye it, bleach it, cut holes and repair, trim fur, use sandpaper, crochet or add yarn, get it dirty, turn it inside out, embroider a pattern onto it, etc. Be creative, play, stay in the moment of making, enjoy the process of not knowing the result. *Avoid using any process that changes your ability to sew it later, like heavy paint or plaster.*

PART 4. QUESTION, DRAW, PLAY

Lay out all your materials on a table. You are going to assemble these and add a large shape to them with additional materials to extend the sculpture's physical form and meaning. Begin by questioning, drawing and playing. What might you do to shift, change, extend these pieces into an abstract sculpture? Move them on the table. Pick out some inspiring cloth for the extension. Freely sketch versions of your sculpture. What is pleasing? Think about the color and pattern. Think about scale. What will the extension look like? Will it contrast, repeat, mimic or dominate? How far can you get from a form that says, 'stuffed animal'? *You are not trying to create a new stuffed animal. If you have a sewing machine, you are welcome to use it for this part, the other parts may be hard on the machine.*

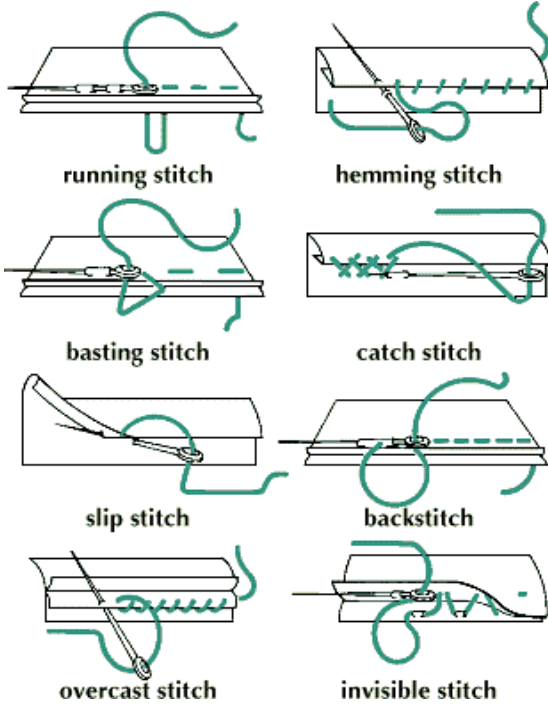
PART 6. RECONSTRUCT

Sew all pieces including your cloth extension together to create your final sculpture. Be aware of craftsmanship, use small, sturdy, invisible stitches. Restuff as needed, use foam, cloth, old t-shirts, pillows, paper, rice or other stuffing materials. Photograph the finished piece in a similar way to the original.

PART 7. REFLECT

Place the original image of your stuffed animal beside the new image of your sculpture. Think about how they relate. What messages were carried through with the materials or shapes or character of the original? Take a step back, what cultural meanings do animals and stuffed animals carry? What personal relationships or stories come to mind? What other ideas are prompted by this process? *What about nature, death, animals, taxidermy, comfort?* Now shift to your sculpture. What stories, meanings or feelings does this new sculpture tell?

Technical Details:



Hand stitching + Basic Embroidery Look Book

Download and assemble

Nifty needlework:

<https://www.pinterest.com/michelleillumini/nifty-needlework/>

Embroidery:

<https://www.pinterest.com/michelleillumini/embroidery/>

Hand stitching

For the most part, you will use the running stitch for sewing your sculpture. Here is a quick how to as well as some pictures of other useful stitches to help you get started!

Running stitch. Secure thread and bring the needle to the fabric surface. Insert the needle into the fabric, taking three or four, small, even, forward stitches, approximately 1/4-inch apart. Pull the needle through the fabric. Repeat. <https://colabstudio.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/lookbook.pdf>

Inspirational Artists + Film: Annette Messager, Mike Kelley, Nick Cave, Liz Magor, Mark Dion, Stuffed Documentary

SOCIAL ACTION

Contributed by Mathew Kelly, Central College

Assignment: Develop a creative artifact in response to a current event or series of events happening in the world right now.

Objectives:

- Consider our place and impact on the world stage.
- Examine the complexities of social activism
- Distill complex events into essential information, solutions, problems and hidden concerns.
- Use the unique qualities of a range of media to convey ideas.
- Use current events as a source of inspiration.

Process and Strategy:

- *Research.* Find 3-5 topics in world events that are important to you. It can be a global issue or something from your hometown. Find out all you can about these topics including underlying causes, symptoms, consequences, typical and atypical solutions.
- *Clarify.* Why is this important to you? Where do you stand on this issue? Are you offering a solution, taking a stand, presenting another point of view, asking another question? What are the most important aspects of this issue?
- *Play.* For the events you have researched, consider developing a creative prototype addressing the issue using one or more of the examples below. Choose one you are least familiar with to expand your creative tool kit:

1. Pictogram/Pictograph –A pictogram cannot possibly address all complexities of an issue, but it can address the most essential aspects. Create a pictogram addressing the most essential aspects of the chosen social issue.

Why do this? Pictograms must be read quickly and clearly through imagery alone. These can become powerful logos or symbols encompassing a cause. Simply seeing these pictograms can help keep a complex issue in the forefront of people’s minds

2. Poster or infographic. Integrating imagery with text helps illuminate some of the complexities of any topic. The challenge is to integrate the two in a way that is impactful as well as informative. Create a poster or infographic addressing the most essential aspects of the chosen social issue through the integration of imagery and text.

Why do this? Posters and infographics are used in every industry. An ability to develop effective posters and infographics would be a valuable skill to any profession.

3. *Photo essay*. Telling the story through a series of images. The approach may be narrative or non-narrative in structure. Show the critical aspects of your chosen social issue through a series of 5-7 images.

Why do this? Quantity is sometimes necessary to fully express the impact of a topic and imagery is often quite powerful in this regard. A single image can encompass all of the emotion of a given moment. A series of images can show multiple aspects of a complex issue.

4. Small scale sculpture (paper, cardboard, wire, found objects) Building a prototype to be seen in 360 degrees has unique challenges. The scale of the sculpture, its materials, and intended location are key elements influencing interpretation. The sculpture may be a model for a larger piece. For example, “Cloud Gate” by Anish Kapoor is much more potent as a large-scale piece for people to walk under than a small object that might fit on your desk.

Why do this? We often speak about seeing every “side” of an issue. A sculpture in the round doesn’t always have sides. This may be a way to break down thinking about an issue in binary terms (right or wrong) and instead as something multifaceted.

5. Poem. Poets focus on the most essential words needed to show the reader/listener the intended meaning. Nothing is extra. Choose a poetic structure (Haiku, Limerick, Ballad, Sonnet, Acrostic, Free verse, Villanelle, Ode, or Elegy).

Why do this? Some find powerful expression in words both written and spoken as opposed to creating imagery and objects. A visual artist who is challenged to find the right words to describe what they see could unlock creative possibilities through this process. One who is used to writing at length can use this to distill ideas to their most essential form.

6. Short performance (dance, mime, or actions without words). How we interpret someone’s intent or mood is often through body language and other non-verbal cues. Choreograph a short performance in response to a current event.

Why do this? Theatre is one way we can explore challenging material because characters act out what we are thinking. It is a way to present the complexities of an issue without feeling it is directed at an individual.

7. Sound collage or sound effects. We often use sound effects to help describe a situation. For example, “When the concert started it was like BOOM and the crowd went (more sounds).” Create a sound collage helping the listener understand some of the key aspects of the social issue.

Why do this? Sound profoundly affects us in psychological and physiological ways. It can be a very powerful influence over our actions and interpretations. Addressing a social issue specifically through sound without the influence of visuals requires a different kind of attention. TED talks by Julian Treasure may be instructive.

- *Edit.* You need to know as much as you can about the event you are addressing. Viewers, however, generally respond most strongly to distilled ideas and powerful examples. Seek impact, not just accuracy!

Recommended Reading: *Creative Inquiry* on Targeted Research and on Analogical Thinking; *Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know*, by Adam Grant

Notes to Instructors: This assignment can help to demonstrate the unique power of each artform the student selects. The immediacy of a short performance or animated film is inherently different from the quieter communication inherent in a photo essay or the evocative power of a poem.

Social Action may work especially well in the second half of the semester. When student energy begins to drop, an open-ended assignment focusing on a topic of personal interest can be invigorating!

CONNECT THE DOTS

Contributed by Sandra Reed, Professor at Marshall University

Assignment:

Using at least six basic Gestalt principles, arrange at least twelve small everyday objects to construct a variety of patterns and recognizable images. The principles we will use are containment, grouping, repetition, proximity, fusion continuity and closure.

Objectives:

- Create surprising and personal arrangements while experiencing low-risk visual exploration.
- Gain practical experience with the vocabulary of Gestalt principles.
- Use documentation to demonstrate the power of iteration
- During critique process, curate related works using grouping--one of the most basic of the Gestalt principles.

Materials and Equipment:

Each student should bring

- Twenty-four of any one small item, such as paper clips, maple leaf seed pods, matches, etc.
- 8.5x11" and 11x17" white paper plus additional Bristol paper as needed
- A roll of cellophane tape or other means to temporarily attach items to the typing paper.
- A wall where prints can be temporarily displayed for critique
- A means of recording iterations, such as a cell phone or photocopier

Process and Strategy:

Week 1. Activity and Discussion, based on Gestalt section in *Launching the Imagination*

Start with 12 similar objects, such as paper clips, seed pods, pull-tabs, pencils, etc.

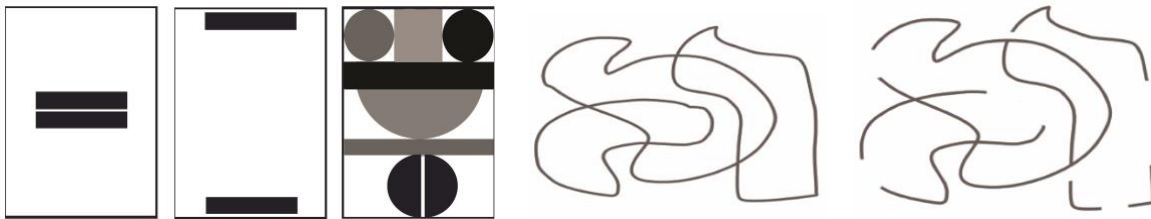
Containment is a unifying force created by the outer edge of a composition, or by a boundary within a composition. Just as twelve strangers become connected when they arrive for the first day of class, so the simple act of placing the 12 objects within any boundary helps to unify them. Try positioning them on both the 8.5x11 paper and on the 11x17" paper to see how the frame itself affects the composition.

Next, explore **Grouping**. Simply by separating the objects into three or four clumps, we create sub-categories and add interest. Working with either paper size expands the possibilities.

Then, trade eight of your objects with one student and eight with another. You should now have three types of objects. This increases the possibilities--and the complexity. Use 16-24 from your overall set to explore five more Gestalt strategies.

Repetition occurs when the same visual element or effect is used over and over. A grid is the most obvious repetitive structure and can be used as a starting point. Too much repetition, though, is boring. To add interest, explore repetition by *orientation* (all objects placed diagonally, for example), repetition by *shape* (bands of curvilinear shapes alternating with bands of squarish shapes, for example), or repetition by *color*.

Proximity refers to the distance between things. Relationships are easily created when things are in close proximity, as shown in the first figure. When the squares are farther apart, the viewer must stretch more to make a connection. **Fusion** occurs when shapes or volumes are placed so close together that they share common edges. As shown in the third figure, this can create new negative shapes as the surrounding area becomes more clearly defined. As shown in the fourth figures, fusion can be pushed further when transparent shapes overlap.



Overlap tends to increase **Continuity**, which may be defined as a fluid connection among compositional parts. This connection can be actual or implied. With actual continuity, each shape touches an adjoining shape. With implied continuity, we mentally make connections.

Because humans seek connections, even fragmentary information can produce a cohesive image. As shown here, turning six simple shapes into a soccer ball is an extreme example. This process is called **Closure**. Try various ways that you can use as many of your puzzle pieces as necessary to create an image. How many do you need to make it readable?



For further discussion, consider ways in which these principles of Gestalt can affect your understanding of *anything*--from the papers you may write to experiences in your life.

Homework

Apply what you have learned from the in-class experimentation in at least two independent works utilizing as many identical or varied items as needed. A few possible prompts include:

- A labeled map of the route from home to classroom.
- A self-portrait or portrait of someone in your life.
- A reference to your childhood home.
- Abstract arrangements expressing paired emotional states such as uncertain/confident; attachment/disconnection, conquered/retreating, pleasant/abrasive, challenge/yield; etc.

The items forming the homework designs should be taped down, and then photographed/scanned and then printed, so that you have flat images to present for the critique. Bristol paper or chipboard will provide a sturdier backing, if needed. The size of the homework designs should be at least 8 ½ x 11 with no maximum limit.

Class 2: Presentation and Critique

All of the homework will be pinned up and discussed, starting with the Gestalt principles used and the emotional results produced. When is greater unity needed? How can separation or a break in the pattern strengthen the image?

Instructor's notes: Asking students who remembers “connect the dot” images from their childhood could be a jumping off point for this project. A vast array of examples of varying degrees of complexity results from an online search of “connect the dots.” These demonstrate how our mind constructs an image without complete information.

Here are a few resources regarding Gestalt principles

- This YouTube animation is a user-friendly introduction to Gestalt principles: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yadmpXUQ68A>
- LinkedIn Learning, Khan Academy, and other online educational sites feature sections on Gestalt psychology and principles.
- Advanced examples can be found at ipoxstudios <https://ipoxstudios.com/gestalt-psychology-for-artists-video-collection/> (scroll down to last section, “In-Depth Descriptions”).

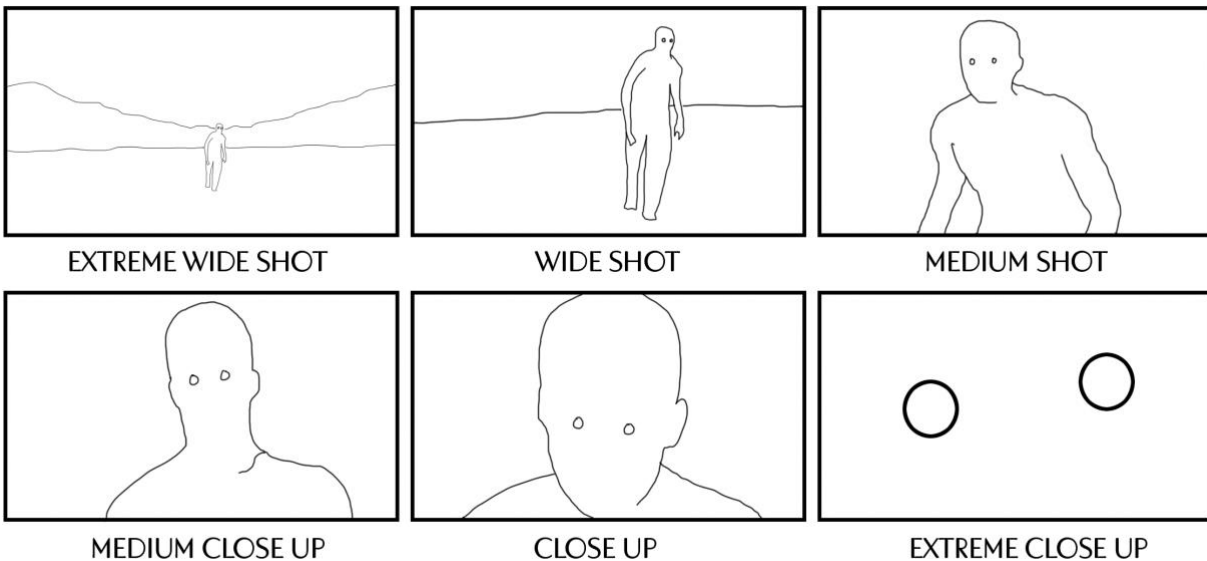
As an added challenge in the initial homework, invite students to identify one or more additional online resource that helps them to understand Gestalt principles, Gestalt psychology, visual organization, pattern recognition, etc. Note that theorists may differ in how they characterize/refer to the Gestalt principles, which can be a teachable moment.

Poorly grouped items or words (i.e., design fails) will illustrate the importance of Gestalt principles in our lives. This is one of many sets of examples.

<https://www.manypixels.co/blog/post/epic-design-fails> Be sure to preview this or any sets of failed design examples before sharing with students.

IN BRIGHTEST DAY, IN BLACKEST NIGHT

Contributed by Jeremy Waltman, Indiana University of Pennsylvania



Assignment: Photograph six basic shots including a human figure during the day and again at night. Using a PDF file, present a total of twelve horizontal images organized in a grid.

Objectives:

- Experiment with the effects of basic shots, from extreme wide to extreme close-up.
- Explore the temporal and emotional effects of light and dark. What time of day is it? Is the situation inviting, threatening, or a mix of both?
- Practice framing the human figure within a composition.
- Experiment with the organization of multiple images.

Materials: Camera, computer, and a human subject

Key Questions and Strategy:

- Who is the character? (Age?) What is their costume? (Mechanic? Student?)
- What is their setting/background? (Woods? Sidewalk?)
- Use natural light. (The sun during the day, streetlamps/neon at night, etc.)
- Notice the type of light. (Bright? Heavy shadow? Does it enhance the story?)
- What's the color? (Does it help viewer focus on the subject? Does it enhance the story?)
- Use sharp focus. Don't present noisy/pixelated images. (Low light can cause this.)
- In the future you'll also ask: What's the camera motion? (Does it enhance the story?)

Recommended Reading: *Expanding the Bandwidth*, pages xx-xx

Turn In: One PDF document with all 12 images. PDF can be created in Microsoft Word and many other software. Name the file as Lastname_Firstname_Assignmentname

Grading:

A: 12 horizontal composed images with great light and focal point. On time & as one PDF file.

B: 12 horizontal composed images with proper focal points.

C: 12 horizontal images of average composition.

D: 12 horizontal images improperly composed

F: All else



Wide Shot Example – Jeremy Waltman



Close Shot Example – Jeremy Waltman

EXPLORING BOTANICAL COLORS THROUGH COLLAGE

Contributed by Michelle Wilcox, Flagler College and University of North Florida

Assignment: Create at least four 5x5" paint swatch collages based on colors you see in plants.

Objectives: You will need to:

- Demonstrate heightened observation and awareness of color juxtapositions
- Combine written and visual observation
- Through abstraction, create images that capture the essence of the plants observed
- Create unified images from collaged fragments.

Materials:

- Paint Color Swatches and Color-aid paper (from a set provided to the class)
- Notebook or sketchbook to take some notes with on your color observations
- Scissors or X-acto Knife
- Glue: I suggest using the brand "Yes! Paste" or any kind of archival glue
- Neutral colored paper to adhere collages onto

Process and Strategy:

Part One: Collect Observations and Color Swatches

- Begin by making your field trip to Lowes, Home Depot, or a local hardware store that has a paint department and garden section. Bring something to write with and to write on.
- Go first to the garden center. Walk through and notice any plants/shrubs/trees/flowers that draw your attention. In your notebook, write down the colors within the plant that you see, be as specific as you can. You're looking for color combinations.

For example, if I picked a Hibiscus shrub, I might write down the following: Light Yellow Green, Dark blue-Green, Coral-ish pink, Light Pink, vibrant yellow-orange, Marigold yellow, light brown/tan. Overall, the dominant colors are pink & green, but there are multiple variations of those general colors which is why we use the descriptors.

- Take notes on 4 different plants. And remember, choose plants that are attractive to you, it is always easier to look at something that you enjoy!
- After you complete your notes, go to the paint section of the store where they have the paint sample color cards. Pick up color sample cards that match your descriptor words, try to pick up 10-20 cards to take home with you. This is where your specific descriptor words will come in handy, is it Light or Dark? Warm or Cool? Vibrant or Muted? Additional colors can be selected from a Color-Aid paper pack provided to the class.
- To avoid confusion, use labeled envelopes for the swatches you are using for each plant!

Part Two: Create Collages

- Return to the studio and get ready to create your collages.

- Create one collage for each plant using the color combinations you observed. It might be interesting to make a written notation of what plant inspired the collage when you're finished with it.
- Don't focus on creating a representational image of the flower or plant; your goal is to use the plant as an inspiration to create something new. There is no wrong way to do this so begin by cutting up some of the cards in a variety of shapes and sizes.
- Experiment with the arrangement of cut pieces together until you are pleased and glue your shapes down.
- You can do all four collages on one large page or use four separate sheets to make individual collages. Try to aim for each collage to be no smaller than 5 inches on one side.
- Remember that although you are not recreating the image of the flower, the subject could influence the shapes you cut. Do you create organic irregular shapes or hard-edged geometric ones? You are referencing the plant, but not recreating it. Your collages will be something new.

FURTHER READING

Intrinsic Motivation

Daniel Pink, *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, New York, Penguin Books, 2009

Creativity

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*. HarperCollins Publishers, 1996.

Howard Gardner, *Five Minds for the Future*, Harvard Business Press, 2008

Tom Kelly and Jonathan Littman, *The Art of Innovation: Lessons in Creativity from IDEO, America's Leading Design Firm*, Crown Business, 2001

Tom Kelly and Jonathan Littman, *Ten Faces of Innovation*, Currency/Doubleday, 2005

Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*, Anchor, 2007

Twyla Tharp, *The Creative Habit: Learn it and Use it for Life*, Simon and Schuster, 2006

Concept Development

Edward de Bono, *Lateral Thinking*. Ward Educational Limited, 1970.

Mary Frisbee Johnson, *Visual Workouts: A Collection of Art-Making Problems*, Prentice Hall, 1983.

Critical Thinking

Sylvan Barnet, *A Short Guide to Writing about Art*, 6th edition, Addison, Wesley, Longman, 2000.

Amy Tucker, *Visual Literacy: Writing About Art*. McGraw-Hill, 2002.

Visual Composition

Donis Dondis, *A Primer of Visual Literacy*, MIT Press, 1973.

Ellen Lupton, Jennifer Cole Phillips, *Graphic Design: The New Basics*, Princeton Architectural Press, 2008.

Mary Stewart, *Launching the Imagination: A Comprehensive Guide to Basic Design*, McGraw-Hill, 2016.

