

# TYPOGRAPHY

AUTUMN 2006

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## ART 221 COURSE SYLLABUS

MONDAYS 8:30-10:50am in CFA 144 (lecture)

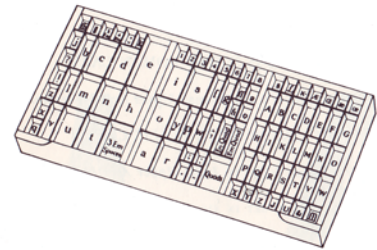
WEDNESDAYS 8:30-10:50am in CFA 136 (lab)

Office: CFA 226A

Office hours by appointment

Tel. 716.645.6878 ext. 1373

Email: ks46@buffalo.edu



"Letters are things, not pictures of things."  
—Eric Gill

## CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to the fundamentals of typography as a critical skill for communication design practice. Topics include: history of writing systems and typography, anatomy of type, basic type measurements, five families of type, copyfitting, type arrangement and grids, typography for optimal readability and typography as interpretation.

## OBJECTIVES:

- To develop a questioning mind and inventive eye for using type that is informed by an understanding of the best of traditional practices and question the failings of these practices within changing applications, technologies and cultural conditions.
- To understand typography as the application of parasignal manipulation to a writing system, which is essentially an alphasignal system.
- To develop the understanding and skills needed to manipulate parasignals that augment the meanings symbolically presented with written text, facilitate reading and add visual interest.
- To understand that typography is a particular print technology implementation of a writing system.
- To understand that writing systems are particular types of symbol systems.
- To develop skills for solving communication problems with type.
- To develop a sensitive eye for arranging type and combining it with other images.
- To develop a strong portfolio of work for acceptance to the Communication Design Concentration.

## TOPICS:

- Defining typography as an art, craft and process
- History of typography as the design and evolution of the forms and technologies of writing systems
- Consider the advantages and disadvantages of different writing systems
- Anatomy of type
- Basic type measurements
- Five families of type
- Display types and body text types
- Optimal readability for body copy and signage
- Designing with text and image
- Designing with display type
- Copyfitting
- Type arrangements and grids

- Typography as a means for clarifying, emphasizing, reinforcing, adding meanings, contradicting alphasignal meanings with the manipulation of parasignals

### GRADES AND REQUIREMENTS:

Presence, active inquiry and informed participation in class discussion are essential. Students are required to complete all assigned projects, readings and exercises. There will be one quiz. Participation in class discussions is expected. All written assignments must be in MLA formatting.

Students are required to attend each and every class. If an emergency arises please notify me by telephone or e-mail before class. Three unexcused absences will be permitted for the entire semester. Roll will be taken five minutes into the session and all persons coming into class after roll call will be recorded as absent. Absence from class does not excuse you from any assignment or material. A fourth absence will result in the reduction of your final grade by a full letter grade. A fifth absence will result in the reduction of your final grade by two full letter grades. A sixth absence will result in a failing grade for the course.

Assignments not submitted on time will receive a grade of "0." Late submissions will not be accepted unless arrangements are made with me prior to the due date. No re-submissions will be considered.

Final grades are the sum of the following combination: a. presentations (10%) b. papers (15%) c. projects (65%) d. quizzes (10%). UB uses a lettered grading policy, A - F, including + and - grades. An incomplete grade may only be given to students who have fulfilled the attendance requirement for the course and completed all but one of the assignments.

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Available at Talking Leaves Books (3158 Main Street) tel. 837-8554.  
Bringhurst, Robert *The Elements of Typographic Style*. version 3.1. Vancouver: Hartley & Marks, 2004.\*

**LAB FEE:** \$100

**ADDITIONAL TEXTS:** Inspiring introductions to type that will last a lifetime.  
Blackwell, Lewis *20th-Century Type*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.  
Burke, Clifford *Printing Poetry*. San Francisco: Scarab Press, 1980.  
Drucker, Johanna *The Alphabetic Labyrinth*. New York, NY: Thames and Hudson, 1999.  
Duncan, Harry *Doors of Perception: Essays in Book Typography*. Austin: W. Thomas Taylor, 1987.  
Gill, Eric *An Essay on Typography*. Jaffrey, NH: David R. Godine, 2000.  
Lupton, Ellen *Thinking with Type*. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004.  
McLean, Ruari *The Thames and Hudson Manual of Typography*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1980.  
Morrison, Stanley *A Tally of Types*. Jaffrey, NH: David R. Godine, 1999.  
Spencer, Herbert (ed.) *The Liberated Page*. San Francisco: Bedford Press, 1987.  
Spiekermann, Erik *Stop Stealing Sheep & Find Out How Type Works*. Berkeley: Adobe Press, 2003.  
Tranter, John "Lost Things in the Garden of Type." <<http://johntranter.com/prose/gardtype.html>>.  
Tschichold, Jan *The New Typography*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.  
Updike, Daniel *Berkeley Printing Types: Their History, Form & Use*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1966.

### ONLINE RESOURCES:

AddAll: The best place to find used, rare and new books. [www.addall.com](http://www.addall.com)  
Albright-Knox: Museum of Contemporary art in Buffalo. <http://www.albrightknox.org/>  
American Printing History Association: Printing in America, then and now. [www.printinghistory.org](http://www.printinghistory.org)  
Buffalo Book Arts: Typographic activities in your neighborhood. [bflobookarts.blogspot.com](http://bflobookarts.blogspot.com)  
Font Zone: A subscription-based type news source. [www.fontzone.com](http://www.fontzone.com)  
Hallwalls: Interdisciplinary Arts Center in Buffalo. [www.hallwalls.org](http://www.hallwalls.org)  
Identifont: The largest independent directory of typefaces. [www.identifont.com](http://www.identifont.com)  
Media History Project: Media history from petroglyphs to pixels. [www.mediahistory.umn.edu](http://www.mediahistory.umn.edu)  
Microsoft Typography: What's happening in type. [www.microsoft.com/typography/default.mspx](http://www.microsoft.com/typography/default.mspx)  
Roycroft: The Arts and Crafts Movement in East Aurora. [www.roycroft.org](http://www.roycroft.org)  
Typofile: A typographic community. [www.typophile.com](http://www.typophile.com)  
Visual Studies: Need I say more? <http://visualstudies.buffalo.edu>

\* See Bringhurst's work-in-progress *The Elements of Typographic Style Applied to the Web* @ <http://webtypography.net>

## ASSIGNMENT 1: INTERPRETING WITH TYPE

Create a one page spread 8x8. Typographically layout the following text:

I am the voice of today, the herald of tomorrow, I am type! Of my earliest ancestry neither history nor relics remain. The wedge-shaped symbols impressed in plastic clay in the dim past by Babylonian builders foreshadowed me: from them, on through the heiroglyphs of the ancient Egyptians down to the beautiful manuscript letters of the medieval scribes. I was in the making. Johann Gutenberg was the first to cast me in metal. From this chance thought straying through an idle reverie—a dream most golden—the profound art of printing with movable types was born. Cold, rigid, and implacable I may be, yet the first impress of my face brought the divine word to countless thousands...

*Frederic W. Goudy, 1927*

Incorporate and/or consider the following:

1. 72pt. drop cap first letter of the text.
2. Kern and lead the text.
3. No widows or orphans.
4. Indicate all specs used in the form of a final mock-up (picas, points, FL, RR, etc.)
5. NO images allowed. Solutions must be illustrated typographically.
6. Check spelling (I may have made some mistakes.)
7. Consider the subject. No decorative elements.

## ASSIGNMENT 2: 27<sup>TH</sup> LETTER

The Roman Alphabet has only 26 letters. It presents some problems with representing the 40 or more distinct phonemes of English. Develop a 27<sup>th</sup> letter, in both upper and lower case, to accommodate one of the phonemes that are typically represented with two or more letters. Or develop a ligature, a joined combination of two or more Roman Alphabet letters which occurs frequently in English text. This has been commonly done with metal type to save time in typesetting or to resolve some of the awkward letter spacing produced by the combinations of certain letter pairs.

1. 11" by 17" color poster.
2. Use Adobe Illustrator to create the new letter. Take care that the letter you create works well visually with all of the other letters in the font. Present large upper and lower case versions of the new letter to introduce it and show its use and significance with words or phrases that are particularly suited for the new letter. You may wish to set a historical or particular usage environment to impress your viewers.

**ASSIGNMENT 3: TRAINING YOUR EYE**

1. Pick your own content. It must relate to Typography or an aspect of it. The books listed under "Additional Texts" above are a fine place to begin browsing.
2. Type five lines of text copy on a 24 pica measurement and show:
  - a. Set solid
  - b. Set with 1 point of leading
  - c. Set with 2 points of leading
  - d. Set with 3 points of leading
  - e. Set with 4 points of leading
  - f. Set with 5 points of leading
2. Use a 10 point serif face for one series of exercises then change the type face to a sans serif face and repeat the exercise.
3. Use a 14 point serif and sans serif and repeat exercise 2.
4. Indicate which of these settings you believe to be the best/good typesetting and why.
5. Use black and red ink only.
6. 11 x 17"
7. Information you need to work on this project is discussed in *The Elements of Typographic Style*.

**ASSIGNMENT 4: TYPE AND TYPOGRAPHER**

Project description by Steve Kull.

A typographer and related typeface will be assigned from the list below. A two-page paper will be created about that specific typographer and typeface. The paper should include a brief biography of the typographer, background information on the typeface, as well as any other interesting facts or theories. In addition, include high quality images related to the subject you have been assigned (photos of the typographer, examples of the typeface in use, etc.)

Once the research is complete, a designed publication related to your specific topic of study will be created. A cover with masthead as well as an inside spread, table of contents pages and a type specimen page will be included in the publication.

Typographer	Typeface
Claude Garamond	- Garamond, Sabon
John Baskerville	- Bakerville, Caslon
Giambattista Bodoni	- Bodoni, Bauer Bodoni
Max Miendinger	- Helvetica
Eric Gill	- Gill Sans, Perpetua
Adrian Frutiger	- Frutiger, Universe, Serifa, Meridien, Avenir
Matthew Carter	- Galliard, Charter
Karl Gerstner	- Akzidenz Grotesque (Berthold Foundry)
Morris Fuller Benton	- Alternate Gothic, Franklin Gothic
Fredrick W. Goudy	- Goudy
Paul Renner	- Futura
Robert Slimbach	- Minion
Zuzzana Licko	- Mrs. Eaves
Eric Speakerman	- Meta

**ASSIGNMENT 5: EXPRESSIVE WORDS**

An adaptation of an assignment by Steve Kull.

The purpose of this assignment is to typographically enhance the meaning of a word while exploring the computer's typesetting potential.

Review the design work by Rudolph deHarak, Herb Lubalin, Robert Brownjohn, and others and write a short description of the relationship between the form and content. I suggest using the O.E.D. in addition to typographic sourcebooks.

Select six words (three from list A and three from list B) and explore their expressive quality by manipulating the letter forms. To achieve the desired effect, avoid simply repeating the words or creating an illustration from the letter forms. The best solutions not only enhance the word's meaning but are clever and aesthetically pleasing. Sometimes an unexpected effect can be achieved when the typographic solution contradicts the meaning of the word, setting "big" with small type, for example. As this exercise requires manipulating typefaces, styles, sizes, and positions, it is an excellent project for developing computer skills.

The final format should be 8 X 8 inches.

**WORD LISTS**

<b>A</b> explosion broken sunrise invisible short smooth float	<b>B</b> puzzle mimic elastic inside additional lonely magnetic removable
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**ASSIGNMENT 6: PERSONALIZING CITIES**

Pick six cities from the following list and 'personalize' the city correctly with an appropriate typeface. Consider the commonly accepted precepts of the city when selecting the typeface. You may want to do a little research on the city's history, architecture, natural resources, languages and cultural attributes. Use 144 pt. for the presentation size.

Select from: London, New York City, Phoenix, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Moscow, San Francisco, Dallas, Boston, Las Vegas, Miami, Toronto, Quebec, Berlin.



## ASSIGNMENT 7: 25 WATCH FACES

The purpose of this assignment is to develop a sensitivity to typographic form; to explore the syntactic representation of time and space within a fixed format; and to encourage an intuitive response to a short brief.

Spend a little time at a local watch/jewelry store to consider the design of the standard circular watchface. You will note a vast array of typographic designs, classical and sophisticated through to tacky and brash. All are the work of designers!

You are required to generate a series of 25 typographic watchfaces, each adhering to the size and format of the template provided. Work in single color (black) and begin with conventional approaches, incrementally finding more experimental and challenging compositions. Look at the typographic forms that you have at your disposal, the range of typefaces and the positive/negative shapes that they possess. Consider the way that your eye may be led by certain compositions, how rhythm may be achieved, how function can be challenged. Look to explore syntactic aspects of time and space. Work quickly, trust your intuition, and take risks.

1. 2.5" diameter, centered within a 4" square
2. Single color: black
3. Only use the following typefaces:

- Garamond / Garamond 3
- Sabon
- Bakerville
- Caslon
- Bodoni
- Bauer Bodoni
- Helvetica / Helvetica Neue
- Gill Sans
- Perpetua
- Frutiger
- Universe
- Serifa
- Meridien
- Avenir
- Galliard
- Akzidenz Grotesque
- Alternate Gothic
- Franklin Gothic
- Goudy
- Futura
- Minion
- Mrs. Eaves
- Meta

### **ASSIGNMENT 8: ANATOMY OF A BOOK JACKET**

The purpose of this assignment is to experience the creative process of book cover design as well as to relate 3 books by design that can be promoted and sold as a series. Take a good long look at a wide variety of book jackets and consider the conventions, as well as departures from those conventions that work. Write a brief, illustrated analysis of five.

Then select 3 books, either by the same author or pertaining to the same subject. Redesign the book jackets of all 3 books selected. This includes the front, back, spine and inside flaps of the jacket. All 3 books should be visually and proportionately related (typeface, color, photographic/illustration style).

The size of the jacket is up to you, but all 3 books should be exactly the same width and height. Start with sketches and then go to the computer. Once started on the computer, begin in black and white and then begin to add color and other design elements.

Remember, there should be a reason for typeface, color and image. A book is a three-dimensional object and each part of its anatomy serves a distinct purpose.

## ASSIGNMENT 9: INTERPRETING AND REPRESENTING FINE PRINT

The Poetry Collection at UB contains over 100,000 volumes of poetry written in English and may well be the finest collection of its kind in the world. We will tour the collection as a class and have the opportunity to survey the finest books printed by hand from the late 19<sup>th</sup> through the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The objective of your final assignment is to draw upon, and successfully integrate several aspects of your previous assignments, from “Interpreting with Type” to “Type and Typographer” to “Anatomy of a Book Jacket.” You should demonstrate your ability to identify, interpret, and thoughtfully represent the aesthetic of one contemporary American fine press printer.

A fine press will be assigned from the list below. A two-page paper will be created about that specific printer or press. The paper should include a short biography, information about the press’ typographic style, as well as any other interesting facts or theories.

Each student will create a color brochure (8.5 x 3.5” closed; 8.5 x 14” open) printed front and back. This brochure should commemorate (but not imitate) the press’ aesthetic. Take careful notes on the printer’s use of leading, margins, point size, founts, ornaments, color, grids, optical registration, impression weight, use of negative space, etc. Your brochure should contain a title page, two illustrated bibliographic entries, a two-page history of the press based on your research, and a short colophon. Pre-approved presses and printers appear below:

Kelmscott Press  
Doves Press  
John Henry Nash  
Cummington Press  
Grabhorn Press  
William Everson  
Arion Press  
Toothpaste Press  
Burning Deck Press  
Tuumba Press  
Black Sparrow Press  
Loujon Press  
Trigram Press  
Poltroon Press  
Johanna Drucker  
Perishable Press Limited  
Emily McVarish

**FALL SEMESTER 2006**

**MONDAYS 8:30-10:50am in CFA 144 (lecture)**

**WEDNESDAYS 8:30-10:50am in CFA 136 (lab)**

**Week 1**

M 8.28

W 8.30

Classes begin. Introductions, class overview, requirements, etc.  
Lecture and introduce project no. 1.

**Week 2**

M 9.4

W 9.6

Labor Day Observed  
Review project no. 1 in process.

**Week 3**

M 9.11

W 9.13

Critique finals of project no. 1; Lecture and introduce project no. 2.  
Review project no. 2 in process.

**Week 4**

M 9.18

W 9.20

(Reminder: Tues. 9.19 Day of Learning Classes cancelled)  
Critique finals of project no. 2.

**Week 5**

M 9.25

W 9.27

Lecture and introduce project no. 3.  
Review project no. 3 in process.

**Week 6**

M 10.2

W 10.4

Yom Kippur (Classes cancelled until 6:00 PM)  
Lecture and introduce project no. 4.

**Week 7**

M 10.9

W 10.11

Critique finals of project no. 3.  
Review project no. 4 in process.

**Week 8**

M 10.16

W 10.18

Critique finals of project no. 4; Lecture and introduce project no. 5  
Review project 5 in process.

**Week 9**

M 10.23

W 10.25

Critique finals of project no. 5; Lecture and introduce project no. 6.  
Review project 6 in process.

**Week 10**

M 10.30

W 11.1

Critique finals of project no. 6; Lecture and introduce project no. 7.  
Review project 7 in process.

**Week 11**

M 11.6

W 11.8

Critique finals of project no. 7; Lecture and introduce project no. 8.  
Review project 8 in process.

**Week 12**

M 11.13

W 11.15

Critique finals of project no. 8; Lecture and introduce project no. 9.  
Review project 9 in process.

**Week 13**

M 11.20

W 11.22

Fall Recess Begins

**Week 14**

M 11.27

W 11.29

Classes Resume

**Week 15**

M 12.4

W 12.6

Last Class

Charles Olson (taking a cue from Heraclitus) wrote: "What does not change is the will to change."  
Updates and amendments to this syllabus will be announced in class.