

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Title	Pictograms and Symbols
Course #	GRAC 0065
Credit Hours	2-credit (6 hours of classroom instruction per week)
Prerequisites	None
Schedule	M 7PM to 9PM, W 6PM to 9PM; 10/25 to 12/11/23 (Hybrid: Mon in-person, Wed via Zoom)
Zoom Link	Meeting ID: 917 9217 9339

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor	Professor Christopher Previte
Office Hours	Weekly, Online Office Hours will be posted in Announcements in Canvas.
E-Mail Address	Christopher.Previte@tufts.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course Description Design pictograms and learn about gestalt principles of design through figure/ground relationships, similarity, continuation, closure, proximity, and symmetry. Projects in this class will help you to develop skills to create graphics that are based on a matrix and design a cohesive series of pieces. The class will use Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop to accomplish projects that expand from simple symbol drawings to patterns and corporate branding.

Student Learning Outcomes Upon successful completion of this course, students must demonstrate that they possess the following learning outcomes as determined by their performance assessments:

1. Articulate the distinction between pictograms, pictographs, icons, and logos.
2. Apply gestalt principles of design through figure/ground relationships, similarity, continuation, closure, proximity, and symmetry.
3. Explore the role of pictograms and symbols historically, as a means of communication.
4. Create meaning in visual communication through a cohesive series.
5. Learn to thoughtfully critique and be critiqued by other students.

Grading and Assessment Methods Your progress is assessed based on *attendance and class participation* as well as *projects, assignments, and/or quizzes*.

Each of these are graded using rubrics or guidelines published under Assignments in Canvas.

Critiques follow the Functional Criticism technique. Students are expected to make use of critiques to revise and improve projects.

1. THE FOLLOWING IS THE BREAKDOWN OF YOUR GRADE:

Hands On Exercises (3) - worth 30%

Projects (1) - worth 55%

Class Participation - worth 15%

2. DUE DATES

ITEM/DELIVERABLE	DUE DATE
EXERCISE 1 – Creating simple pictograms	WEEK 2
EXERCISE 2 – Designing pictographs	WEEK 3
EXERCISE 3 – Designing icons	WEEK 4
PROJECT 1-1 – Creating logos/brand identities	WEEK 5
PROJECT 1-2 – Applying proximity/symmetry	WEEK 6
PROJECT 1-3 – Creating and applying patterns	WEEK 7
PROJECT 1-4 – Final presentation & reflection	WEEK 8

Specific deadline dates are found in the assignment details under Assignments on Canvas.

Submission Guidelines All projects must be submitted via Canvas...

- in the appropriate place
- on time, by the posted deadline
- as a high resolution PDF (.pdf)

Grade Points

Letter Grade	At Least	Below	Value	Letter Grade	At Least	Below	Value
A	93		4.00	C	73	77	2.00
A-	90	93	3.67	C-	70	73	1.67
B+	87	90	3.33	D+	67	70	1.33
B	83	87	3.00	D	63	67	1.00
B-	80	83	2.67	D-	60	63	0.67
C+	77	80	2.33	F		60	0.00

Please see the Tufts University catalog for details.

COURSE MATERIALS

- Software** Adobe Creative Cloud (Student Subscription, Illustrator, Photoshop)
<http://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html>
- File Storage** Portable, external hard drive (200GB min.) OR
Access to cloud storage (OneDrive, DropBox, iCloud, etc.)
- Other Supplies** Sketch Book, Drawing or Layout Paper, Pencils, Pens, and Markers/Colored Pencils
- Consumables** All weekly consumables, which can include readings, videos, and podcasts, will be included in the Weekly Modules and/or Announcements in Canvas. Students are expected to consume and take notes on all of these as they are made available.

There is no textbook in this class.

COURSE POLICIES

- Attendance** SMFA has an institutional attendance standard that expects students to attend and fully participate in all class meetings.

Full attendance in regular class sessions is required. If a student taking a course for credit is tardy to class (20 mins late) more than three times or absent from class more than twice without a reasonable (preferably documented) excuse, the student will receive a grade of NO CREDIT for the course in question, and this grade will appear on the student's transcript.

Exceptions to this policy will be made on an individual basis at the discretion of the instructor, for students meeting asynchronously as well as for students who might encounter technical difficulties accessing classes synchronously. Making up missed work will be the responsibility of the student who should be in close contact with their instructor. Students are encouraged to speak with their instructor at the beginning of the course should they have any concerns about their ability to access the course remotely.

Students who will be missing class for legitimate medical and/or personal issues must contact the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Advising (for undergraduates) or the Associate Director of Graduate Programs (for graduates) immediately to explore the possibility of flexibility with their faculty. Students should also contact the Associate Dean of Student Affairs if they need to pursue a medical leave or other support for prolonged medical or personal issues.

- Discussion Boards** Students are required to fully participate in all discussion boards by the Friday of the week they are assigned (by 10PM). To "fully participate" in a discussion board means to reply to the given prompt in a thorough, well-researched, and thoughtful manner that addresses all given instructions. Additionally, all students must respond to *at least two* classmates' posts within each discussion board in an equally thoughtful manner.

Any research referenced in your posts must be cited.

Timely participation in discussion boards is essential to the relevancy of the given discussion. Late participation, within the assigned week, will result in a reduced grade. Participation after the Saturday of a given week or not at all will result in a '0' for that discussion boards.

Course Writing Guidelines

All written assignments and content for class will be written using the following guidelines:

- A page of writing is approximately 250 to 500 words per page. So, if an assignment requires 3-pages, that's 750 to 1,500 words.
- You must write in 11-point font, with 1.5 line spacing throughout the whole document.
- You can use any of these fonts: Times New Roman, Avenir, Calibri, Helvetica. Only 1-font per document. You can use any included type styles (bold, book, italic, etc.) for emphasis.

While you may certainly do your initial writing by hand, on paper, all *submitted* writing must be done using one of the following digital writing tools: Microsoft Word, Google Docs, Apple Pages.

Late Work

Students are expected to turn assignments and projects in on time, based on posted deadlines. The expectation is that work will be completed on time. Any work that is not submitted when due may be marked down by one letter grade ("B" to "C", "C" to "D"...) for each week that it is late.

Students must submit the final assignment no later than the last day of the term/semester. No assignments are accepted after the last day of the term/semester.

Students needing extra time to submit work are expected to contact the instructor via email to explain their circumstances and request an extension. The instructor will then decide whether or not to grant an extension or maintain the failing grade ('F').

Missed Assignments Academic Integrity

Failure to submit an assignment will result in the assignment receiving a failing grade ('F').

Tufts holds its students and faculty members strictly accountable for adherence to academic integrity. It is critical that you understand the requirements of ethical behavior and academic work as described in [Tufts' Academic Integrity policy](#). If you have questions about the expectations concerning a particular assignment or project in this course, be sure to ask me for clarification. The faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering are required to report suspected cases of academic integrity violations to the Dean of Student Affairs Office. If I suspect that you have cheated or plagiarized in this class, I am obliged to report the situation. If you are tempted to plagiarize or otherwise cheat because you feel desperate to complete an assignment, don't: instead, come talk with me.

AI Use Policy Introduction & Purpose

I recognize the importance and benefits of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, which is why my position is to embrace and integrate them into certain course activities with full transparency about their use. Any use of AI in this course is to enrich your learning experience with interactive activities and as a way for you to gain practical experience with important technologies. However, using any AI tools without permission is not permitted.

Examples of AI Tools

ChatGPT	Replika	MidJourney
ChatSonic	ELSA	Adobe Firefly
Jasper	Bing Chat	Claude
Socratic	Wolfram Alpha	Poe
Ai-powered Bing	Bloom	DALL.E
Google Bard	YouChat	QuillBOT
TruthGPT	Megatron-Turing	

Specific use rules for AI in this course:

- Do not use any AI tools during any exams or quizzes.
- Do not use AI tools during any assignments without specific permission and instructions.
- Credit and cite any time you use AI.
- You may use AI to check your written work for grammar and punctuation.
- You may use AI to paraphrase your own, original writing.
- AI should not be used to write or change the style and composition of your writing.
- Never enter any personally identifiable information into AI tools

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Tufts University values the diversity of our students, staff, and faculty; recognizing the important contribution each student makes to our unique community. Tufts is committed to providing equal access and support to all qualified students through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may fully participate in the Tufts experience. If you have a disability that requires reasonable accommodations, please contact the StAAR Center at StaarCenter@tufts.edu or 617-627-4539 to make an appointment with an accessibility representative to determine appropriate accommodations. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

Mental Health Support

During these challenging times, attending to your mental health and well-being is more important than ever. Please know that Tufts Counseling and Mental Health (CMHS) is here to support you. Don't hesitate to give them a call to consult about what might be most helpful. CMHS offers individual telehealth appointments, virtual support groups/workshops, and/or assistance with referral, as appropriate. To make an appointment call 617-627-3360, or for more information visit the CMHS website at <http://go.tufts.edu/counseling>.

Basic Needs Security

If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or if you lack a safe and stable place to live, there are resources to help you. Some of them may be found [here](#), and I can direct you to further resources. You may also contact your advisor or advising dean for assistance.

Academic Support at the StAAR Center

The StAAR Center (formerly the Academic Resource Center and Student Accessibility Services) offers a variety of resources to all students (both undergraduate and graduate) in the Schools of Arts and Science, Engineering, SMFA and Fletcher; services are free to all enrolled students. Students may make an appointment to work on any writing-related project or assignment, attend subject tutoring in a variety of disciplines, or meet with an academic coach to hone fundamental academic skills like time management or overcoming procrastination. Students can make an appointment for any of these services by visiting go.tufts.edu/TutorFinder, or by visiting our website (<https://students.tufts.edu/staar-center>).

**Commitment to
Equity, Inclusion,
and a Practice of
Freedom**

By registering for this course, you are agreeing to a social contract. We recognize that in order to establish the conditions wherein we will collectively and individually develop a practice of freedom, we must confront and undo the work of oppressive indoctrination by challenging, unlearning and relearning modes of thought and existence in a space of generosity, support, and mutuality. In the context of this class, cultivating a practice of freedom refers to the right of freedom from discrimination, which is afforded every member of this class, as it pertains to citizenship, race, ancestry, ethnicity, cultural expression, class, disability, place of origin, skin color, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender, age, record of offenses, marital status, and family status. This applies to all areas of shared space and related classroom activities including interactions with faculty, visitors, colleagues, and the class as a whole. By registering for this course, you acknowledge that you will be an active and engaged member of this community. You agree to uphold, and when appropriate, advocate for the practice and maintenance of this freedom.

Policy on Sharing

This course is designed for everyone to feel comfortable participating in discussion, asking questions, learning, and facilitating the learning of others. In order for that atmosphere to be maintained, the recordings of our conversations will only be shared with the enrolled students in the class (not posted publicly) and it is prohibited for any of us who have access to the video to share it outside the course. Similarly, I have specifically designed the syllabus, exams, handouts, and lectures for the people who are enrolled in the course this term and those may not be shared outside this course. It is against Tufts policy for anyone to share any content made available in this course including course syllabi, reading materials, problems sets, videos, handouts, and exams, with anyone outside of the course without the express permission of the instructor. This especially includes any posting or sharing of videos or other recordings on publicly accessible websites or forums. Any such sharing or posting could violate copyright law or laws that protect the privacy of student educational records.

**Inclement Weather
Policy**

In the instance of inclement weather that precludes us from meeting in person, we will meet via Zoom using the link available on our Canvas home page.

**Important
Resources**

StAAR Center: <https://students.tufts.edu/staar-center>
Student Affairs: <https://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs>

WEEKLY MODULES

Week	Day/Date	Weekly Topics and Events
1	10/25/23	<p>WELCOME TO CLASS; OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course and syllabus review (structure, expectations, outcomes, assessment). • Canvas course review. • Examples of pictograms, pictographs, icons, and logos <p>Creative Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adobe's website and tutorials. • YouTube options (Ai PS). <p>Consumable(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Universal Arts of Graphic Design • Graphic Design Fundamentals • The Role of Sketching in Graphic Design <p>---</p> <p>DUE: NA HW: Ensure access to Adobe Illustrator & Photoshop.</p>
2	10/30/23 11/01/23	<p>INTRODUCTION TO GRAPHIC DESIGN AND PICTOGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustrator & Photoshop Basic Skills Assessment • Overview of graphic design principles • Introduction to pictograms and their applications • Timeline and Definitions – Part 1 <p>Consumable(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Birth of Writing: Pictographs in a Cave • From Cave Drawings to Emojis • Symbols in Graphic Design <p>---</p> <p>DUE: Access to Adobe Illustrator & Photoshop; EXERCISE 1 – Creating simple pictograms HW: NA</p>
3	11/06/23 11/08/23	<p>PICTOGRAMS AND ICONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring the use of pictographs and icons in visual communication • Applying the gestalt principle of continuation to create visually cohesive designs • Introduction to icon design principles and best practices • Timeline and Definitions – Part 2 <p>Consumable(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The History of Writing <p>---</p> <p>DUE: EXERCISE 2 – Designing pictographs HW: NA</p>

<p>4</p>	<p>11/13/23 11/15/23</p>	<p>LOGOS AND BRANDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring the use of pictographs and icons in visual communication • Applying the gestalt principle of continuation to create visually cohesive designs • Introduction to icon design principles and best practices • Introduce PROJECT 1 <p>Consumable(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Famous Logos Explained • The Branding Guidelines Archive • 7 steps to creating a brand identity <p>---</p> <p>DUE: EXERCISE 3 – Designing icons HW: Begin PROJECT 1</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>11/20/23</p>	<p>GESTALT PRINCIPLES AND DESIGN HARMONY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth study of the gestalt principles incl. proximity and symmetry • Analyzing how these principles contribute to visual harmony in design <p>Consumable(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring the Gestalt Principles of Design <p>---</p> <p>DUE: PROJECT 1-1 – Creating logos/brand identities HW: Continue PROJECT 1</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>11/27/23 11/29/23</p>	<p>PATTERNS AND TEXTURES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring the use of patterns and textures in graphic design • Understanding the relationship between pattern design and brand identity <p>Consumable(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Guide to Texture in Graphic Design • Texture as a Visual Element <p>---</p> <p>DUE: PROJECT 1-2 – Applying proximity/symmetry HW: Continue PROJECT 1</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>12/04/23 12/06/23</p>	<p>CORPORATE BRANDING PROJECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of all the concepts and techniques learned throughout the course • Developing a cohesive series of graphics for a fictional corporate brand • Creating a comprehensive brand identity package (logos, icons, patterns, other collateral) <p>---</p> <p>DUE: PROJECT 1-3 – Creating and applying patterns HW: Prepare PROJECT 1 for Final Presentation</p>

8	12/11/23	FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATION AND REFLECTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of final projects, class critique, and reflections on personal growth and style development. --- DUE: PROJECT 1 (Final) HW: NA
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The schedule and material in this class may be updated or changed upon the instructional needs of students in the course and any changes in university schedules.

Created by: Christopher Previte

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Maintained by: Christopher Previte