

## **dsgd 104 project series**

Introduction to Graphic Design  
San José State University  
Fall 2009

*"The question is not what you look at, but what you see." Henry David Thoreau*

*"The real voyage of discovery consists not of seeking new landscapes but of having new eyes." Marcel Proust*

*"The most fatal illusion is the narrow point of view. Since life is growth and motion, a fixed point of view kills anybody who has one." Brooks Atkinson*

The goal of this course is to contribute to the student's discovery and understanding of the basic objectives, principles, and methods used in graphic design.

The four projects described here have been conceived to help beginning students develop the compositional and problem-solving skills employed by designers. In the process of completing these projects, students will be challenged to determine goals and to make observations and decisions that result in concise, informative, and engaging visual statements.

Acquire the four objects listed below and bring them to class for the beginning of this project series. After initial studies of each object, you will select one of these objects to represent throughout all four projects in the series. Throughout the semester, you should research and collect reference material on the nature of your object in order to inform and support the concepts you present.

*adjustable wrench*  
*clothespin (wooden with spring)*  
*tomatillo*  
*yo-yo (without type or other graphic)*

### **project one: reductive representation**

Begin by creating a series of exploratory analytical hand drawings of the objects. Explore organic and geometric forms, the relationship between thin line and massive solid, as well as other contrasting or harmonious forms. As you narrow your choice to one object, refine and reduce the complexity of your representations with the objective of arriving at dynamic, simplified visual descriptions of the object. You must determine the essential aspects of this three-dimensional object, which you will use in order to communicate its nature in two-dimensional reductive representations.

Present three final images in black and white 5.5 inch squares, mounted left to right:

- A. detailed analytical drawing:
  - scan of a hand drawing from or relating to your process; not cropped
- B. the reductive representation:
  - rendered in vector-based application; not cropped
- C. additional graphic interpretation:
  - a formal extension of your reductive process; may be a cropped detail

Present high quality prints (clean edges without pixilation; rich, even black; bright white), mounted as diagrammed (see page two) for projects 1 and 2 on a horizontal 15"x20" black single thickness presentation board (such as *bainbridge super black*).

### **typography for projects two, three, and four:**

For the following projects, choose type from the Helvetica or Helvetica Neue families only—no substitutions—unaltered in proportion or design, from the range of faces represented in the dsgd 99 type reader only (available at a.s. copy shop).

### **project two: compositions with type and with color**

Using materials from project one for reference and inspiration (not necessarily with the same final renderings), create three reductive compositions, each with one or more representations of your object:

- A. solid black and white composition with type and object, where type is the hierarchical focal point, and that communicates an aspect of the object
- B. the same as above, but where the object is the hierarchical focal point, and that communicates the same or another aspect of the object
- C. composition in three solid colors other than black (such as *pantone solid* colors) and no type, that communicates the same or yet another aspect of the object

In A and B, you may use any appropriate word or words other than the name of the object itself (descriptive, modifier, etc.), that communicate an aspect, or multiple aspects, of the object. Explore dynamic contrast, rhythm, and balance, while clearly maintaining the recognizability of the object. Present high quality prints, mounted as diagrammed for projects 1 and 2 on a horizontal 15"x20" black presentation board.

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*"The obscure we see eventually. The completely obvious, it seems, takes longer."*  
Edward R. Murrow

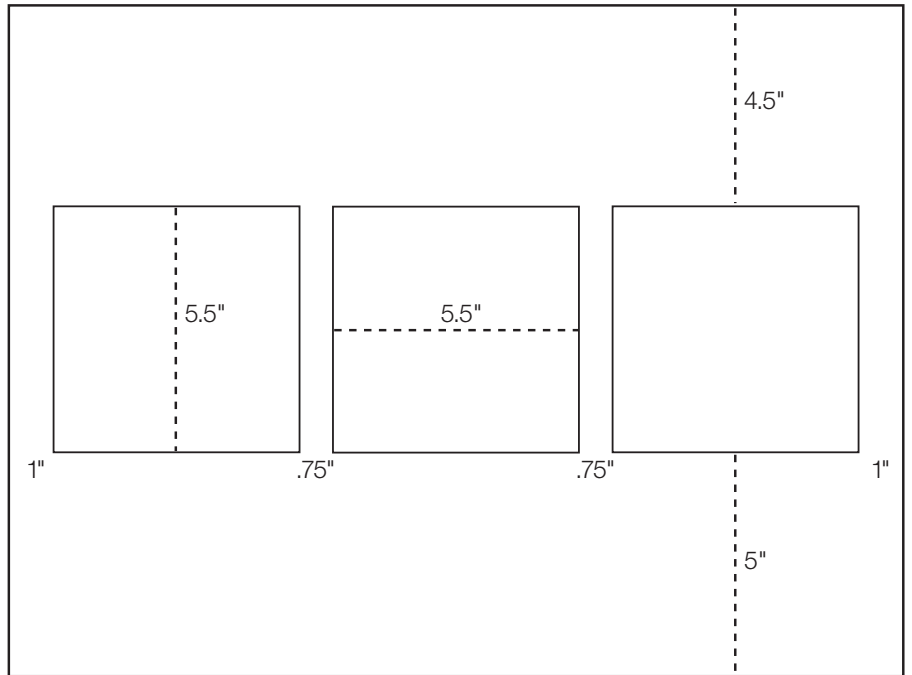
*"A point of view can be a dangerous luxury when substituted for insight and understanding."* Marshall McLuhan

*"Nothing is beautiful from every point of view."* Horace

*"Owing to the fact that all experience is a process, no point of view can ever be the last one."* William James

### presentation diagram for projects one and two:

Projects one and two have the same configuration. Mount your high-quality 5.5 inch square prints as diagrammed here on a horizontal 15"x20" black (letramax or similar) presentation board, with compositions A, B, and C positioned left to right:



### project three: type and image in three dimensions

Create a series of compositions combining representations of your object with context words or phrases (the same or different from project two) that communicate *two contrasting aspects* of your object on each of the following forms:



1. rectangular form, 5" tall with 2.5" sides
2. cylindrical form, 5" tall and 2.75" in diameter
3. triangular form, 5" tall with 3" sides

Explore how shape, line, and pattern in the type and reductive representations can be used to create interest from all possible points of view around these forms, and how transition and opposition can create tension and dynamic balance between your two messages. Single or multiple representations of image and type may be used as appropriate. Consider all visible sides of the form in relation to one another and as individual compositions. Use any two colors (screens ok) on a white surface.

Present one of the above forms, carefully constructed, using a high quality color print as its surface. Use the bottom panel of the form for your identification label.

### project four: interpretive conceptual panel

Based on the reference material you have collected, and on the studies and compositions you have completed throughout the semester, create a 15"x20" vertical or horizontal composition in which you (A) *juxtapose your object with other graphic forms* in order to (B) *communicate a social, natural, or other conceptual context* in which the object is a focal point. In combination with or juxtaposed to this concept, you must also (C) *diagram how the object normally functions*. Visual representations can be expanded beyond the assigned objects to include any appropriate elements that support the conceptual context and/or the functionality you present.

The panel must include a minimum of 100 words. In addition, list attributions for all your sources of information in a footnote within the composition. You may employ any appropriate representation techniques, media, and colors. Mount your final 15"x20" high quality print flush on appropriate presentation board (do not use foamcor).