



DWDD 1400 Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: <https://catalog.uvu.edu/>

Semester: Spring

Year: 2025

Course Prefix: DWDD 1400

Course and Section #: 001, X01, X02

Course Title: Digital Design Essentials

Credits: 3

Course Description

Teaches the fundamentals of digital layout for web development and properly creates engaging interfaces for digital media. Addresses technical challenges for digital mediums to deliver effective digital experiences. Introduces basic content creation and sprint thinking independent of software platforms.

Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:

- General Education Requirements
- Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
- Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
- Discipline Core Requirements in Program
- Elective Core Requirements in Program
- Open Elective

Other: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dan Hatch or Patrick Cox or Cassidy Bouse or Tressa Hopkinson

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the basic elements and principles of digital product development.
 2. Use digital type, imagery, and content to create digital products.
 3. Communicate basic digital messages through the use of ideation and iteration.
 4. Utilize content, images, and color libraries to create basic digital projects.
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Course Materials and Texts

1. Required book: [Visual Design Ninety-five things you need to know by Jim Krause](#)
 2. Required book: [Type on screen edited by Ellen Lupton](#)
 3. Required book: [Universal Principles of Design by Kristina Holden, and Jill Butler](#)
 4. Required book: [The Sketchnote Workbook: Advanced techniques for taking visual notes you can use anywhere by Mike Rohde](#)
 5. \$45 lab access fee - this gives you access to the on-campus Mac labs in Computer Science Building. Mac Labs CS 412, CS514 and CS 613
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Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy

1. Sketch Notes (also known as whiteboarding)
2. Design Journal
3. Design Principle Sheets
4. Major Design Projects
5. Midterm Project and Critique
6. Final Project

Instructors and peers will grade using a rubric provided in course outcomes.

In part — projects will be graded objectively by measurable advancement, without bias or opinion. This will include the technical aspects and concepts of the project and a demonstration of the toolset or software.

Assignments will be graded subjectively. These are based on industry standards, which define the quality of the work submitted as determined by the course instructor. The subjective assessment will include the elements and concepts of digital project development, problem-solving skills, and draftsmanship.

The rubric used by the instructors is broken up in this way:

- Web Principles and Elements

Students demonstrate what they understand about the principle or element in the rubrics module. The instructor will rate your performance in the rubric from excellent demonstration by the student — to poor demonstration by the student.

- Creativity and Problem-solving.

Students will be graded on the variety of work and how creative the work is vs. how cliché the work is. More variety and creativity will get a higher score.

- Draftsmanship

This means the quality of work. The better the instructor thinks your draftsmanship is, the higher the mark.

- Grading Scale:

To receive credit for the class in the Digital Media program, you need to get a grade no lower than a B-

All projects will be graded on a curve. Exceptional projects are assessed in the A range. Good projects in the B range, average projects in the C range.

| Grade | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | E |
|---------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Percent | 94-100 | 90-93 | 87-89 | 83-86 | 80-82 | 77-79 | 73-76 | 70-72 | 67-69 | 63-66 | 60-62 | 0-59 |

Late Work Statement:

Late work will be graded—with a late penalty of 5% per day and a maximum of 15% off. You will be expected to finish your work on time—it is harder to keep up when you get behind. We have to be done at the end of the Semester. *If you have extenuating circumstances or other issues, contact the instructor and work out some alternate schedule.*

Incomplete Grade Statement:

As per Utah Valley University Policy, under extenuating circumstances, you can request an "Incomplete" grade if you have at least 70% of your homework done by the end of the semester. This is typically representative of completing module 12 or higher. Then, you will have additional time to finish

up the coursework with your instructor. This will be negotiated with your instructor, and if you do not finish the coursework within one year, the grade will automatically revert to an "E" grade.

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments

All reading comes from the required books.

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion

This is either an Online/Hybrid or Face to Face course with no traditional "attendance." You are required to log into Canvas each week to review assignments, go through lessons, communicate with the instructor and your peers, and stay on top of announcements and due dates. If this is a Hybrid or face-to-face class, attendance is encouraged but not mandatory except for Critiques and Midterms.

Students will see a variety of examples of projects and assignments. Don't be confused about what to do if the examples are very different. They are different, so show you that there is no right way to do an assignment — the expectation is that you do it your way.

Low-score assignments are related to projects in the course as a way for instructors to give constant feedback to the student while progressing through the modules. They must be completed on time and be well-drafted to count.

To assist students as they learn the basics of the software, this course will consist of a handful of assignments and projects and two high-stakes projects at midterm and the end of the semester. If you complete the modules, you will have the tools you need to complete the midterm and the final. The combination of the modules/assignments, the midterm, and the final will lead to the outcomes outlined above. The two major assignments comprise the majority of the points.

Above all, students are expected to work. Expected to be self-motivated and to follow through with assignments. You are expected to be creative and a problem-solver. *All work will be turned in via Canvas per assignment. File Types are PDF (vector), PNG (72 dpi), JPEG (72 dpi), h264 (mov, mp4, m4v) 640x480. URLs can be submitted via YouTube or Vimeo and added to Canvas.*

AI is allowed but must be used appropriately. This is not an AI prompt class, so do not rely on AI to complete your work entirely. The goal is to help you develop industry-relevant skills while understanding how to use AI as a supportive tool. Misuse may result in needing to redo assignments or more stiff penalties, such as failing this class.

In business, you will be required to work in teams. All students will be expected to post their work in Canvas and give/take criticism for their work. Students will respond to each individual in their critique group (5 total students per group). With a minimum of 1 critique per student, meaning that you will have to respond to up to 4 other students per assignment.

Criticism must be positive and constructive. More than "I like it" or "I don't like it," you must give constructive criticism. Examples would be "Your project has a good sense of balance. Have you tried using negative space to emphasize your logo?"

Line and Shape

In this lesson, we will explore line and shape in digital compositions. Repetition is key, so you will create grids/thumbnails for each assignment. Start with initial design explorations, then move to larger panel designs.

You'll also learn the Sketchnote technique to create visual notes, which helps capture ideas visually during meetings with developers, designers, or clients. This technique will enhance communication with coworkers and clients.

Additionally, we will create Design Journals, collections of images and content on various topics. Visual research informs our designs and ensures originality. Since this involves copyrighted material, make sure to cite your work with URLs or citations, helping you track sources for future reference.

Space and Depth

What is space? It is the area between shapes or negative space. We show depth through darkness and light or change in the value of the object. Darker objects are closer than lighter objects. Light dissipates in the distance through the atmosphere. So we can create a visual illusion of depth on a 2-dimensional display or surface through size and value.

Digital Color

Color is one of the more important aspects of design. It is used to show emotion, indicate operational status in interaction design or style. Becoming aware of how colors work together through color harmonies is important to show visual hierarchy in your compositions.

Digital Texture

The design element of Texture is the illusion of surface applied to a two-dimensional image or flat surface. On digital screens, the texture looks like that surface visually. Although the screen is flat and smooth, you can give the illusion of texture through color and patterns. We connect the texture to our experience of rough or smooth surfaces.

Photographic Image: Complex Content Elements

This week, we'll explore photography as a tool for capturing images. With camera phone always at hand, use them to gather textures and ideas constantly. In the design process, continuously collect content and ideas. Use your design journal as a scratchpad for ideas, colors, and patterns for digital projects. Photoshop is recommended for these assignments, but you can also crop and edit photos in Illustrator or Sketch.

Digital Icons for Graphic User Interfaces

An icon is a simple representation of an object, place, service, etc. Its most prevalent feature is communication. It should be clear and easily understood. In most cases—universally understood.

Use a vector-based application to create the icons, such as Adobe Illustrator. In comparison, Photoshop is a raster-based application and not appropriate for the assignments in this lesson.

Midterm Project and Critique

There are no real rules to the Midterm Project other than being creative, use all the elements, and have excellent draftsmanship. Those who take creative risks will score the most points if well executed.

Remember to use line, shape, texture, space, color, image, icon. You may use any of your previous designs and finalize them or create new designs. Also, focus on the principles used up to this point. Draftsmanship and creativity will be a major part of your grade.

Basic Type on Screen

Typefaces are essential in design. Each letter is a small design, and combined, they form word shapes we recognize. At normal reading pace, we see word shapes, not individual letters. Type sets the design's tone and style, with different characteristics aiding readability at various sizes.

This lesson also introduces the Design Principle Sheets assignment. You'll analyze designs based on principles from the Universal Design Principles book and present your findings in a document.

Typographic Voice

Typefaces have a variety of historical styles conveyed in their individual letterforms. These styles range from those found in modern-day to ancient Rome. The Trajan typeface came from letters inscribed on the Trajan's Column in Rome, Italy. Fashioned from all capital letters, it is prominently used in many designs. The typographic voice will influence the look and feel of a design, so you want to make sure you use it in the correct way to convey your message.

Logos, Logotypes, and Logomarks

We see logos everywhere—on clothing, bottles, packaging, and ads. They help us recognize brands and identify quality or style. Logos are now a constant presence in our lives.

A logo expresses a company or product brand. The term "logo" means word and can represent an icon, word, or both. Logomarks are icons or symbols representing the brand, while logotypes are

stylized typography. Logos are recognizable by their color, shape, and typestyle in products and advertising.

Interface Design for Heads Up Display

Creating a heads-up display for a vehicle is a daunting task. We are putting information on the inside of a vehicle windshield that requires easy viewing of pertinent information but not too much that it interferes with the navigation.

Visual Composition

We will be creating a template to layout our mobile design like the business card from the previous lesson. Using the material design mobile breakpoint, we will set up our template using the relative mobile size of at least 360px x 640px dimensions.

Design Thinking and Revisions

Its time to update your designs and do some iterations. This lesson we will be reworking our design for mobile website.

Peer Review and Final Project

Since the midterm, you have been working on the final projects. Now you finish off your work. Present it this week and critique your rough drafts before you submit your final project.

Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative AI

Use of Generative AI is allowed but must be used appropriately. This is not an AI prompt class, so do not rely on AI to complete your work entirely. The goal is to help you develop industry-relevant skills while understanding how to use AI as a supportive tool. Misuse may result in needing to redo assignments or more stiff penalties such as failing this class.

Using Remote Testing Software

This course does not use remote testing software.

This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

Required University Syllabus Statements

Accommodations/Students with Disabilities

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at DHHservices@uvu.edu

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

Academic Integrity

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: Student Code of Conduct](#).

Equity and Title IX

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

Religious Accommodation

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu. If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a [specially dedicated space](#) for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.