Foundations: Tier 1 – Block 3

NMAT-F 103

In the following outline, I've summarized the changes that were to the made course each semester it was offered. The brief synopsis can be used to contextualize the supporting evidence for this class.

Spring 2020:

The emphasis of the class was on Symbol, Logo, and Text. For my rotation of the course, I developed three projects that would build upon one another. Students used traditional materials to create a collage, explored Adobe Illustrator to create a logo based on the collage, and merged the two previous projects together in Photoshop while integrating text.

Covid-19:

Finally, as the semester transitioned online due to Covid-19, the assignments and the core objectives for the course did not alter. However, with this said the delivery for the content, along with the assessment of the projects had to be considerably altered for remote teaching. Primarily, students were asked to upload photographs or exports of their work in progress along with a brief description of any of the challenges they were attempting to resolve. I would take these works and alter them digitally to illustrate the direction they should take in order to resolve their work. This visualization would always be paired with a descriptive response to best explain the decisions I was taking.

Spring 2021:

Due to the pandemic, the course was modified to a hyflex model to accommodate social distancing within the classroom. Since students only met in person once a week on campus, I created several in-progress discussion posts on Canvas so that I could more effectively evaluate the progress of their work.

This modification aside, the content of the course remained largely the same.

Spring 2022:

The course reverted to a pre-pandemic model of meeting in person twice a week. The only other change that was made to the course was that the semiotics lecture I present at the beginning of the term was pre-recorded as a video and assigned as homework for students to watch. This small change allowed students to have a little more time in class to work on their projects.

Spring 2023:

The curriculum of the course was reimagined, with a faux industrial design theme. Specifically, students were now tasked with coming up with a fictitious product, that they would refine through the iterative process using traditional drawing techniques, and a range of digital tools and processes. The course would keep the logo design assignment and the poster projects that introduced students to Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop. With the other faculty member, Wayne Madsen, we decided to team teach the course as one semester-long project. This enabled students to deep dive into a complex creative project that they would see to completion over many months early in their undergraduate education. As a note, Wayne Madsen, introduced students to 3D modeling in Blender, along with 3D printing.

The result of this long-term industrial design project was a success.

Spring 2024:

Due to a change in the faculty for the course, the integration of 3D modeling and printing was no longer practical. Therefore, the class was modified so that students in the course would sculpt a single 3D model using air-dry clay. The adjunct instructor, Tarja Harney, who co-taught the course with me facilitated the lesson on how to sculpt using traditional materials. After the students completed their sculptures, I demonstrated how they could photograph their models using a professional backdrop and lighting equipment, along with manual controls on a DSLR and an iPhone. Not only did this assignment enable students to capture their models using best practices with photography but it also covered a deficiency within the NMAT curriculum. Unfortunately, many of our students do not know how to use a camera since they've been entirely reliant on auto control on the camera on their phones.