

Digital Design Practicum

SYLLABUS, WINTER 2024

URBDP 573 (4 credits)
University of Washington
Department of Urban Design & Planning



Max Guther

Meeting

Lecture: Thursdays, 1:30 – 3:20pm at GLD 114

Demo/practicum: Attend one (9:30 - 11:20) or (1:30 - 3:20) at [GLD 007F](#)

Instructor

Open lab time: Tuesdays, 1:30 – 2:20

Rich Desanto
Affiliate Instructor, Public Artist | Landscape Designer
rdesanto@uw.edu

TA

Sunho Choi
Urban Design & Planning Ph.D. Candidate
sunhoch@uw.edu

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

Welcome to URBDP 573, Digital Design Practicum! This class will familiarize you with software tools and concepts behind graphic design and communication, focusing on their applications in urban design and planning. Becoming familiar with these tools will allow you to choose how to best graphically articulate broader ideas rooted in the foundational principles of graphics. Our goal is to communicate ideas about people and place effectively and beautifully. This class is only an introduction, but it will prepare you to continue to learn digital design independently.

This class is adapted with permission from a previous version of Digital Design Practicum taught by Mackenzie Waller and Peter Dunn, Lecturers in the UW College of Built Environments. Thank you!

We will use the following software:

- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe InDesign
- SketchUp 3D Modeler
- SketchUp LayOut
- GIS workflows (as time allows)

At the completion of this class, you will be able to:

- Perform basic operations in the specified software with confidence.
- Independently seek additional help when needed.
- Produce professional deliverables that demonstrate principles of excellence in visual communication.
- Evaluate styles, techniques, and graphics quality used in urban design and planning.

Class Structure

This is a lab-based class in which you will learn by doing. We will use brief lectures and readings to introduce important concepts. The majority of class time will be divided between hands-on guided demonstrations of the software and open lab time for you to work on your assignments. Although you will author your assignments individually, you are encouraged and expected to work together with your peers in a supportive learning community.

Student Responsibilities

To make this class as a success, your responsibilities are to:

- Actively attend each class meeting.
- Take class assignments seriously, complete assignments on time and to a high standard.
- Respect your classmates and their work.
- Think about how *you* can get the most out of this class.

If you do all of these, you will learn a lot, you will get a good grade, and you might even have fun.

Instructor Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the instructor and TA mirror yours: to arrive prepared for all classes; to provide timely and constructive feedback on assignments, to create an environment in which all students can learn; and to take your academic goals, your work, and the class material seriously.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The University of Washington's Department of Urban Design and Planning, the institutional home of this class, has included the following statement as part of its mission:

Urban Design and Planning is striving to shift the culture of planning to engage and enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion, not just within the academic context but also in the profession. We aspire to drive change not merely by responding to trends but also by leading the change we seek.

Further, the department has defined the following three values:

Equity: Striving for fairness of results or outcomes, rather than equal access to opportunity.

Diversity: Recognizing and supporting differences that create vibrant and healthy communities

Inclusion: Creating an environment where everyone can participate, and everyone belongs.

I wholeheartedly agree. In this class, we will value and honor diverse experiences and perspectives and strive to create a welcoming and respectful learning environment for all students. In this class, we will also respect the general goals of academic freedom and ensure that they are maintained.

Differences of opinion, critical analysis, and honest feedback are welcomed, and should be expressed in a manner that supports the learning process.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Hardware

Access the following hardware is required:

- A **computer** during class and to complete your assignments.
- Reliable high-speed **internet access**.
- **An external hard drive** for backing up your work. 8GB or so will be plenty for this class, but larger is better for you to keep all of your current and future work together in one place.
- A **mouse** is strongly recommended. For laptop users, this is a small investment in your comfort and productivity.
- **Paper and drawing instruments** for making hand sketches of your designs. Trace paper is especially helpful, and is inexpensive. A variety of drawing tools (pens or pencils in various weights and colors) is nice if you have them, but is not necessary for this class.
- A **scanner or camera** (your phone is fine) to take and upload digital pictures of your hand sketches.

If you do not have access to the appropriate computing hardware, there are several resources at the university that can help get you properly equipped.

- The Student Technology Loan Program has laptops available for loan: <https://stlp.uw.edu/>
- The College of Built Environments has laptops with all appropriate CBE software available for loan (see more info below): <https://be.uw.edu/spaces/computing/student-loaner-program/>

If you are worried that your computer does not have sufficient processing power or memory to use the graphics programs in this class, consider using the CBE remote desktop option discussed below.

Software

Access to the following software is required:

- **Canvas, Zoom, Miro.** These are free and supported by the university. You are surely already familiar with Canvas and Zoom. Miro is a web-based tool for sharing work with the class, and we will learn it together in the first week of class.
- **Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, and Acrobat.** If you want to use these on your own computer, you will need to purchase a license for Creative Cloud. The student license is \$19.99 per month and requires an annual contract. Note that the license includes lots of programs, but you'll only need to install these for class. <https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html>.
- **SketchUp Pro** (including 3D modeler and 2D LayOut). If you want to use these on your own computer, you will need to purchase a license. The free version of SketchUp is insufficient for this class. The student license for SketchUp Studio (which includes more than you need) is \$55 per year. <https://www.sketchup.com/plans-and-pricing#for-higher-education>

If you cannot afford or do not want to purchase this software for your own computer, you have two other options:

- **URBDP loaner laptop.** These are available through URBDP Computing and come loaded with all of the URBDP design software, including everything needed for this class. Supplies are limited, and my understanding is that students who do not already have their own computer are prioritized. (If you have a computer and want the software, see the remote desktop option below.) More info at <https://be.uw.edu/spaces/computing/student-loaner-program/>

Note that the URBDP Citrix Application Server is not helpful for this class, since it does not include the applications we will use.

Readings

Required readings and optional additional resources will be made available through the class website. There is no class textbook and you will not need to purchase any text.

WORK & EVALUATION

Assignments

You will complete six assignments for this class, listed below with their primary applications. Detailed instructions will be provided in class and on Canvas.

- A1 Circulation Diagram (Illustrator)
- A2 Axonometric View (SketchUp 3D)
- A3 Plan View (Sketchup LayOut)
- A4 Infographic (Illustrator)
- A5 Edited Scene (Photoshop)
- A6 Portfolio (InDesign)

Team Trivia

Our class includes a bit of friendly competition. Most Mondays, we will begin class with team trivia. Questions will be based on lectures and readings from the previous week, and perhaps other sources. Your trivia performance has zero impact on your grade. However, there will be prizes for the winners.

We will create trivia teams in the first week. Your trivia teammates will also be a resource for you during the quarter. You are encouraged to work together with your trivia team during open lab time and to ask your teammates for help when you are stuck.

Participation

If you attend class regularly, participate in team trivia, demonstrate effort and engagement with assignments, and help create a productive learning environment for your peers, you will get full points for participation.

Grade

Your final grade will be calculated based on your assessed performance on the above elements according to the following weights:

90%	Assignments (6 × 15% each)
10%	Participation

Percentages will be converted to a grade on the 4.0 scale as follows:

<u>A: Excellent</u>	<u>B: Very Good</u>	<u>C: Competent</u>	<u>D: Passable</u>
99%+ 4.0	89% 3.4	79% 2.4	69% 1.4
98 4.0	88 3.3	78 2.3	68 1.3
97 3.9	87 3.2	77 2.2	67 1.2
96 3.9	86 3.1	76 2.1	66 1.1
95 3.8	85 3.0	75 2.0	65 1.0
94 3.8	84 2.9	74 1.9	64 0.9
93 3.7	83 2.8	73 1.8	63 0.8
92 3.7	82 2.7	72 1.7	62 0.7
91 3.6	81 2.6	71 1.6	61 0.7
90 3.5	80 2.5	70 1.5	60 0.7

The instructor reserves the right to deviate from this scale as circumstances warrant. Final scores below 60% will not receive credit for the class.

POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance at every class meeting is expected. If you are unable to attend class for any reason, please inform the instructors in advance.

If your personal circumstances prohibit you from attending class regularly, please reach out to me and I will be happy to discuss an accommodation.

Readings

The course website includes a list of readings and resources for each week. These are meant to be helpful *during* the week they are listed, and you should consult them in parallel with that week's class lectures and lab activities. While some of these materials are resources for you to refer to as needed, others you are recommended to read in full. These have been chosen to be accessible and useful, but when you are crunched for time you should prioritize your assignments over the readings.

Any of the readings listed in previous weeks are fair game for team trivia.

Assignment Submission and Deadlines

Assignments must be submitted digitally on the class Canvas site *and* posted to the class Miro board by the assignment deadline.

Respect deadlines. In professional contexts, deadlines are very often not flexible. Learn now to meet them. Late work will be penalized 10% of total available points for each day (or portion thereof) after the deadline it is submitted. Assignments received more than 7 days after the deadline will not receive credit.

If an *extraordinary* circumstance prevents you from meeting a deadline, please discuss the possibility of an accommodation with the instructor as soon as possible. You will not receive an accommodation for lost or damaged files.

Assignment Revisions

You may make revisions to any assignment. In order to revise an assignment, you must first email the TA with an assignment revision plan describing specifically how you propose to improve your work. The TA must then approve this plan. Once approved, you should revise your work accordingly and resubmit on Canvas. Revisions are due no later than one week after initial grades are posted. Late revisions will not be accepted. Revisions will be re-graded without penalty; you have the potential to earn full credit for the assignment. (However, deductions due to late initial submission will continue to apply.)

Accommodations and Support

I am committed to creating an environment in which all students are included and have the opportunity to learn.

If you require an accommodation for a religious observation or practice, please let me know. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at <https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/>. Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the form at <https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>.

If you would benefit from accommodations for a disability, let me know and we will work with Disability Resources for Students to ensure you get the most out of this class. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, me, and DRS. You can reach DRS at 206-543-8924 (V) or 206-543-8925 (TTY). More information is available at disability.uw.edu. Please note that I am unable to provide accommodation for a disability without prior notification from DRS.

Finally, life as a student can be challenging even in the best of times, and these are not the best of times. If any personal circumstances are preventing you from bringing your best self to class, please do not hesitate to reach out to your community for support. The university has many amazing resources available to you, and I too am ready to support you in whatever way I can.

Conduct and Academic Integrity

As always, students are expected to adhere to the UW's code of conduct. Be respectful of each other, and think carefully about your role in making our class a safe and welcoming space for everyone.

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in all of their work. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. In the first weeks of class, we will discuss some concerns about intellectual property and copyright infringement particular to graphic design work. If you are not sure what is OK, just ask!

Course Feedback

There is no need to wait until course evaluations at the end of the quarter to provide feedback to the instructors. If you have any concerns or suggestions related to teaching, assignments, organization, classroom environment, or other elements of the class, you are welcome and encouraged to let me know at any time. This gives me the opportunity to make improvements as we go.

If you prefer to give feedback anonymously, you may do so online [here](#). This form will remain open all quarter, and I will see responses as soon as they are submitted.

You may also raise any concerns directly with the chair of the Department of Urban Design and Planning, Branden Born (bborn@uw.edu)

SCHEDULE

Beginning in Week 2, every class will have open lab time.

Assignments are due at the start of class on the day listed. Topics and dates may adjust based on students needs.

Every Friday a Lab time will be available. We will discuss these times our first week of class.

	In Class	Deadlines
<u>Week 1</u>		
Thursday January 4	Welcome & Introductions	
Friday January 5	Learning Miro: Miro Activity: Trivia Teams / Labs Lecture: File organization, graphic design and presentation basics	Preliminary Survey
<u>Week 2</u>		
Tuesday January 9	Meet with your Trivia Teams and Choose Lab time	Select study area
Thursday January 11	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe Illustrator Introduce Assignment 01: Circulation Diagram	
Friday January 12	Demo: Adobe Illustrator – Open Street Map/ Lab	
<u>Week 3</u>		
Tuesday January 16	Open Lab Work on Assignment 01	
Thursday January 18	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe Illustrator Introduce Assignment 02: Axonometric View	
Friday January 19	Demo: SketchUp 3D Modeler/ Lab	A1: Circulation Diagram

	In Class	Deadlines
<u>Week 4</u>		
Tuesday January 23	Open Lab Work on Assignment 02	
Thursday January 25	Team Trivia Demo: SketchUp 3D Modeler	
Friday January 26	Demo: SketchUp 3D Modeler / Lab	
<u>Week 5</u>		
Tuesday January 30	Open Lab	
Thursday February 1	Team Trivia Demo: SketchUp LayOut Introduce Assignment 03: Plan View	A2: Axonometric View
Friday February 2	Demo: SketchUp LayOut with Adobe Illustrator / lab	
<u>Week 6</u>		
Tuesday February 6	Open Lab	
Thursday February 8	Team Trivia Lecture: Data visualization and infographics Introduce Assignment 04: Infographic	A3: Plan View
Friday February 9	Demo: Infographics w/ Adobe Illustrator/ labs	
<u>Week 7</u>		
Tuesday February 13	Open Lab	
Thursday February 15	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe Photoshop Introduce Assignment 05: Edited Scene	
Friday February 16	Demo: Adobe Photoshop/ lab	

	In Class	Deadlines
<u>Week 8</u>		
Tuesday February 20	Open Lab	
Thursday February 22	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe Photoshop	A4: Infographic
Friday February 23	Demo: Adobe InDesign Introduce Assignment 06: Portfolio	
<u>Week 9</u>		
Tuesday February 27	Open Lab	
Thursday February 29	Team Trivia Demo: Adobe InDesign	A5: Edited Scene
Friday March 1	Demo: Layouts/ Adobe InDesign/ lab	
<u>Week 10</u>		
Tuesday March 5	<i>Open Lab</i>	A6: Portfolio Draft
Thursday March 7	<i>Presentation tactics/ lab</i>	
Friday March 8	Gallery walk and celebration	A6: Portfolio