

MAYBORN SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

ADVG 1100 – APPLIED DESIGN FOR ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Fall 2026

Class Day/Time

Monday, 2:25pm - 5:15pm

Location

Main Campus

Gate 132

Fall 2026

August 17 - December 11

Final Week/Final Exam

December 14-18, 2026

Adjunct Professor

Troy Scarlott

Email:

Troy.Scarlott@unt.edu

Office Hours:

Monday (before or after class) - by appointment only

I am available for 1-1 appointments on Monday's - before or after class. To make a 1-1 appointment, please contact me via UNT email and request 1-1 appointment with specific date/time. I will respond via email to confirm the appointment (date/time).

Course Syllabus and Class Schedule

The syllabus and in-class lab assignments are subject to change due to class progress, schedule conflicts, guest speakers, weather and/or contingencies

Before each class, review the class readings/assignments outlined below for each week. Course is a lab-based format that will include lecture, discussion, class critiques, small group discussions, in-class demos and instruction, and in-class assignments/design exercises.

Course Description

ADVG 1100: Applied Design for Advertising and Public Relations

In this course, we will focus on the basic principles of strategic and effective design for communications (marketing, advertising, social media, public relations etc). You'll explore the creative process – developing a strategy, generating ideas, creating design comps and refining designs through an iterative creative process. For the course, you will have the opportunity to work in-class as a lab with hands-on assignments using design tools (Adobe Creative Cloud) and

also increase your knowledge and skillsets through weekly assignments. You will gain and build valuable knowledge that will empower you to create and design for all things marketing including, digital marketing, traditional advertising, social media, public relations, websites, and mobile applications.

1. **Introducing Design Tools:** You'll become familiar with the tools commonly used in design industries, with a focus on advertising and public relations. Through hands-on experience, you'll gain proficiency in using Adobe Creative Cloud software, specifically focused on Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign. Additionally, you may the ability to explore open-source design tools including Canva, Figma etc
2. **Cultivating Design-Related Soft Skills:** To complement design skills and software knowledge, you'll develop essential soft skills that are design-oriented. These include understanding how to develop smart strategic direction, design through iterative process, present your ideas and designs, offer and receive constructive feedback, assess and improve your work, breakthrough creative obstacles, motivate yourself, find inspiration, embrace failure, collaborate effectively, work independently, and embrace uncertainty.

Learning and developing basic design skills takes a significant amount of time – and this course will offer time to learn in-class as well as expect learning and development outside of class. Please allocate a minimum of three hours per class session to prepare for upcoming in-class exercises. This approach ensures that you are well-prepared to engage during class.

This course will focus on the following topics:

- **Design Principles:** You will learn the basic principles of design, such as logic, grids, balance, contrast, alignment, proximity, repetition, and hierarchy. These principles are essential for creating visually appealing and effective designs.
- **Typography:** You will learn about typography, how to choose appropriate fonts, and how to use typography to enhance the readability, effectiveness and aesthetic of your designs.
- **Basic Color Theory:** You will learn about basic color theory and how to use color to evoke the right emotions and effectively communicate messages.
- **Software Proficiency:** You will develop basic proficiency with industry-standard design software like Adobe Creative Cloud (Illustrator, Photoshop, and InDesign) and online tools like Canva.
- **Composition and Layout:** You will learn how to organize visual elements utilizing logic, grids, margins and balance to create cohesive layouts.
- **Creative Thinking and Problem-Solving:** You will learn how to solve visual communication challenges through design - and practice brainstorming, conceptualizing ideas, and thinking creatively to find design solutions.
- **Introduction to Visual Identity:** You will learn about creating branding including visual identities (logos, color palettes, typography, images etc) and how to apply to maintain consistency across different design elements.
- **Critique and Feedback:** You will learn how to give and receive constructive feedback – and important skill in design education. You will be encouraged to

participate in class discussions and work critiques – where you will analyze design work and offer/receive input from peers and instructors.

- **Portfolio Development:** You will have the opportunity to begin thinking and developing your design work and style into a personal portfolio. This skill is essential for showcasing your abilities to potential employers or clients.

Prerequisites

None. This is an ADVG foundational course.

Communication

Email - Communicating with students using the UNT student email account is part of the university's contract with students. For this course, we will use communicate with students in this class through the students' my.unt accounts (not personal email accounts)

Class - Students should communicate with the Professor/TA via UNT email, Canvas email, and/or appointments

Class Format

This course format is based predominantly on an in-person lab and seminar. The success of a seminar is largely dependent upon student participation – working on in-class assignments, engaging in lectures and presentations, offering opinions and asking good questions. Students will get value of the class - only by what they put into it by way of preparing, attending, and participating in class presentations and discussions. The role of the instructor is primarily to lecture, guide discussions and debates, and evaluate student performance.

For this course, it's also important to read and study the textbook and develop design assignments outside of class – as your knowledge will grow exponentially by playing and experimenting with design and the design software.

Required Textbook

White Space is Not Your Enemy: A Beginners Guide to Communicating Visually Through Graphic, Web & Multimedia Design.

The latest edition is the 2024 - 4th edition (which is UNT bookstore)

Hagen, R., & Golombisky, K.. Boca Raton: CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group.

Textbook Policy

The Mayborn School of Journalism doesn't require students to purchase textbooks from the University Bookstore - and students can purchase the textbook through online bookstores etc

Required Materials - for this course, you must have:

- Required textbook

- Reliable and consistent access to a computer (Mac or PC) and bring your computer to class
- Reliable internet access
- Adobe Creative Cloud for UNT Students (see below for links to learn more and purchase subscription)
- Access to Canvas (UNT's online platform for grades, assignments, etc.)
- A sketchpad or notebook (paper) and pen/markers of your choosing - please bring to class

Course Technology & Skills

- Computer/Laptop with Video Camera
- Reliable internet access
- Adobe Creative Cloud (InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator)
- Microsoft Office Suite
- Apple Keynote or Microsoft PowerPoint
- Canvas Technical Requirements
(<https://clear.unt.edu/supportedtechnologies/canvas/requirements>)

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

List of course-specific technical skills learners must have to succeed in the course:

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments
- Downloading and installing software
- Using Adobe Creative Cloud design programs

Adobe Creative Cloud for UNT Students

UNT has a contract with Adobe - the following link has the information students need to purchase a subscription and opt-out of an existing agreement that is at a higher price: <https://cvad.unt.edu/cvad-it-services/adobe-student-subscriptions.html>

For questions or problems with your Adobe Creative Cloud subscription, email: adobe@unt.edu

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. At UNT, we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: UIT Student Help Desk site (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

COURSE DETAILS

Grades

Based on the course format, in-class and out of class assignments, you can earn up to 1,000 points for the entire course based on the following criteria (below). Please note that your professor will make the determination of your final grade.

Final course grades will be awarded as follows:

Total Points	Letter Grade Received
900 – 1,000	A
800 – 899	B
700 – 799	C
600 – 699	D
500 – 599	F

Grade Criteria

In this course you will demonstrate the growth of your hard and soft design skills, including:

- **Attendance:** (100 points max) Attendance points can only be earned by being in class and completing and submitting in-class lab assignments. Everyone in this class has an extremely important role.
- **Participation and Engagement** (100 points max): It is important to participate and engage in each and every class – to get the most out of the course format. Doing the work in-class and contributing to discussions and helping other students is essential to the creative process.
- **Design Proficiency - Adobe Creative Suite** (200 points max)
You will learn how to design using Adobe Creative Suite, including InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator and other design tools (Canva, Keynote, PPT) and have the opportunity in-class and out of class to build knowledge and proficiency.

- **Design Assignments** (400 points max): Throughout the course, you will be given a series of design assignments focused on applying design concepts and building design knowledge with Adobe Creative Suite. The design assignments will build throughout the course – moving from simple to more complex.
- **Quizzes/Exams** (2 @ 100 points each; 200 points max): You will be given 2 quizzes/exams based on the course textbook and in-class lectures/presentations.

Notes and Tips

- Attend class each week - and participate!
- Be prepared with computer and assignment for in-class assignments
- Your computer must have Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator) installed and ready to use in class
- Watch and complete video tutorials for Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator) outside of class - on your own
- Keep your laptop fully charged for class and bring your charger, mouse etc as needed
- Allocate enough time outside of class for design assignments (3+ hours) as design requires play time and experimentation
- Complete each assignment - to the best of your ability- each week; export all assignments as a static file (PDF, JPG or PNG) and then submit both the static file and the source file (photoshop, illustrator, indesign)
- Use Canvas to submit course assignment

Class Attendance:

- Attendance is required for this course
- Any student that is absent for four (4) or more classes will fail the course – including excused and unexcused absences
- An excused absence includes approval by the professor – prior to class; please send email to professor if you will miss a class
- Research has shown that students who attend class are more likely to be successful.
- You should attend every class unless you have a University excused absence such as active military service, a religious holy day, or an official University function as stated in UNT policy
- **Tardiness:, the professor will track if a student arrives late or leaves early;** two (2) tardies will count as one (1) unexcused absence
- All excused absences require documentation and approval of the instructor in advance. Documentation becomes the property of the instructor, so make a copy for your own records.

Missed classes

Students who miss class are still required to turn in all due assignments and be prepared for the next class meeting. It is the responsibility of each student to use Canvas to track and submit all

assignments. The instructor isn't responsible for updating students on assignments or providing lecture notes.

Tardiness (arriving late to class)

Being late or leaving early without the instructor's permission counts as an absence at the discretion of the instructor. Two tardies will count as an unexcused absence.

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities

Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity will be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments that they missed as a result of their participation. However, it is the responsibility of the student to plan in advance with the instructor prior to any scheduled examination or assignment to arrange for making up the work.

Religious Observance

Students wishing to observe religious occasions that require missing class should notify the instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with the instructor in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.

Class Protocol

During class, please silence your cell phone and keep it packed inside your purse or backpack. When class instruction is occurring, you may not surf the web or check email. We will have class breaks to check email and phones.

Classroom Policies

Research has shown that students who attend class are more likely to be successful. You should attend every class unless you have a University excused absence such as active military service, a religious holy day, or an official University function as stated in the <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039>. If you cannot attend a class due to an emergency, please let me know.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

This includes cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, unauthorized possession of examinations, changing of grades, records, etc. or helping another student commit an act of academic dishonesty. For example, plagiarism is the paraphrasing or direct quotation of published or unpublished works *without* full and clear acknowledgment of the author/source. Academic dishonesty will bring about disciplinary action which may include expulsion from the University. This is explained in the UNT Student Handbook. When you submit work for this class, that is the same as making a statement that you have produced the work yourself, in its entirety. Plagiarism, fabrication, copyright infringement, and similar uses of other people's work are unacceptable. Plagiarism, in a nutshell, is using other people's written words or published ideas as your own. Some people consider the use of 7-10 words in a row, copied from another source, as plagiarism. Be sure to include citations when using other people's writing, because plagiarism is a serious offense in any discipline, especially in journalism. It is a firing offense in the professional world.

The procedures for disciplinary action will be in accordance with the rules and regulations of the University governing disciplinary action. See details at <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or exams; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor, the acquisition of tests or other material belonging to a faculty member, dual submission of a paper or project, resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructors, or any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. Plagiarism includes the paraphrase or direct quotation of published or unpublished works *without* full and clear acknowledgment of the author/source. Academic dishonesty will bring about disciplinary action which may include expulsion from the university. This is explained in the UNT Student Handbook.

When you submit work for this class, that is the same as making a statement that you have produced the work yourself, in its entirety. Plagiarism, fabrication, copyright infringement, and similar uses of other people's work are unacceptable. Plagiarism, in a nutshell, is using other people's written words or published ideas as your own. Some people consider the use of 7-10 words in a row, copied from another source, as plagiarism. Be sure to include citations when using other people's writing, because plagiarism is a serious offense in any discipline, especially in journalism. It is a firing offense in the professional world.

Students found to plagiarize work in this class will be subject to failure of the class and further discipline by the University of North Texas at the discretion of the instructor. Penalties for academic dishonesty may range from failure of the individual project to failure of the class and possible expulsion from the university.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Academic Integrity Policy

Unauthorized use of AI programs beyond explicit assignments constitutes academic dishonesty and violates integrity. Violators will receive a grade of "0" and be subject to disciplinary action from [UNT Integrity Council](#).

Original Thinking Emphasis: AI is not a replacement for original thinking. All work done in this class should begin with personal research followed by insights and strategic planning. AI usage, if applicable, should be an outgrowth of this process.

Guided AI Application: Generative AI tools may be occasionally used for assignments to teach effective technology utilization, especially for agency and client projects. Similar to using programs like GPS, AI serves as a tool to help users reach a destination, but the user must always determine and verify the final destination.

Seeking Guidance; Students uncertain about AI tool usage may directly consult the instructor or seek advice from the [University Policy Office](#).

Maintaining Academic Integrity With AI:

- Prioritize personal research and strategic planning.
- Use AI tools under guided circumstances.

Unauthorized AI usage will result in a grade of “0” (zero points) for that assignment and reporting to the UNT Integrity Council.

Course Overview - Assignments

Assignments

- All assignments must be submitted on-time via Canvas
- Assignments may be submitted via email to the Professor, in case of Canvas IT issue
- Late assignments will be accepted and graded – with a respective penalty
 - Up to 7 days late – reduction of 25% (in points)
 - 8 days -14 days late – reduction of 50% (in points)
 - 15+ days late – assignments will not be accepted and student will receive 0 points for the assignment
- Students who miss class are still required to complete all assignments by the due date. It is the responsibility of each student to use Canvas to track and submit all assignments.
- All assignments are to be submitted through Canvas. if you encounter difficulties meeting a deadline on any project, you need to communicate with your instructor *before* the project is due.

Please note that the following course schedule may change throughout the semester based on class progress – it's important to attend class to stay up to date on topics and assignments.

Week 1/Class 1

Topics:

Introductions; Overview of course and requirements; Discussion on brand attributes and emotion; Student Survey; In-class assignment on brand attributes and the emotions of design

In-Class Assignment:

Student Survey; Development of personal brand attributes

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 1 and 2
- Install Adobe Creative Cloud on computer
- Design assignment

Week 2/Class 2

Topics:

Designing for Communication and Big Ideas; The Basic Elements of Design

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 3
- Design assignment

Week 3/Class 3

Topics:

Introduction of Adobe Creative Cloud Design Tools – InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 4
- Design assignment

Week 4/Class 4

Topics:

Overview of Design principles, design elements and basic page layout

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 5
- Design assignment

Week 5/Class 5

Topics:

Intro to InDesign

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 6
- Design assignment

Week 6/Class 6

Topics:

Intro to InDesign – focus on page layout and hierarchy of information

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 7
- Design assignment

Week 7/Class 7

Topics:

Intro to typography; how to design with type

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 8
- Design assignment

Week 8/Class 8

Topics:

Intro to Photoshop tools and work flows

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 9
- Study for Mid-term quiz

Week 9/Class 9

Topics:

Mid-term Quiz

In-Class Assignment:

Quiz

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 10
- Design assignment

Week 10/Class 10

Topics:

Review quiz; Power of Storytelling through Design

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 11
- Design assignment

Week 11/Class 11

Topics:

Social Media design

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 12
- Design assignment

Week 12/Class 12

Topics:

Design - integrating Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 13
- Design assignment

Week 13/Class 13

Topics:

Designing an Advertising Campaign Part 1

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 14
- Design assignment

Week 14/Class 14

Topics:

Designing an Advertising Campaign Part 2

In-Class Assignment:

Tutorial and/or design assignment; Breakout group discussions and critiques

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Read Chapter 14
- Design assignment

Week 15/Class 15

Topics:

Course review; prep for final exam

In-Class Assignment:

prep for final exam

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Review all chapters
- Study for final exam

Week 16/Class 16

Topics:

ADVG 1100 Final Exam – exam covers all textbook chapters, lectures and design assignments covered during the entire course

In-Class Assignment:

Exam – includes two parts: 1) Exam questions (multiple choice and fill-in-blank formats); 2) In-class design assignment using Adobe Creative Cloud

Assignment – for Next Class

- Textbook: Review all chapters
- Study for final exam