

COURSE TITLE	COURSE NUMBER
MENTORED PORTFOLIO	ART 170
INSTRUCTOR'S NAME	CONTACT
Ferranto	606-6621 office: AAB 405 matt.ferranto@sunywcc.edu http://www.sunywccart.org/portfolio
MEETING DAY/TIME	LOCATION
TBA	AAB 405

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A comprehensive final portfolio review designed to help Digital Art Certificate students complete a professional portfolio, develop a resume, and apply for a professional position in graphic arts. Suggestions for seeking a professional career in commercial art or design are included.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this class, you will have created:

- A portfolio of works suitable for application to professional positions in the graphic arts
- A professional resume and related business card
- A cover letter that you can adjust for various applications

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

PORTFOLIO

The portfolio is simply a group of works and is a major element in your establishing a professional profile, gaining assignments, and attracting clients. You will revise works from your Visual Arts classes at Westchester Community College and personal works as well as create new works that demonstrate skills and techniques expected of professional design portfolios. Your professional portfolio should meet the following criteria:

General

- 8-12 works
- A variety of media & skills demonstrated
 - a single "process piece" that shows sketches, roughs, & final is a good idea
- Works should demonstrate
 - **Solid visual concepts** use of formal & technical skills to convey a message or idea, "process pieces" can show concept development
 - **Application of design principles as communicative forms** figure & ground, visual emphasis, balance, proportion, unity, rhythm
 - **Typographic skills** typographic contrast & hierarchy, integration of type & image, use of type as image, avoiding amateur typographic mistakes
- Commercial application of most works should be obvious
- Include clear & consistent captions & texts to explain works, note project goals, software used, etc.

Format

- **Personal website or other online format**
 - Online media is the primary medium through which most people will find/view your work. It is crucial that you develop an online presence for your work.
- **Hard copy/print**
 - A simple print portfolio is necessary for interviews or other in-person meetings

RESUME & BUSINESS CARD

Your resume & business cards are crucial professional networking and marketing tools.

Resume should include all relevant education, professional experience, and activities that are related to your career as a designer. It should also be well designed, demonstrating your visual and typographic skills without appearing overly flashy or precious. Proper spelling, grammar, and complete, accurate, brief descriptions of your background are essential. The resume should reflect the general look of your portfolio.

The Career Transfer Center provides regular resume-writing workshops throughout the year. It's in your best interests to take advantage of this service.

Business Card should include all of your relevant contact information and be well designed. The material qualities of a business card can vary widely, and both sides may be used for printing.

COVER LETTER

Along with your portfolio and resume, you will need to write a cover letter, or letter of introduction, when applying for positions or working with clients. Your cover letter must at very least demonstrate solid written communication skills. Besides proper spelling and grammar, your cover letter should specifically refer to how your particular skill set is applicable to a given set of client needs.

FINAL INTERVIEW

Developing solid interviewing skills is crucial to succeeding in any professional field. Like anything, success comes with practice. Links to various interviewing strategies and techniques are provided on the class site, and many, many more are available on the web. The Career Transfer Center provides regular interview workshops throughout the year. It's in your best interests to take advantage of this service. More than anything, however, you should practice your interview skills: ask a relative, friend, or trusted colleague ask you standard interview questions until you are comfortable in your replies.

TOPIC OUTLINE

Week 1 or 2: INTRODUCTORY MEETINGS

- Discuss short- and long-term career goals
- Review student work – bring all pieces for initial review
- Choose one of the three junior designer position listings listed below OR research & locate your own appropriate position/internship listing. You will spend the semester preparing an application, including a portfolio, for this position.
- Online formats: personal website, Flickr, Wordpress, etc.
- Review class website, resources
- Review job descriptions & job search strategies

Week 3

- Upload 8-12 pieces of your best design work to an online site as discussed in Week 1 or 2
- Email a full application for one of the default junior designer positions OR an appropriate junior designer position/internship that you have located to matt.ferranto@sunywcc.edu. **Upload your works and email the application by Friday afternoon of the third week in the semester.**
- Your application should include
 - A link to your online work
 - A resume
 - A cover letter (as the body or text of the email)
 - Any attachments that are specified in an application (such as a pdf file with three images)
- **Note: this first application will not be perfect. It is a starting point. We will review and edit all aspects of these items throughout the semester.**
- If you choose to locate/apply to a position other than the provided ones, send that full description in a separate email to matt.ferranto@sunywcc.edu

Week 4 FIRST QUARTER REVIEW

- Meet in person and discuss application
- Bring first draft of business card to review
 - Card should be cut to size (3 ½" x 2")
- Discuss hard copy portfolio options, review examples

Week 5-7

- Revise your design works as discussed in review sessions and via email discussions
- Revise your resume, cover letter, and business card as discussed
- Email revisions to matt.ferranto@sunywcc.edu
- I expect at least one email of revisions per week, and I will return written reviews/critiques of all revisions (usually within 48 hours of receipt)

Week 8 MIDTERM REVIEW

- Meet in person and discuss full application
- Bring revised, designed resume and business card for review
- Bring first draft of hard copy portfolio for review

Week 9-11

- Revise your design works as discussed in review sessions and via email discussions
- Revise your resume, cover letter, and business card as discussed
- Email revisions to matt.ferranto@sunywcc.edu
- I expect at least one email of revisions per week, and I will return written reviews/critiques of all revisions (usually within 48 hours of receipt)

Week 12 THIRD QUARTER REVIEW

- Meet in person and discuss full application
- Bring revised, designed resume and business card for review
- Bring second draft of hard copy portfolio for review

Week 13-14

- Revise your design works as discussed in review sessions and via email discussions
- Revise your resume, cover letter, and business card as discussed
- Email revisions to matt.ferranto@sunywcc.edu
- I expect at least one email of revisions per week, and I will return written reviews/critiques of all revisions (usually within 48 hours of receipt)

Week 15 FINAL REVIEW

- Meet in person and discuss full application
- Bring latest draft of resume and business card
- Bring third draft of hard copy portfolio for review

FINAL EXAM WEEK: FULL INTERVIEW

- Mock interview: AAB 405
- Bring all materials that you would to an interview:
 - Business card
 - Full hard copy portfolio
 - CD or portable media of digital works (full website files for students who have built personal portfolio site)
 - Resume
- Dress appropriately
- The interview itself will last about 30 minutes. A good interview will last longer; a poor interview will be shorter. The interview will include a range of “standard” questions along with questions about your work and your general experience in design and communications. We will discuss your interview performance as well as wrap up any final questions or concerns about the course immediately following the interview.

ASSESSMENT

- Students whose design work, resume, cover letter, and interview skills seem practiced and polished enough to make a short list of final candidates for a junior design position will earn an “A” in the class.
- Students whose design work, resume, cover letter, and interview skills are competent but would likely not make a short list of final candidates for a junior design position will earn a “B” in the class.
- Students whose design work, resume, and cover letter are complete but not yet polished enough to likely gain an interview for a junior design position will earn a “C” in the class. Students with portfolios/materials in this range who show outstanding interviewing skills will earn a “C+”.
- Students whose design work, resume, or cover letter, are incomplete will earn an “F” in the class.

ATTENDANCE

- Individual or small group meetings are held on an appointment basis. You are expected to attend meetings as scheduled.

REQUIRED/MATERIALS & SUPPLIES

- **digital storage** You will be given general storage space on the campus server for your work during this semester. This server is NOT SECURE. To follow good digital practices, you must always back up your work. For this you will need to purchase removable media of some sort. Methods include CD-RW, portable USB drives or firewire hard drives.
- **presentation materials** simple folder or more elaborate portfolio book
- **general range of art/design materials** X-acto knife & blades, pens, glue/spray mount, etc.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Westchester Community College provides services for students with documented learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, physical disabilities, visual, hearing, and other health impairments. To learn more about what support services are available visit:

http://www.sunywcc.edu/programs/distance_learning/prospectives/disabilities.htm

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

This class will be conducted in accordance with the college's Student Code of Conduct and basic standards of academic honesty. Cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

For more information about Westchester Community College's Academic Honesty Policy, please visit:

<http://www.sunywcc.edu/dep/english/plag/honesty.htm>

DESIGN POSITION LISTINGS

POSITION ONE

Versatility is of the utmost importance in this small creative team! Candidates should possess a customer service attitude and have a fun and dynamic personality. Our client is looking for a junior graphic designer who can catch on to new things quickly, requires minimal direction, and is speedy and efficient in their work! You should have a strong sense of design and production skills to back them up.

It is mandatory that all candidates have strong skills in the following:

Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign and Flash (you MUST provide Flash animation samples to be considered for this position!) on Mac.

The company has strict brand guidelines, so candidates must be accustomed to - and creative enough - to develop fresh designs while working within these guidelines.

Candidate should be upbeat, quick learners, able to work in a fast paced environment and be able to turn projects around quickly. Candidate should be willing and able to learn new programs. Professional and school design samples are required, but what you have to offer in regards to efficiency, quality of work, speed, ability to learn quickly, etc. will be weighed very heavily.

Other Requirements:

Junior and entry level candidates are encouraged to apply! Must have a degree in Graphic Design or similar (i.e. Communication Arts, Fine Arts, etc.) and have a school or professional design portfolio of samples to back it up.

These skills will earn you BONUS points!

- * Front End Web development skills in CSS
- * HTML Coding
- * After Effects

POSITION TWO

We are seeking candidates with 1 to 3+ years of experience in graphic design and digital media, with a focus on web design and print design and production in our national planning and urban design practice. Experience in a planning and design practice related to architecture or landscape is a plus

Responsibilities

- Serve as graphic designer in support of the planning and urban design practice — specific roles include report and poster design and production; digital media design; illustrations that include photo-simulation and 3-D modeling of design elements; and web design; and other graphics, etc.
- 1 to 3+ years of experience as a graphic designer. Internships can count toward this experience.
- degree in graphic design or graphic arts, from an accredited school, is a minimum requirement.
- Excellent written and communication skills.
- Proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop), website design, use of technology/social media for public outreach, etc.
- Experience in ArcView GIS, AutoCAD, and Sketchup a plus.
- First-hand knowledge of four-color offset print production techniques is also desirable.
- Exceptional typographic and design skills.
- Strong technical skills and a high level of attention to detail.
- The ability to simultaneously drive multiple projects.
- The ability to collaborate well with, and take direction from, senior staff.
- The ability to produce detailed projects in a time-sensitive environment.
- The ability to articulate the value of good design as well as explain and justify specific design decisions.

To apply, please respond including a cover letter and work samples (PDF, PowerPoint or other electronic file type). Please note: Applicants must include work samples for the application to be complete. Thank you.

POSITION THREE

Entry level Junior Graphic Designer with imaginative flair and a working knowledge of the latest graphic design software. The successful candidate will have a Degree in Graphic Design and possess excellent verbal and written communication skills. Must be flexible and organized, with strong work ethic and an even stronger attention to detail. Must also be comfortable taking direction and possess willingness to learn the intricacies of design as applied to both general and direct response advertising.

Responsibilities:

- Executing designs, concepts, and layouts conceptualized by Creative Supervisor.
- Drawing and printing charts, graphs, illustrations, and other artwork, using the computer.
- Preparing files and instructions for vendors who assemble final layouts for print.
- Working with print, direct mail, and interactive mediums.
- Preparing specialty communications (white papers, sales kits, etc.).
- Working within tight deadlines.

Skills: (Specific abilities necessary to perform essential functions in a satisfactory manner.)

- § Ability to work with growing marketing team
- § Excellent interpersonal skills and a positive attitude
- § Deadline, detail and multi task oriented
- § Ability to keep up with industry related trends in design.
- § Strong oral and written communication skills a must
- § Must be self motivated, driven, and pay close attention to details
- § Must be organized and have ability to prioritize and handle multiple projects under high pressure, tight deadline environment

Understanding of pre press, print and traditional graphic arts procedures and standards a plus.

Microsoft Word

Microsoft PowerPoint

Adobe Acrobat Professional

QuarkXPress and/or Adobe InDesign

Photoshop

Illustrator

Please include salary requirements and samples of your work to be considered.