Digital Art Course Syllabus

Course Description: This introductory course deals with controlling computer technology to produce an artistic image. Students will learn computer illustration techniques, image manipulation, animation, web design, digital camera use, and graphic design visual literacy. As students are introduced to the various fields in the digital arts, they will learn and apply the fundamentals of design with software applications (Adobe Creative Suite 6), as well as study the language of art and the principals of design. Throughout the course we will examine both contemporary and historical Graphic Artists and their impacts on society and the art world. Projects coordinate technical skills with organization, management, communication, ethics and teamwork.

Instructional Philosophy: Instruction will be provided both with visual demonstrations and through assignments that encourage creativity and critical thinking. Students are encouraged to explore their creativity and actively engage in all steps of the creative process: brainstorming, sketching, collecting visual research, responding to creative prompts, risk taking, refining, and reflecting. As students refine their skills making and creating, they will also be deepening their understanding of art/design history, criticism and aesthetics. Students will be given challenging real world projects and assignments typical of the graphic design industry.

Course Goals:

As a result of taking this class, you should be able to…
1. Demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles of design.
2. Read, understand and communicate in the language of graphic design.
3. Use technology such as Adobe Creative Suite.
4. Demonstrate positive work behavior and leadership skills.
5. Solve problems using critical thinking strategies.
6. Constructively critique other students' work as well as reflecting on your own.

Major Course Assignments and Projects:

- *Entry Tasks (ie daily drawings)*: **(1 point each)** Each morning an entry task will be displayed on the front board with instructions, this is to be completed on your iPad**.** If you are absent, it is your responsibility to make up any missing entry tasks. **You cannot make them up after 2 weeks.**
- *Participation and Effort:* You must participate to succeed! Art is about participation, through critiques, classroom discussions, aesthetics, art production, and all assignments. Your grade is not based on ability alone; I look at the effort you put in to all your assignments. You will receive daily participation points
- *Projects:* **(50 points each)** We will have an average of 17 art projects that will be completed during the year. These will be graded on the rubrics given to you at the start of the assignment. If you are late with an assignment, you will lose 5 points for every day you are late. Excused absences will not be considered late if turned in the following day back.
- *Critiques:* **(20 points each)** You will analyze and critique each other's art for every project as well as critique each others art digitally on Artsite.
- *Portfolio:* **(75 points each Tri)** You will also get an overall portfolio grade at the end of each trimester for keeping your portfolio up to date with all completed projects
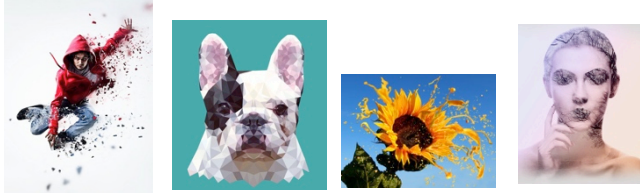
* Notebook checks are required before any project can be started
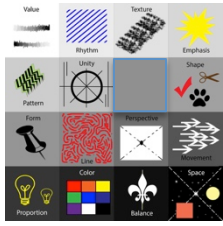
Project #1: Elements and Principles
Students examine the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design as they pertain to the digital arts. Students will create a list of Elements and Principles with student friendly definitions using Photoshop.

Project #2: Photoshop/ Digital Photography
Students learn how to use Photo shop while creating various artworks such as a vector self-portrait, an abstract emotion, dispersion, bizarre mash-up, paint splatter portrait, geometric vector animal, double exposure, and popular media touch ups.

Project #3: Illustrator/ Graphic Design
Students will work in groups, creating their own design firm. This firm will be presented with a fictional comp any in need of their design services. Students will create a logo for them as well as an updated logo for Gaiser using Illustrator.

Project #4: Dreamweaver/ Website Design
Students will work in their design firm again to fulfill a clients request for a website. Students will design a website that fits the clients needs using graphic design elements and coding.

Project #5: InDesign/ Create a Book Cover
Students will design a book cover using InDesign from a fictional client. Students will create all the graphic art, title and other font styles, as well as the summary for the back cover.
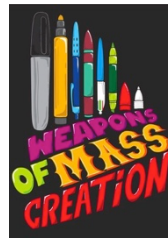
Project #4: Advertising
Students will create an ad for Gaiser forecasting, marketing all the electives. Students will create an add appropriate graphic elements and design themes.
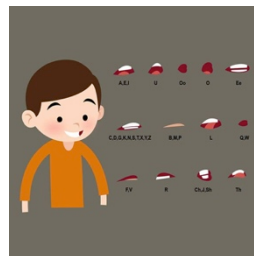
Project #6: Project Planning
Students will create a storyboard for a short animation film. Students will develop and plan out the characters, sound, movements, etc.
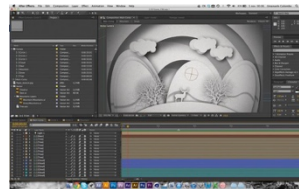
Project #7: After Effects/ Animation
Students will create a character for the animation short and animate the film using After Effects.

Project #8: Auditions/ Sound Production
Students will lay out their sound track, the speaking parts of the animation short as well as the background sounds and music.

Project #9: Video Production
Students will edit all the parts of the animation short together to create a 1-minute animation short film.

Project #10: Safety PSA
Students will write, direct, film, act and edit in a safety PSA

Project #11: Final Project Presentations
Students will develop and further explore a project of their choice dealing with design and finishing with a student presentation and critique of the work.

Project #12: Leadership
Individual, group, and community leadership skills are a key component of all CTE (Career and Technical Education) classes. In a middle school setting it is important to stress the responsibility that students involved in digital art and design class have to treat others in the school with respect, and not only that, but promote this using the tools available to them in class. Points will be awarded for individual leadership activities such as: perfect attendance, school involvement, volunteering in the community as well as performing other leadership tasks within the classroom, school, and community
.

Text & Materials: A textbook is not used in Digital Art, although articles and other papers will be handed out throughout the year. Students are required to have a composition notebook in which to properly keep these items and all other important information as it is presented to the class. A flash drive is highly recommended in order to save finished work on so it may be shown to parents. Please feel free to ask should you have any questions regarding type/size of flash drive, although most all that are over 3 GB will suffice.

Student will become familiar with Adobe Creative Suite design applications including: Illustrator, After Effects, Dream Weaver, Photoshop, and InDesign.

Assessments:
The primary assessments in this class are the rubrics that are used to assess finial projects. The standard four-point scale is used:
4 = Student is working above standards of a particular skill
3 = Student is working at standard of a particular skill
2 = Student is working below standards of a particular skill
1 = Student is working at a limited standard of a particular skill

Most major Digital Art Projects are valued at 50 points, while tests, quizzes, homework, class work, or participation are usually worth much less. Grades are not weighted, as each is worth a certain value and a collection of these points determines the final grade, based on the scale below. Several forms of assessment occur in the class, including peer assessment and self-assessment.

Grading Scale:

Grade	Percentage	Explanation
A	94-100%	Exceeds expectations
A-	90-93%	
B+	87-89%	
B	84-86 %	Meets standards and expectations
B-	80-83%	
C+	77-79%	Passing, but does not meet some standards
C	74-76%	
C-	70-73%	
D	60-69%	Passing, but only meets the minimum standards
F	0-59%	Failing, does not meet minimum standards
I	Incomplete	

I am looking forward to an exciting year and cannot wait to see the creativity and design skills that students exhibit in this class. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at Gaiser Middle School at (360) 313-3400, or by e-mail (which will probably be quicker) at melissa.swenson@vansd.org

Thanks,
Melissa Swenson
Gaiser Middle School
Digital Arts