Syllabus

Course Description

Course Title	Project Visual Communication 2.a
Course Code	97156
Course Title Additional	Birds aren´t real
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	NN
Language	Italian; English; German
Degree Course	Bachelor in Design and Art - Major in Design
Other Degree Courses (Loaned)	
Lecturers	Prof. Dr. phil. habil. Gerhard Glüher, Gerhard.Glueher@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/889 Dott. Gianluca Alla, Gianluca.Alla@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/52545 dr. Emilio Patuzzo, Emilio.Patuzzo@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/52719
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
Course Year/s	2nd - 3rd
CP	19
Teaching Hours	90+60+30
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	295
Planned Office Hours	93
Contents Summary	The course provides to students knowledge and skills on operational design approaches, methods and theories of visual communication for various functional and experimental fields of

	application with a focus on the role of digital media.
Course Topics	Conspiracy theories have accompanied human history since ancient times. While in the past such theories remained confined to small circles, today the internet makes them accessible and shareable on a global scale. Forums, blogs, social media, and newsletters not only spread them further but also provide spaces where narratives are enriched with details, oscillating between reality and fiction. We live in an era in which we are exposed to an overwhelming amount of information, often difficult to interpret and contextualize. At the same time, our attraction to complex narratives drives the appeal of conspiracy theories, which can offer surprising plots and alternatives to a reality that may seem ordinary. In this context emerges the satirical theory Birds Aren't Real, which claims that birds have been replaced by government drones. Originally intended as a joke, the movement has evolved into a social experiment that questions the mechanisms of disinformation. Its founder, Peter McIndoe, studied conspiratorial language and created a convincing imaginary world through fake documents, promotional videos, and online content. From a simple handmade sign, the idea grew into a digital phenomenon that also spread into the real world, demonstrating how what rises online can have tangible effects in everyday life. Because of these characteristics, Birds Aren't Real serves as the starting point of the course, guiding students in analysing the dynamics that influence the spread of a digital phenomenon. Based on this case study, students individually develop a visual communication project that comes to life online, through newsletters, blogs, forums, or social media, and culminates in a real-world event. The course provides students with the tools needed to build the foundations of a solid design methodology, applicable to different contexts and briefs. Within this framework, the course examines how the choice of medium affects language, both written and visual, and how these decisions influence overall communication. Particular attention is also given to the relationship between digital

	and physical tools, observing how they interact and reinforce each other. During the frontal lectures, software and digital tools are introduced, including animation software and artificial intelligence applications, with a focus on their use for generating multiple images and exploring the relationship between static and moving images. Finally, students are encouraged to develop critical and lateral thinking, essential for approaching a brief openly and without bias. This approach allows them to analyse content with curiosity, recognise its potential, and transform it into coherent and effective visual projects, even when the initial idea appears fragile or implausible. In this context, lateral thinking becomes a tool for imagining alternative scenarios, identifying unexpected connections, and experimenting with new forms of communication.
Keywords	Visual Communication, Campaign Design, Digital Design, Typography, Motion Design, Visual Narrative
Recommended Prerequisites	no prerequisites
Propaedeutic Courses	To have passed the Project Visual Communication 1; to have certified the language level proficiency B1 in the course language in years following the first.
Teaching Format	Frontal lectures, open discussions, practical exercises, reviews, presentations
Mandatory Attendance	not compulsory but recommended
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes	Knowledge and understanding have acquired their own project methodology in the field of visual communication, from the phase of planning to the phase of realisation of the project. have acquired the basic practical and theoretical knowledge necessary to realise a project in the field of visual communication. have acquired the basic knowledge to be able to turn a critical eye to their own work and to deal with contemporary complexity. have acquired the basic knowledge necessary for further Master's studies in all components of project culture as well as in theoretical subjects.

	Applying knowledge and understanding plan, develop and realise a project in the field of visual communication. be able to finalize the creation of an accomplished project in the field of visual communication, thanks to the basic knowledge acquired in the practical, scientific and theoretical fields. recognise the main phenomena of contemporary society, to observe them critically, also from an ethical and social point of view, and to elaborate appropriate solutions at the level of a design proposal/response. make use of the skills acquired during the course of study in the event of continuing studies in a Master's degree programme in the field of visual communication and to develop them further. Making judgements be able to make independent judgements for the purpose of developing their own design skills and in relation to all those decisions that are necessary to bring a project to completion. be able to make independent judgements, both in the critical evaluation of their own work and in their ability to use the right interpretative tools in those design contexts in which they will work and/or continue their studies, also considering ethical and social aspects. Communication skills present an independently realised project in the field of visual communication in the form of an installation, orally as well as in writing in a professional manner. to professionally communicate and substantiate one’s own decisions and justify them from a formal and theoretical point of view. communicate and present your own project at a professional level in another language and correctly in a third language in addition to their own language. Learning skills have learned a work methodology at a professional level - in the sense of being able to identify, develop and realise solutions to complex problems by applying the knowledge acquired in the practical and theoretical fields - in order to start a professional

	activity and/or continue their studies with a master's degree program. have developed a creative attitude and learned how to enhance it and develop it according to their own inclinations. have acquired basic knowledge in theoretical and practical subjects as well as a study methodology suitable for continuing studies with a master's degree program.
Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)	
Assessment	The final exam consists of the delivery, presentation, and discussion of the project developed during the semester. Students will present their work through a digital presentation showcasing the concept behind their design choices, the graphic language used to visualise the topic, and the final digital assets. In addition, students will design a public demonstration and will be required to produce physical outputs. The complete list of digital and physical deliverables will be defined during the course. Throughout the semester, students will also be assigned two exercises: one focused on motion design and one on editorial design. Both exercises must be developed and presented during the course and will be considered again at the final exam. Finally, each student will be asked to prepare a twenty-minute lecture for their classmates. In rotation, other students will design the poster announcing the lecture. N.B. All non-attending students – after having informed the lecturers – must bring the same assignments as attending students: digital and physical project deliverables, exercises, and the digital presentation. They will also prepare a fifteen-minute lecture on a topic of their choice and design the corresponding poster.
Evaluation Criteria	— Quality of design outputs — Quality of graphic and oral presentation during the final exam — Critical thinking and reflection on the assigned topic — Ability to explore multiple ideas and approaches to the topic — Technical improvement over the semester

	The final grade will be influenced by the development of the main project, the quality of the exercises, the clarity of the final presentation, and the originality of the lecture. The relative importance of each component will be discussed in class.
Required Readings	Peter Von Arx Film+Design, P. Haupt, 1983 Wolfang Weingart My Way to Typography, Lars Müller Publisher, 2010 Norm Dimension of Two, Norm, 2020 Anna Briers, Nicholas Carah, Holly Arden Conflict in My Outlook, Perimeter Editions, 2022 Edwin A. Abbott Flatlandia, Biblioteca Adelphi, 7, 1966 Alex Gartenfeld, Bruce Hanley, Laura Hoptam, EileenMyles, Ellen Salpeter Shannon Ebner: A Public Character, Roma Publications, 2016 Demian Conrad, Rob van Leijsen, David Héritier, Silvio Lorusso Graphic Design in the Post-Digital Age, Research Institute for Art and Design (IRAD), HEAD – Genève, 2021 Hans-Rudolf Lutz

	Typoundso, Niggli Ag, 1988 Laszlo Moholy-Nagy Painting, Photography, Film, Lars Müller Publisher, 2019 Hamish Muir, Mark Holt 8vo On the Outside, Lars Müller Publisher, 2005 Armin Hofmann Graphic Design Manual: Principles and Practice, Karl Gerstner Designing Programmes, Lars Müller Publisher, 2019
Supplementary Readings	More readings related to the topic of the project will be communicated during the course.
Further Information	
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Quality education

Course Module

Course Constituent Title	Visual Communication
Course Code	97156A
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	CEAR-08/D
Language	Italian
Lecturers	Dott. Gianluca Alla, Gianluca.Alla@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/52545
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester

CP	8
Responsible Lecturer	
Teaching Hours	90
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	110
Planned Office Hours	60
Contents Summary	The course should provide fundamentals, skills, working methods, theories and practices of Visual communication in diverse functional and experimental scopes.
Course Topics	Conspiracy theories have accompanied human history since ancient times. While in the past such theories remained confined to small circles, today the internet makes them accessible and shareable on a global scale. Forums, blogs, social media, and newsletters not only spread them further but also provide spaces where narratives are enriched with details, oscillating between reality and fiction. We live in an era in which we are exposed to an overwhelming amount of information, often difficult to interpret and contextualize. At the same time, our attraction to complex narratives drives the appeal of conspiracy theories, which can offer surprising plots and alternatives to a reality that may seem ordinary. In this context emerges the satirical theory Birds Aren't Real, which claims that birds have been replaced by government drones. Originally intended as a joke, the movement has evolved into a social experiment that questions the mechanisms of disinformation. Its founder, Peter McIndoe, studied conspiratorial language and created a convincing imaginary world through fake documents, promotional videos, and online content. From a simple handmade sign, the idea grew into a digital phenomenon that also spread into the real world, demonstrating how what rises online can have tangible effects in everyday life. Because of these characteristics, Birds Aren't Real serves as the starting point of the course, guiding students in analysing the dynamics that influence the spread of a digital phenomenon. Based on this case study, students individually develop a visual

	communication project that comes to life online, through newsletters, blogs, forums, or social media, and culminates in a real-world event. The course provides students with the tools needed to build the foundations of a solid design methodology, applicable to different contexts and briefs. Within this framework, the course examines how the choice of medium affects language, both written and visual, and how these decisions influence overall communication. Particular attention is also given to the relationship between digital and physical tools, observing how they interact and reinforce each other. During the frontal lectures, software and digital tools are introduced, including animation software and artificial intelligence applications, with a focus on their use for generating multiple images and exploring the relationship between static and moving images. Finally, students are encouraged to develop critical and lateral thinking, essential for approaching a brief openly and without bias. This approach allows them to analyse content with curiosity, recognise its potential, and transform it into coherent and effective visual projects, even when the initial idea appears fragile or implausible. In this context, lateral thinking becomes a tool for imagining alternative scenarios, identifying unexpected connections, and experimenting with new forms of communication.
Teaching Format	Frontal lectures, open discussions, practical exercises, reviews, and presentations
Required Readings	Peter Von Arx Film+Design, P. Haupt, 1983 Wolfang Weingart My Way to Typography, Lars Müller Publisher, 2010 Norm

	Dimension of Two, Norm, 2020 Anna Briers, Nicholas Carah, Holly Arden Conflict in My Outlook, Perimeter Editions, 2022 Edwin A. Abbott Flatlandia, Biblioteca Adelphi, 7, 1966 Alex Gartenfeld, Bruce Hanley, Laura Hoptam, EileenMyles, Ellen Salpeter Shannon Ebner: A Public Character, Roma Publications, 2016 Demian Conrad, Rob van Leijsen, David Héritier, Silvio Lorusso Graphic Design in the Post-Digital Age, Research Institute for Art and Design (IRAD), HEAD – Genève, 2021 Hans-Rudolf Lutz Typoundso, Niggli Ag, 1988 Laszlo Moholy-Nagy Painting, Photography, Film, Lars Müller Publisher, 2019 Hamish Muir, Mark Holt 8vo On the Outside, Lars Müller Publisher, 2005 Armin Hofmann Graphic Design Manual: Principles and Practice,

	Karl Gerstner Designing Programmes, Lars Müller Publisher, 2019
Supplementary Readings	More readings related to the topic of the project will be communicated during the course.

Course Module

Course Constituent Title	Digital media
Course Code	97156B
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	CEAR-08/D
Language	English
Lecturers	dr. Emilio Patuzzo, Emilio.Patuzzo@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/52719
Teaching Assistant	
Semester	First semester
CP	6
Responsible Lecturer	
Teaching Hours	60
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	95
Planned Office Hours	18
Contents Summary	The lecturer should teach fundamentals, skills, working methods, theories and practices of diverse forms of digital publishing and social media marketing.
Course Topics	It is curious that the rise of mass media coincides with the growing belief that there are no facts, only interpretations. Curious, because over the past century — especially since the advent of digital technologies — the "media" as a device has both revealed and contributed to the breakdown of the idea of a monolithic and shared truth, in favor of a fragmented, perspectival, and, along this trajectory, even revisable one. Building on a more complex understanding of truth — and, with it,

	a critical analysis of the current reality regime shaped by digital mediation — Module 2 focuses on the development of an editorial plan aimed at communicating the "real-world event" designed in Module 1. This plan should take the form of one or more digital outputs (such as blogs, social media platforms, websites, landing pages for fictional organisations, etc.). In addition to the systemic coherence of the projects developed, particular emphasis will be placed on the visual and graphic components that shape the plan: the design of a typeface consistent with the message and its dissemination strategies; the creation of lettering or calligraphic elements; the methods of producing and reproducing images (photographs, photomontages, memes, etc.) in accordance with how such images are consumed by a pre-defined audience; the design of a digital interface and the thoughtful use and organisation of devices' screens/surfaces; the selection of contents and their graphic translation (through infographics, data visualisation, comic strips, videos, animations); as well as the design of visual, textual or video content generated by a suitably trained ai. By both invoking and suspending Umberto Eco's reflections on the limits of interpretation, the module aims to highlight the role of the digital medium as an active agent in shaping the very processes through which meaning is produced — in other words, affecting the ways interpretation deploys itself. Drawing on media history, the myths that have emerged and endured within media consumption, media languages, and a lab-based practical approach, the module seeks to show how the definition of content is directly and inextricably tied to the design of the form in which it is conveyed. In doing so, the module not only equips students with the conceptual and practical tools necessary to design structured and effective digital communication strategies, but also fosters critical awareness of the most complex and crucial aspects of communication in the digital media environment.
Teaching Format	Lectures; discussions based on the assigned readings; project reviews; presentations
Required Readings	Barthes, R. (1957) Mythologies. Parigi: Seuil (trad. it. Miti d'oggi, Einaudi, Torino, 2016)

	Balbi, G.; Comunello, F.; Pasquali, F. (2025) Studiare i media. Prospettive disciplinari e parole chiave. Roma: Carocci Somaini, A.; Pinotti, A. (2016) Cultura visuale. Immagini, sguardi, media, dispositivi. Torino: Einaudi Berger, J. (2003) Sul guardare. Milano: il saggiatore Cometa, M. (2020) Cultura visuale. Milano: Raffaello Cortina editore Didi-Huberman, G. (2005) Immagini malgrado tutto. Milano: Raffaello Cortina editore Foucault, M. (1971) L'ordre du discourse. Parigi: Gallimard (trad. it. L'ordine del discorso, Einaudi, Torino, 2004) Grespi, B.; Villa, F. (2024) Il postfotografico. Dal selfie alla fotogrammetria digitale. Torino: Einaudi Ortoleva, P. (2019) Media a bassa intensità. Racconti, media, vita quotidiana. Torino: Einaudi Ortoleva, P. (2022) Il secolo dei media. Stili, dinamiche, paradossi. Milano: Saggiatore Sorlin, P. (2001) I figli di Nadar. Il secolo dell'immagine analogica. Torino: Einaudi
Supplementary Readings	Further readings and design case studies will be presented during the course.

Course Module

Course Constituent Title	Theories and languages of visual communication
Course Code	97156C
Scientific-Disciplinary Sector	PHIL-04/B
Language	German
Lecturers	Prof. Dr. phil. habil. Gerhard Glüher, Gerhard.Glueher@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/889
Teaching Assistant	

Semester	First semester
CP	5
Responsible Lecturer	
Teaching Hours	30
Lab Hours	0
Individual Study Hours	90
Planned Office Hours	15
Contents Summary	The integrated theoretical module provides fundamental overview about scientific methods of contemporary semiology and communication theory.
Course Topics	Forms of human communication; Forms, Methods and Phenomena how signs are to be interpreted; visual perception and the open methods to interpret an image; philosophical reflections about the topics: simulation, truth and reality
Teaching Format	Frontal lectures, Presentations (individually or in small groups), common discussions about selected texts, exercises
Required Readings	Maar, Christa & Burda, Hubert (Hg.): Iconic Turn - Die neue Macht der Bilder, Köln, 2004, Du Mont Dubost, Jean-Pierre (Hg.): Bildstörung. Gedanken zu einer Ethik der Wahrnehmung, Leipzig 1994 (Reclam) Kaiser, Marcus: Im Blick der Bilder, Wiesbaden 2023 (Springer) Barthes, Roland: Der entgegenkommende und der stumpfe Sinn, Frankfurt M. 1993 (Suhrkamp) Virilio, Paul: Die Sehmaschine, Berlin 1989 (Merve) Gabriel, Markus: Warum es die Welt nicht gibt, Berlin 2015 (Ullstein) Watzlawick, Paul: Wie wirklich ist die Wirklichkeit?, München 2001 (Piper) Passig, Kathrin & Scholz, Aleks, Berlin 2007 (Rowohlt)
Supplementary Readings	Further readings will be provided during the lecture, if necessary