



AUF

The American  
University of Florence

**SYLLABUS**

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Academic Affairs

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DIVA – DIGITAL IMAGING AND VISUAL ARTS

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**SCHOOL OF DIGITAL IMAGING AND VISUAL ARTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION**  
**COURSE TITLE: ART DIRECTION AND MEDIA MANAGEMENT**  
**COURSE CODE: DIVCAD615**

**3 semester credits**

### **1. DESCRIPTION**

The course aims to develop competency in developing and managing conceptual work in the creative sectors. Course topics examine the curation of visual media and art production through visual communication design, interactive web experiences and digital interfaces, promotion and marketing initiatives, and audience-oriented communication strategy. Students learn and apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills through a creative lens in the art direction and management of campaigns, projects, and initiatives.

### **2. OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Apply methodological competence to streamline aesthetic ideas into a well-edited art project.
- Develop creative strategies for viable visual communication in any artistic field and through different media – such as films, TV, websites, newspapers, and social media.
- Utilize complex functions and applications of photo and graphic design software for art direction purposes.
- Successfully translate desired moods, messages, concepts, and underdeveloped ideas into concrete creative projects and through different media.
- Identify a brand or an artist's needs, determine and develop the artistic vision, and finally direct and produce a sophisticated artistic project.
- Lead and motivate a team of artists/graphics and articulate their vision to the team.
- Develop and implement targeted content for various media platforms.

Research, write, proofread, and edit all media content, implement and manage media campaigns, and deliver public relations and communications plans.

### **3. REQUIREMENTS**

Prerequisites: Successful completion of an undergraduate degree is required for this course.

### **4. METHOD**

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities that challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem-solving, and experiential and field learning activities where applicable.

## 5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

- Bower, Steven. *Inside Art Direction: Interviews and Case Studies*. Fairchild Books, 2016.
- Harrel, Adam. *Creative Direction in a Digital World: A Guide to Being a Modern Creative Director*. CRC Press, 2017.

The Textbooks are pre-ordered and available at: Paperback Exchange in Via delle Oche 4r or laFeltrinelli Via dei Cerretani 40R. Textbooks may also be available for purchase online or in e-book format.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

### FURTHER READINGS

(Books listed below are available in the FUA-AUF library)

Hollifield, Ann et.al. *Media Management: A Casebook Approach*, Routledge, 5th edition, 2015.

Russel, J. Thomas. *Kleppner's Advertising, Student Value Edition* (17<sup>th</sup> Edition). Prentice Hall, 2009.

Preston, Ward. *What an Art Director Does: An Introduction to Motion Picture Production Design*. Silman-James Press, 1994.

Oldach, Mark. *Creativity for Graphic Designers*. North Light Books, 2000.

Ganim, Barbara. *The Designer's Commonsense Business Book*. North Light Books, 2005.

Bierut, Michael. *How to use graphic design to sell things, explain things, make things look better, make people laugh, make people cry, and (every once in a while) change the world*, Harper Design, 2015.

Zappaterra, Yolanda. *Art Direction + Editorial Design*, Abrams Studio, 2007.

Bang, Molly. *Pictures This: How pictures work*. Chronicle Books; Anv Exp Re edition, 2016.

Johnson, Michael. *Branding in five and a half steps*. Thames & Hudson; 1 edition, 2016.

Heller and Vienne. *Art Direction Explained, at last!*, Laurence King Publishing, 2009.

Mante, Harald. *The Photograph: Composition and Color Design 2nd Edition*. Rocky Nook, 2008.

### LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

#### BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca\\_palagio\\_di\\_parte\\_guelfa/](http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/)

#### BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[www.bibliotecadelleoblatoe.it](http://www.bibliotecadelleoblatoe.it)

#### THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: [www.britishinstitute.it/en](http://www.britishinstitute.it/en)

### 6. FIELD LEARNING

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

### 7. COURSE MATERIALS

Some courses may require specific materials. Please refer to your enrollment information.

### 8. COURSE FEES

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

In addition, students may be required to leave a **deposit** for equipment loaned to them during the session. The deposit will be returned at the end of the course, provided the equipment has been returned in the same condition it was loaned.

### 9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM

10% Attendance

20% Participation and Assignments

20% Midterm Exam / Special/Research Project (if applicable)

20% Case Study

30% Final Project

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

### 10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

**Absences** are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences

are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.
- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

#### LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

#### TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

**Participation:** Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

### 11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

**Case Study:** All students will sign up for a 10-minute Case Study presentation on Lesson 1. In Lesson 6, each student will present to the class a specific Case Study on one existing art direction project in any field. Examples can be a set of printed ads, TV commercials, brand packaging, book series, cover collections, film posters, short video projects, themed magazines, organization of social media marketing campaigns, and promotion of events. Each Case Study should be an analysis comprising a personal evaluation of chosen art direction visual strategies, investigation of goals, effectiveness, and reception. The instructor will provide examples of Case Studies in class.

The **Midterm Exam** will take place on Lesson 7 and will consist of two parts: Part One will be ten short answer-questions on topics covered thus far in the course. Part Two will be a 1-page essay where students will be required to critically elaborate upon the content that has emerged thus far in the course.

**Final Project:** By Lesson 15, each student must turn in a Final Project. The final project is an art direction project in any field presented in a specific format (at least a 20-slide PowerPoint or a 15-minute video presentation). The project requires complex articulations of the addressed discipline, as it must provide bibliographical references and critically engage with one or more topics discussed throughout the course. By Lesson 10, all students must consult with the instructor to discuss possible final projects. During Lesson 15, all students will give a 15-minute presentation, followed by Q&A.

## 12. LESSONS

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Introduction to the syllabus with an overview on assignments and expectations. Who is the Art Director? What are their key roles and responsibilities? What makes a great Art Director? How is this role different from Creative Direction?
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Gain a clear understanding of all course expectations.</li><li>- Consolidate existing knowledge on the Art Director's requirements and goals.</li><li>- Understand the difference between Art Director and Creative Director.</li></ul>
Readings/ Assignments	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Inside Art Direction</i> , Introduction. <u>Reading:</u> <i>Art Direction Explained</i> , pp. 22-27; 226-239. <u>Useful link:</u> <a href="#">Drawing the Line Between Art and Creative Direction</a>

Lesson 2	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Brief Journey into Graphic Design and Visual Communication
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand all phases of the process of ideation and concepting.</li><li>- Focus on theories and strategies for a great design.</li><li>- Explore all art direction fields: photography, typography, illustration, editing, and web design.</li></ul>
Readings/ Assignments	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Creative Direction in a Digital World</i> , Chapters 3-4. <u>Reading:</u> <i>Art Direction Explained</i> , pp. 28-45.

Lesson 3	
Meet	In class
Lecture	What Makes Art Direction Work?
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand the visual impact of scale, entry points, parallel narratives, and diagonal.</li><li>- Practice the art of allure with decorations and "doo-dads."</li><li>- Discern efficiently the use of color and black and white images.</li></ul>
Readings/ Assignments	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Art Direction Explained</i> , pp. 50-87. <u>Reading:</u> <i>Creative Direction in a Digital World</i> , Chapter 6.

<b>Lesson 4</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Focus on: Advertising, Branding and Packaging
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review all visual aspects of an advertising campaign.</li> <li>- Understand what a brand visual strategy is and identify opportunities for differentiation.</li> <li>- Explore and apply different product strategies and packaging design.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Inside Art Direction</i> , Chapter 1. <u>Reading:</u> <i>Creative Direction in a Digital World</i> , Chapter 2.

<b>Lesson 5</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Focus on: Newspapers, Magazines, and Book Publishing
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delve deeper into visual journalism – the design of magazines and newspapers.</li> <li>- Focus on the creation of great covers – inspiration, style, and layouts.</li> <li>- Practice main techniques of printed editorial design.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Inside Art Direction</i> , Chapter 2-3. <u>Reading:</u> <i>Art Direction + Editorial Design</i> , pp. Chapter 2.

<b>Lesson 6</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Focus on: Motion, Film, and Theater
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be able to briefly define film, tv, and theater art direction.</li> <li>- Understand all stages of film creation, from script breakdown to scouting locations and set design.</li> <li>- Explore 3D art direction for motion design.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Inside Art Direction</i> , Chapter 4. <u>Optional Reading:</u> <i>What an Art Director Does</i> , Intro + Chapter 1.  <b>CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS</b>

<b>Lesson 7</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>

<b>Lesson 8</b>	
	<b>BREAK</b>

<b>Lesson 9</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Focus on: Music and Social Media
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand the musical artistic director's vision and their responsibilities.</li> <li>- Practice a long-term strategy for a musical and a social media project.</li> <li>- Be acquainted with social media strategies; content conception, design, execution and sharing.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Inside Art Direction</i>, Chapter 5.</p> <p><u>Useful Link:</u> <a href="#">How To Create Art Direction For Your Social Media Graphics</a></p>

<b>Lesson 10</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Art Direction Goes Digital
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand main changes in art direction with the digital era, such as the transformation of consumers into users.</li> <li>- Recognize and apply digital narrative strategies.</li> <li>- Be able to synthesize documents and conversations in the digital media.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Art Direction Explained</i>, pp. 162-171.</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Creative Direction in a Digital World</i>, Chapter 8.</p> <p><u>Useful link:</u> <a href="#">Art Direction and Web Design</a></p>

<b>Lesson 11</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Media Management: Leadership and Motivation
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comprehend the characteristics and responsibilities of an inspiring art director and manager.</li> <li>- Be acquainted with main management and leadership theories, including those encouraging a new sense of social responsibility.</li> <li>- Apply leadership strategies to a number of different competitive, motivational, strategic, and organizational issues in the media world.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Media Management</i>, pp. 1-52.</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Art Direction Explained</i>, pp. 92-101.</p>

<b>Lesson 12</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Planning, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be aware of the dynamics of managing media organizations from small enterprises to media corporations.</li> <li>- Understand why media needs innovation and creativity and how to implement them into the marketplace.</li> <li>- Comprehended entrepreneurial activities of media firms.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Media Management</i> , pp. 101-168. <u>Reading:</u> <a href="#">Innovation and Leadership in the Media Industry</a> , pp. 53-104.

<b>Lesson 13</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Media Marketing and Research
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand the role of the art director in marketing.</li> <li>- Put into practice main (social) media marketing strategies.</li> <li>- Apply research theories and methodologies to media market analysis.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Media Management</i> , pp. 169-266. <u>Reading:</u> <a href="#">Structural Analysis of the Media Market</a>

<b>Lesson 14</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Working with Others and Directing Yourself
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand what is at stake when direction your own artistic projects.</li> <li>- Practice team-building strategies to keep your team motivated.</li> <li>- Be able to summarize all contents covered in the course.</li> </ul>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Inside Art Direction</i> , Chapter 6. <u>Reading:</u> <i>Creative Direction in a Digital World</i> , Chapter 10.

<b>Lesson 15</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	<b>FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS</b>  <b>FINAL PROJECT DUE</b>