



**BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**The City University of New York**  
**Department of Media Arts and Technology**

**Course Title:** MMA 100 - Foundations of Digital Graphic Design  
**Semester:** Fall 2024  
**Section:** 1700 (13137)  
**Day/Time:** Wednesdays – 5:30pm - 9:10pm  
**Classroom:** Fiterman Building – Room 706

**Class Website Link** -> <https://openlab.bmcc.cuny.edu/mma100-fall-2024/>

**Professor Ryan Seslow** - [rseslow@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:rseslow@bmcc.cuny.edu) or [ryan@ryanseslow.com](mailto:ryan@ryanseslow.com)  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays - 4:30pm - 5:30pm by appointment

**3 Credit Hours** (2 Hours Lecture, 2 Hours Lab)  
**Prerequisite:** ACR 094, ENG 088, and ESL 062

**Course Description:**

This image-based course will introduce graphic design as the foundation upon which effective visual communication is built. Investigation of the elements and principles of graphic design will lead to specific design problems and their solution. The development of ideas and the ability to communicate them effectively will be covered. Discussion of both vector and bitmap-based digital graphic platforms will begin progress toward industry-standard computer proficiency.

**Class Resources:**

We will be using a class website via the CUNY BMCC OpenLab platform to learn, support, discover, share, experiment, present and archive our course work. Our class website is a growing weekly resource and repository of course information and communication. Students will refer to the course website each week to obtain assignment details, view and re-cap technical demonstration videos, participate in discussions/critiques, share inspirational/historical resources and experiences on a regular basis.

**Class Website Link** -> <https://openlab.bmcc.cuny.edu/mma100-fall-2024/>

**Recommended Text Book & Resources:** (*\*\*the text books are not mandatory*)

Text book - *Introduction to Graphic Design: A Guide to Thinking, Process and Style* - Author: Aaris Sherin, Publisher: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, ISBN: 978-1472589293

Text Book - *Graphic Design: The New Basics Paperback* - Author: Ellen Lupton, Jennifer Cole Phillips - Publisher: Princeton Architectural Press, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, ISBN# 1568987021; 978-1568987026

**Use of Technology:** Software used: Adobe Creative Suite with Photoshop & Illustrator (as well as other free and experimental applications found on the web and mobile)  
Students will need a portable media system for storing and backing up their work (I will provide a google drive link for our class). Students are responsible for their files and maintaining them. The professor will offer several suggestions and resources to help keep your data safe.

### Evaluations and Requirements:

Individual Class Projects and homework assignments: -----	70%
Mid-semester & Final assessment statement:	10%
Class performance and attendance: -----	10%
Final Project & Final Portfolio:	10%

All of class content and assignments will be posted to our class website on the OpenLab. There will be some in-class exercises as well as homework to be done outside of class. Assignments and homework can always be revised and re-submitted for a better grade.

### Grading Scale: (this class uses the CUNY grading scale)

- The grade of A is awarded for excellence. An A student turns in all work consistently with very high standards of quality, creativity, and original thinking. This student also performs exceptionally in presentations and critiques.
- The grade of B is awarded to students who have turned in all work consistently with high quality standards. The work shows creative thinking, extra effort, and care in presentation. B students have demonstrated knowledge that surpasses the basic material and skills of the course.
- The grade of C is earned when all class work is turned in and the student has mastered the basic material and skills of the course. This student participated in class and demonstrated knowledge of the basic material and skills.
- The grade of D or F is given for work that is incomplete, late, and/or does not demonstrate mastery of the basic material and skills of the course.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (Students will be able to...)	Measurements (means of assessment for student learning outcomes listed in first column)
1. Demonstrate software proficiency in industry standard bitmap and vector graphics.	1. Midterm project
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles and elements of design and color theory.	2. Quizzes
3. Create vector files that can be used with a digital fabrication tool such as a vinyl cutter or laser cutter to build a design project.	3. Vector landscape maker project.
3. Create an effective page layout that incorporates principles of graphic design.	3. Final project
4. Demonstrate an ability to use text as a visual vehicle of communication design.	4. Final project

Below are the college's general education learning outcomes, the outcomes that checked in the left-hand column indicate goals that will be covered and assessed in this course.

	General Education Learning Outcomes	Measurements (means of assessment for student learning outcomes listed in first column)
	Communication Skills- Students will be able to write, read, listen and speak critically and effectively	
	Quantitative Reasoning: Students will be able to use quantitative skill and the concepts and methods of mathematics to solve problems.	
	Scientific Reasoning- Students will be able to apply the concepts and methods of the natural sciences	
	Social and Behavioral Science- Students will be able to apply the concepts and methods of the social sciences	
	Arts & Humanities- Students will be able to develop knowledge and understanding of the arts and literature through critiques of works of art, music, theatre and literature.	Brief essay or design project completed on the first and last day of class to show progress on material covered during the semester.
	Information & Technology Literacy- Students will be able to collect, evaluate and interpret information and effectively use information technologies.	
	Values- Students will be able to make informed choices based on an understanding of personal values, human diversity, multicultural awareness and social responsibility.	

**COURSE OUTLINE:** (Schedule is subject to change as needed - this includes individual needs to help accommodate students)

## **Weeks 1 – 6 - What is Graphic Design?**

Class introductions and our learning potentials together. Design Solutions: Strategy, Concept, Design, Execution & Production

- What does a graphic designer do?
- How is design different from art?
- Areas of specification in graphic design

Exploring the Design Process: Thumbnails, Roughs & Comps

### ***Assignment #1 – Elements & Principles (3 parts) Layout and Poster***

- Software: Photoshop overview - the interface and tools + what it is used for in the industry
- Managing Photoshop files across other software platforms

**Elements of Design:** Brainstorming, process, variations & avoiding cliché'

Line, Shape, Value, Color, Texture & Visual Flow. Portfolio Basics, examples & considerations

**Principles of Design:** Positive and Negative Space, Composition / Figure ground

Balance, Emphasis, Rhythm, Unity - Working with Raster software – Photoshop / scanning

Framing: cropping, bleeds, borders and margins

### ***Assignment #2 – Post Card Design - Layout, Composition & Assets***

**Layouts and Visual Relationships** - Using a Grid Format / Other Layout Formats - Contrast, Repetition, Alignment, Proximity.

Color Theory – The color wheel, making color choices - Primary color systems: RGB (additive) and CMYK (subtractive)

## **Weeks #7 –13:**

***Designing Posters – Vector Portraits, Vector Landscapes, Type & Typography, Branding,***

***Logos & Portfolios*** Integrating Concept with Visual Elements - Poster Design & Poster Design

History ***Assignment #3 - Vector art, Vector portraits & posters***

### **Layout and Arrangement**

- Emphasis
- Scale and placement
- Software: Illustrator overview - the interface and tools + what it is used for in the industry – Mastering the Pen tool and its transcendent abilities with other software applications.
- Managing Photoshop files in Illustrator
- Basics of the type tool in Illustrator

**Color & Type Continued** - Additive, Subtractive (RGB, CMYK) - Mood & Perception

#### ***Assignment #4 - Typography & Designing with Type***

- Terminals and decoration
- Typographic hierarchy
- Spacing and alignment
- Kerning and leading
- Choosing type
- Type and color / scale & weight

#### ***Assignment #5 - Logos, Icons, Branding & Letterforms***

Communication through products & services, promotional items, self-promotion, branding, branding culture & the Internet.

Choosing a final project subject – pulling it all together / portfolio experimentation and tutorials.

**Week 14 – Final Project work sessions**

**Week 15 - Final Presentations / Full Class Critique**

#### **Class Participation**

Participation in the academic activity of each course is a significant component of the learning process and plays a major role in determining overall student academic achievement. Academic activities may include, but are not limited to, attending class, submitting assignments, engaging in in-class or online activities, taking exams, and/or participating in group work. Each instructor has the right to establish their own class participation policy, and it is each student's responsibility to be familiar with and follow the participation policies for each course.

#### **BMCC Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has guides designed to help students to appropriately identify a cited work. The full policy can be found on BMCC's Web site, [www.bmcc.cuny.edu](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu). For further information on integrity and behavior, please consult the college bulletin (also available online).

#### **Gender-Inclusivity**

BMCC community members have the right to use and be referred to according to their preferred name, title, and/or personal pronouns. Everyone also has the right to use all spaces according to their self-identification, including restrooms and locker rooms. To learn more about how to change your preferred name and affirm your gender identity at CUNY (including requesting a new ID card and/or email address), go here: <https://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/student-affairs/lgbtq/>

Anyone who has experienced harassment related to gender or sexual identification, who needs assistance, or who wishes to file a complaint, can contact the Office of Compliance and Diversity: <https://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/about-bmcc/compliance-diversity/>.

## **FREE BMCC STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

BMCC is committed to the health and well-being of all students. It is common for everyone to seek assistance at some point in their life, and there are free and confidential services on campus that can help.

**Advocacy and Resource Center (ARC)** <https://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/student-affairs/arc/> room S230, 212-220-8195, [arc@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:arc@bmcc.cuny.edu). If you are having problems with food or housing insecurity, finances, health insurance or anything else that might get in the way of your studies at BMCC, contact the Advocacy and Resource Center (formerly Single Stop) for assistance. Please contact us at [arc@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:arc@bmcc.cuny.edu), call 212-220-8195, or come by the office at room S230. You may also contact the Office of Student Affairs, S350, 212-220-8130, [studentaffairs@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@bmcc.cuny.edu), for assistance.

**Counseling Center** [www.bmcc.cuny.edu/counseling](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/counseling), room S343, 212-220-8140, [counselingcenter@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@bmcc.cuny.edu). Counselors assist students in addressing psychological and adjustment issues (i.e., depression, anxiety, and relationships) and can help with stress, time management and more. Counselors are available for walk-in visits.

**Office of Compliance and Diversity** <https://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/about-bmcc/compliance-diversity>, room S701, 212-220-1236. BMCC is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive learning environment free of unlawful discrimination/harassment, including sexual harassment, where all students are treated fairly. For information about BMCC's policies and resources, or to request additional assistance in this area, please visit or call the office, or email [olevy@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:olevy@bmcc.cuny.edu), or [twade@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:twade@bmcc.cuny.edu). If you need immediate assistance, please contact BMCC Public safety at 212-220-8080.

**Office of Accessibility** [www.bmcc.cuny.edu/accessibility](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/accessibility), Students who need academic accommodations in connection with a disability must initiate the request with BMCC's Office of Accessibility (OA). Students need to register with the Office of Accessibility in order to officially disclose their disability status to the College and to determine eligibility for appropriate reasonable accommodations (including any prior IEPs or 504s). Please contact the OA at the start of the semester (or as soon as possible) to coordinate any accommodation request/s: [www.bmcc.cuny.edu/accessibility](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/accessibility), Room N360 (accessible entrance: 77 Harrison Street), 212-220- 8180, [accessibility@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:accessibility@bmcc.cuny.edu).