



Santa Reparata International School of Art
Course Syllabus

Semester: Spring 2019

Course Title: Illustration Studio: from the Verbal to Visual

SRISA Course Number:

Maryville Course Number:

Credits: 3, Contact Hours: 90

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Do different types of text and their meanings require different approaches for image making? Maybe. A variety of different texts will be assigned, each accompanied by a different image-making methodology. There will also be a variety of applications for the resulting images. Students will be able to explore a wide range of media, and image making. The goal is to assist students in understanding and developing their own approaches to this complex process. This course is appropriate for juniors in the Communication Design major.

2. CONTENT INTRODUCTION

Statement from the Professor

I am always searching for new forms of expression in my creative field, and I am frequently looking outside of Italy for inspiration. Most of the time New York City is a place of great inspiration. That's why I am particularly happy to share my experience and my creative process with you in order to help you in finding your own voice as an illustrator. Inspired by my Italian upbringing and the artists I admire, we will be exploring the interaction of inspiration and techniques and ways you can merge them into your own illustrations. We will practice how to find sources of inspiration, and we will cultivate that inspiration as a means to make something meaningful and unique that will help you translate the verbal world into a visual one.

In order to do that in this course, sometimes we will be going out on site and eventually we will meet other artists. I will introduce you to mine and their creative process. I will share with you what lies behind a final editorial or commercial graphic illustration work, and we will be getting to know each other and trying to practice ways to get to know who we are as artists. We will explore the roots of illustration as a means to try and better understand the meaning of what we do as illustrators, and then face the tasks and exercises as a means to further improve. You will do this by finding inspiration and resources mostly in what we have around us. We will see how the language of color is important to define who we are and what we are doing, and how to find colors that fit your artistic and editorial story. We will explore the power of basic shapes to communicate concepts and the power of shifting the meaning of some simple forms from what that form is to what the same form could be by adding our creativity to it.

Most illustration is in service of a verbal concept, typically inspired by a text. Most illustrators' approach to interpreting texts is intuitive and evolves over time. Using different applied outcomes – nonfiction and fiction illustrations, this studio will introduce different strategies for visualizing texts. By the conclusion of the semester students should have a coherent set of methodologies to draw upon when setting their communication goals. Students will write both analyses of assigned texts and be responsible for selecting the prompt for their projects from the assigned texts.

Structure and Expectations

There will be four projects assigned over the course. The projects will be based upon these categories: a work of non-fiction, fiction, poetry(music), and a product-related one. The projects will

be magazine articles, a book project, a selection of music releases, and an illustration series for the label of a product. Each project will require at least one illustration; others may involve multiple illustrations. Each project is open to the media of your choice. You should be well on the way toward a secure visual language and this is an opportunity to apply and expand your skills. Each project will ask you to read and think clearly about what you've read.

Set Your Communication Goals

Before you begin thinking visually about your illustration(s), you will write a *Communication Intent statement*. This statement will assist you in eliminating options and focus your thinking. It will also provide a guide for evaluating your progress and results. It is not a recipe, rather an organizational device.

Communication Intent Statement

The Communication intent statement: *a single simple sentence stating what the text is about* (what was the author's primary communication goal in writing this piece? In other words, its moral – its central point), this is not to be confused with its plot. When appropriate, list the author's primary, secondary, and tertiary communication goals. Perhaps list the ways in which the author tells the story (what literary devices are used). Make notes and sketches that explore how you can translate those literary devices into visual images. What is the central idea that must be communicated in each of your images, the secondary, and possibly, the tertiary? Listed below are some other aspects to consider (not all of these apply to all applications):

A Variety of Approaches

The *Episodic Narrative*: an image that addresses one key moment in a narrative – a traditional approach

The *Single Narrative*: summarizes the narrative with one image, e.g. take key moments in the narrative and use them to construct the image

The *Sequential Narrative*: multiple images used to tell the narrative, a classic movie poster, story board, or graphic novel approach

The *Illuminated Narrative*: symbolic synthesis of the narrative into a single image – a summarizing visual metaphor

The *Non Sequitur Narrative*: an image that has limited relationship to text – this could be a visual metaphor for the narrative, but less directly related

A Variety of Methods

Image faithfully describes text – a more literal approach Image contributes to text – respectful of text, with self-conscious goal of expanding text's meaning

Image is inspired by text – text provides starting point only

Vivify the action/scene described in the text in single or multiple images. Use your understanding of the text to communicate that meaning. Express an editorial stance about the content of the text. Use the text as an excuse to make an image.

Distill the text into a single quick communication. Express the emotional content in the text.

Do Your Research

Know the who, what, when, and where for sure, but also the time, temperature, and the why: the back & future story, motivations, and goals of the characters. This is not unlike a process utilized by actors, helping them better understand the character they are to become. This information is very helpful when trying to imagine how a character may stand or gesture, etc.

Choose Your Medium

What media is most appropriate for your communication goals? Or, is it how you employ your favorite media? Remember, formal elements also communicate. What is absent also communicates too. What scale is appropriate? What format (vertical or horizontal --- --- most of the time there's no choice)?

Design Your Message

Sketches help most of us explore the visual, and communicate the results of our research. Occasionally, the first or second thoughts are the strongest and best. One can only determine that by generating many more as proof. All projects will be approached as iterative problem solving exercises. If you begin an iterative process looking for the single correct answer you will likely fail. Do not self---

edit during an iterative process. Even a terrible idea can help generate a better idea if it's recorded. If left unrecorded, it is gone forever and cannot help you.

3. PREREQUISITES

You have already met the prerequisites for this course.

4. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

At the successful completion of this course you will be able to understand how closely related words and images are as well face the complexity of working in the illustration field as an artist and as a problem solver. Being able to use a variety of approaches and a variety of methods will greatly air your visual communication career.

5. REQUIRED MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

Materials necessary for this course are:

- - sketchbook(s)
- - Pen, pencils, crayons (whatever you feel more comfortable in your daily sketching)
- - Laptop
- - Camera (smartphone cameras are ok)

Recommended stores where to get the above listed materials are:

- - Zecchi, Via dello Studio 19, Firenze
- - Salvini Belle Arti, Via degli Alfani 111R

6. GRADING POLICY AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

20% Homework and creative projects

20% Mid-Term critique

20% Classroom participation and attendance

25% Final project

15% Special project (i.e.: portfolio, on-site sketch or photo, transfer photo)

Following **grading system** will be observed:

A	Excellent 4.0 (grade points awarded)	95% percentage of 100%
A-	3.7, (90% to 94%)	
B+	3.3 (87% to 89%)	
B	Above Average 3.0 (83% to 86%)	
B-	2.7 (80% to 82%)	
C+	2.3 (77% to 80%)	
C	Average 2.0 (73% to 76%)	
C-	1.7 (70% to 72%)	
D	Below Average 1.0 (60% to 69%)	
F	Failure 0.0 (59% and below)	
W	Withdrawal 0.0	

7. PLAGIARISM AND COPYING

SRISA severally condemns ignorant plagiarism and copying during examinations. Any student that makes use of words or ideas taken from another person's work without properly citing credit for the specific purpose of deceiving their professor will receive an automatic "F" on that assignment or exam. Should the offense be repeated, the student will receive an automatic "F" in the class. Students utilizing the strategy of appropriation in a work of visual art for political, religious or social reasons may do so. It is fundamental that students pursuing strategies of appropriation understand that in the United States *fair use* allows them to copy copyrighted material for a limited and "transformative" purpose. Given the complicated nature of how artists utilize appropriation in the 21st century, SRISA students are required to discuss ideas regarding fair use and copied imagery with their professors before turning in their assignment.

8. CRITIQUES

Critiques are friendly group discussion of each student's course work. They allow you to see your own work through the eyes of your peers and instructor, and also encourage you to develop critical insights about your work and the work of others. A critique is a review of what you know and your skill level. It is also a means for assisting further knowledge and skill development. A critique is a group learning experience. Each of you is personally responsible for helping everyone else's work to improve.

All outside assignments are due on the assigned date. If you do not have a project completed for the project's final critique when it is due, your grade for the project will be an F, and you will not have the opportunity to complete or rework your project. If you are confused about some aspect of the assignment you may ask me during or after class, or you may email me.

9. ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR POLICY

Students are required to attend all classes. If you miss class without an excused absence your grade will be lowered by one letter grade for each unexcused absence. If you are ill you should obtain a doctor's note in order to receive an excused absence. Missing more than four classes will result in an "F" on your transcript.

- Excused absences require a doctor's note or a written note from the Director.
- Tardiness: After 20 minutes into class time, students are considered absent.
- Students who leave 20 minutes before class time ends will be considered absent.
- Arriving in class unprepared to work is considered an unexcused absence.
- The use of cellular phones is prohibited during class time.
- The use of cell phones and iPods is prohibited in the darkroom at all times.
- Students are expected to participate in class, act responsibly, and behave properly while on the school premises.
- Classrooms are to be left in order and clean.
- Students must take care of equipment and materials and promptly report any damage and/or loss.

• No eating in class.

Each student is expected to arrive in class prepared to be involved in discussions. Students are expected to participate in class, act responsibly, and behave properly while on the school premises. Classrooms are to be left in order and clean. Students must take care of equipment and materials and promptly report any damage and/or loss.

During most classes we will be discussing work you have created outside of class. We will also spend significant time working on in class assignments or revisions of work you have done outside of class. You will arrive promptly and get your materials organized quickly. You will come to class prepared with all appropriate supplies. I strongly recommend you eat before class. Your cell phone is not welcomed in class and must be turned off before class begins. Headphones and portable music players are also not allowed during class. If we listen to music, we will listen as a group.

Being each meeting day a 7 hours long studio day, you will have 1 hour for your breakfast / snack / lunch, to be split as you prefer

10. SAMPLE COURSE CALENDAR

Welcome

Presentation of the course

Class Exercise (details will be given in class)

1st assignment: A Work of POETRY/MUSIC

Revision (1st assignment) Class

1st assignment finalized by end of the day

2nd assignment will be given before leaving class: A Work of NON FICTION

Revision (2nd assignment) Class

2nd assignment continues in class

Revision (2nd assignment) Class

2nd assignment finalized by end of the day

3rd assignment will be given before leaving class: A PRODUCT-RELATED Work

Revision (3rd assignment) Class

3rd assignment continues in class
revision (3rd assignment) / By appointment, Pandolfini Studio, 11.30 to 13.00

3rd assignment finalized by midday

MID TERM EXAMS

4th assignment will be given before leaving class: A Work of FICTION

BREAK

Revision (4th assignment) Class

MEET WITH AN ILLUSTRATOR 4th assignment continues

Revision (4th assignment) Class

MEET WITH AN ILLUSTRATOR 4th assignment continues

BOLOGNA CHILDREN BOOK FAIR

Revision (4th assignment) Class

MEET WITH AN ILLUSTRATOR 4th assignment continues

Revision (4th assignment) Class

4th assignment continues

4th assignment finalized

FINAL EXAMS

11. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

SRISA strives to foster an all-inclusive learning environment that best caters to its students' needs. While faculty frequently work one-on-one with students, there are some situations in which special accommodations are required. Should a student have any academic accommodations regarding test taking or otherwise, they must present an official letter from their home University to the SRISA Director within the first week of class stating the accommodations.

12. DISCLAIMER

This Syllabus may be amended as the course proceeds. You will be notified of any changes.