Masters in Design

Visual Communication

COURSES OF STUDY

IDC, IIT Bombay
M.Des in Visual Communication

The programme develops mature communications professionals who also have a deeper understanding of aesthetic aspects. In addition to finding solutions to communication needs, they also generate methodologies for solving communication problems. The emphasis is to shift from the traditional skills-driven intuitive design to creative problem solving, using appropriate media for effective communication. The students are given opportunities to learn new skills and to advance their level of understanding. The focus is on areas of unmet demand, such as projects that have social and educational relevance.
# Visual Communication Course Content - Semester 1

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
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# Visual Communication Elective Courses - Semester 1

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VC 601
Visual Language - Syntactics  0 0 4 6

• Study of Visual Language - critical study of visual elements, features and principles. Exploration and creation of complex and meta patterns.
• Relationship between syntactics, semantics and pragmatics. Viewpoints, point of reference and framing. Relationship of colour, form and meaning. Explorations in visual abstraction.
• Principles of visual dynamics and its analysis in 2 D. Concepts of visual structure and visual interest, visual analysis and refinement of visual representations.
• Spatial relationship, grids, compositions and layout in 2 and 3 dimensional space.
• Analysis of Aesthetics- the structure of Appearance. Form in nature, Exploration of visual images with analogies from nature.

Text/ References:
• Hoffman, Armin; Graphic design manual, Principles and Practice. Arthur Niggli Publisher, Multilingual edition. 2001
• Proctor, R.M.; The principles of pattern, Dover Publications, 1990
• Lauer, David; Design Basics, Wadsworth Publishing, 1999
• Wong, Wucius; Principles of Form and Design, Wiley Publications, 1993
• Frutiger, Adrian; Signs and Symbols: Their Design and Meaning by, Watson-Guptill Publications, 1998
• Itten, Johannes; The Art of Color: The Subjective Experience and Objective Rationale of Color, Wiley Publications,1997
• Kepes, Gyorgy; Language of Vision, Dover Publications, 1995
• Elam, Kimberly; Geometry of Design: Studies in Proportion and Composition, Princeton Architectural Press, 2001
• Lawlor, Robert; Sacred Geometry: Philosophy and Practice (Art and Imagination), Publisher: Thames & Hudson, 1989
• Steiner, Rudolf; Booth, David (Introduction); The Fourth Dimension: Sacred Geometry, Alchemy, and Mathematics, Publisher: Steiner Books, 2001
• Hall, Edward Twitchell; The Hidden Dimension, Publisher: Anchor; Reissue edition, 1990
• Bachelard, Gaston; Jolas, Maria (Translator); The Poetics of Space, Publisher: Beacon Press; Reprint edition, 1994
• Livio, Mario; The Golden Ratio: The Story of PHI, the World’s Most Astonishing Number, Publisher: Broadway, 2003

VC 607
Visual Design I  1.5 0 2 6

• Understanding of the factors that directly or indirectly influence the visual design problem. Theory and application of problem structuring methods used in design. Design methodology- Study in the phases of process from analysis through synthesis and evaluation. Program for investigation of problem. Developing questionnaires, interviewing users and selection of suitable techniques to study user behaviors and reactions. Understanding of users demands and manufacturing constraints.
• Documenting and interpreting of data and formulating conclusions. Role of creativity, role playing brain storming, metamorphic thinking and other methods of idea generation. Comparative study in other creative fields.
• Texts/References
• Kepes Gyorgy : Education of vision, Studio Vista, London, 1965
• Mckim Robert H : Experiences in visual thinking, Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., California, 1972
VC 609
Art, Design and Society I 2004

- Analysis of history of Design. Bauhaus, Ulm.
- Analysis of history of Design in India. Analysis of design in the context of India.
- Cultural studies. Discourse analysis.
- An Introduction to Theatre.
- An introduction to Documentary Films.
- Critical writing in Art, Design, Theatre and Film.
- An Introduction to Humanities and Social Sciences.
- Qualitative methods- ethnographic, historical, philosophical, case study, and interview.

Texts/References:
- Mario, Bussagli; Sivaramamurti, C.; 5000 Years of Art in India, L.N.Abrams, NY
- Eames, Charles and Ray; The India Report, NID, 1958
- Neil, Gershenfield; When Things Start to Think, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1999
- Gropius, Walter (Author); Pick, Frank (Introduction); Shand, P. Morton; The New Architecture and The Bauhaus, The MIT Press 1965
- Morris, William (Author); Kelvin, Norman (Editor); William Morris; on Art and Socialism, Dover Publications (August 9, 1999) ISBN-13: 978-0486409047
- Papanek, Victor; Design for the Real World, Thames and Hudson, London, 1995
- Meggs, Philip; A History of Graphic Design, John Wiley & Sons, 1998
- Trivedi, Kirti (ed.); Indian Symbology, IDC, 1987
- Raizman, David; History of Modern Design, Publisher: Prentice Hall, 2004
- Spitz, Rene; The Ulm School of Design: A View Behind the Foreground, Publisher: Edition Axel Menges, 2002
- Lupton, Ellen; Miller, J. Abbott (Editor); The ABC’s of Bauhaus, The Bauhaus and Design Theory, Publisher: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000

VC 611
Studies in Typography 2004

- Study of Typography. History, Classification, Anatomy and usage of various letterforms. Theoretical and applicable principles of letterforms.
- Expressive Typography. Compositions with type. Study of Indian language scripts. Calligraphic experiments in Indian Language scripts. Typography in different contexts like New media, Posters, Signages, Books, Mailers, Motion graphics etc. Study of grids and layouts.

Texts/References:
- Ruegg, Ruedi & Frohlich, Godi: Basic typography, ABC edition, Zurich.1972
- Ruder, Emil; Typography, a manual of Design.
- Schmid, Helmut: The Road to Basel.
- Shinkosha, Seibundo; Typography Today. IDEA special issue.
- Elam, Kimberly; Expressive Typography. The word as image.
• Bain, E.K; Display Typography.
• McLean, Ruari; Manual of typography.
  Thames and Hudson.
• Schmid, Helmut; The road to Basel. Helmut Schmid Design.
• Hurlburt, Allen; Grid: a modular system for the design and production of newspapers, magazines, and books. Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.
• Muller-Brockmann, Josef; Grid systems in graphic design. Arthur Niggli, Netherland, 1981

VC 603
Image Making and Representation I  0 0 4 6

• This course aims to provide a preface to different media and approach to image making and illustration.
• Exposure to representation through Art History and study of masters in Communication and Visual Arts.
• Exercises in Continuity and Style, Abstraction, Interpretation, Word/images, Symbols, and Book/Editorial Illustration.
• Study of graphic information processing, graphs, maps, charts etc.

Texts/Reference:
• Illustration Annual Magazine: The Black Book
• Illustration Annual Magazine: Illustration magazine
• Gentleman, David; India, Tara Press, 2005
• Midda, Sara; Sara Midda’s South of France: A Sketch book, Workman Publishing Company 1990

VC 605
Photo Communication  0 0 4 6

• Study of photography: Aperture, Shutter-Speed, Light, Composition.
• SLR Film Cameras and Darkroom Techniques.
• Digital Photography and Digital Printing.
• B/W Photography and Colour Photography.
• Creative Exploration.
• Critical perspectives in Photography.
• Techniques of photography-camera and dark room. Learning to use camera and lighting for studio photography. Techniques of slide making.
Texts / References:
- Sontag Susan, On Photography, Picador; 2001
### Visual Communication Course Content - Semester 2

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VC 606
Visual Design II  1.5 0 2 6

- Application of design methods to complex communication design tasks. The emphasis is on planned design projects in different visual areas and appropriate application of design methods.
- Visual Design methodology for various stages of design process – research, analysis, ideation, concepts, prototyping and evaluation.
- Using different methods for doing primary and secondary research, user studies and need finding.
- Methods of data analysis, cross mappings, insights and problem identification.
- Role of creativity, role playing, brain storming, body storming, metamorphic thinking and other methods of concept generation.
- Prototyping and Evaluation Methodologies.
- Presentation and documentation of the design task.
- The Vastu-sutra Upanishad methodology for generation of symbolic form: Setting intended meaning, Realization, Articulation of attributes, Mental visualization, Projection of the visualization on a semantic and hierarchic grid. Enhancement of the image. Form creation algorithm for the visualized image for its replication without loss.

Texts/References
- Jones, John Christopher; Design methods, Wiley, 1992
- Meggs, Phillip B.; Type and Image: the language of graphic Design, VNR, 1992
- Potter, Norman; What is a Designer: Things, Places, Messages, Princeton Architectural Press, 2002
- Marzano, Stefano; Creating Value by Design: Thoughts and Facts, Antique Collectors’ Club, 1999
- Rand, Paul; Design, Form, and Chaos, Yale University Press, 1993
- Fletcher, Alan; The Art of Looking Sideways, Phaidon Press, 2001
- Frutiger, Adrian; Signs and Symbols: Their Design and Meaning, Watson-Guptill Publications, 1998
- Boner Alice, Sadashiva Rath Sharma, Baumer Bettina; Vastusutra Upanishad, Motilal Banarasidass, 1986

VC 614
Art, Design and Society II  2 0 0 4

- Key issues in visual arts (painting and installation art, photography, films), performing arts, public art.
- Concepts and concerns, and discourse on contemporary arts practice.
- The course involves talks by visiting artists, writers, film-makers, theatre artists as well as site visits to organizations and institutions that support arts-based activities and education.

Texts/References
- Pal, Pratapaditya (ed. ); 2000: Reflections on the Arts in India, Marg, 2000
- Subramanyan K. G.; Moving Focus: Essays on Indian Art, Seagull Books, Kolkata, 2006
- ISBN Number : 81 7046 199 5
- Subramanyan K.G.; The Living Tradition,
VC 610
Reproduction Methods and Technology 0 0 4 6

- A study of printing technology. Introduction to all the major processes of printing. Influence of printing process on design.
- Discussions on the constraints and possibilities with each of the printing process.
- An outline of paper technology. Study of properties, finishes, features and uses of different types papers available in the country.
- Study of production methods of books, new papers, magazines etc.
- Study of packaging using different materials.
- Handling print projects through digital media.
- Digital format image manipulation, Colour correction, font management, colour proofing, pre flight checks. Innovations in print technology like C2P.

Texts/References
- Pipes, Alan. Production for Graphic Designers.
- Bann, David. The print production handbook.
- Sarkar, N.N. Art and Production. Sagar Pub.
- Faine, Brad. The complete guide to screen printing.
- Craig, James. Production for the graphic designer.

VC 654
Semantics & Communication Theory 1.5 0 2 6

- The course explores relationship between human information processing and design of messages.
- Introduction to the two brain theory, short term memory, chunking theory and their implications on human information processing. Human information processing strategies with emphasis on processing of visual information. Introduction to visual perception and Gestalt laws of organization. Introduction to information theory and their application to spatial and spatio-temporal message design.
- Concept of attention in perception. Relationship between message design and attention, supported by eye movement studies. Exploring relationships between the semantics and the structure messages.
- Course is supported by studio which uses these theories in development of visual messages.

Texts/References
- Kohler, W. Gestalt; Psychology, New American Library, New York, 1947, pp. 80-122
- Miller, G; The magical number seven, plus or minus two: some limits on our capacity for processing information, in “Readings-in perceptions”, ed. Wetheimer
VC 602
Image making and Representation II  0 0 4 6

- Study of moving image and audio. Art in motion.
- Exploration of advanced illustration techniques in 2D and 3D.
- Conceptualization and Story boarding.
- Designing for specific audiences.
- Experiments in Animation and New Media.
- Exercises in image manipulation and editing.

Texts/References
- Arnheim, Rudolph; Film as Art, University of California Press, 2006
- Tumminello, Wendy; Exploring Storyboarding (Design Exploration Series), CENGAGE Delmar Learning; 2004
- Williams, Richard; The Animator’s Survival Kit: A Manual of Methods, Principles, and Formulas for Classical, Computer, Games, Stop Motion, and Internet Animators, Faber and Faber, 2002

VC 618
Information Graphics  0 0 4 6

- Study of visual display of quantitative information, syntactic and semantic aspects of information graphics.
- Practical problem solving by conversions of abstract, Quantitative concepts into visual images.
- Study of charts, maps, diagrams, reconstruction graphics. Information graphics for new media and dynamic data.
- Exposure to information theory and its applications.
- Symbolization of concepts for information purposes.
- Application of information graphics in different contexts: Statistical information, procedural diagrams, reconstruction of events, timeline etc.

Texts / References
- Bertin, Jaques: Graphic information processing, Walter Degruyter.
- Tufte, Edward R; Envisioning Information. Graphis Press
- Tufte, Edward R; Visual Explanations-images
and quantities, evidence and narrative.
- Japan Creators’ Association, Diagraphics- The most complete collection of creative diagrams ever assembled.
- Holmes, Nigel; Designing pictorial symbols. Watson-Guptill Publications.
- Holmes, Nigel; Pictorial maps. Watson-Guptill Publications.
- Holmes, Nigel; Best in diagrammatic graphics. Rotovision
- Norman, Donald A; Memory and attention: an introduction to human information processing. John Wiley and Sons.
- Norman, Donald A; Design of everyday things. MIT Press.
- Norman, Donald A; Emotional design: why we love (or Hate) everyday things. Basic Books.

VC 620
Advanced Typography 0 0 4 6

- Development of typography as a discipline: an overview of historical, technical, and aesthetics issues. Typography for the print and the digital media. Effect of technology on changing practice of typography and the role of typographers.
- Typography as communication. Experimental typography and the need for experiments.
- Digital Typography: emerging directions and new possibilities.
- Typography for Indian languages and scripts. Issues of bi-lingual and multi-lingual typography.
- The course will be conducted through discussions, seminars and individual assignments in selected areas.

Texts / References:
- Friedl, Friedrich; Ott, Nicholas and Stein, Bernard; Typography-an encyclopedic survey of type design and techniques throughout history.
- Heller, Steven (ed): The education of a typographer.
- Rafaeli, Ari; Book Typography. Delaware: Oak Knoll Press 2005
- Heller, Steven and Meggs, Philip.B.; Texts on Type. Critical writings on Typography.

VC 624
Designing Interactive Experiences 0 0 4 6

- Interaction Design Process -it’s background, applications and technology.
- Methodology of design for the Interactive Medias and for User Experience.
- Understanding the design brief as part of an eco-system.
- Physical, Cognitive and Social Computing environments.
• Collaboratively design an interactive product or environment.

References
• Appadurai, Arjun; The Social Life of Things, Cambridge University Press, 1986
• Buxton, Bill; Sketching User Experiences: Getting the Design Right and the Right Design (Interactive Technologies), Morgan Kaufmann, 2007
• Laurel, Brenda; The Art of Human-Computer Interface Design, Publisher: Addison-Wesley Professional, 1990
• Shedroff, Nathan, Experience Design 1, New Riders, 2002 ISBN 0735710783

VC 626
Story and Narrative

• The objective of this course is to introduce students to the broad categories of Indian narratives, their structure and models with an emphasis on verbal and visual storytelling. Students will also explore and investigate relationship between narrative and narrative devices where the device or crafted object becomes an embodiment of the story, both transcending and retaining its own materiality. Through group and individual projects students will document and /or analyze such traditions that bring together narrative and 2D/3D visual devices within the framework of existing theories on Narrative and Indian Narratology.
• Categories of Indian Narratives
• Narrative Models
• Narrative Structures (Indian and Western)
• Time and Space in Narrative
• Verbal and Visual Narratives
• Modes of Visual Narrative
• Visual Devices and changing technology
• Folklore traditions
• Methods of documentation and analysis

References:
• Levi-Strauss, Claud; Myth and Meaning: Cracking
the Code of Culture, Schocken (March 14, 1995)
• Mckee, Robert; Story: Substance, Structure, Style and The Principles of Screenwriting, Publisher: Harper Entertainment; 1 edition (November 25, 1997)
• Jain, Jyotindra; Picture Showmen: Insights into the Narrative Tradition in Indian Art, Marg Publications; 1 edition (December 31, 1998)
• Campbell, Joseph (Author); Estes, Clarissa Pinkola (Introduction); The Hero with a Thousand Faces: Commemorative Edition by Publisher: Bollingen; Cmv edition (February 17, 2004)
### Visual Communication Course Content - Semester 3

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VC 611
Visual Ergonomics and Human Perception 1.5 0 2 6

- Investigation of human physical characteristics and limitations with respect to the environment as related to visual communications of text and graphics.
- Ergonomics as applied to visual-legibility studies. Use of eye movement recorder in visual analysis.
- Environmental conditions of illumination—study of figure and ground relationships.
- Ergonomics of readability issues with respect to static and dynamic text at short and long viewing distance. Ergonomics related to readability issues on display devices.
- Research methods in ergonomic data generation.
- Human Perception related to Visual design applications.

References
- Marie, Anne; Barry Seward; Visual Intelligence: Perception, Image, and Manipulation in Visual Communication, Publisher: State University of New York Press, 1997

VC 615
Indian Thoughts and Traditions 2 0 0 4

- Study on Indian thought and philosophy and its relation to visual communications.
- Meaning of our festivals, mythology, the nature of religious ceremonies and other cultural diversities.
- Study of various Indian visual symbols.
- Study of Indian patterns and colors.
- Discussion of Indian cultural identity and its interpretation through visual communications.
- Experiments to create design with inherent Indianess.

Text/References
- Iyer Bharatha K; Indian art-A short introduction, Taraporwala, Mumbai, 1982
- Gandhi, Indira; Eternal India, BIPublications, Mumbai, 1980
- Boner, Sharma Baumer; Vastusutra Upanishad, Motilal Banarasides, Delhi, 1982

VCP 601
Summer Project I 6 Credits

(Mid June to mid July)
- This is a summer project that can be done with an industry, professional design firm, an institution or an organization like an NGO. The objective of this project is to be part of the process where design is being implemented, contribute towards the process and learn from the situation. The project is meant to expose the student to design practices in his chosen area of interest. This project is expected to influence the degree project in many cases.

VCP 602
Design Project II 1 8 Credits

(Mid July to November end)
- An independent project with one of the following focus:
- Design project of student interest and / or faculty interest and / or industry project
- Re-design project that relooks at an existing problem or situation
• Research project, delving into methodological or pedagogic issues
• Exploration project, exploring application possibilities in a new technology or medium or variations

VC 619
Advanced Photography 0 0 4 6

• Documentary / Editorial Photography.
• Photoessays.
• Montage. Digital compositing.
• Photography as a Personal Language.
• Reflexive approaches.
• Photography and Art.
• Reading and writing about the image.
• A study of masters of photography.

Text/References

VC 627
Advanced Digital Video Communication 0 0 4 6

• Video as a tool for clarifying ideas, making observations, and experimentation.
• A study of classics.
• Writing narrative scripts.
• Linear and Nonlinear writing.
• Documentary filmmaking.

• Short Fiction.
• Film Theory.
• Avant garde movements in film making.

Text/References
• Ray Satyajit; Our Films, Their Films, Sangam Books Ltd, 2001
• Robert Stam; Film Theory: an introduction”, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000

VC 635
Studies in Human Computer Interaction 0 0 4 6

• Contextual Inquiry and other user studies techniques
• Analysis techniques, work modeling, affinity diagramming
• Human cognition and interaction design
• User models, personas and scenarios
• Prototyping interactive products
• Usability tests, heuristic evaluation and other evaluation techniques
• HCI in the Indian environment
• Recent advances in the field of HCI.

Text/References
• Kaufmann, Eadweard Muybridge, The Human Figure in Motion, Dover Publications, 1955
• Eadweard Muybridge, Animals in Motion, Dover Publications, 1957
• Robert Russett, Cecile Starr, Experimental Animation, Da Cappo, 1976.
• Peter Lord, Brian Sibley, Cracking Animation, Thames and Hudson, 1999
• Preston Blair, Cartoon Animation, Walter Foster, 1980

VC 637
Experimental Animation 0 0 4 6

• Experimenting and design explorations with various animation methods - like paint on glass, sand animation, puppet animation, drawing on film etc.
• Prerequisites:
• Animation basics- an awareness of the principles of classical animation, an understanding of the process of animation, an experience of animation exercises-walks, head turns, lip synch, special effects etc

VC 667
Visual Culture 1.5 0 2 6

• This course introduces students to the nature of images and the critical role that “looking” and “seeing” have for our society. Areas of inquiry include Popular culture, Indigenous imagery, Advertising, Fashion, Cinema, Photography, Print Media, Internet, Events such as ritual, spectacle or performance within their own familiar environment.
• Images as Signs
• Changing character of Media
• Images and Technology
• ‘Looking’ at the familiar with unfamiliar eyes
• Communities and Culture

• Global/Local representation
• Visual Displays
• Methods of Observation and documentation
• Methods of analysis and Interpretation
• Appropriation vs. Interpretation

References
• Richards, Asha; Pop Culture India!: Media, Arts, and Lifestyle (Popular Culture in the

## Visual Communication Course Content - Semester 4

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<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
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VC 622
Design Research-Seminar 0 0 4 6

- The course involves student researching in an area related to design and is expected to produce an insightful report or a paper on the topic. Students need to choose a topic suggested by a faculty member and work under faculty guidance. The work may involve primary and secondary research, creative exploration out alternatives, experimental set-ups and methodical documentation. Students are encouraged to explore new fields, materials and media, with a focus on analysis. The student is required to present a seminar on the topic at the end of the semester.

VCP 603
Design Project III Stage 1 12 Credits

- Duration: 3 months from December – end of February.
- This project could be an extension of the previous project (if the scope of the project justifies the extension) or it could be an independent project with one of the following focus:
  - Design project of student interest and/or faculty interest and/or industry project
  - Re-design project that relooks at an existing problem or situation
  - Research project, delving into methodological or pedagogic issues
  - Exploration project, exploring application possibilities in a new technology or medium or variations

- The evaluation of the Stage 1 of Project III is done internally with a panel appointed by the DPGC in consultation with the guide. The panel will consist of the guide and two other faculty members.

VCP 604
Design Project III Stage 2 24 Credits

- Duration: 2-4 months from March – end June.
- This project will be an extension of the project III and should include development of the final design concept. The defence presentations will be held during the month of April and time given till the end of June to complete the jury feedback, final drawings and finer detailing of the project.
- The evaluation of the Stage 2 of Project III is done by a panel of examiners appointed by DPGC. The panel will consist of external jury member along with an internal examiner, the guide and the chairman (A Professor or an Associate Professor from another Department of IIT Bombay)