

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DIVISION OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Graphic Design | Media Arts Program
Revision Date: 07-01-23
[Syllabus Statements](#)

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Course Number:	GDMA2595
Course Title:	Professional Design Practices
Prerequisite(s):	GDMA2575
Catalog Description:	In this course, students learn the professional practices, expectations, and standard, technical requirements required of qualified entry-level designers. Students will explore topics including client and design team relationships, maintaining schedules and managing budgets, navigating contracts, and pitching ideas. The intention of this course is to further students' training through real-world professional scenarios outside of the aesthetic and technical considerations of design work.
Credit Hours:	2.5
Class Hours:	30
Lab Hours:	23
Total Contact Hours:	53

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES: *Course will:*

- A. Explore the differences between working at a design studio, advertising agency, in-house design department, venturing out as a freelance designer and expectations as an entry-level designer.
- B. Discuss the ethical and logistical issues surrounding speculative work and copyright and fair use issues.
- C. Scrutinize the ways designers communicate with team members, superiors, and clients and demonstrate effective communication to strengthen relationships in-person, via email, and phone.
- D. Develop better ways to pitch ideas to a group and/or client.
- E. Discuss considerations for freelancing designers including: contracts, salary trends and methods of calculating pay, maintaining and balancing a project budget, methods for efficient time management.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- A. Student Learning Outcomes: *Student will be able to:*
 - 1. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of working at a design studio, advertising agency, in-house design department, or as a freelance designer.
 - 2. Summarize the types of work that an entry-level designer creates.
 - 3. Argue the ethical and logistical issues surrounding speculative work and fair use issues.
 - 4. Illustrate methods in which they can bolster positive working relationships and resolve issues with their clients and team members.
 - 5. Demonstrate effective professional communications with clients and colleagues.
 - 6. Analyze salary trends to assist in calculating freelance pay and formulate realistic expectations of entry-level pay.
 - 7. Create a budget and timeline for various projects and demonstrate methods in balancing that budget and meeting deadlines.

- 8. Demonstrate effective and persuasive techniques in mock professional pitches.
- 9. Compose and modify established contracts to create agreements with clients and describe their usage within the industry.
- B. General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs)
 - 1. GELO #6: Career and Life Skills
 - Outcome 1: Employ effective interpersonal and intrapersonal communication skills.

IV. CONTENT/TOPICAL OUTLINE (*course outline may provide more detailed information*)

- A. Selling your Ideas
 - 1. Exuding confidence and excitement
 - 2. How to build interest
 - 3. When good clients go bad (and what to do)
- B. Scheduling Your Work
 - 1. Better time management
 - 2. Tools to help schedule
 - 3. The deadline is everything
- C. The Job Hunt
 - 1. Studio vs. Agency vs. In-House vs. Freelance
 - 2. The dangers of spec work
 - 3. Keeping expectations realistic
- D. Creating Strong Client Relationships
 - 1. Treating the client like a customer
 - 2. How to lead your client to good decisions
 - 3. When good clients go bad (and what to do)
- E. Working in a team setting
 - 1. How to be a good team player
 - 2. How to handle bad team members
 - 3. Email vs. face-to-face
- F. Freelance Rates and Managing a Budget
 - 1. How to calculate a freelance rate
 - 2. Managing your project budget
- G. Contracts
 - 1. Understanding contracts
 - 2. How and when to use a contract
- H. Social Media Networking
 - 1. Networking online
 - 2. Promoting yourself professionally via social media

V. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Required Text(s): None
- B. Other Resources: Handouts: worksheets, tutorials, assignments, and projects

VI. METHODS OF PRESENTATION/INSTRUCTION

- A. Methods of presentation typically include a combination of the following:
 - 1. On-screen presentations, demonstrations, guided tutorials and lecture
 - 2. Worksheets, charts, tutorials, projects/assignments
 - 3. One-on-one teaching and assistance
 - 4. Team teaching
 - 5. In-class exercises and activities

6. Presentations by design professionals/employers
7. Videos
8. Field trips

VII. METHODS OF EVALUATION

- A. Methods of evaluation, although determined by the individual instructor, traditionally includes a combination of the following:
 1. Adherence of deadlines and completion of all assignments, exercises, worksheets, tests, quizzes, and tutorials and/or daily assessments.
 2. No late assignments will be accepted; no exception will be made. All assignments turned in past the scheduled deadline will result in a grade of failing (F) and will not be eligible for further revision. Please refer to the Course Information Document for attendance, submission, revision, extra credit, and missed exercises and quizzes policies.
 3. Students must submit their own work. Cheating on any assignment, exercise, tests, quizzes, tutorial, and/or daily assessment will result in a failure of that assignment with no possibility of revision (if applicable). Multiple instances will result in a failure of the course and may be grounds for disciplinary action or dismissal from the program.
 4. Compliance with all Policies. For all GDMA program policy documents, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/gdmapolicies>.
 5. Students must conduct themselves in a manner that is in consonance with the Professionalism requirements of GDMA courses, be adequately prepared for course work and discussion as well as actively participate in in-class activities and critiques. For the Professionalism requirement, visit <http://tinyurl.com/gdmapolicies>.

VIII. SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. Student must meet all of the following to receive a passing grade:
 1. Student must complete this course with a minimum course grade of “C” (70%).
 2. Students are expected to sign a Syllabus and Course Information Document Agreement and Anti-Plagiarism Agreement to represent their understanding of this information and the expectations within the course. For all GDMA program policy documents and anti-plagiarism information, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/gdmapolicies>
 3. It is the responsibility of the student to take notes on all lectures, tutorials, assignments, and exercises. You will not be given printed instructions for assignments. This is to emulate professional expectations within the design industry.
 4. Students are expected to assist in keeping all GDMA labs neat and orderly. Please pick up all scraps, waste materials, discarded printouts, etc. and place them in the recycling bins. Please promptly clean up all spills and messes on your desk spaces. Periodically and at the end of each term, students will be required to assist in cleaning the labs.
 5. Each student is required to complete all parts of this course regardless of prior knowledge or experience.
 6. For course specific policies please refer to the Course Information Document.