Tiffani Crossdale

Graphic Design Principles I - Course Experience

Entering a new course is bound to bring plenty of questions regarding what type of crucial elements a student will learn throughout the semester. Some students believed they were going to have hands-on experience with graphic arts, while others didn't have any specific expectations. As a studio, the members were exposed to the concepts of focal points, lines, 3D, patterns, and rhythm. Within due time, these students eventually grasp all concepts, such as tone and color. The most important part of these lessons is the amount of effort a designer puts into adapting to the materials given. Consistently practicing with the intention of putting out gracious effort is a sign of true dedication and commitment to their career.

Students aren't expected to understand everything immediately. However, if they believe that graphic design is their calling, the results should appear on the projects and revisions. For the first project was to create a focal point of a square or circle. The purpose of it was to display how well the focal point could control negative spaces, which determined whether or not the design would work. If the measurements were incorrect or the negative space overpowered the shape, an adjustment was needed. The second project followed a similar concept, except it controlled the direction of a line. Having a line's direction through a focal is a good example of how to attract their attention, considering that we read from left to right. By manipulating the eyes of the consumer, a design can hold their attention long enough for it to successfully show its purpose. The same method can be used for 3D perspective, which involves creating a focal point that travels off the paper, controlling the distance.

Pattern and rhythm were a new topic introduced to the studio. In order to establish a rhythm, a pattern is to be established initially so the variable may be identified. Patterns are created from making the same shape but in different sizes. For example, you can use a square and slice off a portion of the side, then created a significantly thinner square to identify pattern. For rhythm, the variable could be the space between the shapes. It can also be the shape itself, keeping the original space size. Without establishing a proper variable, consumers may not be able to distinguish the product from a pattern.

After acquiring knowledge on all of these topics, the concept of tone and color were next on the list. In order to fully understand color, it was necessary to start off with practicing how gray tones work. Black and white can change any color to cool them down or intensify the effect. Dark colors need a considerable amount of white to brighten up. Light colors, however, are very delicate. Even the slightest bit of black can darken it, and too much will make it completely dark. By producing a project based on gray tones before colors, it was easier to get a feel of controlling them with accuracy. It's a matter of trial of error, and eventually it'll be something natural to the designer. The same steps can be applied to monochromatic tones. Having a smooth transition between both tones will give an illusion that they're the same color with a slight shift in tone, whether it's seen from a distance or up close.

When working with full color, there's a number of combination that can be used to create an aesthetically appealing image. Warm colors blended with cooler colors is one way of doing it, while the alternative is using only one selection of the other. The main idea is to have all the colors harmonize with each other. If a group of colors don't seem to coexist to the point where the viewer will find them unappealing, adjustments are needed in order to make them sync. For example, a designer may decide to use purple, red, green, and yellow as the focal point. Initially, the soft value contrast might not be a success, but if the colors had a more pastel palette, they would most likely work. Red and purple by themselves are quite powerful, but if lighter colors were placed next to them, the eyes will immediately pick up the contrast between them. It's important to control each color so they won't overpower the others.

The purpose of absorbing all of these new concepts is to apply them once it's time to work on the field. Colors will become sensitive to the eyes, along with the smallest inconsistencies in measurements. Being able to pick up on such elements is necessary for becoming a successful designer. If there is something that needs improvement, it won't be an issue to correct because a designer will figure out a solution to make the design perfect. Everything is a step-by-step process for entering the design world. Despite how competitive it is, if someone has the knowledge to face the challenges that will test their abilities, the outcome is likely to be favorable for them.