

**ARTF 1301: Basic Design I**

**CRN: 14727**

**Fall 2025**

**Instructor: Irene A. O'Leary**

**Email: [iaoleary@utep.edu](mailto:iaoleary@utep.edu)**

**Office Hours: Office hours are by appointment only. Students may also email their questions directly to me during weekdays and I will respond as soon as possible.**

### **Course Description**

**Basic Design I** is a foundation level class structured for the needs of art majors who plan to pursue a career in art. Students are introduced to the visual elements and principles of design which consist of: point and line; shape and mass; texture; light; color; and space. The Principles of Design include: unity and variety; balance; emphasis and focal point; proportion and scale; movement, stability and rhythm. Lectures will include examples relative to course work, while critiques will be held for comparative evaluation and critical feedback regarding in-progress and finished designs.

Discussion will expand upon these topics to include include straight, curved and implied line; geometric and organic shapes; positive and negative space; approximate symmetry, symmetrical, asymmetrical and radial balance; illusion of depth; simulated and actual texture; and color theory. Students will be expected to apply these introductory concepts to create 2-dimensional visual compositions. Students are encouraged to keep a sketchbook as a tool for concept development.

**This course requires additional time to be spent outside of class hours for completion of homework assignments and in-class work.**

### **Course Objectives or Expected Learning Outcomes**

- Develop an understanding of the fundamental principles of design.
- Create properly composed, well balanced 2-dimensional designs using various materials.
- Explore various art movements and concepts through exposure to various artists.
- Effectively use visual elements and apply the principles of design to compositions.
- Acquire a basic knowledge of art terminology to express ideas.
- Develop good craftsmanship and work ethic to succeed in achieving the above stated goals.

### **Technology Requirements**

Supplementary content, materials and announcements may be posted to **Blackboard** through out the semester. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to a stable web browser, such as Google Chrome or Firefox.

## Course Assignments, Evaluation and Grading

Grade distribution, standards and criteria:

**Course Participation: 30%**

**Mid-term Portfolio: 35%**

**Final Portfolio: 35%**

### Course Participation includes:

- Development and execution of assignments during class meetings.
- Contribution and attendance for **in-progress, mid-term, and final portfolio critiques**.
- Projects made solely outside of class without approval from the instructor **will not be accepted**.
- Work removal and studio clean up at the end of the semester is required for your final grade.

### Evaluation for each project and final letter grade will be determined by the following factors:

- Understanding of conceptual ideas and application of techniques associated with each assignment.
- Presentation and physical condition of projects.
- Participation in group critiques and overall work ethic.
- Cumulative effort, improvement and quality.
- A = Excellent, B = Good, C = Average, D = Below Average, F = Failure

### Course Requirements: Critique Participation, Midterm and Final Portfolio

**In-progress critiques** - Students will be divided into small groups and will present work for peer feedback and discussion. Deadlines and works to be evaluated will be announced by the instructor and is dependent on the pace of the class.

**Midterm Critique / Portfolio** - Students will present all assignments created since the beginning of the semester for instructor feedback and peer discussion. Portfolios of student work will be collected by the instructor and returned with a mid-term grade and written evaluation.

**Final Critique / Portfolio** - Students will present all artwork created since mid-term for final evaluation, feedback and critique from the instructor and the class. Portfolios will **not** be collected for the final. Final course grades will be posted online to student records with notification through e-mail.

\*Weekly assignments are considered progress towards your mid-term and final critique/ portfolio.

### Illness Precautions

**Please stay home if you have symptoms of a communicable illness.** If you are feeling unwell and can't attend class, it is your responsibility to check Blackboard **first** for updates in regard to new assignments and lectures, or ask a fellow student for updates. The instructor will **only** respond to documented emergencies & illnesses, requested office hour appointments, and questions about assignments.

### Excused Absences and Course Drop Policy

According to UTEP Catalog, "At the discretion of the instructor, a student can be dropped from a course because of excessive absences or lack of effort. A grade of "W" will be assigned before

the course drop deadline and a grade of “F” after the course drop deadline.” **See Policies and Regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excused absences.**

In general, I will **not** drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the [Registrar’s Office](#) to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an “F” for the course.

- Entering class late and leaving early is disruptive and unacceptable standard. Make an effort to attend class on time and remain in class the entire time.
- Each student is permitted 4 absences during the semester without penalty.
- **After 4 unexcused absences it is the student’s responsibility to provide documentation for further absences or contact the Registrar’s Office to initiate the drop process.**

#### **Class Conduct:**

- Students may listen to music at a low volume with headphones during class time as long as it does not disturb other students. Music must be turned off during lectures, demos, and critiques.
- Cell phones and tablets- **NO Netflix, Hulu, Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok) Youtube, Twitch, etc. during class time, as it can be counter productive.** Calls on cell phones can be made for emergencies or during break time.
- Guests are not permitted at any time during class. You are expected to remain in class rather than step-out and visit with guests during class time.
- There will be a 15 min. break in the middle of class for restroom breaks, snacks, and stretching.
- Studio safety- Some aspects of using certain tools can be hazardous if proper precautions are not taken. Safety procedures will be explained throughout the semester.
- Cleanliness - You are required to clean up your work area when you are finished working in the studio. Please put all of your tools, materials, papers, etc away in your lockers and wipe down your table area.
- Work Removal- Finished works must be removed by the date set by the instructor of this course, and is part of your final grade. All works left in the studio after the date announced will be disposed.

#### **Late Policy**

Late and make-up work are only afforded in the case of an excused absence by arrangement and approval of the instructor.

#### **Incompletes, Withdrawals, Pass/Fail**

- Incompletes or “I” grades will be considered for students completing satisfactory or better work and having serious legitimate situations beyond their control requiring additional time to complete the course requirements. All “I” grades are at the discretion of the instructor and the approval of the Department Chair.
- This is a grade based course and is not available for audit or pass/fail options.

## Accommodations Policy

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students who become pregnant may also request reasonable accommodations, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and University policy. Accommodations that constitute undue hardship are not reasonable. To make a request, please register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact CASS at 915-747-5148, email them at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

## Scholastic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution \(OSCCR\)](#) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

## Guidance on Artificial Intelligence

### AI prohibited

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#), [Midjourney](#), or [DALL-E](#), is **not allowed** for assignments in this class. Each student is expected to use critical and creative thinking skills to complete tasks and not rely on computer-generated ideas. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

## Course Resources: Where you can go for assistance

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Please refer to the QR code below for a listing of campus resources.



## Required Materials

**Studio Supplies Provided by UTEP** (will be distributed throughout the semester):

Sheets of Blick Studio Bristol Smooth Paper, 19"x24"  
Elmer's Rubber Cement  
Basics Acrylic Set of 6 Assorted 4oz tubes  
Blick Construction Paper - 12" x 18", Scotch Gray sheets  
Blick Construction Paper - 12" x 18", Black sheets  
Crescent No. 99 Cold Press Illustration Board - 15" x 20" sheets

**Additional supplies needed** (students will obtain these on their own):

Bristol Paper Pad ( at least 9" x 12" or 11" x 14")  
Sketchbook (11" x 14" or 8" x 12" recommended)  
Illustration Mat Board (1-2 sheets) - 20" x 30"  
Cutting surface – self-healing cutting mat 18" x 24"  
Utility knife (for cutting mat board)  
X-acto knife with blades  
24" or 36" metal ruler  
Black Sharpie Markers (medium, fine ultra fine)  
Metal Ruler – 24" or 36" (wood is not acceptable!)  
Drawing Pencils & Erasers – (a small variety such as 5H, HB, 2B, 6B)  
Rubber Cement Eraser or Gum Eraser  
Palette & Container for Water (for color / paint projects)  
Drafting Tape or Masking Tape (blue one works best)

**\*Additional supplies may be needed.** Supplies may be available at: The Art Center, Hobby Lobby, Michaels, etc. **Online stores:** Utrecht, DickBlick Art Materials, Amazon

## COURSE SCHEDULE

\*This schedule may be subject to change according to the needs and pace of the class.

Week 1-2: Syllabus / Demo / Elements and Principles of Design  
Week 3-4: Composition/ Picture Analysis/ **In-progress critique #1**  
Week 5-6: Shape Relationships / Depth / Value  
Week 7-8: **Mid-term critique/ Portfolios due**  
Week 9-10: Color Theory / Invented Shapes  
Week 11-12: **In-progress critique #2**  
Week 13-14: Final Project Ideation and Development  
Week 15-16: **Final Critique / Studio clean up**

**ARTF 1301 Basic Design I** syllabus acknowledgement and course contract acceptance.

I have received and reviewed the attached syllabus. I have had the opportunity to e-mail questions for clarification and I understand and agree to the conditions of this syllabus.

Course #: **ARTF 1301/ CRN #14727**

Semester Date: Fall 2025

Name (print)

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Signature

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UTEP Student ID # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_