



The University of Texas at El Paso
Basic Design I
Syllabus, Spring 2026

Course Information	Instructor Information
ARTF 1301: Basic Design I CRN: 23855 Term: Spring 2026 Course Location: Fox Fine Arts Center – Room A463 Meeting Day and Time: TR 9:00 - 11:50 am	Instructor: Eddy Escobar Lara Office Location: FOXA 355 Office Hours: TR 12:00 -1:00 pm E-mail: eescobarlara@utep.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Basic Design I is a foundational course which introduces students to the fundamental principles and elements of visual design with a focus on developing two-dimensional projects and compositions. Through a series of lectures, critiques, and hands-on assignments, students will explore the fundamental elements of art, including point and line, shape and mass, color, texture, light, and space. Also, the students will learn and explore the principles of design which are the fundamental guidelines that shape the creation of visually appealing and effective compositions. These principles include balance, proportion, emphasis, movement, pattern, unity, and contrast. The course will emphasize the development of critical thinking, creativity, experimentation, risk-taking, problem-solving skills, and iteration in the design process.

KEY TOPICS

•Visual Elements of Art

Students will explore the fundamental elements of art, including line, shape, color, texture, and composition.

•Two-Dimensional Design

Students will develop skills in creating effective two-dimensional compositions using various materials.

•Design Principles

Students will learn to apply design principles, such as unity, contrast, and hierarchy, to create visually appealing and effective designs.

•Critiques and Feedback

Students will participate in regular critiques and feedback sessions, where they will receive guidance and support from the instructor and their peers.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Understanding the fundamental principles of design.
- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills through two-dimensional design projects and critiques.
- Apply design principles to create effective visual communications.
- Experiment with different materials and techniques to cultivate creative expression.
- Develop a portfolio of design showcasing technical skill and artistic growth.

LECTURE AND CRITIQUE FORMAT

Lectures will provide students with information on design principles, visual elements, and best practices in design. Also, lectures will teach art history, movements, and contemporary design artists and techniques. Critiques will offer students the opportunity to receive feedback on their work, discuss challenges and successes, and learn from their peers.

Lectures and critiques are fundamental practices to develop communication skills, conceptualize the work, and to learn the terminology and theory to talk about visual art in a professional manner.

ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS

Students will complete a series of assignments and projects that will challenge them to apply design principles and visual elements in creative and innovative ways. These projects will include:

- **Design exercises:** Students will complete exercises that focus on specific design elements.
- **Composition projects:** Students will create two-dimensional compositions that demonstrate their understanding of balance, proportion, and negative space.
- **Final project:** Students will complete a final project that showcases their skills, craftsmanship, concepts, terminology, development, and knowledge in design.

By the end of this course, students will have developed a strong foundation in the principles and elements of design, as well as the skills and craftsmanship to create successful art works.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This is a studio lab course, meaning we will be most of the time working in class. We will have critiques on each of the assignments. Sometimes you will need to work outside of class time in order to finish by the critique deadline. Students are encouraged to participate in class critiques and to complete the assignments on time.

COURSE EVALUATION

- First Review/Midterm: 35%
- Second Review/Final Critique: 45%
- Sketchbook and Participation: 20%

Course participation includes:

- Development and execution of assignments during class meetings.
- Contribution and attendance for the critiques and the 2 reviews.
- Assignments completed mostly outside of the class won't be accepted.
- Work removal and clean-up at the end of each class.

A: excellent **B:** good **C:** average **D:** below average **F:** unsatisfactory

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Regular attendance and punctuality is always required. You must arrive in class on time and remain the entire time. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. Students with excessive tardiness and/or absences will fail the course.

Attendance in class is essential to learning the skills of design. A record of your attendance will be kept during the semester. Students are allowed three unexcused absences during the semester without penalty. After the third unexcused absence, your final grade will lower one letter regardless of performance. At this point, the student must consider dropping the course and retaking it in another time when fully committed.

If you come to class unprepared (with no material) and/or not work during class is regarded as an unexcused absent. Excused absences include documented illness, death in the immediate family, and UTEP- related academic requirement. E-mail me with anticipation if you have an excused absence.

Tardies

Coming to class late or leaving early is not acceptable. Every 2 tardiness (no more than 10 minutes late) or leaving class early will count as an unexcused absence.

Behavior in the Classroom

- Respect to your professor and classmates is fundamental. Any disrespectful behavior will have negative consequences and may affect your grade.
- You must clean-up at the end of each class to keep the classroom in optimal conditions.
- The use of cell phones is not allowed unless prior authorization of the professor.
- Listening to music is only allowed with headphones while working in assignments. No listening to music during

critiques, discussions, presentations or instruction.

- It is prohibited the use of social media and texting during class.

APR 2nd Spring Drop/Withdrawal deadline

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Sketchbook 8" x 12" (or bigger)
- Black Permanent Markers (from ultra-fine to medium)
- Cutting Mat 18" x 24"
- X-ACTO Knife with replacement blades
- Metal ruler 24"
- Palette for mixing paint and water container
- Drawing pencils, eraser and pencil sharpener
- 12 piece Set of Colored Pencils (the brand is up to you)
- Art bin or box for supplies
- 2 spray paint bottles (2 different colors)
- 1 Glue Stick
- Scissors
- Portfolio 14" x 17" or bigger

SEMESTER CALENDAR

Week 1 (Jan 20-23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus and supplies • Introduction to Design Principles • Exercise 1- Line and Shape Exploration <p>Create a composition using different types of lines to convey a specific emotion or mood.</p>
Week 2 (Jan 26-30)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 1- Line and Shape Exploration (workday) <p>Critique</p>
Week 3 (Feb 2-6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 2- Positive and Negative Space <p>Create a composition that effectively uses negative space to create a sense of simplicity, elegance and balance.</p>
Week 4 (Feb 9-13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 2- Positive and Negative Space (workday) <p>Critique</p>
Week 5 (Feb 16-20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 3: Color Theory <p>Create a triptych using 3 different color studies.</p>
Week 6 (Feb 23-27)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 3: Color Theory (workday) <p>Critique</p>
Week 7 (Mar 2-6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 4: Stencil Art <p>Keep exploring color theory with one of the most popular contemporary art techniques: stencil.</p>
Week 8 (Mar 9-13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 4: Stencil Art (workday) <p>Critique</p>
Week 9 (Mar 16-20)	SPRING BREAK
Week 10 (Mar 23-27)	•First Review/Midterm
Week 11 (Mar 30- Apr 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 5: Poster Design <p>Create a poster that demonstrates balance, harmony and unity, using different visual elements.</p>
Week 12 (Apr 6-10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 5: Poster Design (workday) <p>Critique</p>
Week 13 (Apr 13-17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 6: Surrealism

	Create a design inspired in one of the most intriguing and unique artistic movements of the 20 th century: Surrealism. Brief Critique
Week 14 (Apr 20-24)	• Exercise 7: Brand Design Final project which incorporates all the principles and elements of Design.
Week 15 (Apr 27-May 1)	• Exercise 7: Brand Design (workday)
Week 16 (May 4-7)	• Exercise 7: Brand Design (workday) • Final Critique
Week 17 (May 11-15)	• Final Individual Meeting

UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS

Cheating/Plagiarism: Cheating is unethical and not acceptable. Plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper without crediting the source of that information or wording; it is also unacceptable. Do not submit work under your name that you did not do yourself. You may not submit work for this class that you did for another class. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy. Refer to [hnp://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/](http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/) for further information.

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, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

Basic Design I syllabus acknowledgement and course contract acceptance:

I have received and reviewed the attached syllabus and I understand and agree to the conditions of this syllabus.

ARTF 1301/ CRN: 23855

Semester Date: Spring 2026

Name (print) _____

Signature _____

UTEP Student ID # _____ - _____ - _____