

PLATO Course Graphic Design and Illustration, Semester A

Course Overview

This one-semester course is intended as a practical, hands-on guide to help you understand graphic design concepts, graphic image creation, and image manipulation. This course has 14 lessons organized into 4 units, plus 4 Unit Activities. Each lesson contains one or more Lesson Activities.

This course covers careers you can pursue in graphic design. It also covers training and skills required for a graphic designer. In addition, this course describes how to create images using color and typography and how to manipulate images. It also guides you how to create images using design elements and principles. Finally, this course covers copyright laws and ethics related to the use of graphic design.

You will submit the Unit Activity documents to your teacher, and you will grade your work on the Lesson Activities by comparing them with the given sample responses. The Unit Activities (submitted to the teacher) and the Lesson Activities (self-checked) are the major components of this course. There are other assessment components, namely the mastery test questions that feature along with the lesson; the pre- and post-test questions that come at the beginning and end of the unit, respectively; and an end-of-semester test. All of these tests are a combination of simple multiple-choice questions and technology enhanced (TE) questions.

Course Goals

This course will help you meet the following goals:

- Create images demonstrating design elements and principles.
- Evaluate the skills necessary for a graphic design career and how to demonstrate them.
- Communicate how to perform basic hardware installations.
- Apply graph design skills such as color-balancing techniques, manipulating an image, and using design layouts.
- Perform image editing, such as adjusting hue, saturation, contrast, and brightness.
- Apply creativity and design elements to graphic design products.

Prerequisite Skills

PLATO Course Graphic Design and Illustration, Semester A has a recommended prerequisite course, PLATO Course Principles of Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications. In addition, these fundamental skills will be helpful:

- the ability to visualize and apply creativity and innovation

- general familiarity with the writing process and following guidelines

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Perform basic operations on a computer.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of the general skills required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

PLATO Course Graphic Design and Illustration, Semester A is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- notebook
- computer with an Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent
- free online tools available for graphic design
- scanner
- printer

Course Pacing Guide

This course description and pacing guide is intended to help you stay on schedule with your work. Note that your course teacher may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class.

Course Components and Grading Rubric

The table gives a breakdown of the weight for each component in the course. Weight represents the percentage of the total score coming from each activity.

Course Components	Count	Weight
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Course Components	Count	Weight
Pretest. Pretests are optional assessments, typically designed for credit recovery use. If a student shows mastery of a lesson's objective, the student may be automatically exempted from that lesson in the upcoming unit. Typically, teachers do not choose to employ exemptive pretests for first-time credit courses. Pretests are not included as a component of the student's final grade.	4	0%
Module. Each module in this course contains an interactive tutorial and an associated mastery test. Tutorials may include one or more Lesson Activities that constitute tasks associated with the tutorial. The module score comes from a student's score on the mastery test.	14	20%
Discussion. Online discussions allow for higher-order thinking about terminal objectives. An online threaded discussion mirrors the educational experience of a classroom discussion. Teachers can initiate a discussion by asking a complex, open-ended question. Students can engage in the discussion by responding both to the question and to the thoughts of others. Each unit in a course has one predefined discussion topic; teachers may add more discussion topics.	4	20%
Unit Activity. Unit Activities are at the end of a unit and constitute one or more small tasks. Their purpose is to deepen understanding of key unit concepts and tie them together. Each Unit Activity includes a simple rubric. The teacher versions include both a rubric and modeled sample answers. Unit Activities are teacher graded.	4	20%
Posttest. The posttest appears at the end of the unit and mirrors the pretest in structure, content, and complexity.	4	20%
End of Semester Test. The end of semester test (EOS) appears at the end of the course. Students are delivered a few items from every tutorial in the course in order to assess the major course objectives.	1	20%
Total	31	100%

*Teachers may manually adjust these weights if desired, per district grading requirements.

Unit 1: History and Careers

Summary

In this unit, you will describe graphic design and how it evolved. You will describe careers in graphic design and multimedia. In addition, you will identify and assess the training and skills required for a graphic designer.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 1	Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation <i>Review the Plato Student Orientation and Course Syllabus at the beginning of this course.</i>	Course Orientation
4 days: 2–5	History of Graphic Design <i>Describe the evolution of graphic design.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 6–9	Careers in Graphic Design <i>Describe careers in graphic design and create a résumé.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 10–13	Training and Skills <i>Identify and assess training and skills required for a graphic designer.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 14	Para Jumble	Game
6 days: 15–20	Unit Activity/ Threaded Discussion —Unit 1 <i>Identify the skills, responsibilities, and the hardware graphic designers use in their careers.</i>	Unit Activity
1 day: 21	Post-test—Unit 1	Assessment

Unit 2: Creating Images

Summary

In this unit, you will describe the types of digital images and graphic design tools. You will describe how universal symbols are used. Additionally, you will describe color concepts and apply color-balancing techniques to images. Finally, you will describe the effects of typography on a digital image.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 22–25	Digital Image Concepts and Basic Tools <i>Describe digital image concepts and use the basic tools of graphic design software.</i>	Lesson

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 26–29	Creating Basic Shapes and Universal Symbols <i>Describe how universal symbols are used.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 30–33	Applying Color <i>Describe the properties of color and apply color-balancing techniques.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 34–37	Typography <i>Describe the effects of typography on a digital image.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 38	Space Jumble	Game
5 days: 39–43	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 2 <i>Use graphic design tools and techniques to create a wallpaper image for a laptop or desktop computer.</i>	Unit Activity
1 day: 44	Post-test—Unit 2	Assessment

Unit 3: Image Manipulation and Copyright Laws

Summary

In this unit, you will describe how to apply image manipulation and rendering techniques on a digital image. You will also describe how to organize and store digital images. Finally, you will describe laws and ethics related to graphic design.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 45–48	Basic Manipulation Tools and Rendering Techniques <i>Describe image manipulation and rendering techniques on a digital image.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 49–52	Storing Images <i>Describe how to organize and store images.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 53–56	Copyright Laws and Fair Use <i>Describe laws and ethics related to graphic design.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 57	Para Jumble	Game
6 days: 58–63	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 3 <i>Use image editing tools and graphic design skills to create and edit images.</i>	Unit Activity

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 64	Post-test—Unit 3	Assessment

Unit 4: Principles of Design, Perspective, and Printing

Summary

In this unit, you will create images using elements of design. You will also create a layout design using design principles. In addition, you will describe how to create perspective images. Finally, you will describe the digital printing process.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 65–68	Elements of Design <i>Create images using the elements of design.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 69–72	Principles of Design <i>Create a layout design using the design principles (emphasis, readability, balance, rhythm, and unity).</i>	Lesson
4 days: 73–76	Perspective <i>Describe how to create one-point and two-point perspective images.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 77–80	Digital Printing <i>Describe the digital printing process.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 81	Thwack-A-Mole	Game
6 days: 82–87	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 4 <i>Use principles of design to create several design layouts and a two-point perspective Rubik's cube.</i>	Unit Activity
1 day: 88	Post-test—Unit 4	Assessment
1 day: 89	Semester Review	
1 day: 90	End-of-Semester Test	Assessment

Course Map

You will achieve course level objectives by completing each lesson's instruction, assignments, and assessments. For a detailed look at how the materials meet these objectives, review the [course map for Semester A](#).