

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Title	Course Code	Semester	Course Hour/Week		Credit	ECTS
Visual Language and Culture	VCDE 203	III	Theory 3	Practice 0	3	5
Course Type	Compulsory Courses	Department Elective	Faculty Elective	University Elective	CoHE (YÖK) Compulsory	Other
	YES	-	-	-	-	-
Level of Course	Associate Degree (Short Cycle)		Undergraduate (First Cycle)		Graduate/ Doctoral (Second /Third Cycle)	
	-		YES		-	

Language of Instruction	English
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Course Instructor(s)	Dr. Ali Çağan Uzman	E-mail : ali.uzman@arucad.edu.tr Office:
Course Objectives	The main purpose of the course is to introduce visual language in the context of art, media and communication. The course will help the student to perceive visuals as texts and vice a versa. In this course students will be thought how to decode and analyze visual texts as well as how to communicate effectively trough visual discourse and the knowledge of sign and symbols.	

Course Learning Outcomes	Students will able to:	Teaching Methods	Evaluation Methods
	Describe core theories of visual language, semiotics, and visual rhetoric; explain how images function as texts.	Lecture	Midterm Project
	Identify and classify cultural symbols/rituals; compile an annotated moodboard showing denotation/connotation.	Project-Based Learning	Midterm Project

	Plan and develop a logotype/mark and basic typographic hierarchy; apply spacing/kerning and pairing principles.	Project-Based Learning	Midterm Project
	Select and justify color palettes with attention to legibility/contrast and cultural association; test accessibility.	Project-Based Learning	Final Project
	Design compliant label architectures and packaging variants; organize copy to meet legal constraints; produce shelf-test mockups.	Project-Based Learning	Final Project
	Synthesize a coherent visual system across poster, social, and motion assets; localize for different markets; present work professionally in a final deck.	Project-Based Learning	Final Project

Course Content	The theories of the visual language will be thought by series of lectures and will follow with asking students to give presentation on related topics. Each week course will be divided in to parts (theory, applied). In practical part students will either produce some ideas on subject or simple presentations according to what they have learned in theory section of the course.
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COURSE OUTLINE/SCHEDULE			
Week	Topic	Implementation (theory/practice)	Required Reading, Preliminary preparation
1	Orientation; course aims, outcomes, assessment. Project brief: select a culture + beverage category; define intent and research scope. • Practical: submit culture choice + 100-word intent.	T/P	
2	Cultural elements inventory; identifying representative symbols, rituals, artifacts; moodboard practice. • Practical: annotated moodboard (12–16 images) with denotation/connotation notes.	T/P	Gordon, I.E. (2004). Theories of Visual Perception (1st ed.). Psychology Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203502259

3	Vector studies of cultural motifs; logo exploration across styles (logotype/monogram/emblem/symbol). • Practical: 20 thumbnail logos + 1 vector candidate.	T/P	Bateman, J. (2014). Text and Image: A Critical Introduction to the Visual/Verbal Divide (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315773971
4	Typography I — logotype terminology, letterform anatomy, spacing; pairing principles. • Practical: type audit; 6 logotype sketches using two families.	T/P	Olson, L. C., Finnegan, C. A. & Hope, D. S., Mar 2008, Visual Rhetoric: A Reader in Communication and American Culture. Olson, L. C., Finnegan, C. A. & Hope, D. S. (eds.). SAGE Publishing Barthes, R. (1993). Rhetoric of the Image. Chandler, D. (2022). Semiotics: the basics. Routledge.
5	Typography II — combination testing, hierarchy, optical adjustments; kerning practice. • Practical: pairing matrix + refined logotype (v1).	T/P	Chandler, D. (2022). Semiotics: The Basics (4th ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003155744
6	Color & Culture — palette strategy; contrast/legibility and cultural associations. • Practical: two palette options (HEX/RGB/CMYK) + contrast checks.	T/P	Barthes, R. (1977). Image-Music-Text. London: Fontana.
7	Project review + MIDTERM (written). • Practical: midterm packet (concept rationale, logo/logotype v1, type/palette decisions).	T/P	Cohen, D., & Anderson, S. (2020). A visual language (Second edition.). London ; Bloomsbury Visual Arts.
8	Label architecture & copy — hierarchy, legibility, and legal compliance for alcoholic beverages (mandatory warnings, ABV/volume, age restrictions, health disclaimers). • Practical: front/back label wireframes + compliant copy draft.	T/P	/
9	Packaging variants & mockups — SKU system and die-lines; shelf readability. • Practical: 2–3 SKU labels + mockups (shelf test).	T/P	Silverman, J., & Rader, D. (2018), The World is a Text: Writing About Visual and Popular Culture, Broadview Press
10	Key visual system — shapes, pattern, pictogram/illustration style; system rules. • Practical: two key-visual directions + style tile.	T/P	Chandler, D. (2022). Semiotics: the basics. Routledge.

11	Campaign touchpoints — poster system and social set; messaging consistency. • Practical: one poster + 3-tile carousel (v1).	T/P	Block, B. (2020). <i>The Visual Story: Creating the Visual Structure of Film, TV, and Digital Media</i> (3rd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315794839
12	Motion branding micro-system — logo reveal and attention guidance. • Practical: 5–10 s loop (logo/key-visual animation).	T/P	Bentkowska-Kafel, A., Cashen, T., & Gardiner, H. (Eds.) (2009). <i>Digital Visual Culture: Theory and Practice</i> . (Computers and the History of Art Series; Vol. Yearbook 2006, v. 3). Intellect.
13	Localization & market adaptation — home vs. export; language/script and symbol shifts. • Practical: localized label/poster pair + 5-line rationale.	T/P	McLuhan, M., & Fiore, Q. (1967). <i>The medium is the message</i> . New York, 123, 126-128.
14	Presentation & portfolio assembly — documentation, sequencing, narrative clarity. • Practical: 10–12 slide deck draft + two portfolio spreads.	T/P	Haselstein, U., Ostendorf, B., & Schneck, P. (2003). <i>Iconographies of power : the politics and poetics of visual representation</i> . Winter.
15	FINAL WEEK — Presentations & submission. • Practical: live pitch (6–8 min) + final deck and packaged files.	T/P	Potter, W. J. (2021). <i>Media literacy</i> (Tenth edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Required Course Material(s) / Reading(s)/ Text Book(s)	Barthes, R. (1977). <i>Image-Music-Text</i>. London: Fontana. Bateman, J. (2014). <i>Text and Image: A Critical Introduction to the Visual/Verbal Divide</i> (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315773971 Block, B. (2020). <i>The Visual Story: Creating the Visual Structure of Film, TV, and Digital Media</i> (3rd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315794839 Chandler, D. (2022). <i>Semiotics: the basics</i>. Routledge. Cohen, D., & Anderson, S. (2020). <i>A visual language</i> (Second edition.). London ; Bloomsbury Visual Arts. Gordon, I.E. (2004). <i>Theories of Visual Perception</i> (1st ed.). Psychology Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203502259 Haselstein, U., Ostendorf, B., & Schneck, P. (2003). <i>Iconographies of power : the politics and poetics of visual representation</i>. Winter. McLuhan, M., & Fiore, Q. (1967). <i>The medium is the message</i>. New York, 123, 126-128. Olson, L. C., Finnegan, C. A. & Hope, D. S., Mar 2008, <i>Visual Rhetoric: A Reader in Communication and American Culture</i>. Olson, L. C., Finnegan, C. A. & Hope, D. S. (eds.). SAGE Publishing Barthes, R. (1993). <i>Rhetoric of the Image</i>. Chandler, D. (2022). <i>Semiotics: the basics</i>. Routledge. Potter, W. J. (2021). <i>Media literacy</i> (Tenth edition). SAGE Publications, Inc. Silverman, J., & Rader, D. (2018), <i>The World is a Text: Writing About Visual</i>
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	and Popular Culture, Broadview Press
Recommended Course Material(s)/ Reading(s) /Other	

ASSESSMENT		
Learning Activities	NUMBER	WEIGHT in %
Mid-Term	1	40
Quiz	-	-
Assignment	-	-
Project	-	-
Field Study	-	-
Presentation / Seminar	-	-
Studio Practice	-	-
Other	-	-
Contribution of Final Examination/Final Project/ Dissertation to the Final Grade	1	60
TOTAL		100

	CONTRIBUTION OF COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES TO PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES	
	PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES	Level of Contribution (1- lowest/ 5- highest)

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Knows the historical development of the field of communication, basic concepts, theories and research methods.	X				
2	Knows the principles and elements of basic design.				X	
3	Knows the history, theories and theorists of visual communication.	X				
4	Knows advanced practical skills in various commercial and creative contexts, including graphic and audiovisual multimedia design.	X				
5	Knows national and international ethical rules, standards and legal documents on communication and visual communication design.				X	
6	Able to use the tools, methods and techniques and computer software required for visual communication design applications.	X				
7	Able to produce innovative and original works that reflect abstract and concrete concepts by emphasizing creativity			X		
8	Has the knowledge and skills to transform creative and innovative ideas into graphic, photographic, typographic, illustrative, 2 and 3-dimensional, animated and interactive visual expressions.	X				
9	Applies visual communication design techniques with design technologies in developing and changing media environments.			X		
10	Has the competence to create visuals with designs that emphasize aesthetics in design processes.	X				
11	Has the competence to define the problem, solve the problem, plan, manage the project and present in the design-based project development process.			X		
12	Has the ability to use research methods and techniques in the field of Visual Communication.		X			
13	Has the competence to research, plan, implement and report during the project phase.			X		
14	Has the competence to establish the connection between design and aesthetic values.		X			
15	Has the competence to interpret universal visual culture and associate the ties of symbols with universal visual culture.				X	
16	Has the competence to analyze, understand and interpret projects in the field of visual communication design with a critical and independent approach.				X	
17	Has the skills and competence to turn their designs into a portfolio document and present them.			X		
18	Knows how to integrate and use digital technologies and artificial intelligence-based/ supported design tools creatively and innovatively in visual communication design and production stages.			X		
19	Evaluates artificial intelligence applications in design studies with a critical approach in terms of aesthetics and originality, and uses them in accordance with ethical rules.		X			

ECTS / STUDENT WORKLOAD				
ACTIVITIES	NUMBER	UNIT	HOUR	TOTAL (WORKLOAD)
Course Teaching Hour (X weeks * total course hours)	14		3	42
Preliminary Preparation and self- study	14		2	28
Mid-Term	1		25	25
Quiz	-		-	-
Assignment	-		-	-
Project	-		-	-
Field Study	-		-	-
Presentation / Seminar	-		-	-
Studio Practice	-		-	-
Final Examination/ Final Project/ Dissertation	1		30	30
Other	-		-	-
TOTAL WORKLOAD				125
TOTAL WORKLOAD / 25				5
ECTS				5

ETHICAL RULES WITH REGARD TO THE COURSE

Plagiarism Disclaimer

Detected and undetected plagiarism is a serious offence at any time and it could have devastating effects on your degree result and future professional lives.

Plagiarism is easy to avoid if you make sure to identify and acknowledge your sources thoroughly and do not copy directly from visual examples, designs, or notes that have in turn been taken word for word from your sources.

	SDG 1: No Poverty	
	SDG 2: Zero Hunger	
	SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being	

	SDG 4: Quality Education	X
	SDG 5: Gender Equality	
	SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	
	SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	
	SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	
	SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	X
	SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	
	SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	
	SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	
	SDG 13: Climate Action	
	SDG 14: Life Below Water	
	SDG 15: Life on Land	
	SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	
	SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals	

ASSESSMENT DETAILS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Final Grades will be determined according to the Course Learning Activities and Final Examination/ Project/ Dissertation Assessment Details as below, and comply by the Education and Examination Regulation set forth by the University.

Throughout the course, students will learn theoretical base of the topic and they will be able to equip themselves with the practical know-how skills of Advertisement production. Also, students are expected to design a creative advertisement piece with the knowledge they have gained in the course.

During the class sessions, participation is very important input for learning process for the students. It is also vital to understand the effect of creativity input for the production process of advertisement.

Midterm Submission is based on section given prior to the midterm in which student are expected to follow the instructions of the assignment and each section has its own evaluation criterias which are mentioned to the students with the assignment.

Please beware that the class uses teams. Thus, submissions have to be made Printed and digitally.

PREPARED BY	Dr. Ali Çağın Uzman
UPDATED	15.10.2025
APPROVED	