ARKIN UNIVERSITY OF CREATIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION

VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN DEPARTMENT

FINAL PROJECT GUIDELINES

A. GENERAL FRAMEWORK

This guideline defines the scope, methodology, and evaluation criteria for all project work to be carried out within the scope of the Visual Communication Department's VCDE404 Final Project. The primary objective of the course is for students to develop an original, user-centred, and professional design project based on a theme or problem they have chosen over the course of a semester. Students are responsible not only for producing an end product but also for explaining the research, design decisions, process management, and implementation rationale behind this product within an academic framework.

The final project comprehensively incorporates the research, analysis, design, and production stages, in line with the multidisciplinary nature of the visual communication field. The process begins with conducting user research, defining the problem, and establishing a conceptual framework. The student then develops a concept based on the findings, makes visual and interactive design decisions, and gradually transforms these into a prototype. The prototype is tested in an iterative process ranging from low to high resolution and is developed based on feedback.

At the end of the term, the student compiles all the outputs they have achieved into a media package. This media package may include visual identity work, social media content, video productions, web or mobile prototypes, infographics, mock-ups, and other design elements that may vary depending on the nature of the project. The student presents the entire process in a report that meets academic standards and shares the project outputs with the Final Jury through a professional presentation.

B. PROJECT TYPES

Each student may develop an integrated project covering one or more of the following categories, depending on their area of interest and specialisation.

1. CORPORATE IDENTITY AND BRAND DESIGN PROJECTS

Students can prepare a comprehensive media package for a brand, organisation, NGO, event or digital platform.

Possible outputs:

Logo design

Corporate identity guidelines (colour, typography, usage areas)

Social media brand kits

Print media designs (posters, catalogues, brochures)

Digital advertising sets

Campaign strategy + media planning

Video presentation / advertising film

2. WEBSITE / MICROSITE / DIGITAL PLATFORM DESIGN

Can develop a web project based on student user research.

Possible outputs:

Information architecture (site map)

Wireframe

UI/UX design

Responsive web interfaces

Interactive prototype (Figma, XD)

Content strategy

Blog, newsroom, product showcase or campaign site

3. MOBILE APPLICATION & INTERACTIVE DESIGN PROJECTS

Interactive applications, one of the fundamental outputs of the Visual Communication field, can be developed.

Possible outputs:

User needs analysis

Personas and user scenarios

Complete UI design from the login screen to all flows

Prototyping and usability testing

Motion UI (micro-interactions)

4. DIGITAL MEDIA PROJECTS

Students can create a digital campaign for a brand, social awareness theme or event, using interactive narrative formats offered by visual communication technologies.

Possible outputs:

Campaign strategy

Target audience and positioning study

Social media content sets

Reels/TikTok content formats

Banner designs

Campaign landing page prototype

Digital media publishing plan

VR/AR

Interactive story platform

Web-based digital narrative

Multimedia documentary (photo + audio + video)

Interactive comic strip / motion comic

Script + storyboard + screen designs

Audience interaction flow

5. INFORMATION GRAPHICS (INFOGRAPHICS) & DATA VISUALISATION PROJECTS

Students can develop projects that present complex information in a visually effective manner.

Possible outputs:

Static infographics

Motion graphics (motion infographics)

Interactive data visualisation

Graphic sets for reports–presentations–campaigns

Data visualisation style guide

Infographic projects combine design + information architecture + storytelling.

6. GAMIFICATION, INTERACTIVE CONTENT AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA PROJECTS

Possible outputs:

Mini interactive games

Interactive content for educational purposes

Story designs offering user choices

Gamification solutions

UI/UX flows + prototypes

7. CONVENTIONAL PRINTING, WORK AND PRODUCT DESIGN

Students can produce projects related to artwork and product promotion and marketing through printing and traditional printing techniques.

Possible outputs:

Packaging

Label Design

Sticker Designs,

Brochure Designs,

Conventional Printing Design

Book Design

Students may choose one type or develop a combined integrated project.

C. PROJECT PROPOSAL

Within the first 7 weeks, the student presents a project proposal consisting of the following headings to the jury and receives feedback:

Project Title

Subject Description

Problem and Importance of the Project

Research and Analysis (Literature Review, Benchmark Analysis, SWOT, PEST Analyses)

Project Objective

Selected Design Method

Expected Outputs (Corporate Identity, Media Kit, Prototype, Video, etc.)

Moodboard & Style Guide

Preliminary Timeline

Initial Prototypes

D. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (After the Midterm Jury)

The project development process aims to systematically advance research, analysis, problem definition, and design decisions in line with the topic chosen by the student. These stages are carried out in parallel with the weekly flow of the course syllabus and ensure that the project is fundamentally robust, well-reasoned, and shaped to meet user needs.

1. Methods and Tools

In design-focused projects, methodology plays a critical role in accurately understanding user needs and developing solutions in stages. In this process, students adopt a systematic design approach that extends from research to prototyping. The methods and tools used both structure the creative process and ensure that the final product delivers a strong user experience.

Design Tools

User Research: Interviews, observation, user scenarios

Persona / Corporate Identity Creation

Application Flow

2. Implementation Phase

The project is implemented based on the insights gained during the research and planning phases. In this phase, students produce, test, and develop their first prototypes by concretising their ideas. Feedback loops are actively used to shape the design outputs to meet user needs. At the end of the process, the media package is completed and made ready for presentation. Depending on the type of project, the following outputs may be produced:

Visual identity

Logo/style guide

Social media designs

Video content

Mockup presentations

Web/mobile prototype

Campaign materials

Printed outputs

E. PRESENTATION AND JURY

Visa Jury Evaluation Criteria (40% of the total mark)

The visa stage is conducted to assess how well the student has substantiated their project idea and how prepared they are for the research and design process. The four main criteria listed below are used to measure the adequacy of the project's initial phase.

1. Clarity and Persuasiveness in Project Structure (25%)

In the visa presentation, the student is expected to convey the project topic, objective and scope in a clear, understandable and coherent manner. The reasons for choosing the project idea, the user or problem it focuses on, and the intended solution should be clearly stated. It is important that the presentation convincingly expresses the logic and feasibility of the project.

2. Reliability and Detail of Background Research (25%)

The student must present theoretical, sectoral or trend analyses supporting the project idea based on solid foundations. Literature reviews, examinations of current trends in the field of Visual Communication and similar projects must be based on reliable sources and be sufficiently in-depth. It should be clearly demonstrated how this research forms the basis for design decisions.

3. Originality of the Proposed Project Idea (25%)

The project is expected to have an innovative perspective, to stand out from previous work, and to make an original contribution to the field of Visual Communication. Originality may be evident in the choice of subject, approach, design vision, or solutions to be developed. The idea is evaluated not only on its novelty but also on how the student has developed it.

4. Visual Elaboration and Consistency in the Presentation (25%)

The student should use visual materials that support the project idea in an organised, consistent, and professional manner in the mid-term presentation. The way content such as mood boards, reference images, benchmark results, concept sketches, or flowcharts is integrated into the presentation determines the visual narrative power of the project. The overall design language of the presentation, use of colour and typography, information layout and flow are also evaluated in this context.

2. Final Jury (60% of the total mark)

The Final Jury assesses how well the student has completed the project developed throughout the term in line with the objectives set at the outset. The maturity of the design process, the professional quality of the resulting media package, the usability of the prototype, and the student's ability to present this work are the basic criteria. This assessment determines whether the project has reached a final-year level of quality in terms of both content and presentation.

1. Consistency of the Final Project with the Project Objectives Presented (25%)

This criterion assesses how consistent the final work is with the problem, objectives, and scope stated in the assessment phase. It is important that the project adheres to the user needs, design problem, and proposed solution initially presented, and that the improvements made during the process are logical, consistent, and justified. The student is expected to be able to explain why their project resulted in this manner and to clearly demonstrate the relationship between the design decisions and the objectives.

2. Creativity and Craftsmanship of the Completed Project (25%)

This criterion assesses the originality and innovative aspects of the project output, as well as the quality of the design implementation. Creativity is sought not only at the conceptual level,

but also in visual expression, form of interaction, conceptual approach, and problem-solving strategies. The craftsmanship level of the project is examined in terms of attention to detail, technical proficiency, compositional balance, typography, use of colour, visual harmony, and overall professionalism. The student is expected to demonstrate a high level of design skill.

3. Design Quality of the Media Package (25%)

The media package presented — for example, web/mobile interfaces, logo and corporate identity elements, social media designs, video content, infographics, mock-ups, etc. — should convey a holistic design language. There should be harmony between the visual identity and the digital interface or video content; the colours, typography, iconography and layout principles used should be applied consistently. In addition, the user-friendliness of the prototype, the logical progression of the flows and the suitability of the design for the target audience are evaluated under this criterion. The overall appearance of the media package should be of professional presentation quality.

4. Presentation Skills (25%)

In the final presentation, the student is expected to convey the project in a clear, organised, and persuasive manner. The fluency of the presentation, time management, effective use of visual materials, and strong emphasis on the critical points of the project will be evaluated. The student's ability to provide clear, consistent, and knowledgeable answers to the jury's questions is also an important part of this criterion. The presentation should not only cover the technical aspects of the project but also present the thinking and process behind the design decisions in a professional manner.

Compulsory Attendance Requirement: 70%

F. ETHICAL RULES

In their final projects, students are required to fully comply with the principles of academic integrity and design ethics. All content used in the project must be original, and the plagiarism rate, including content generated by artificial intelligence, cannot exceed 20%. If the student has used artificial intelligence tools, this use must be clearly and transparently stated in the project, and its rationale and scope must be explained. Under no circumstances can the use of artificial intelligence be intended to copy content or replace original design processes.

All user research conducted during the project process must be carried out in accordance with ethical principles. It is mandatory to obtain informed consent from participants, keep personal information confidential, and comply with the principle of anonymity. Users' names, faces, or personal information should not be shared without permission; user feedback should be reported as is, without alteration or manipulation. Fabricating data obtained during research, presenting untested processes as if they had been tested, or producing results based on fake participants is considered a serious ethical violation.

All visual elements, icons, videos, audio, mockups, or similar materials used in the project must comply with copyright laws. Content requiring a licence may not be used without permission. Materials not subject to copyright must be used with proper attribution in accordance with the relevant licence type. Students may not include designs, illustrations or brand elements

belonging to others in their project without permission. If the project is based on a real brand, organisation or individual, it must be stated that the work is a concept project for educational purposes and permission must be obtained from the organisation.

If photographs, videos or audio recordings of real people are to be used in the project, explicit permission must be obtained from the person and privacy principles must be respected. The content produced cannot contain language that is discriminatory, exclusionary, hateful, or violates social sensitivities in any way. If digital manipulation, such as mockups or representative images, is used, it must be clearly stated in the report that these do not reflect the actual product.

The student is responsible for documenting all stages of the design process in a transparent, accurate and ethical manner. In the event of a breach of ethical principles, the project may be rejected by the jury and the student may be deemed to have failed the course. Therefore, all students are expected to act in accordance with academic integrity and professional ethical standards throughout the final project process.

The student is responsible for the information contained in the following links:

https://arucad.edu.tr/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/26b.-A-STUDENT-GUIDE-TO-USING-AI-FOR-UNIVERSITY-WORK.pdf

https://arucad.edu.tr/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/26a.-ETHICS-GUIDE-OF-GENERATIVE-ARTIFICIAL-INTELLIGENCE-USE.pdf