

## Design Principles & Practices

Design 51-671 | Fall 2023 | Tuesday + Thursday | 10:00-11:50 am | MM 121

Bruce Hanington | MM 118 | hanington@cmu.edu

---

### Course Overview

The design profession is an exciting field with many unique features characterized by the people who design, what they do, when and where they work, and how they see the world. Transitioning into the design profession from other disciplines can be an intimidating and sometimes confusing experience, depending on your background and prior exposure to the field. This course is intended to provide you with a safe haven for discovery and asking questions. This applies whether you want to add design principles and practices as a complement to your existing credentials, to work more effectively with designers, or, to continue in your studies to become a full-fledged, successful designer. Through a variety of lectures, activities and discussions, this course will provide you with information and answers about what it means to be educated in design, and work within the profession.

### Here's what we'll do in this class:

<i>Because designers...</i>	<i>We will...</i>
Think visually	Sketch, draw, and rapidly visualize, making visual that which we often think of in other forms
Make things	Build some basic skills and confidence in desktop and hand-craft modeling, to prototype our ideas
Observe the world	Look around, hone our observational skills, collect, document, share and critique what we see around us
Design for people	Learn some basic information about research, and physical, cognitive, and emotional human factors
Work in teams	Learn about constructing teams, team dynamics and roles, working effectively and how to resolve conflict
Critique each other's work	Learn how to constructively critique the work of others, and accept critiques of our own work
Iterate on their work	Learn how to combine feedback and self-reflection to creatively evolve our ideas
Document their work	Learn how to image and write about our design work, for ourselves and others
Present themselves and their work	Learn and practice the art of storytelling, pitching, and presenting ourselves and our work
Write about things	Practice various writing techniques and analyze written output
Have diverse backgrounds	Assess our own personal and professional journeys to and through design, including future goals

### **Class Format and Organization**

Activities will vary, from lectures and discussions to hands-on exercises, to sharing, presenting, and critiquing work. You will also be required to complete a certain amount of assigned work outside of class time.

Throughout the experience of this class, you will pick up on several nuances of the design profession, for example, variations on the design process, design culture, and the language or “jargon” of design.

The hope of this class is that you will gain a more comprehensive toolkit and understanding of design than you currently have, and, critically important, that you are comfortable in a design environment for the remainder of your education, and careers ahead.

### **Readings**

There is no required textbook for this class. However, there will be assigned readings and recommended articles, links, and books for each section of the course, some of which may be provided by our guests. Likewise, if you find readings or resources you’d like to share with the class, your recommendations are welcome. Use this as an opportunity to begin building your design library.

### **Participation and Evaluation**

Evaluation will be based heavily on your attendance, attitude, and active participation in class. Aside from your positive engagement with the material and in-class activities, you will be graded based on the successful completion of assigned exercises and projects. Instructions and expectations for each assignment will be detailed separately. You will receive written feedback around mid-semester, and at the end of the semester.

### **Communication**

This class will foster an atmosphere of open dialog. You are encouraged to speak up and ask questions, since most inquiries are usually relevant to everyone. If you have questions that you would rather ask outside of class, please see me in person after class or email me. I may also use email to distribute important information to all of you, so please check email regularly.

### **Google Drive**

Please check the [Google Drive course folder](#) for any handouts and assignments, particularly if you have missed a class for any reason. This folder will also be utilized for uploaded readings, submitting assignments, and sharing work.

### **School of Design Syllabus**

Please refer to the common [School of Design syllabus](#) for important supplementary information regarding requirements and expectations that apply to this course.

### **Office Hours**

I do not maintain regular office hours. However, I am easily accessible by email, and maintain a reasonable open-door policy. You are encouraged to contact me if you’d like to schedule a time to meet, or stop by my office located at MM 118.