Autumn term   **Information design seminars**

MA Information Design 2015–16
Department of Typography & Graphic Communication
University of Reading
Tuesdays 09:00–10:30
Keith Tam

Seminars

Seminars are where different topics on information design are presented, discussed and debated. Each student will lead two seminars, where they present the topic based on assigned readings and share a paper with the class. Discussions will follow these presentations.

Presentation

Presentations will be 15 minutes. Prepare a verbal presentation illustrated by a series of slides. Aim to tell a story rather than simply regurgitating the points made by the authors. Organise the presentation into major themes and sub-themes, and get the main concepts across. You will not have enough time to get into great detail.

Paper

Prepare a short paper of around 1,000 words to accompany your presentation. Include citations and a bibliography, and illustrate with images, diagrams or tables if appropriate. The aim of the paper is to provide the detail that isn't possible in the presentation, as a standalone document, for your peers as reference material. Please do not read your paper out word for word in the presentation – this does not engage the audience.
Format: an A3 sheet folded in half, yielding four sides of A4

References

for preparing your presentations and papers

Tufte, Edward R (2006) *The cognitive style of PowerPoint: pitching out corrupts within*. Cheshire, Connecticut: Graphic Press

Mollerup, Per (2011) *PowerNotes: slide presentations reconsidered*. Swinburne, Australia: Swinburne University of Technology
http://researchbank.swinburne.edu.au/vital/access/services/Download/swin:21454/SOURCE2

Waller, Rob (1991) *Designing reports and presentations*. Surrey, UK: The Monotype Corporation http://www.robwaller.org/RepsPres.pdf

Schedule

week			
week	1	29 September	Introduction
	2	6 October	Definitions of information design
	3	13 October	Models for structuring complex information
	4	20 October	User-centred design research methods
	5	27 October	Graphic language and Isotype
	6	3 November	Enhancement week, no seminar
	7	10 November	7-minute presentation on essay topics
	8	17 November	Designing for reading 1
	9	24 November	Designing for reading 2
	10	1 December	7-minute presentation on dissertation topic ideas
	11	8 December	No seminar

Readings

Week 1   Introduction

Carliner, S (2000) 'Physical, cognitive, and affective: a three-part framework for information design' in *Technical Communication*, fourth quarter, 561–576

Week 2   Definitions of information design

What is information design? What skills and knowledge are required to practice as an information designer? What is the role of information design in contemporary society?

Frascara, J (2015) 'What is information design?' in Frascara, Jorge (ed.) *Information design as principled action*: *making information accessible, relevant, understandable, and usable*. Champaign, Illinois: Common Ground Publishing, 5–55

Dervin, B (2000) 'Chaos, order, and sense-making: a proposed theory for information design' in Jacobson, Robert (ed.) *Information design*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 36–57

Shedroff, N (2000) 'Information interaction design: a unified field theory of design' in Jacobson, Robert (ed.) *Information design*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 267–292
(This version might be slightly different: http://nathan.com/information-interaction-design-a-unified-field-theory-of-design/)

Stiff, P (2005) 'Some documents for a history of information design', in *Information Design Journal + Document Design* 13(3), 216–228

Week 3   Models for structuring complex information

How do the database and complex document models impact on how reading is done, how websites are structured and the future of publishing? How can these models be applied, what genres, and what are the future possibilities?

Murray, J H (2012) *Inventing the medium: principles of interaction design as a cultural practice*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press

Chapter 8: The database model: strategies for segmentation and juxtaposition of information 221, 223–251

Chapter 9: The structured document model: using standardized metadata to share knowledge 221, 253–287

Week 4   User-centred design research methods

What ethnographic or user-centred research methods are relevant to designers? How and at what stages can they be applied to design projects?

Kumar, V (2013) *101 design methods: a structured approach for driving innovation in your organization*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons

Wasson, C (2000) 'Ethnography in the field of design', in *Human Organization*, Vol. 59, No. 4, 377–388

Week 5   Graphic language and Isotype

How is graphic language classified and described? What are the different methods of symbolisation and how do they communicate?

Twyman, M L (1979) 'A Schema for the study of graphic language', in Kolers, P A et. al. (eds). *Processing of visual language*, Volume 1. New York: Plenum Press, 117–150

Twyman, M (1985) 'Using pictorial language: a discussion of the dimensions of the problem', in Duffy, T M and Waller, R, *Designing usable texts*. London: Academic Press 245–312

Neurath, O (1980) *International picture language*. Reading: Department of Typography & Graphic Communication, University of Reading

Neurath, M and Kinross, R (2009) *The transformer: principles of making Isotype charts*. London: Hyphen Press

Week 8   Designing for reading 1

What design considerations do we have to make to improve the access of a structured text for strategic (selective) reading? What evidence can we draw from reading research?

Waller, R H W (1982) 'Text as diagram: using typography to improve access and understanding', in D Jonassen (ed), *The technology of text*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications, 137–166 http://www.robwaller.org/waller-text-diagram.pdf

Waller R H W (1999), 'Making connections: typography layout and language', Proceedings of the 1999 Autumn Symposium, American Association for Artificial Intelligence http://www.robwaller.org/RobWaller_AAAI99.pdf

Week 9   Designing for reading 2

Schriver, K A (1997) *Dynamics in document design: creating texts for readers*. New York: John Wiley & Sons

Chapter 5: Seeing the text: the role of typography and space 249–359

Chapter 7: What document designers can learn from readers 443–495