

## Course Syllabus-ITLS 5230/6230

### BEGINNING PHOTOSHOP & GRAPHIC DESIGN

#### What will you need to take this class?

- Decent access to the internet – a good portion of the instruction is video-based.
- Distance Students - a gmail account so we can do a Google Hangout if needed. Your Aggiemail account is a Gmail account the gives you unlimited Google Drive storage!
- Distant Students - A Mac or Windows PC that can run Adobe Creative Cloud adequately, with Photoshop and Bridge installed. Face-to-face students can access this in EDUC 280 or the student open-access computer labs. *Please note:*

*Photoshop Elements will not work for this course!*



Snow Canyon Sunrise - Photo by Nathan Smith

#### **Course Goals:** I want to share my goals for facilitating this course for you:

- The class is a team! We're here to learn together, work together, and help each other become better Photoshop users and graphic designers. I want you to come away from the course with a network of peers you can communicate with long after the class is over, if you so choose.
- I want to give you flexibility in designing your own assignments that use the required skills. Choose to explore your own creative ideas as you create graphic design pieces. You'll design assignments that will end up in your personal portfolio, which is your final project for the course. Your portfolio can be shared with potential employers. I desire to give you the freedom to choose what to create, and yet at the same time, still learn the required skills needed for this course.
- I want to be a facilitator/mentor/team member for you as you work through your assignments. I will keep liberal office hours where you can visit with me in person, or you can contact me through the internet (Skype, Google Hangout, Canvas, etc.).
- I want to connect you with online community, mentors, and resources that will assist you far beyond the boundaries of this course.
- I want to provide you an engaging learning experience in the classroom and online.

## **Class Attendance:**

This is a blended course (having off campus students at a distance participating, as well as face-to-face instruction for students at the Logan campus). Class attendance or a weekly contact via Canvas or Google Hangout is required. Face-to-Face students, class time is a time you can ask and receive answers to questions you may have. (Online students can communicate with me through a Google Hangout or through Canvas.) We will focus on critiquing student assignments from the previous week (and learning design elements and principles in the process), on teaching an aspect of graphic design, and on teaching a Photoshop feature set.

**Grading:** Points will be assigned for the following:

- Assignments, Canvas discussions, and real world projects: Point system - graded on a rubric. Portfolio exhibit assignments and their associated design reflection/notes will be submitted by the assignment's due date. You will have the opportunity to adjust and re-design each piece as you gain new understandings and skills during the course, and the grade on the assignment will be revised to reflect the improvements. The focus is on learning - not grading! Each week, the class will reflect and critique on the design elements and principles of assignments turned in. You will have the opportunity to take what you've learned to improve any assignment you've submitted. However, you'll need to submit the assignment on time to take advantage of this option (see **Late Work** below).
- Class attendance or weekly contact (Canvas; Google Hangout): 5 Points each week.
- Tests: To be arranged.
- Completed Week 15 Portfolio: Up to 150 points.

Grades will be assigned based on the percentage of total points you've earned. **The instructor's evaluation of your effort in class and your improvement in design and Photoshop skills over the semester will also factor in to your final grade.** Point percentages break down as follows:

- 94-100% = A • 90-93% = A-
- 87-89% = B+ • 83-86% = B • 80-82% = B-
- 77-79% = C+ • 73-76% = C • 70-72% = C-
- 60-69% = D • Less than 60% = F

**Course Policies:** Course Fees: There is a course fee of \$75. The fee supports the hardware and software for the ITLS student computer lab. During the semester, you will have access to that lab and its software anytime the Education building is open to work on assignments and projects. From time to time there will be classes scheduled into the lab, such as our class, but other than those, you can use the lab anytime.

**Instructor Feedback/communication:** The best way to communicate with me is to either visit with me during office hours in the YETC, or to message me in Canvas. *I will use Canvas for announcements, gradebook, class discussions, assignment submission, etc., but most of my class content will be here at this website.* I can arrange with you to communicate via a Google Hangout as well.

**Student Feedback/communication:** Outside of class, I will communicate with you several ways, through Canvas, or a Google Hangout. Please take time to check Canvas often for messages, assignments, discussions, and more.

**Syllabus or Class Changes:** During the course of the class, you will be notified of any changes to the class syllabus by a message in Canvas. Changes to this syllabus *before* or *after* the course may occur without any notification. Please check back. Changes to a scheduled class or a class cancellation (because of illness, bad weather, natural disaster, etc) will be posted to the [Weekly Lessons section](#) above, and also a message in Canvas. Please check before class for any changes in plans. I suggest you bookmark this page in your browser.

**Submitting assignments and electronic files:** Instructions submitting each assignment will be given along with the assignment.

**Late work:** In the industry, it's critical that you meet your deadlines. In this class, late work will be accepted at only 50% of its value, except in extenuating circumstances such as incapacitating illness, death in the immediate family, etc. (similar to the "I Grade policy" below).

**Ethics and Honesty:** "Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to establish the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students.

**The Honor Pledge:** To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity." A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University."

**Plagiarism:** "Plagiarism includes knowingly "representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the

unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials." The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment, probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, and referral to psychological counseling."

Please take time to read through [Utah State University's Academic Honesty/Integrity Policy](#) - we will adhere to it in class. *In particular, the Photoshop assignments you turn in must be your own work. Sources of images that are not your own must be documented and credited. Using Photoshop brushes, gradients, actions, styles, etc., that are not your own must be documented and credited.*

**Students with Disabilities - The Americans with Disabilities Act states:**

"Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program. If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (797-2444), preferably during the first week of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor. In cooperation with the Disability Resource Center, course materials can be provided in alternative format, large print, audio, diskette, or Braille."

**Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy:** Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term 'extenuating' circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.



Logan River Walk II - photo by Nathan Smith

# IDEA Student Course Evaluation at Semester's End

## Verify or Select Discipline Code

This code is used to provide the disciplinary comparisons in the course report.  
Please confirm or select the Discipline Code for this course.

1305 Educational/Instructional Media Design

[Browse the full catalog of discipline codes.](#)

## OBJECTIVES

Using the scale provided, identify the relevance of each of the twelve objectives to this course. Your weighting of the objectives is very important because it describes the uniqueness of your course by defining its purposes and what students are supposed to learn. As a general rule, we recommend that you select no more than 3-5 objectives either as "Essential" or "Important," prioritizing what you want students to learn. The weighting system used to generate summary results in the IDEA report weighs Essential objectives "2," Important objectives "1," and Minor objectives "0."

M = Minor or No Importance  
I = Important  
E = Essential

	M	I	E	
1.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
2.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories
3.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Learning to <i>apply</i> course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
4.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course
5.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team
6.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Developing creative capacities (writing, inventing, designing, performing in art, music, drama, etc.)
7.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc)
8.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing
9.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems
10.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values
11.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Learning to <i>analyze</i> and <i>critically evaluate</i> ideas, arguments, and points of view
12.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers

I chose to teach this course for several reasons, even though it's not part of my job assignment...

I love working with our students at Utah State University. I like to get to know each one.

1. I love teaching. I love to see the smiles, and hear the "Wow!" when the concepts sink in. I love sharing and learning along with my students. I love giving you the opportunity to experience real world projects that are meaningful and relevant.

2. I love the challenge - it forces me to learn and improve my skills. I get to learn right alongside you.

One of the ways you can help me is to give thoughtful, honest feedback through the course evaluation process. I take your suggestions seriously, and use them to improve my course each time I have the opportunity to teach it. Each year's offering is different from the one I taught last, due in part to thoughtful feedback I received from my students last year. I particularly read through the written responses you give as part of the evaluation.

Please, take time to fill out the evaluation when you receive the email prompting you to do so for this course. Sometimes it's difficult to know how some of these broad IDEA objectives apply to a specific class like ours. Let me share my thoughts with you.

There are twelve objectives in IDEA that I've marked either (M) minor or no importance, (I) important, and (E) essential. The IDEA instructions to me were to pick 3-5 as important or essential, and mark all the rest as minor. I've followed those directions, but don't feel entirely comfortable with them. So, let me go through them with you so you understand why I marked them the way I did...

**Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends).** I marked this as minor because it doesn't apply much to a creative class.

1. **Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories.** I marked this as essential because I felt it was critical that you understand and be able to apply the principles of contrast, repetition, alignment, proximity, color theory and psychology, and typography to your creations in Photoshop.
2. **Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions).** I marked this as essential because this is where you demonstrate that you can actually apply the principles of design you've learned, and apply the skills you've learned using the tools in Photoshop. This is a major reason I give you opportunities in class to do real work for real clients.
3. **Develop specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professions in the field most closely related to this course.** I marked this as important. Many of you are in PR and marketing, or Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences. These Photoshop skills you've learned are essential to using the tool effectively. The principles you've learned are essential as you apply them in your field of study.
4. **Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team.** I marked this of minor or of no importance. Although I think its critical that you are a team player, I felt that this needn't be a focus of this particular course.
5. **Developing creative capacities (writing, inventing, designing, performing in art, music, drama, etc.)** I marked this as essential, because creativity is so important to the process of design. I have tried to inspire you through sharing

creative ideas in my Pinterest boards, in making suggestions on your work, in doing class critiques.

6. **Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.)** I marked this a minor for the evaluation because of the limit IDEA suggested. I believe most creative efforts build upon the shoulders of other creative efforts. I have tried to teach you to look at others' works for ideas. The material has also focused on the cultural meanings of color in design.
7. **Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing.** I marked this a minor for the evaluation because of the limit IDEA suggested. In reality - it is important. I have tried to have you learn to feel what feels right or wrong with an image or graphic - and then demonstrate that skill in your e-portfolio reflections on the design of your assignments. This skill of being able to express yourself will be a critical one for success in life.
8. **Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions and solving problems.** I marked this a minor for the evaluation because of the limit IDEA suggested. I have shared many examples of resources that are available to you as you continue your life-long learning process. I have shown you Lynda.com, Pinterest, Deviantart, YouTube tutorials, and more. As I have put together your class website, I have linked to many resources to help build your toolbox of them.
9. **Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values.** I marked this as minor importance. Not that it's not important - it is. I just felt that this was not a primary objective of this course.
10. **Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.** I marked this a minor for the evaluation because of the limit IDEA suggested. It is important, however. That's one reason we've spent time in most of our classes asking you to critique class assignments with me.
11. **Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers.** I marked this as minor for the evaluation because of the limit IDEA suggested. It's very important to me, however. That is why I start each class by asking, "What questions do you have for me?" It's also why I keep very open office hours for you. I hope to get you enthused and excited about Photoshop and design, to climb out of the "traditional" box that college courses usually are, to give you opportunities to do some real life projects such as the GearUP and College of Education work you've done. I hope I've inspired you to continue. I hope I got you excited about Photoshop and graphic design. I hope you felt that this was one class that was really worth it to you personally. If you feel that way - I've been successful.

Anyway, I would sincerely appreciate your thoughtful feedback on the class. I haven't seen the side of the IDEA evaluations that you see, but I hope there is a comment box where you can actually give me feedback on how I did for you.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the evaluation.

Sincerely,  
Nathan Smith, Instructor - ITLS 5230/6230