



Course Prefix/Number: GDES 490
Course Title: Capstone
Core Course
Class Meeting Times: MW 3:30 – 4:45

Instructor: Mr. Nadim Matta
Office Location: G 322
Office Phone: 3621
Email: nmatta@auk.edu.kw
Office Hours: T 11:00 – 12:00

Instructional Modality: In Person
Class Location: G 219

AUK Mission Statement:

The American University of Kuwait is a liberal arts institution dedicated to teaching, learning, and scholarship. The University offers programs that provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for lifelong learning and professional success. AUK enriches society by fostering an environment that encourages critical thinking, effective communication, personal growth, service, and leadership.

Department/College Mission Statement:

The Art and Graphic Design Department degree program offers a balance of theory and practice in the art and science of visual communication. The program cultivates cultural and aesthetic sensibilities while emphasizing critical thinking, analysis, and problem-solving through the teaching of design history, methodology, and technologies to produce designers capable of producing meaningful designs in a diverse global community.

Catalog Course Description:

The Capstone course is designed to teach GDES students how to visualize the complex intersection between personal voice, conceptual understanding, and the use of research for a graphic design exhibition. The course is largely self-directed, and students are expected to select and investigate a graphic design topic using design as a means to present their findings.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Students will be able to use the result of literature review to inform their topic and to guide their project specific research.
2. Students create specific 2D, 3D and digital deliverables based on their research, and with definition of their creative goal in mind.
3. Students consult with other faculty, industry professionals and others as needed for Their project.
4. Students are required to pass through a series of check points. First check point is with the professor of record, the second and the third checkpoint are with other department faculty.
5. Students prepare the defense of their capstone project by writing critical analysis of the formal and conceptual aspects of their design, which then becomes the basis for their visual, oral, and written presentation.

Students will design, install, present and defend their capstone project in an assigned place for capstone exhibition.

Course Delivery/Methodology:

For this course we will be meeting in person on campus, and material will be presented through lectures, and projects. All course materials will be posted on Moodle, which can be accessed at the course link. All assignments must also be submitted through Moodle. You will be completing different evaluations for this course as detailed below. To successfully complete this course, you must actively participate in class, present the projects on time and deliver the required materials for research, process and finished output by the posted due dates and times.

Required Textbook/Required Readings:

Leonard, Neil and Ambrose, Gavin. Basics of Graphic Design 02: Design Research. London, Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2012 ISBN 978-1-350-16752-0

Davis, Douglas. Creative Strategy and the Business of Design. Blue Ash, OH, HOW Books, 2016 ISBN-13: 978-1-4403-4155-7

Recommended/Supplemental Readings:

The Designer as Author by Steven Mccarthy
 Understanding Methods of Design by Bruce Hanington and Bella Martin
 Alan Fletcher, The Art of Looking Sideways,
 1st Edition, Phaidon Press. 2001
 Ellen Lupton, Jennifer Cole Phillips, Graphic Design The New Basics,
 1st Edition, Princeton Architectural Press. 2008.
 Ellen Lupton, Abbott Miller, Design Writing Research, Writing on Graphic Design, Phaidon Press Limited,1996.
 Edward Tufte, Envisioning Information, Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press, 1990.Ian Noble, Russell Bestley, Visual Research: An Introduction to Research Methodologies in Graphic Design, AVA Publishing (UK) Ltd., 2005.

Additional Books and Resources

1. Stop Stealing Sheep & find out how type works by Erik Spiekermann
2. Thinking with Type by Ellen Lupton
3. Grid systems by Kimberly Elam
4. The complete manual of Typography by James Felici
5. Designing with type by James Craig

Evaluations and Grading:

Evaluation Type	Weight
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Research	20%
Classroom activities	15%
Sketchbook	15%
Design Work, Minimum Requirements (Logo and Identity Elements / One 3 Dimensional Element / Two Digital Elements /Two 2 Dimensional Elements / Sketchbook / Exhibit Sketch / Style Guide and Process Book	40%
Exhibition	10%
Total	100%

The Research - 20% Research/Analysis/Process: Did the student research the subject matter and explore more than one solution in the planning stage? Did the student follow all steps identified in the project directions and show work at all critiques?

The research project consists of one final research paper. The first oral presentation should inform us of the creative goal, breadth of your research thus far, a visual mood board and literature review.

The second oral presentation should inform us of project specific research, the deliverables along with the identification and definition of the principles and elements of graphic design and how utilized in work to reach creative goal.

The third oral presentation will combine six central components of the research paper: (1) a clear and concise creative goal; (2) a literature review; (3) a statement defining creative goal, (4) the conceptualization and meaning of your project; (5) images of the designs supporting the creative goal; and (6) the process taken to fulfill the creative goal.

Classroom Activities - 15% Individual and group activities will be assigned throughout the semester.

Sketchbook - 15% A process book is a record of your thinking and design process. It must be brought to every class. You will do thumbnail sketches of project ideas take notes and paste in handouts. It should include your writing, research, design investigations, successes and failures-in short, it should document how you got from point A to point Z in seventeen weeks (including all of your steps, even abandoned topics). You should work on the process book in tandem with your projects. It needs to be in chronological order and spiral bound). Your sketchbook needs to tell the story of your project process and will be examined and graded periodically throughout the course. The sketchbook is graded on neatness, completeness, and the demonstration of the process of idea development, research, type/image studies, concept development, quantity and quality of sketches with more than just one idea explored.

Design Work - 40% Concept: Did the student solve the creative problem? Is the message clear and effective? Did the student challenge himself/herself?

Design and Execution: Are the design principles and elements used effectively? Is there a clear visual hierarchy? Are color and type choices appropriate for the subject matter and audience?

Exhibition 10% Exhibit Presentation & Craftsmanship: Did the

student present his or her design to the class on the due date? Did the student clearly present his/her objectives to the class during critique? Is the project free of spelling errors/typos? Is there an overall attention to detail?

The exhibition is not just a pin up of your design work. It is to be an original 3-D design, a creative presentation of your thesis. A date will be provided to you for the installation of your semester's work. You are expected to professionally and creatively exhibit the project in support your creative goal.

Final Course Submissions

1. Research Paper defending your creative goal.
2. Designed projects supporting creative goal
3. USB of all project components included for exhibit
4. Exhibition of work on expected date
5. Book highlighting your research, creative goal, and design work. (Prepare two)

NOTE: In the CAPSTONE course there are 'CHECKPOINTS' every three/four weeks, should you fail to meet the checkpoint requirements you will not be able to continue to the exhibition stage and this will endanger your passing and/or graduating. Cheating will result in an "F" on the project. You are to be the sole author, artist, designer, creator

THE GRADING PROCESS: FOUR MAJOR CHECKPOINTS AND EXHIBITION

Note that the minimum requirement for a student to exhibit is achieving a "C" or better in each Checkpoint. All Checkpoints are graded by rubric.

• **First checkpoint—1 and two above [April 1 / 6]**

A 60 days review before you go ahead with the exhibit. The review takes place during the mid semester review. This process is assessed in front of GDES faculty members.

Student must present everything. printed and digital

logo / identity elements / one digital element / 3 items of 2D elements / 1 three - dimensional element. Process book / style guide.

• **Second checkpoint—3 above [May 1 / 4]**

Students must present all work during pre-jury review. This meeting will take place two weeks prior to initial set up. At this meeting, concept, ideation, direction is polished and you are working on printing your final design. Those who are behind will not be able to go beyond this stage. You must present your design as it would be displayed in the exhibition. Printed to size and prototype of final forms must be developed and presented at this review. You will not proceed with the exhibition if you do not have work to present and if the work is not adequate for the exhibition.

Student must present everything in actual size. printed and digital

logo / identity elements / one digital element / 3 items of 2D elements / 1 three - dimensional element / exhibition space ideas. Process book / style guide.

• **All work finished, ready to exhibit. [May 14 / 18]**

All receipts must be turned for all costs related to the project (and attached to the student's own budget and estimates)

• **The Capstone Exhibition opening [May 20 / 27 TENTATIVE TO BE CONFIRMED]**

AUK Official Grading Scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage	University Points
A	94-100	4.0
A-	90-93	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	84-86	3.0

B-	80-83	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	74-76	2.0
C-	70-73	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	64-66	1.0
D-	60-63	0.7
F	0-59	0.0

AUK Attendance Policy:

Any student who misses more than 15% of class sessions of any course during a semester should expect to fail, unless she/he submits documented evidence to the course instructor of inpatient medical care, death of an immediate family member, academic instructional activities, or national athletic activities. If excused, students are required to satisfy all coursework due or assigned during their absence as determined by the course instructor. If a student does not submit documented evidence for her/his absence exceeding the limit, it is the student's responsibility to withdraw from the course by the specified deadline, as indicated on the academic calendar. Students who withdraw from a course receive a grade of "W". Students who do not withdraw from a course nor submit supporting documents for excessive absences will receive a grade of "FN" (failure for non-attendance).

Code of Academic Honesty and Integrity:

Upon admission to the American University of Kuwait, students agree to act responsibly in all areas of academic, personal and social conduct and to take full responsibility for their individual and collective action. Such regulations are found in the American University of Kuwait Catalogue, Student Handbook, and the AUK website at www.auk.edu.kw. Any question of interpretation regarding the code of academic honesty and Integrity shall be reported to the appropriate academic dean. The Code shall be reviewed annually at the discretion of the academic deans. Any student or student organization found to have committed the cited violations or misconduct, either on or off campus, is subject to the disciplinary sanctions outlined in adjudication procedures.

Plagiarism:

The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, an attempt of an individual to claim the work of another as the product of his or her own thoughts regardless of whether that work has been published. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting improperly or paraphrasing text or other written materials without proper citation on an exam, term paper, homework, or other written material submitted to an instructor as one's own work. Plagiarism also includes handing in a paper to an instructor that was purchased from a term paper service or downloaded from the Internet and presenting another person's academic work as one's own.

Cheating:

The term "cheating" includes but is not limited to, copying homework assignments from another student; working together with another individual on a take-home test or homework when not approved by the instructor, looking at and/or copying text, notes or another person's paper during an examination when not permitted to do so. Cheating also includes the giving of work information to another student to be copied and/or used as his or her own. This includes but is not limited to giving someone answers to exam questions either when the exam is being given or after having taken an exam; informing another student of specific questions that appear or have

appeared on an exam in the same academic semester; giving or selling a term paper, report, project or other restricted written materials to another student.

Academic Support:

Learning Support Services focuses on empowering students to become independent and successful learners by developing their literacy skills, enhancing their understanding, and helping them improve their academic and study skills. Learning Support Services is comprised of two centers: the Tutoring Center and the Writing Center. The Tutoring Center provides free academic support in various subjects to AUK student. Email: tutoringcenter@auk.edu.kw.

The Writing Center provides multilingual support (English, Arabic, French, and Spanish) through individual or small-group consultations. Email: writingcenter@auk.edu.kw

Disability Accommodations:

AUK provides equal and inclusive educational environment in order to enable all students to meet and perform requisite academic standards and to participate in the opportunities and activities of its community. If you believe you can benefit from accommodations for a learning, physical, or mental health disability, [click here to book a session through the Counseling Center/Disability Services Booking Page](#), to ask about disability services at AUK, initiate an accommodation plan, or receive disability services. You can also email counseling@auk.edu.kw if you need assistance in booking a session.

Course Policies/Student Responsibilities:

Tardiness

Arriving late to class is disrespectful and disruptive to all. Lectures and other in-class activities will start promptly at the beginning of class, and it is the student responsibility to make up for the covered materials during his / her absence and tardiness in attending the class.

Leaving during classroom

Any student leaving class once it has begun will be marked as ABSENT. Please inform me prior to start of class if you must leave early for that day.

Mobile phones and similar devices

These are not to be used in the classroom. There are no exceptions to this policy, as they cause disruption and noise, thus affecting other students.

Late and Missing Work Policy:

If the student has a valid reason, work can be turned in with a 2 sessions deadline after the official due date. The student must inform the instructor by writing (email) ahead of time of the reason for turning in the work late. After this period, one letter grade will be deducted per session.

Make-Up Work Policy:

Will be assigned on need basis.

Communication Policy:

Students can reach the instructor by email to nmatta@auk.edu.kw and when necessary by an agreed upon zoom meeting on up to 15 minutes.

Please be sure to use your official AUK email account, write your full name, and indicate which class and section you are taking (Class ###, DAY/TIME section) when you send me an email. If you have a question, please check the syllabus first and if your question is not answered there, then please feel free to send an email and I will be happy to clarify. I respond to questions via email within 24 hours of receiving them; if I do not respond within 24 hours, please re-send the

email. Please note I normally respond during working hours. Emails sent on weekends will be responded to on Sunday.

Technology Issues:

All assignments must be submitted through Moodle. However, you may experience trouble submitting an assignment due to technology or internet issues. If such a situation does arise and you are unable to submit your assignment through Moodle, please send me an email at nmatta@auk.edu.kw and include the **completed** assignment. Please make sure that you email me the assignment **before** the deadline as this documents that you did finish everything by the due date and time, but that you just had a technology issue. This will ensure that your assignment will be accepted, and you will not receive a late penalty. Once the technology or internet issue is resolved, please upload the assignment to Moodle. In general, always be sure to frequently save your files and keep backups of your assignments.

Syllabus Changes:

There may be changes to the schedule and syllabus during the semester. When this happens, I will inform you in class and over email.

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Assignments and Readings
1		Recap from GDES 420 and research elaboration
	Classroom work and Sketching	
	Classroom work and Sketching	
2		research elaboration
	Classroom work and Sketching	
	Classroom work and Sketching	
3		research elaboration
	Classroom work and Sketching	
	Classroom work and Sketching	
4		research elaboration
	Classroom work and Sketching	
	Classroom work and Sketching	
5		Design Work Development
	Classroom work and Design Development	
	Classroom work and Design Development	
6		
	Classroom work and Design Development	
	Classroom work and Design Development	
7		
	Classroom work and Design Development	
	Classroom work and Design Development	
8		
	Classroom work and Design Development	
	Classroom work and Design Development	
9		Jury 1 (Tentative)
	Classroom work and Design Development	
	Classroom work and Design Development	
10		
	Classroom work and Design Development	

	Classroom work and Design Development	
11		
	Classroom work and Design Development	
	Classroom work and Design Development	
12		
	Classroom work and Design Development	
	Classroom work and Design Development	
13		Jury 2 (Tentative)
	Classroom work and Design Development	
	Classroom work and Design Development	
14		
	Classroom work and Design Development	
	Classroom work and Design Development	
15		Capstone Exhibition