

Packaging Design

NJCU Course: 422-1056, Spring 2016

Tuesday 10:55am to 1:45pm, Rm. A209

Professor: Janet Pihlblad, Office rm: A229, email: jpihlblad@njcu.edu; office: 201.200.2370 (please use email)

Class webpage: www.janetpihlblad.com/pages/teaching/packaging

Course Description

Students learn current software methods and techniques for the construction of innovative prototypes, which translate from two to three dimensions. A project-based creative exploration of packages as human-centered object/artifacts, designed to convey identity, and protect and contain products, culminates in students learning about sustainability, materials and new consumer attitudes. Course entails readings, student research, written assignments, oral presentations as well as package prototypes.

Prerequisites: 283 Communication Design Techniques, 237 Typography

Additionally: Innovative and experimental structure of the package, as 3-D form is emphasized. Students learn proper ways to set up computer files for die-cuts / templates, and exposure to methods of product & consumer research, creative briefs and branding concepts. Students will redesign existing product packaging, and original new product packages. The second half of the class deals with sustainable packaging and an in-depth acquaintance with various evolving materials used for eco-friendly packaging. 3-D prototypes are executed, with the focus being on excellence and innovative thought in employing graphic design principals.

Learning Objectives

- Become familiar with market-place categories and current trends.
- Understand die-cuts and packaging templates well enough to design your own.
- Learn about a wide variety of packaging materials and technical/manufacturing developments in packaging.
- Demonstrate ingenuity, the criteria to capture market appeal, and be environmentally-conscientious within these limitations.

Required Textbook: None.

Supplemental References and Websites

Readings and some visuals come from these books:

Package Design Workbook, by Dupuis and Silva, Rockport Publishers; 2011 edition

The Packaging and Design Templates Sourcebook 2, compiled by Luke Herriott, Rotovision SA Publisher; 2010

Why Shrink-wrap a Cucumber? The Complete Guide to Environmental Packaging, By Aldridge & Miller, Laurence King Publishing; 2012

Packaging Sustainability, by Wendy Jedlicka, Wiley & Sons; 2009

Plastic: A Toxic Love Story, by Susan Freinkel, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; 2011

Massive Change, by Bruce Mau, Phaidon Press; 2004

<http://www.thedieline.com>

<http://www.sustainablepackaging.org>

<http://envisionplastics.com>

(These and more web links are available through the class web-page.)

Supplies

For this class you will need a **USB drive**, and be sure you **back up all work**. This is extremely important. If you lose it, I cannot grade it. It might not be your fault, but if it's all gone, it's still your responsibility. Backing up, and saving as you work, prevents this tragedy!

Other Supplies: Exacto knives, cutting mats, straight-edges and various crisp papers for the template section (The service bureau does have supplies you may check out and use while at school). There will also be some color printing at the service bureau required. Sketching paper and soft pencils will also be needed.

Your Grade Will Be Based On:

- Fulfilling assignment objectives.
- The amount of effort extended.
- Creative Projects: Is it aesthetically successful? Quality of ideas & execution of ideas: What kind of thought is evidenced by the work? What is the quality of execution?
- Creative and original approaches to the work.
- Conscientious and thorough attention to readings, written work, presentations
- Class participation.

Grade Scale

A	=	93 - 100	Excellent work, exceeding basic requirements creatively, technically, visually, & conceptually.
A-	=	90 - 92	
B+	=	87 - 89	
B	=	83 - 86	Good work, goes beyond basic requirements
B-	=	80 - 82	
C+	=	77 - 79	
C	=	73 - 76	Fulfills objectives, meets basic requirements
C-	=	70 - 72	
D+	=	67 - 69	
D	=	60 - 66	Work that barely meets basic requirements.
F	=	59 - 0	Failing

Basic Requirements: Fulfills objectives, meets specifications, demonstrates knowledge of material covered during the class, aesthetically competent, shows diligent effort.

Policies

- Attendance: You are expected to come to every class. But if you are truly ill, do not come to class.
- You are only allowed one absence. Any absence beyond the first will require documentation, such as a doctor's note, or a mechanic's receipt (for car trouble). With four absences it is very unlikely that you will pass the class. Reasonable excuses and documentation must be combined with diligent efforts to catch up.
- Always email me when you must miss class, it is the professional thing to do.
- You can download all assignment pages, as well as most slide-shows, and other helpful links from our class web page.
- Leaving class early, arriving chronically late or taking a long break when its not break-time is all very bad manners. Your grade will reflect such poor behavior.
- Food and Beverage: Never have food or beverages near the computers. Bottles with secure lids are acceptable.
- Put your computer-screens to sleep when we are engaged as a class-group in critique, discussion,

watching slides or a presentation, and give your full attention.

- Please be on time. In the professional world you will lose your job if you are repeatedly late. In order to discourage this very bad habit there will be a penalty. The first two instances of being late by fifteen minutes (or more) receive a warning. After that, for each instance of being late (15 min. or more) you will have an additional research project. I have a hand-out on this which I will give you. The choice of subjects are artists or typographers. This will be one written page, hand written (no copy & paste!). If your research paper(s) are missing at the end of the semester, you will fail the class. Documentation excusing your lateness will exempt you from this extra assignment.
- Assignments and Due dates: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Present what you have. An assignment which receives a poor grade may be resubmitted later if reworked and improved. Turning in assignments on time is extremely important in a deadline driven industry. In a professional setting, missing a deadline can cause you to lose your job or your client. In this class it will lower your grade.

Disabilities

If you require any accommodation because of a diagnosed disability, please contact OSS, the Office of Specialized Services @ 201-200-2091. I must receive documentation to accommodate.

Health & Safety Guidelines

You are not to risk the health and safety of yourself, or any other persons in this campus community. To ensure your well being, strictly follow all health and safety policies and procedures set forth by your instructor, as well as the New Jersey City University regulations, which can be found in the Student Handbook. If you have questions, concerns, or are ever unclear about proper classroom etiquette, do not hesitate to ask the instructor or an appropriate authority.

If you have any health concerns, either physical or psychological that may affect your ability to fully participate in this class or complete the given assignments, I am available to discuss possible solutions in order for you to achieve the goals outlined for this course. If you have health or disability concerns that you would like to address, but are not inclined to discuss them with me, there are services on campus available to address your concerns; contact Student/Health Services (Vodra Hall, Suite 107, 201-200-3456).

Eye Strain: Staring at a computer for long, uninterrupted periods can cause eye strain. It is recommended that you look away from the computer and focus on a distant point for a few minutes out of every 20 minutes.

Please note: If we have a snow day, I will give you an extra assignment, via email, and you need to work on that while you are out. A snow day does not mean a gift of free time! I will ask you to present the snow-day assignment at the next class-meeting. Be forewarned.

Packaging Design: Schedule of classes, Spring 2016

Week 1 Jan 19

Introductions

Read and discuss **syllabus**, Fill out questionnaire, Introductions,

View Slides & a Video of past student works; view a **video**, *Bag It!*, a documentary in a humorous tone: where does plastic come from, and where does it end up? This video examines our relationship to a consumer culture and it's by-products, which are often called packaging.

Homework, due next class: Become familiar w/ style categories and product categories. Go on a digital scavenger hunt and create a digital scrapbook. Become an analytical observer of your favorite packaging. **Find 25** or more examples of packaging which fit the categories given. Be prepared to present 5-10 favorites to the class. **Save** all to a folder **on a USB**.

Prepare for next class: Also bring exacto knife, blades, sharp pencil, straight-edge, to the next class.

Week 2 Jan 26

Product Style-Categories and Working with Templates.

Present some favorites from your digital scrapbooks, and discuss the importance of a focused style. How is this reinforced through typography, colors and form? How are images used in the different categories?

After a break, you will work with various templates and become familiar with how templates are designed through exploring and experimentation. Using one of these existing CD templates, or modifying one, design a CD package and label for a fictitious artist or band. Look at examples.

Week 3 Feb 2

CD Package Design; Understanding a Dieline File.

Learn how to download templates, size to fit a real CD, and print to tile image. Experiment with various templates to understand how they work. Present your CD package-concepts, several sketches should be done. See how to set up the template file in Illustrator. Work on your design during class.

Week 4 Feb. 9

Critique your First Design Project: CD Package

Present and critique your CD design, as both prototype and digital file.
New project is introduced.

Week 5 Feb. 16

Templates for Innovative/Creative Package Design

Look at award-winning package designs which demonstrate out-of-the-box thinking. Experiment with folding several unusual package templates from the book, *The Packaging and Design Templates Sourcebook 2* (available through the class web-page). Then develop your own innovation in package design, by combining existing templates or creating an original template. You decide on a product and make the package to suit it. In two weeks, present both the prototype and the digital dieline file,; set up according to professional standards. By the end of class you must have at least one concept.

Week 6 Feb. 23

Present sketches and first folded paper prototype of project in progress. Suggestions will be made. Continue working on this project.

Week 7 Mar 1

Critique Innovative/Creative Package.

You must present both the finalized three dimensional prototype as well as the dieline file, set up according to professional standards. New project will be introduced.

<Spring Break March 7 to 12>

Week 8 Mar. 15

Existing Product Packaging Re-Design, Re-envisioning Possibilities

New Project: Discuss the six essential purposes of packaging, and see examples in slide-form. Choose an existing food-product package to re-design, from the choices I provide. You will each gather data about market and demographic research (guided by a hand-out page), do a visual audit of the competition, and write and present a Creative Brief. The Creative Brief puts your research and own ideas about the brand into a professional form. This must all be typed, printed, and turned in.

Week 9 Mar. 22

The Design Process

Present your creative brief and digital style/mood boards; these must include color and typography choices which reinforce your creative brief. Each presents five sketches of the primary package panel. Discuss target audience concerns . Remember to consider all sides of a box, and all the facts which law requires, like weight and nutrition break-down. Now refine your designs. Each student will create the prototype and the digital file, which includes all sides of a box. Food/beverage packaging and the nutritional panel will receive extra attention and consideration, with a reading and a tutorial.

Week 10 Mar 29

Critique Re-envisioned Package of Existing Product.

Present and discuss your re-designed package. Then new project is introduced. Reading with take-home test, combined from the following: *Why Shrink-wrap a Cucumber?* and *The Complete Guide to Environmental Packaging*, and *Packaging Sustainability*.

Week 11 April 5

Sustainable and Ethical Design

Discussion about the concept of sustainability, carbon footprints, what does "green" mean, consider political positioning, old and new materials, the contribution of transportation pollutants, and how ethical concerns can drive a market, and the evolving attitude in both consumers and designers. Inspiring examples will be viewed and discussed. Choose the worst package you can find, the most wasteful and polluting packaging, and prepare to re-design it, according to what you learn about the eco-friendly measures which could put to use.

Week 12 April 12

Inherently "Bad" Materials? Evolution in Design-thinking

Prepare for student presentations: Each student will be assigned a different packaging material to research, and show it's life-span and recycling possibilities. Research pages will be handed out for each material, to direct your research and give you a head-start on your presentations. Next week you will present your findings.

Week 13 April 19

Discovering Materials and their Life Spans

Your presentations on the environmental impact of specific packaging materials. Then take a quiz on materials and their end-of-life cycle. Begin redesigning the package you chose, to change it toward a more environmentally benign revision. Idea-sketches are required, in addition to one developed design.

<April 22 is Earth Day>

Week 14 April 26

Eco-Friendly Re-Envisioning of an Existing Package

Work independently, and meet with me on an individual basis to check your progress.

Exam Week May 3

Presentation should include not just a proto-type, but a convincing Powerpoint or Keynote Slides about the improved environmental impact of your package concept.

(The Instructor reserves the right to proceed at a pace most helpful for the individuals in the class, and to alter the syllabus when appropriate.)