

## GD405 SENIOR DESIGN SEMINAR FOCUSES ON THE IN-

Fall 2011 ¶ John McVey, instructor ¶ Meets in Hardie 309, Monday & Wednesday, 8:30-11:10, also at <http://jmcvey.net/garage>.

DEPENDENT PROJECTS of each student, and encourages reflective practice in the exploration, development, assembly and design of content. Studio work is complemented by one-on-one and group crits and discussions (some involving guest participants); discussions of and presentations relating to research and readings; blogging and continuing documentation of process; and an exhibition in the 301 Cabot Gallery (ordinarily in the Spring, for Spring graduates). ¶ The instructor seeks to make seminar a valuable learning experience for every participant. It is up to the individual student and the instructor to determine how much structure is appropriate. The professional career considerations of Seminararians also are taken into account, particularly with regard to development of a body of work “*indicative of an ability to participate [in design] as a professional.*” Students should reflect on how their project might, in combination with other portfolio work, position them for work (and life) beyond Montserrat. ¶ Studio work needs to be located within a context of ideas, inquiry, testing. It should involve stretch — of imagination, technical skills, ability to articulate and argue for a solution or solutions — and it should reflect a commitment to perfection but also to exploring multiple approaches, channels, iterations to the same mate-

rial. ¶ Several times during the semester, guest faculty are invited to participate in discussions of student work, either during regular class hours or, on occasion, on an evening. Guests may also make presentations or lead discussions on topics and even readings of interest. ¶ Seminararians contribute regularly to the course blog, with visuals and language of current work, and with comments on each other's postings and work shown in class. ¶ Design Seminar can be taken for either one or two successive semesters. Two semesters need not be devoted to the same project. ¶ Work done for each semester becomes complete with the submission of documentation of that work. The purpose of the documentation is two-fold : (1) encourages precision, method and reflection; and (2) provides a record for future seminararians. Prepared in both printed and PDF form, it accurately describes one's work and experience, along these lines :

project design	<input type="checkbox"/> title <input type="checkbox"/> thesis statement / proposal <input type="checkbox"/> personal, educational and professional objectives <input type="checkbox"/> overview (stages, schedule; one or two semesters, etc.)
progress	<input type="checkbox"/> description and discussion of each stage of project <input type="checkbox"/> rationales for approaches taken <input type="checkbox"/> evaluations
physical description	<input type="checkbox"/> e.g., tools used, applications, style sheets, paper <input type="checkbox"/> typefaces
conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> evaluation; <input type="checkbox"/> questions one is left with at conclusion of project <input type="checkbox"/> advice to future seminararians
other	<input type="checkbox"/> bibliography

Process books going back several years are archived in the Seminar Room; an index is available. ¶ **WORKSPACE** is made available in the rear area of the H-309, and by lottery to students requesting (and providing a convincing rationale for) workspace in the 301 Cabot building. ¶ Seminararians should develop bibliographies relating to their projects; entries/links may be entered in the course blog (student's individual pages) and (with notes and tags) at <http://delicious.com/designstories>. Design and other books stored in H-309 may be removed only with express permission of the instructor (and owner of most of the materials), and borrowings noted on a signout sheet.

**FINE PRINT :** Participants will have completed 90 credits of course work, including the core Design sequence (GD 1-2-3, Typography 1, and Using Images); they may also have taken the required Typography 2 and Design Stories, and studio and other electives that would support their intentions for Seminar. ¶ Acceptance into Seminar is determined by a faculty panel; applicants may be required to revise and resubmit their proposals, for approval to be granted. ¶ The usual attendance expectations apply (don't miss classes; come to class on time and prepared; maintain your and comment on others' blogs).

The **FINAL GRADE** is based on (1) the student's studio work, judged by the instructor in consultation with the student's individual advisor (if any) and other faculty participants, and (2) the student's seminar work. Studio work may involve, in addition to (a) the student's own directed work, being work on his or her theme, pursued in consultation with the course instructor; (b) exercises assigned in the seminar component of the class. Evaluation of **STUDIO WORK** takes into account the fol-

lowing factors: exploration (various iterations), attention to typographic and other detail, bringing work to completion, craft, and appropriateness of the chosen solution/s to the proposal, documentation of process; willingness to incorporate input from others.

student's independent project	25	quality of exploration (evidenced by multiple iterations, research, willingness to consider and pursue suggestions, alternate strategies)
	25	presentation, technical and craft
	10	documentation
seminar work	15	attendance, active participation in crits, discussions
	10	other assigned work, senior design show
	15	writing, blogging
total	100%	

**SEMINAR WORK** consists primarily of (a) constructive participation in crits and discussion of assigned readings, both in class and on blogs; (b) participation in group exhibition (where this happens).