objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- critically evaluate maps and other graphics from a number of perspectives, including graphic design, semiotics, cognitive science and geography;
- articulate and implement principles and practices that help graphic displays of spatial information communicate effectively;
- independently and collaboratively design layouts that help people think spatially and make decisions across topics, disciplines and other boundaries;
- demonstrate skills with software to make maps and graphical narratives.

places

lecture
MBH 438, Tue and Thurs, 8-9:15am

lab
MBH 317, Thurs, 1:30-4:15pm

people

Prof. Jeff Howarth
MBH 329
jhowarth@middlebury.edu
office hours: 11-noon Tue, Thurs, Fri

Mike Ryba
ASI office
mryba@middlebury.edu
office hours: open

basic expectations

Be prepared to participate, complete assignments on time, complete readings when they are assigned, follow directions for submitting work, attend class and arrive on time, offer to help people if you see them struggling, be open to criticism, be constructive when criticizing, work hard but have fun.

grounds for deductions

Here are some examples of things that warrant grade deductions:

Unexcused late work, not having work to present in a crit, repeatedly using your computer for anything unrelated to this class when you are in this class, repeatedly using your phone in class, repeated absence or tardiness, actively creating an environment that is hostile to the goals of the course.

aid and assistance

If you have a documented disability and think you may need accommodations in this class, please contact me or Jodi Litchfield (litchfie@middlebury.edu), the ADA Coordinator, asap. All discussions will remain confidential.

evaluation

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<th>Task</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rudiments</td>
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<td>Reference Map</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projection Poster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Poster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>25%</td>
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For all sections, grades are based on the evaluation of deliverables minus any deductions accrued from participation issues.
Rudiments

In this section, you will learn rudiments of graphic design. We’ll look at how maps use graphic variables, create custom icons, and explore type faces. We’ll also focus on how these different kinds of signs interact when they work together. Throughout this section, your homework for Thursday will consist of critical evaluation of maps and planning simple educational layouts. In labs, you will learn software procedures to implement your plans. Your layouts will be due in lecture on Tuesdays.

First Projects

In this section, you will learn elements of map design. We’ll look at more complex graphic interactions, including scale, visual hierarchy and layout. You will develop two independent projects: a reference map and a layout that teaches someone about a map projection principle. We will begin to spend more lecture time doing crits, where you will give and receive feedback on your work.

Group Project

In this section, we will collaborate on a group project. We’ll use historical USGS topographic maps and ancillary data to show changes in North American mountain glaciers over time. This will provide an opportunity to work with raster and vector data while digging into authentic data compilation and collaborative design problems. We’ll also read selections from Tufte and Imhof.

Independent Project

In this final section, you will independently pitch, compile, design and present an original map layout. We will discuss key issues in data quality and spatial thinking that govern good map design. Your work will go through a series of crits at different stages of the design process.