

**CARIBBEAN INSTITUTE OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION (CARIMAC)
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
MONA CAMPUS**

COURSE TITLE:	VISUAL COMMUNICATION
COURSE CODE:	COMM3399
LEVEL:	II
SEMESTER	1
CREDITS:	3
PRE-REQUISITES:	NONE
LECTURER:	DAVID SOUTAR

RATIONALE:

There has always been the cultural assumption that information is best communicated through written formats. Indeed, the primacy of words over pictures has a long and entrenched history.

The course is an attempt to equalize the score between words and images. It is important to understand, however, that an emphasis on visual messages for this course does NOT mean that words are considered less important than images. The most powerful, meaningful and culturally important messages are those that combine words and pictures in equally respectful ways.

Visual Communication is an exploration into the idea that memorable visual messages with text have the greatest power to inform, educate and persuade an individual. It is also an attempt to discover why some images are remembered while most are not, with a view to reintroducing the role of visual messages as tools of propaganda, behaviour change and, ultimately, national or regional development.

The course will be of interest to students working with multimedia technologies or students studying art philosophy, art education, and psychology. CARIMAC students specializing in journalism, multimedia, social marketing, and television production will find this course particularly useful. The course is open to individuals majoring in Media and Communication and any other student who has an expressed interest in visual communication.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- define key concepts used in visual communication
- describe how images can be used to enhance messages
- use images to create messages
- analyze visual messages intended for local, regional and international target audiences
- explain the relationship between images and words
- select appropriate media for disseminating visual messages
- explain how one can become more visually literate

TEACHING METHODS:

The course will be taught using a combination of weekly 2-hour lectures and 1-hour tutorials. Visual aids will be a significant part of the tuition based on the nature of the content of the course. Students will therefore be exposed to various still and moving images during lectures and tutorials to illustrate concepts introduced in the course. Field trips to museums and galleries will give students an opportunity to assess how various artists create images and visual messages. Case Studies using visual messages or groups of images created for audiences in the Caribbean region will also be used as part of course activities. Because of the practical applications of the knowledge gained in this course, students must demonstrate the application of this knowledge through course assessment which will account for 60% of the final grade.

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

In-course Test (1 hour, short-answer questions)	10%
Research Projects (Students will select various visual images related to a selected topic and provide an analysis of those images applying the theory introduced in the course)	30%
Tutorial Assignments (analysis of visual messages, case studies and individual presentations on selected topics)	20%
Final Exam (2 hours - two essays on selected issues discussed in class)	40%

COURSE CONTENT:

- Week 1** To Sense. To Select. To Perceive.
Readings: Preface and Chapter 1
- Week 2** Light, Eye, Retina, and the Brain
Reading: Chapters 2 and 3
- Week 3** Visual Cues: Color, Form, Depth, and Movement
Reading: Chapter 4
- Week 4** Visual Theories and Visual Persuasion
Reading: Chapter 5 and 6
- Week 5** Pictorial Stereotyping
Reading: Chapter 7
- Week 6** Six perspectives for Image Analysis
Reading: Introduction to Section Four
- Week 7** Graphic Design & Typography
Reading: Chapter 8
- Week 8** Informational Graphics
Reading: Chapter 10
- Week 9** Photography
Reading: Chapter 12
- Week 10** Motion Pictures
Reading: Chapter 13
- Week 11** Television & Video
Reading: Chapter 14
- Week 12** Computers and World Wide Web
Reading: Chapter 15 and 16
- Week 13** Advertising Issues & Political Cartoons

Course Text

Lester, P.M. (2003). *Visual Communication: Images with Messages – 3rd Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. ISBN 0534562442

Additional Reading Materials

Ambrose, G. & Harris, P. (2003). *The Fundamentals of Creative Design*. Switzerland. AVA Publishing. ISBN 2884790233

Barry, Ann Marie Seward (1997): *Visual Intelligence: Perception, Image and Manipulation in Visual Communication*. New York: State University of New York Press

Berger, John (1972): *Ways of Seeing*. London: BBC/Harmondsworth: Penguin

Block, J Richard & Harold E Yuker (1990): *Can You Believe Your Eyes?: Over 250 Illusions and Other Visual Oddities*. New York: Gardner

Crow, D. (2003). *Visible Signs – an introduction to semiotics*. Switzerland. AVA Publishing. ISBN 2884790357

Kress, Gunther & Theo van Leeuwen (1996): *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. London: Routledge

Messaris, Paul (1994): *Visual 'Literacy': Image, Mind and Reality*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press

Saint-Martin, F (1990): *Semiotics of Visual Language*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press

Online Sources

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/gaze/gaze.html>

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Sections/image04.html>

<http://commfaculty.fullerton.edu/lester/writings/viscomtheory.html>