

Final Project Rubric: Introduction to Graphic Design

Total Points: 100

Students will create a final design project (poster, flyer, or brand concept) demonstrating mastery of design principles, creative thinking, and technical proficiency using Adobe Creative Cloud software. Students will also present a brief written and verbal explanation of their design choices.

Criteria	Exceptional (20–18 pts)	Proficient (17–14 pts)	Developing (13–10 pts)	Beginning (9–0 pts)
Application of Design Principles (Balance, contrast, alignment, repetition, proximity)	Exceptional understanding and application of all design principles. Layout is visually strong, cohesive, and communicates effectively.	Good application of most design principles. Composition is clear and balanced with only minor inconsistencies.	Some design principles applied inconsistently. Composition lacks clarity or visual harmony.	Limited or incorrect application of design principles. Composition appears unbalanced or confusing.
Creativity & Concept Development	Concept is highly original, engaging, and demonstrates deep creative thinking. Design clearly communicates the intended message with strong visual impact.	Concept is clear and creative. Message is effectively communicated through visual design.	Concept is somewhat clear but lacks originality, depth, or cohesion. Message is partially communicated.	Concept is unclear or unoriginal. Message is confusing, incomplete, or missing.
Technical Proficiency (Use of Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, or InDesign tools)	Demonstrates expert technical skill, all tools used appropriately; layers, alignment, and exports are clean, accurate, and professional.	Demonstrates solid technical ability, tools are used correctly with only minor errors in setup or export.	Shows basic technical skill but contains visible errors or inconsistencies in layout or file setup.	Frequent technical errors or incorrect use of tools, project appears incomplete or poorly formatted.

Typography & Color Use	Typography and color choices are deliberate, harmonious, and enhance readability and mood. Visual hierarchy is clear and effective.	Typography and color choices support readability and hierarchy. Minor inconsistencies present.	Typography or color choices are adequate but lack contrast, consistency, or hierarchy.	Typography or color use hinders readability or clashes with design intent.
Presentation & Professionalism	Project is polished, well organized, and professionally presented. Rationale for design choices is insightful and well articulated.	Project is neat and clear. Rationale explains design decisions with reasonable detail.	Presentation is adequate but lacks refinement. Rationale is brief or unclear.	Project is incomplete, disorganized, or missing explanation and lacks professionalism.

The purpose of the final assessment is to evaluate students' mastery of foundational graphic design skills by having them create a professional design project that demonstrates creativity, technical proficiency, and application of design principles. This summative assessment allows instructors to assess both the process and the product, ensuring learners can translate theory into practice. The rubric supports fairness and transparency by clearly outlining expectations for each performance level across multiple criteria, including design principles, creativity, technical skills, typography and color use, and professionalism. Students understand how their work will be evaluated, which reduces subjectivity and encourages consistent grading. The results of this assessment can inform instructional improvement by highlighting areas where learners struggle like technical proficiency or conceptual development. The rubric can guide adjustments to

course content, learning activities, or additional support resources to strengthen future learner outcomes.