

NSCAD DSGN 1000 OL2

# Digital Tools for Designing

Fall 2020

**Instructor:** Robert Currie  
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1-4 PM Fridays  
Online  
3 Credits

**Class web site:** <http://nscad.geneva9.com/>

## Course Description:

*This foundation course focuses on developing an introductory understanding of the knowledge and skill a designer must have to effectively communicate with digital tools. The course focuses on demonstration, practice and application of digital software. For example, introduction to imaging basics and composite images are explored through Photoshop; vector drawing in Illustrator, page layout fundamentals through InDesign, and a 3D modelling program. Other core concepts of digital images are covered, such as colour, font, file formats (file size/dimension, DPI, image type files and when to use JPEG, PNG or GIF etc) and designing with code (using a language such as Processing). Skills acquired in this course are fundamental to further develop creative and professional practice.*

## Learning Outcomes\*:

Upon successful completion of this course the student will demonstrate the ability to:

1. apply knowledge of the role of digital tools in designing/creative practice
2. understand digital capabilities that may be required in designing/creative practice
3. apply basic skill in core concepts related to digital skills for designing/creative practice

*\* Please note that each Learning Outcome must be successfully achieved before a final grade for the course is assigned*

## Interdisciplinary Design:

Interdisciplinary design involves working across traditional boundaries of media and disciplines, and requires a set of tools that can address a broad set of problems. This class emphasizes a core set of software tools that are commonly used across a range of design disciplines, and provides exposure to selected tools used in more specialized or emerging disciplines.

In addition to creative tools, students will be introduced to working with design briefs, technical requirements, constraints and research, as well as communication and presentation tools widely used in the design world.

## Student Workload:

Total student workload for a 3 credit course is estimated to be 9 hours/week, including scheduled class time.

## Course Format:

This will be conducted online. This course serves as an introduction to Digital Tools for Designing. Students will be expected to attend weekly sessions, participate in class exercises and discussions. All course projects need to be completed in full by the set due dates.

## Course Requirements, Resources, Materials:

### Course requirements:

The most important thing you will need for this class is a computer that can install and run the Adobe Creative Suite programs. This can be a Mac or a Windows PC, but please note that for higher level classes (at the 2000 level and above) in design, a reasonably powerful Mac laptop is strongly encouraged. See the HSELS policy attached to this outline.

You will need to pay for and install the education version of the Adobe CC suite for the duration of the class. Detail on how to do this will be sent as part of the class introduction process.

You will need a reliable internet connection. If your internet connection is restricted in any way (such as some web-sites being blocked) it may be difficult or impossible for you to access some course materials.

There will be some additional free software you will need to install on your computer (details will be provided later)

so you will need the ability to install programs on the computer you are using.

You can find the minimum requirements for Macs and PCs here: <https://helpx.adobe.com/ca/illustrator/system-requirements.html>

If you have a computer already and it meets the minimum requirements, you can use that existing computer for this class.

**Resources:**

Online help, video tutorials and live video lectures will be provided as needed.

**Materials:**

Students are required to have a Mac or Windows computer capable of running the current version of Adobe Creative Cloud, and a reliable, unrestricted internet connection, and the education version of the Adobe CC suite installed for the duration of the class.

**NSCAD Attendance Policy:**

Class attendance at NSCAD is expected. Absences could result in lowered or failing grades. Absences may require the student to 'make up' the content missed before being allowed entrance to future classes (e.g. safety knowledge for shop, studio). Any absences must be addressed with the course instructor who may request supporting documentation. Please refer to 'Attendance Policy' found on Page 14 of NSCAD Academic Calendar and NSCAD web page. Instructors may adapt a more specific attendance policy that could influence the final grade for this course.

**NSCAD University Occupational Health and Safety Policy:**

At NSCAD safety is a priority. All students are required to obtain and maintain up-to-date safety (WHMIS) certification. An on-line Brightspace certification process is available to all NSCAD students.

Please note that your NSCAD ID card needs an up-to-date Health and Safety (WHMIS) sticker to access shops and studios, and for Security to permit you access to the university campus sites after hours. WHMIS training is provided online through students' Brightspace account.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

Completion of all assignments is mandatory. Evaluation will be based on a number of assignments, quizzes, and a research/essay assignment. Participation in online labs will also account for a portion of the grade. The majority of assignments and projects will be completed outside of normal lab instruction hours. Dates and details will be provided in the course outline and as the course progresses. All work must be submitted in English.

**Grade Weights**

Assignments:.....	60%	In-class practical quiz...	10%
Quizzes:.....	10%	Class participation: .....	10%
Writing assignment: ....	10%		

**Grading System:**

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Grade Point Score	Descriptive Term
A+	95 and above	4.3	Excellent
A	90-94	4.0	Excellent
A-	85-89	3.7	Very Good
B+	80-84	3.3	Very Good
B	73-79	3.0	Good
B-	67-72	2.7	Good
C+	63-66	2.3	Satisfactory
C	59-62	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	55-58	1.7	Satisfactory
D	50-54	1.0	Marginal
F(Fail)	49 and below		

**Academic Integrity:**

A climate and culture of academic integrity is an expectation of everyone. Students at NSCAD are required to comply with standard academic practices in acknowledging sources in all work presented for academic credit. Please refer to the NSCAD Academic Calendar for the full description and regulations on 'Academic Integrity and Plagiarism'.

**Writing Centre:**

The NSCAD Writing Centre offers professional tutoring for any kind of written assignment, at any level of study, at any stage of the work. Please see the Writing Centre web page for more information and booking online at <https://navigator.nscad.ca/wordpress/home/studentresources/the-writing-centre/>

**Accessibility Policy:**

Accommodations can be arranged for disability-related needs by consulting Bill Travis, Disability Resource Facilitator, in the Office of Student Experience (902-494-8313) within the first two weeks of class. Please refer to the NSCAD Academic Calendar for full details in 'Accommodations for Students Experiencing Disabilities', or visit the NSCAD Wellness Centre at: <https://wellness.nscad.ca>.

**Spiritual/ Religious Observance:**

Requests for accommodations for spiritual or religious observances must be presented in writing to the instructor within the first two weeks of class.

**Copyright notice:**

All materials used in this course and distributed within the Brightspace Course Management System are subject to the Canadian Copyright Act and NSCAD's Use of Copyright Materials Policy. <https://tinyurl.com/y8h3lk8j>

Copyrighted materials include, but are not limited to, the following: recorded lectures, notes, books, poems, essays, articles, audio and video recordings, works of art and images. These materials are to be used only for private study, and research. Creating copies or redistributing these course materials without the permission of the copyright owner may be an infringement of copyright law.

Fair Dealing usage guidelines as outlined in NSCAD's Copyright guide are here: <https://guides.nscad.ca/copyright-pages/fairdealing>

Please see NSCAD's Copyright Guide for guidelines and contact information

<https://guides.nscad.ca/copyrightpages/home>

**Design Students' Personal Hardware, Software, English Language Settings (HSELS) Requirements:**

If you are considering buying a new computer you may want to review the document attached to this outline, which sets out the requirements for a computer for design courses at the **2000 level and above**. It does not apply to this 1000 level class.

Division of Design Soft Policy  
For all students enrolling in DSGN-2000 to DSGN-4999 Courses

*Final Fall 2020 draft: 1 Sept. 2020  
Note: this draft will be updated for all subsequent terms*

Please copy the following text and paste in your course outline/s.

## **Design Students' Personal Hardware, Software, English Language Settings (HSELS) Requirements:**

### **Required computer hardware:**

Apple computers are the predominant choice for the design profession, and that's why the Division of Design instructs using Apple technology. Students are required to purchase a laptop (a MacBook Pro is strongly recommended) and specified software prior to commencing the program.

All current (May 2020) Apple MacBook Pros are capable of running the required software for the Design program. Students should consider buying an Apple laptop with the fastest available processing speed, along with any RAM upgrade that the student can afford to buy. In the long run, the initial expense will be offset by improved software performance and lifespan.

If the student already owns or vastly prefers a Windows-platform laptop that is powerful enough to serve, the Division of Design has no objection to using it. However, the bulk of faculty and technician experience is Mac-based; issues with a Windows machine will not be resolved by NSCAD. The student will be responsible for managing any cross-platform issues that arise. Furthermore, a student's inability to complete specified course work due to working on a Windows-platform laptop will not be an acceptable excuse for failing to meet a course's requirements; this situation could cause a student to receive a below average grade, if not fail a course.

### **Where to purchase:**

A student can purchase the Apple MacBook Pro from any Apple retail store. At the time of purchasing, it should be mentioned that it is an educational purchase (be sure to have proof of enrollment or student ID). See: Apple Online Store for Education (<http://www.apple.com/ca/educationstore/>)

If a student is purchasing elsewhere, prices should be compared with Apple; generally, Apple's educational pricing offers the best value.

Purchasing Adobe software / Adobe's Creative Cloud for Students [Canadian] page:  
<https://www.adobe.com/ca/creativecloud/buy/students.html>

**Please note:**

Students are strongly encouraged to purchase the AppleCare Protection Plan, rather than other service plans offered by certain retailers. More information is available here: <http://www.apple.com/ca/shop/browse/home/applecare>

**Other hardware required:**

Students are encouraged to buy a mouse to go with the laptop; many students find working solely with the trackpad challenging. If the student works with a 3D modeling software, such as Rhino, a mouse will be necessary.

External Hard Drives are optional but are strongly recommended for back up of assignments. An external, directly connected hard drive back-up (via Time Machine or cloning apps) affords more immediate data recovery, particularly at the moment of need, than cloud-based solutions such as OneDrive, DropBox, et al.

Drawing Tablets (\$99.95 and up) are useful tools but not required. Some packages include a tablet, mouse, and stylus.

NSCAD University does not service or repair computer hardware or software.

**Required software:**

Adobe Creative Cloud Annual Subscription (Student & Teacher Pricing; credit card required): The Adobe software can be subscribed to on an annual or monthly basis. To purchase by phone, call 1-800-585-0774.

Students will install at a minimum: Adobe InDesign, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Acrobat Pro. Other applications may be needed for future courses but those four are the core applications in the degree program. While there are many other graphic design software packages available, knowledge of the Adobe suite is currently a requirement for the design profession.

Apple computers come standard with their office software suite: Pages, Keynote, and Numbers. These programs open and edit equivalent Microsoft Office files.

**NSCAD software licenses (applicable to only Fall 2020):**

*No licenses are available to students for the Fall 2020 term.*

**NSCAD financial support/Student bursaries:**

NSCAD is committed to eliminating barriers to acquiring these required hardware and software course tools based on financial hardship. The Office of Student Experience may be able to provide a bursary to students in need. Please contact the Manager of Financial Aid [ose@nscad.ca](mailto:ose@nscad.ca) for more information.

**English language operating system and software (international students):**

All students from non-English speaking countries are required to have an English language operating system on their laptop with all software operating in the English language.

For those buying a new computer and/or software outside of Canada, the invoice/s will need to clearly state that the computer and/or software is operating with the English-language setting. This can be requested by the retailer as a note placed on the invoice/receipt.

If a student is using an existing computer and software that both meet the requirements listed in this document but it does not operate with the English-language setting, they will need to submit one of two documents from a computer service/repair shop: 1) a letter and/or invoice stating that the language setting has been properly initialized in the operating system and software or 2) a letter that confirms that the operating system and software already operates with the English-language settings. If the student is residing in Halifax, this must be done locally, see the following list of service providers:

Halifax Computer Repair Shops, Assessment fee: \$45 - \$95 (base charge):

Century Computer 902-423-2500

Brilliance Computers 902-453-0050

Halifax Computer Repair 902-444-2615

Scanned invoices and/or letter confirming English language settings are initialized on the student's computer will be emailed to Dr. Christopher Mark Kaltenbach, Chair of the Division of Design: [ckaltenbach@nscad.ca](mailto:ckaltenbach@nscad.ca).