

COVENTRY UNIVERSITY
TEACHING OBSERVATION FORM (OCTOBER 2016)



Part 1 – (to be completed by lecturer before the observation)

Lecturer's Name Paula Murarescu	Faculty/School/Dept. FAH School of Art and Design	Course Title - Module Title 112AAD Visual Communication 1 - Level 4	Year 2017
Observation Date 13 November 2017	Observer's Name Selma Porobic	Session Type (e.g. lecture, seminar, tutorial, practical demo, lab work, other, etc.) Seminar/Workshop	
Reflection on previous observations (your reflections on your previous observation) My previous observation suggested over-emphasising the session's aim and scope at the beginning and during the actual delivery to ensure students are fully aware of the session's constructive alignment with the module and its assessment requirements. This is something I consciously built on for this session.			

Session Purpose and Aims (a brief outline of the purpose of the session being observed and the student profile)

Student profile:

Level 4 Graphic Design students with limited experience of design as a critical and process-driven subject. Students come from a wide range of backgrounds and carry different levels of course specific skills.

This module develops critical and reflective thinking as it introduces students to fundamental visual communication theories and fosters a prolific and exploratory approach to design. Students are encouraged to question, research and be productive through the use of techniques and mediums. The module provides a challenging and achievable level of learning.

The student cohort has been split into 4 groups for this session and each occurrence will work with an expected number of 23 students.

Purpose of session:

This is one of the last sessions in a series supporting part 1 of the module assignment brief which asks students to design a visual essay publication that explores personal explorations of the city (Coventry). This is a seminar/workshop that weaves together all of the learning acquired in previous weeks (observational mark-making techniques, design as generative system, relationship between form and content and photographic theories of anchoring and relaying) and emphasizes graphic design's ultimate goal—communication of a message/story.

The location of the seminar links in with this week's task which was presented to students in the morning. This task is one in a series of weekly assignments aimed at ensuring continuous progress is made in relation to the assignment brief. For this particular week, the brief is research driven and asks students to collect and compile material solely from printed library resources and use the graphic design techniques explored in the observed session to curate and control an individually chosen narrative.

Lesson Plan:

Seminar/Workshop (12:00-13:00)

First Part of the Session — Clarifying the context and aim of the session.

Students will have been shown an example of graphic design relevant to their brief prior to the session and asked to identify the design's message, as well as the graphic design techniques used to manipulate this message. Their answers will be reviewed via guiding questions aimed at probing and observing the interplay between form and content. Students will be encouraged to recognise the manipulation of form and content as the main method of controlling the delivery and impact of a design's message.

Second Part of the Session — Applying critical observations to practice.

Students will be tasked with selecting from a series of existing visual materials and work in groups on re-contextualizing and appropriating these into a narrative stemmed from the observable interactions between the visuals. Students will be guided to explore narrative, sequencing and pairing, layout, pace and rhythm, as well as text.

Part 1— Setting (10 min)

1. Introduce session context and aim
2. Revise student observations

Part 2 — Exercise (30 min)

3. Students work in groups — guided.

Overall Conclusion (10 min)

4. Presentation of student work.
5. Recap —Task 6

Session Learning Outcomes – (indication of what the lecturer expects the learner to be able to do by the end of the session i.e. knowledge, skills, understanding, etc.)

—identify design problems linked to the communication of a message/narrative
—recognize, analyse and apply graphic design techniques to control a message/narrative focusing on the interplay between form and content
—play with format, substrate, sequencing, layout and the relationship between images, as well as text and image to control the unfolding and pace of a narrative
—develop a good understanding of context and how this shapes reading of visual representations
—effectively re-contextualize and subvert existing visual material as a way of solving and responding to well-defined design questions

Observation Focus – (what aspects of your teaching would you like the observer to focus on and provide feedback?)

- Overall teaching style and approach

Part 2 – (observer to complete and to discuss with lecturer)

<i>Please underscore as appropriate</i>					
Preparation, planning and organisation	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Session aims/objectives/outcomes	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Teaching methods and approaches employed	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Quality of the teaching/learning materials	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Learner engagement, participation and interaction	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Use of technology (where appropriate)	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Delivery (style, pace, audibility, presence)	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Management of the learning experience (student integration and classroom management)	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Delivery adapted to student group	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Checking that learning is taking place	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
Intellectually stimulating, inspirational/passionate teaching	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
<i>Please refer to the following page(s) for comments on the observation</i>					

General feedback - consider aspects such as appropriateness of level, is the content up-to-date, accurate use of examples, research-informed, lecturers subject knowledge, etc.

- Paula started her session with good introduction outlining purpose and learning outcomes. Session was held in the Library, DMLL Grass. Main screen in the room did not work and could not be repaired. Space was booked well in advance, yet no one informed Paula and she had to improvise on the spot. She did it really well, no signs of panic or discomfort. Luckily for this session, use of screen was secondary.
- Paula was well prepared for the session. Choice of her samples was excellent, as she could make her points visually strong and easy for students to understand.
- Session lasted about an hour. It had a clear introduction, exercise/discussion and conclusion/closure with Q&A. Timing was perfect: it started on time and finished on time.
- Session was well paced. Introduction of any new concepts was done fluently, so it was easy for students to pick up and build upon.
- 16 students were present and only 2 were slightly late for the session. Cohort has 95 students, so this was workshop for one of the groups (there are 4 in total).
- At times noise from the next room was unbearable (very loud music and talking/laughing). Paula managed it well and had to keep her voice loud to be heard. I was struggling to hear students and in the end had to intervene.
- Students were attentive and engaged. A small group did not participate fully in the exercise and acted as 'observers'. Paula subtly encouraged them using position of their seating as 'the best viewing position to tell the story'.
- During the session Paula was in continuous dialogue with students. They were leading and Paula questioned their choices, making them aware of the process they are going through. She then provided theoretical background for their choices. At times, she reminded them and quizzed them on their knowledge from the previous sessions.
- At every step Paula explained process very clearly with lots of relevant examples. Her up-to-date knowledge of the subject was evident.
- She did summarise at the end of the session with help from the students. Even the less engaging students did contribute, which means that they fully understand the session. Their lack of full participation could be just an issue of personal shyness. The end of the session was used to reinforce her message and learning outcomes of the session.
- As session was held in the Library, Paula encouraged students to explore Library after the session. She reminded them of their next session and to use Moodle for module materials.

- This practical workshop/seminar was a mock-up of students' assignment. For this level of students so early in the academic year it is an excellent idea, particularly if it is their first assignment. Through this exercise they strengthened their knowledge and were shown practically how to address the assignment successfully.

Strengths - *identification of strengths and best practice, e.g. internationalisation, use of technology to enhance teaching, innovative practice, etc.*

- Paula is very eloquent and confident in her presentation. Her explanations were clear and supported by the relevant materials and examples.
- Session was well prepared and delivered. She clearly explained what is expected from the students for the task.
- She is adaptable at short notice, e.g. she was not distracted by the problem with screen. She also modified session. She observed in the previous workshop that students were too indecisive when she asked them to choose 2 images from the group of images she had provided. For this session, she asked students to choose 1 image. That did not distract from the intended learning outcome, but pace of the session was more appropriate.
- Responses to questions were positive and knowledgeable. Good explanations of relevance of theory.
- She is fully aware of participation of all students and encourages students' engagement.
- All her materials are on Moodle and she encouraged students to use them.
- Students are relaxed around her, nevertheless their respect for her is clear.

Suggested Areas for Development

It is hard to recommend something, as this was specific workshop/seminar. Due to technical problems (that are not fault of Paula) I was not able to see the link between her intended digital presentation and the practical exercise students did.

Part 3 – (Outcome)

Further Action (this should be jointly discussed and agreed by the observer and lecturer)

Selma's feedback allowed me to objectively observe my strengths and potential areas of development. The idea of working together with the students in a 'dress-rehearsal' format for their actual assignment seemed particularly well received. This is something I will take forward.

Selma pointed out interesting parallels between the physical approach that this session fostered and the potential integration of digital software. This has prompted me to expand the session in the future and allow space for digital interpretation of the same task. This would give students a holistic view of different design processes and equip them with a critical understand between the pros and cons of each process.

Lecturers Comments

Lecturer's Signature:



Date: 20 December 2017

Observer's Signature:



Date: 20th December 2017

Part 4 – (Observer to complete and to discuss with lecturer as necessary)

Institutional Feedback for Action

a) quality of the learning environment / accommodation for teaching and learning

b) Opportunity identified to generate session for Academic Professional Development (i.e. best practice to share)