

DES 185 - Exhibition Design

Engaging people with objects and narratives in spatial environments

DES 185 Exhibition Design, Winter Quarter 2023

Class: Tuesday/Thursday 1:10–4:00 p.m. Cruess Hall 208

Instructor: Professor Tim McNeil

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Web: <https://storiedspaces.faculty.ucdavis.edu/tim-mcneil/>

UC Davis exhibition and experience design: <https://storiedspaces.faculty.ucdavis.edu/>

TA: TBD

Email: TBD

Design Drop-ins (office hours): Tuesday/Thursday 4:15–5:00 p.m. or by appointment (ask questions, share project work and interests, or simply have a chat). Zoom room: <https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/5300212369>

Please complete the [course survey](#) by 11:59 p.m. on January 13.

Course Overview

Design of cultural and commercial exhibition environments. Exhibition research, concept development, object selection and spatial planning. Design of display furniture, object staging, architectural finishes, exhibition interpretive strategies and graphics.

Course Description

Exhibition design shapes environments ranging from museums and cultural institutions to commercial trade shows, branded environments, and global expositions. It is one of the most inter-disciplinary of the design fields, encompassing: architecture, interior, lighting, graphic, digital media, and industrial design. Exhibition design is primarily concerned with how to communicate an object-led narrative to an audience in an engaging manner. Interpretive strategies using spatial planning, furniture, lighting, graphics, audio, film, and new media enhance the delivery of this narrative.

The principles of exhibition design have undergone significant transformation in the last 30 years. Designers now not only devise innovative approaches to the display of artifacts and the communication of stories, but they also design experiences for audience engagement, interaction, and participation. Teamwork is crucial in the exhibition design process and includes experts, artifact conservators, writers, educators, and technical specialists. The exhibition designer needs to understand the multi-disciplinary nature of the field and its many areas to facilitate successful and appropriate design solutions.

Exhibition content is relayed through multiple levels (intellectually as well as participatory), and designing an exhibition is like telling a story in three-dimensions. This course will focus on the theoretical planning and design of an exhibition space, and the process will follow a professional design studio model through four specific phases: (1) developing an exhibition narrative and concept (how will you tell the story?), (2) spatial planning and object placement (how will you organize the story?), (3) exhibition staging (what will the story look like?), and (4) visual language and information delivery (how will you communicate the story?).

Each phase will introduce information organization, sketch visualization, architectural drawing, model making, object display and conservation standards, exhibition design principles and presentation techniques. The exhibition design process and final design intent will be documented in a professional quality presentation. The means and methods of designing an exhibition environment will be explored through group learning activities, lectures, studio assignments, critiques, and fieldwork. While pragmatic concerns will be stressed in all phases, experimentation is highly encouraged. Individual instruction and group discussion will occur regularly to foster the generation of ideas and monitor progress.

Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes

Module/Phase	Student learning outcomes	Teaching assessments	Learning experiences
Design history and context	Demonstrate an understanding of exhibition design context and contemporary practice	Group case studies Precedence/best practice research Written summary Oral/visual presentation Reflection	Present case studies to the class for discussion and peer review
Design principles and methodologies	Demonstrate an understanding of the design principles associated with creating exhibitions	Games Group work exercises Quiz Oral/visual presentation	Participate in group class activities and rapid response ideation exercises
Design research and concept (phase 1)	Accurately measure and document exhibition constraints: site, audience, story, and content	Lectures with reflection and discussion Group based curation of content Role playing Project proposal Mind maps Written summary Oral/visual presentation Experiential learning	Develop an exhibition brief, object list and spatial massing studies
Design development and detailing (phase 2–4)	Demonstrate proficiency with the design tools to create exhibitions	Lectures with reflection and discussion Skill performance Lab/studio exercises Oral/visual presentation Interviews	Develop scale model, floorplan, sketches and renderings of exhibition space and exhibition graphic identity
Design documentation and presentation (phase 5)	Prepare, practice, and refine written, visual, and oral design presentation techniques	Oral/visual presentation Group assessment Skill performance	Develop a design intent document/process book and final presentation

Summary of Course Topics

- Exhibition Design history, principles, and methodologies
- Exhibition planning, marketing, and curatorial practice
- Spatial analysis, interpretive exhibit strategies and accessible design
- Object placement, staging and conservation
- Display furniture, architectural details, materials, and finishes
- Color and lighting in the exhibition environment
- Exhibition identity and promotional graphics
- Construction and installation specifications

Summary of Course Assignments

The course is broken down into six sections: introduction to exhibition design, four main themes that address the exhibition design process, and a final presentation. Using a scaffold learning approach, each section has an assignment that builds on the other. These assignments are phases in one larger project which concludes with the design intent documentation for an exhibition. The phases are “rolling” which means students can return to each one to incorporate feedback and make changes

before the final project is completed at the end of the quarter. Each phase has a hard due date which is graded. The phases represent a check-in point to keep the project on track, and for instructor and peer review assessment. Course assignments include independent and group visual thinking exercises during class sessions, projects to introduce the discipline of exhibition design and allow students to share their backgrounds and interests, and a main project in five phases with group work and/or peer review sharing opportunities.

- Week 0–1: Project 1.0 - Exhibition design introduction and methodologies
- Week 2–3: Project 2.1 - Exhibition content and development
- Week 4–5: Project 2.2 - Exhibition spatial planning and object placement
- Week 6–7: Project 2.3 - Exhibition staging, atmosphere, and interpretation
- Week 8–9: Project 2.4 - Exhibition visual language and graphic identity
- Week 10: Project 2.5 - Exhibition design presentation and design intent

Summary of Course Schedule and Activities

Each class is divided into three main parts with homework:

1. Warm-up visual thinking and presentation exercises – 15 mins
2. Lecture/reading with group discussion – 45 mins
3. Studio and project work – 110 mins
4. Project homework – 3 hours (outside of class time)

Winter 2023 Quarter Schedule						
1.0 Exhibition design methodologies						
WEEK 1	Jan 10	Lecture - course introduction; overview of project 01 / Studio – project 01	Jan 12	Lecture - introduction to exhibition design; overview of project 02 / Studio – project 01		PROJECT 01 DUE SUNDAY JAN 15 @ 11:59 P.M.
2.1 Exhibition content and development						
WEEK 2	Jan 17	PROJECT 01 – presentation / Studio – project 2.1	Jan 19	Lecture – exhibition audience and narrative / Studio – project 2.1		Reading - <i>Understanding Museum Visitors' Motivations and Learning</i> , John Falk, 2018
WEEK 3	Jan 24	Lecture – exhibition Journey / Studio – project 2.1 Guest speaker: Temeka Davies @ 1:15 p.m.	Jan 26	Lecture – exhibition space and form; overview of project 2.2 / Studio – project 2.1		PROJECT 2.1 DUE SUNDAY JAN 29 @ 11:59 P.M.
2.2 Exhibition spatial planning and object placement						
WEEK 4	Jan 31	PROJECT 2.1 – Presentation / Studio – project 2.2 Field trip – Manetti Shrem Museum (1:10p)	Feb 2	Lecture – exhibition spectacle / Studio – project 2.2		Reading - <i>Exhibition Language</i> , Hermann Kossmann, 2010
WEEK 5	Feb 7	Lecture – exhibition atmosphere / Studio – project 2.2	Feb 9	Lecture – exhibition staging; overview of project 2.3 / Studio – project 2.2		PROJECT 2.2 DUE SUNDAY FEB 12 @ 11:59 P.M.
2.3 Exhibition staging, atmosphere, and interpretation						

WEEK 6	Feb 14	PROJECT 2.2 – Presentation / Studio – project 2.3	Feb 16	Lecture – exhibition constraints / Studio – project 2.3		Reading - <i>Advocacy for Design</i> , Polly McKenna-Cress, 2013
WEEK 7	Feb 21	Lecture – exhibition immersion / Studio – project 2.3	Feb 23	Lecture – exhibition wonder; overview of project 2.4 / Studio – project 2.3. Guest speaker - TBD	Feb 24 Field trip: Chabot Science Center (optional)	PROJECT 2.3 DUE SUNDAY FEB 26 @ 11:59 P.M.
2.4 Exhibition visual language and graphic identity						
WEEK 8	Feb 28	PROJECT 2.3 - Presentation / Studio – project 2.4	Mar 2	Lecture – exhibition communication / Studio – project 2.4		Reading – <i>Environmental Graphic Design</i> , Polly McKenna-Cress, 2013
WEEK 9	Mar 7	Lecture – exhibition learning / Studio – project 2.4	Mar 9	Lecture – exhibition evaluation: overview of project 2.5 / Studio – project 2.4		PROJECT 2.4 DUE SUNDAY MAR 12 @ 11:59 P.M.
2.5 Exhibition design presentation and intent						
WEEK 10	Mar 14	PROJECT 2.4 – Presentation / Studio – project 2.5	Mar 16	Lecture – exhibition design production / Studio – project 2.5		PROJECT 2.5 DUE SUNDAY MAR 19 @ 11:59 P.M.
<p><u>Finals week: There is no final exam on Mar 22</u></p>						

Recommended Reading

These books will help you explore exhibition/experience design context, planning, development, and design intent:

- *Exhibition Design* by Philip Hughes, Lawrence King, 2015 (book focus - exhibition design process)
- *Creating Exhibitions*, by Polly McKenna-Cress and Janet A. Kamien, Wiley 2013 (book focus - exhibition planning and teams)
- *Narrative Spaces: On the Art of Exhibiting* by Kossmann, Mulder, Oudsten, 010 Publishing 2012 (book focus - exhibition design history and context)

Readings and design documents will be assigned for review from the “files” section on the Canvas site.

See Prof. McNeil’s bibliography and reference list for further resources, articles, and books.

Pre-requisite Courses

Required: DES 1, DES 14 or 21, DES 15, DES 16

Recommended: DES 50 (3D Design), DES 150 (CAD), DES 115 (Typography), or DES 186 (Environmental Graphics) and/or DES 187 (Narrative Environments)

Course Units

This course counts for four units of undergraduate academic credit at UC Davis. Each unit equates to six hours of in-class and six hours of homework outside the classroom per week. This is based on what is known as the [Carnegie Rule](#). Please take into consideration this time commitment and allow at least 12 hours per week for this course.

Grading

Class participation (10%); Project 1 (10%); Project 2 phases 1–4 (40%); Final process book and presentation (40%)

A = 90–100 pts. Your work is excellent. You exceeded expectations. Your research is thoughtful and extensive. You explored many different approaches. You were completely engaged by the project and realized your ideas with

B = 80–89 pts.	sophisticated ability. You presented your work in a highly professional manner. You were consistently prepared and met all project deadlines. You excelled in demonstrating your understanding of the project. Your work is very good. You went beyond just meeting the expectations of the class, but there are some issues still needing attention. Your research and realization is very good. You met deadlines and were prepared. You were able to show that you understand the project.
C = 70–79 pts.	Your work is good and met average standard. You met the expectations of the class but did not put in any extra effort to go further.
D = 60–69 pts.	Your work is poor. You did not meet all the expectations of the class.
F = > 59 pts.	Your work is unacceptable and far below the expectations of this class

Grades are determined by:

- your work, methodology and design originality
- your ability to explore, develop and refine a wide range of solutions
- your ability to clearly communicate your ideas in person, in images and words
- your active participation in critiques and work sessions
- your response to feedback and willingness to ideate and find solutions
- your craft and professionalism, quality of presentation
- your notebooks, sketches, and documentation of ideas
- your attendance and completing assignments by the specified deadlines
- your active participation and engagement in group/peer review work

Grading rubrics are used for the primary assignments and can be found on Canvas. Consult these rubrics so that you know which elements are due and how work will be assessed. Your final grade is not necessarily an accumulation of assignment grades, but rather a weighted consideration of the above. Grades will be posted on Canvas.

Materials

These materials will be useful to you for this course and other design courses: sketchbook/tracing pad/roll and markers, digital camera, Olfa knife and blades, metal ruler and self-healing cutting mat, white drafting tape, UHU Tac and glues, model making, and mounting materials as needed and specified by the instructor.

Computer Equipment and Software

Access to a laptop or computer with the capability to run the basic design software for this course is highly recommended. The following software (or an equivalent) will allow you to complete the assignments successfully: SketchUp (plans, elevations and 3D modelling, the basic version is available for free online). Other CAD software such as Vectorworks, AutoCAD and Rhino are industry standards that can also be used and are more robust for design detailing; Adobe Suite – specifically InDesign (final presentation book, graphics, and design intent documentation), Illustrator (elevations, modelling, and graphic identity), Photoshop (image adjustment and composition), Acrobat (viewing and editing design documents and sharing with the group).

No laptop - the Cruess Hall and campus computer labs contain the software and are available. Other options:

1. If possible, buy your own copy of Adobe Creative Cloud. This will be the best experience and if you are a design major you will use it all year.
2. Use the [UC Davis virtual lab](https://ucdavis.edu/virtual-lab) if access to a laptop that can run Creative Cloud is a barrier, the campus has loaner laptops available to students: <https://keep-teaching.ucdavis.edu/student-resources/need-wi-fi>. (Note you will still need to purchase a Creative Cloud license to run on a loaner laptop—the license is not included.)
3. Use open-source alternatives (free options) such as:
 - Photoshop: GIMP <https://www.gimp.org/>
 - Illustrator: Inkscape <https://inkscape.org/>
 - InDesign: Scribus <https://www.scribus.net/>

These alternatives are not the design industry standard.

IMPORTANT – This course will not teach computer software applications. Quick individual or group tutorials will occur when needed, however, it is expected that students will have a basic understanding of the software used per the pre-requisites.

Expectations and In-class Etiquette

Attendance is required for all classes unless instructed otherwise. This allows for an active studio atmosphere where everyone can learn from each other, and the instructor can guide you and introduce basic design principles and methods. The act of design is participatory and hands-on, students learn best by doing, observing, and listening. Engaging in peer critiques and studying the work of other students on the course is the most effective way to learn and at the heart of design education.

Please be on time for all classes, lectures, studio work and critiques unless instructed otherwise. If you are not on time and consistently late this will lower your final participation grade by 0.5 pt. for each time it occurs. Studio time is valuable. It's essential for the collaborative design process and difficult to make up, so please remain for the entire duration of the class unless excused. Email instructor/TA in advance with a valid reason prior to missing a class. Two absences are allowed during the quarter for unforeseen circumstances unless agreed otherwise with the instructor in advance.

Please attend all project presentations and meet the assignment deadlines. Late work will not be accepted, and you will forfeit a grade unless an arrangement has been made with the instructor in advance and a valid reason presented. Because design is an iterative process it is better to present a project incomplete and on time rather than not at all. Studio time is precious, please do not use it to work on other non-course related projects.

Mobile tablets and laptops should be closed during lecture, discussion, and field trips unless they are exclusively being used for note taking. Project research and work should be conducted on laptops and/or department lab computers and not on mobile phones. During class time, your cell phone, or its equivalent, must be turned off or be set to vibrate/silent. Plan on being present in class and developing efficient work habits. Studies show that multi-tasking is not effective. Searching the Internet, checking email, instant messaging, social media etc. take away from your ability to participate fully in class. Participation counts for 10% of your grade – this can sometimes be the difference between one letter grade and the next.

Zoom Etiquette (if online instruction is required)

The instructor realizes the challenges posed by the online and remote learning environment. This course has been adapted from the in-person version to suit this format and the content and group work has been reduced. Please let the instructor know if you run into any difficulties or have concerns about the privacy issues that online education creates, and we will attempt to find a workable solution. When using Zoom:

- Prepare your physical location and ensure you have a stable internet connection
- Use a headset with a microphone for the best audio quality
- Please sign-in for classes with the Zoom link on Canvas or sent by email in advance using the meeting password
- Arrive at least a few minutes early for each online class session to get settled and say hello
- Make sure your username is the one you'd like to use on the screen and so the instructor can identify you
- Add your pronouns (optional) and your geographic location (e.g. Davis) next to your name (also optional)
- Create a better and more collaborative class environment by turning on your video so that the instructor can see you (optional with consent of instructor) especially if you are talking in lecture or studio sessions
- Avoid distracting backgrounds and use good front facing lighting
- Mute your audio unless you are speaking and minimize any background noise
- Follow the chat and hand raising etiquette provide by the instructor or TA at the beginning of each module/class
- Some content will be shared in advance and all-class lectures/presentations will be recorded and available afterwards
- Be prepared to share your screen to present your work
- Third-party software such as Google products may be used to share and comment on work
- Canvas is our virtual classroom, and we will communicate, collaborate, and share through this portal as much as possible
- Attend the entire Zoom class unless instructed otherwise
- Try to avoid eating during the Zoom class session – drinking is okay
- Discuss any technical or privacy issues in advance with the instructor or TA

Due to the challenges of remote instruction and learning, accommodations, and alternative ways of working to the expectations listed below will be allowed. Everyone must attend the first half of scheduled class times for warm-up activities and short lectures (this is synchronous and will be recorded). The second half of class is studio time and students may opt to work independently (offline and asynchronous). The instructor will let students know if they need to check-in at the end of the class period. The instructor will go over the schedule in advance of each class. Please seek guidance from the instructor about any difficulties you may anticipate or encounter due to the remote learning environment.

Resources that make UC Davis a better to place live, learn, and thrive

Accommodations:

The instructor aims to make the learning community as inclusive as possible and welcomes discussion about how we can promote your full participation in this class. If you come across materials that are not accessible to you or experience a barrier to your participation in this class, please bring this to the instructor's attention.

If you have a disability, the instructor welcomes an opportunity to informally discuss your needs in office hours or by appointment. If you prefer, feel free to bring a friend or advocate to your meetings. In addition, the instructor encourages you to contact the Student Disability Center (SDC) at (530) 752-3184 or sdc@ucdavis.edu to set up official accommodations. It can take time to implement accommodations, so if you plan to request them, do so within the first two weeks of class. If you have not registered with SDC considerable additional delays are likely.

Securing formal accommodations may be inaccessible or present additional barriers to you. If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to reach out to the instructor.

UC Davis Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

<https://diversity.ucdavis.edu/>

UC Davis's commitment to social mobility is part of its DNA, which is to say that attention to issues of institutional diversity, systemic inclusion, social equity is paramount to maintaining our relevance to our students, patients, employees, and community.

UC Davis Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs

<https://ossja.ucdavis.edu/>

Upholds standards of academic honesty and responsible behavior, promoting student development, and assisting students in need.

UC Davis Aggie Mental Health

<https://mentalhealth.ucdavis.edu/>

This website is a one-stop-shop for student mental health resources. It is meant to be utilized by students, staff, and faculty as we work together to collectively raise awareness about mental health.

UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct

<https://supportjudicialaffairs.sf.ucdavis.edu/code-academic-conduct>

Familiarize yourself with what it means to be always honest. Take group as well as individual responsibility for honorable behavior. Collectively, as well as individually, make every effort to prevent and avoid academic misconduct, and report acts of misconduct that you witness.

UC Davis Principles of Community

<https://diversity.ucdavis.edu/principles-community>

Diversity – a defining feature of California's past, present, and future – refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and world views that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender,

age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and geographic region, and more.

UC Davis Accommodations and Accessibility

<https://sdc.ucdavis.edu/>

Reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities can be made by talking with the professor as early in the quarter as possible; solutions that benefit one student can end up benefiting the class, so please feel free to come forward with any questions or suggestions.

UC Davis Harassment & Discrimination Assistance and Prevention Program

<https://hdapp.ucdavis.edu/>

Supports the university's commitment to a harassment and discrimination-free work and learning environment.

UC Davis Student Resources

<https://ebeler.faculty.ucdavis.edu/resources/fag-student-resources/>

For questions about academic support, health and wellness, careers and internships, and the campus community.

UC Davis Remote Instruction and Learning

<https://keep-teaching.ucdavis.edu/student-resources>

Includes information about learning effectively while engaging in remote instruction and accessing tech tools and tips.

UC Davis University Writing Program

<https://writing.ucdavis.edu/>

Offers courses to improve writing and help multi-language students.

UC Davis Global Affairs

<https://globalaffairs.ucdavis.edu/siss>

Services for international students and scholars.

UC Davis College of Letters & Science Academic Advising and other useful information

<https://lettersandscience.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk276/files/files/page/UC%20DAVIS%20101%20-%20A%20Quick%20Reference%20Guide.pdf>

Making Informed Design Choices

McNeil's Three-R's

This course introduces a variety of design development techniques and ideation methods for working through the design process. The course will stress how important it is to justify the philosophical underpinnings and practical roots that support the design decisions you make and how this helps to gain buy-in from other stakeholders – the why, what, and how. McNeil's 3-R's are critical to this process:

1. State your design Reference (what design elements are you working with?)
2. Explain your design Reasoning (how will the constraints and attributes dictate the design direction?)
3. Develop your design Rationale (why is your design solution the right solution?)

Some examples of using the 3-R's to justify your design decisions in an exhibition environment:

Exhibition space: you are designing the dividing wall configurations for an exhibition on skateboard culture (reference); the exhibition will be popular, the objects mostly flat, and the story is very linear (reasoning); therefore, the exhibition will have curved walls and the floor will be slightly ramped to evoke a skatepark, a continuous walkway will vary in width to mimic the curvature of a longboard but wide enough to accommodate many people (rationale).

Exhibition furniture: you want to display the winning basketball in an exhibition on the L.A. Lakers (reference); the ball is round, will deflate over time, people will want to touch (reasoning); therefore, the ball will be temporarily anchored so it doesn't roll, placed inside a glass display box so it can't be touched, the box has a door that can be opened to access and inflate the ball (rationale).

Exhibition color: you are choosing a wall color for the entrance of an exhibition on Chinese textiles (reference); for conservation reasons the space is dark and introduces people to traditional Chinese silk robes (reasoning); therefore, the color will be light to compensate for the low light and derived from the yellow silk pigment in the many robes on display (rationale).

Visual Thinking Exercises

Rapid assignments at the beginning, middle or end of each class

<https://knowwithoutborders.org/visual-thinking-with-mind-mapping/>

Module/Phase	Student learning outcomes	Teaching assessments	Learning experiences
Design principles and methodologies	Demonstrate an understanding of the design principles associated with creating exhibitions	Games Group work exercises Quiz Oral/visual presentation	Participate in group class activities and rapid response ideation exercises

Keep a journal that contains notes, ideas, sketches, drawings, diagrams, photographs, and clippings that respond to class based visual thinking exercises and exploratory work for all course projects (this journal will not be graded, it is for your own personal use).

Creativity is at the heart of good design. It is a quality that is highly valued, but not always well understood. Those who study and write about creativity stress the importance of a kind of flexibility of mind. Studies have shown that creative individuals are more spontaneous, expressive, and less controlled or inhibited. They also tend to trust their own judgement and ideas — they are not afraid of trying something new.

A common misunderstanding equates creativity with originality. In fact, there are very few original ideas. Most of what seems to be original is simply a bringing together of previously existing concepts in a new way. Psychologist and author Arthur Koestler referred to this merging of apparently unrelated ideas as [bisociation](#). Koestler reasoned that creativity is the ability to see connections and relationships where others have not. Thinking in intuitive, non-verbal, and visual terms has been shown to enhance creativity in all disciplines. See [An Introduction to Design Thinking: Process Guide](#).

Your journal begins its life on the first day of class. Over the next ten weeks multiple rapid creative design challenges will be assigned during the class sessions – the ideas and proposals for these design challenges should be captured in the journal. A successful journal (hard bound sketchbook 8.5 x 11 inches) shows experimentation and steady progress throughout the course. It contains sketches and drawings that are observational (from life), transformative (using conventions like perspective) and speculative (from imagination). See Professor Tom Maiorana's video on [rapid visual communication](#) to help with sketching technique.

Project 01 – DUE WEEK 1

Exhibition Design Methodologies

Exhibition design is a broad and complex field. Best precedence examples of exhibitions provide inspiration, introduce this dynamic discipline, and the range of exhibition topics. Consult the [course bibliography](#) for links to exhibition design studios and their work.

Module/Phase	Student learning outcomes	Teaching assessments	Learning experiences
Design history and context	Demonstrate an understanding of exhibition design context and contemporary practice	Group case studies Precedence/best practice Research Written summary Oral/visual presentation Reflection	Present case studies to the class for discussion and peer review

STEP 1: Working independently select a current or past museum exhibition (online) that reflects your personal interests and/or relates to who you are and your identity. For example, if your family heritage is Scottish, you might choose the [science and technology galleries](#) at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. These were designed by Metaphor.

STEP 2: Tell us why you selected the exhibition and how it connects to you. If possible, identify who designed the exhibition and whether it was an in-house or contract design team – provide a link to their studio. Most museums archive their exhibitions with photographs on their website. Finding the name of the designer is not always easy so do your best.

STEP 3: Develop and design a single slide that includes (1) name of exhibition, venue, the dates it was on view, your name; (2) brief summary of what the exhibition is about, why you chose it and who is the designer (approx. 100 words); (3) photographs of the exhibition space and/or objects in the exhibition with brief captions that describe the exhibition design features (1–3 images). Try to speculate on the type of experience the audience had in the exhibition. Film and media links can be substituted for photographs if available but need to be linked in the file.

STEP 4: The final presentation should consist of 1 slide. Upload as a single PDF file to Canvas for class presentation and grading. Use <https://www.ilovepdf.com/> to keep the file size below 20MB. Name the file using your last name and, in this format, (185W23_lastname_00.pdf) and present to the class (via Zoom if online).

Project 02 - OVERVIEW

Exhibition Design Process

Work in teams of three (content, spatial, graphic). Plan, develop and design an object-based exhibition responding to the following prompt:

Exhibition Theme: FOOTWEAR (explore through a visual response with objects – fashion, furniture, photography, sculpture, paintings, products, books, textiles, film, graphics etc.). This years’ theme coincides with the Chris Francis exhibition taking place in the UC Davis Design Museum. Student teams should explore their topic broadly, expand the notion of footwear, and move it beyond shoes to think about community engagement, contested histories, multiple voices/perspectives, and de-colonialization.

Exhibition Objects: Choose 80–100 objects to display in the exhibition that relate to your theme (this does not include equipment or elements to interpret or facilitate the work). These can be mixed media, but they can’t all be flat – at least 25% of the objects you choose must be three-dimensional. For example: an exhibition about footwear in the entertainment industry could combine photographs and movie costume. Dream big on this one. Consider objects of various sizes, different mediums, and makers.

Exhibition Venue: Use the temporary exhibition space at the [Manetti Shrem Museum of Art](#) (see drawing file on Canvas). The space must be sub-divided with partitions into a series of spaces that respond to your topic and sub-themes. The exhibition space is 5,360 sq. feet. It is not a requirement to use all the space if your exhibition is better suited to a smaller area. Explore all of the ways to divide up the space and let the exhibition theme and content influence the outcome. Visit the Manetti Shrem Museum space to better understand its features and design constraints. Use the museum’s wordmark (logo) for any publicity materials and graphics. The exhibition graphics do not have to follow the museum’s graphic identity.

Design Intent: Create a professional looking design process book that captures the exhibition concept, general design choices and rationale – what’s called “design intent.” The document should convey a narrative that self-guides someone through the exhibition and its design story. Each chapter constitutes a phase of the project broken down into content development, spatial planning, object staging, and graphic identity. Each page of the document should include a consistent title block with the name of the project, phase, designer, date, and course. This document is an excellent portfolio piece that demonstrates to future employers the author’s ability to carry a project from research, to concept, and design development phase. Use and refer to the exhibition design process [book template](#) for guidance.

Project 02, phase 1 – DUE WEEK 3
Exhibition Content and Development

Module/Phase	Student learning outcomes	Teaching assessments	Learning experiences
Design research and concept (phase 1)	Accurately measure and document exhibition constraints: site, audience, story, and content	Lectures with reflection and discussion Group based curation of content Role playing Project proposal Mind maps Written summary Oral/visual presentation Experiential learning	Develop an exhibition brief, object list and spatial massing studies

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: Phase 1 of this project concentrates on exhibition planning and concept development, a research process that can take several years depending on the complexity of the exhibition. The process involves curators, specialists, and other experts as well as designers. This research phase results in an exhibition brief (summary of the exhibition goals and objectives) and object list (details about the items to be displayed).

DESIGN PROCESS: The designer serves as the “interpreter” of the exhibition content. They layer the content into the exhibition space, formulate the initial spatial plan, and help to organize the exhibition themes and objects into groups and relationships. Chronology, theme, maker, media, geography, scale, color, and comparison are possible approaches to group the content and convey the exhibition story. With the content in place, it’s then time to plan the experience, structure the story, and devise the exhibition path.

PHASE 01 OVERVIEW: Develop a brief and object list based on the [template](#) for the exhibition. Include a description of the exhibition, the audience, and any key information. The object list should contain a thumbnail image of each object in the exhibition listed with a sequential exhibition item number, the name, dimensions, and media for each object. Begin to loosely plan out the exhibition space using a series of massing studies based on the sections, content divisions and the perceived spatial needs of your exhibition and the number/size of the objects. Review past student examples for this phase on Canvas. Employ McNeil’s 3Rs (state your design Reference, explain your design Reasoning, develop your design Rationale).

STEP 1: **Exhibition brief:** Select an exhibition topic. Study any reference materials and websites. Research your topic and develop an exhibition brief based on the [template](#) provided noting the big idea, audience, learning objectives, interpretive goals, special object conservation and design requirements, promotional considerations, security, sponsorship, and merchandise opportunities (1 page).

STEP 2: **Object list:** Gather 80–100 objects for the exhibition using online sources. Develop a detailed object list with images. Caption each image with an exhibition object item number, object name, date, maker, media, and approximate dimensions (6 pages).

STEP 3: **Exhibition concepts:** Develop a narrative for the exhibition, how the story will unfold in the space, the visitor experience (beginning, middle, and end), and various ways the objects can be grouped in the space, their relationships and

main exhibition themes. Produce at least 3 different massing studies on top of the exhibition floor plan, note the direction people will move through the space with arrows (1 page).

STEP 4: **Peer review:** Compile steps 1–3 into a single document for review. Use 11 x 17-inch page format. Include the exhibition’s name, designer(s), and design completion date no bigger than 10 pt. on each page (see [template](#)).

STEP 5: **Deliverables:** The final document should consist of 8 pages (brief; object list; concepts). Upload phase 01 as a single PDF file to Canvas for class presentation and grading. Use <https://www.ilovepdf.com/> to keep the file size below 20MB. Name the file using your last name and, in this format, (185W23_lastname_01.pdf) and present to the class (via Zoom if online).

Project 2, phase 02 – DUE WEEK 5

Exhibition Spatial Planning and Object Placement

Module/Phase	Student learning outcomes	Teaching assessments	Learning experiences
Design development and detailing (phase 2–4)	Demonstrate proficiency with the design tools to create exhibitions	Lectures with reflection and discussion Skill performance Lab/studio exercises Oral/visual presentation Interviews	Develop scale model, floorplan, sketches and renderings of exhibition space and exhibition graphic identity

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: Phase 02 in the design process seeks input, builds consensus, and gains approvals from the various stakeholders involved in the exhibition planning. Scale floor plans and models are a useful tool to explore the potential of the exhibition space because they allow multiple people to share, view, and physically interact with the exhibition elements and provide feedback during the process.

DESIGN PROCESS: The designer tests the boundaries and form of the space, determines if the selected objects will fit, applies the principles of accessible design, and is mindful of the intended audience and that ALL people can be accommodated safely in the exhibition. Consideration at this stage should be given to whether the space is intimate or open, the visitor flow directed or un-directed, the floor elevated, the ceiling dropped, the height, length, and shape of walls or dividers, parts of the space are closed off or turned into rooms for films or activities, the most important objects are on sight lines and in prominent locations. The exhibition sequencing should create surprise, vary the experience, and keep people engaged.

PHASE 02 OVERVIEW: Create a simple scale model of the exhibition space and add spatial divisions according to the exhibition sections. Place scaled objects in the model and arrange them in the intended sequence and section groupings. Explore multiple exhibition layouts and spatial configurations. Render a draft floorplan of the exhibition space once a preferred design has been determined using the scale model. Review past student examples for this phase on Canvas. Employ McNeil’s 3-Rs (state your design Reference, explain your design Reasoning, develop your design Rationale).

STEP 1: **Scale model:** Print out the museum [gallery floor plan](#) (“file” section on Canvas) as a guide to construct a scale model (1/4 in = 1 ft.) of the permanent exhibition space with the existing perimeter walls and openings. Use simple materials such as foam core or cardboard for the base and walls and glue them together (approx. model base size will be 26 x 24 in.). Make temporary walls/dividers and insert them in the space. Experiment with a variety of layouts and object configurations. Sub-divide the space based on the themes, object sequence, and massing studies from phase 01. Do not fix down the temporary walls/dividers or other additions (use pins or removable tape) so that the spatial planning can continue in the next phase.

STEP 2: **Scale objects:** Print and cutout scaled images from the object list or cut out pieces of paper to represent the objects (approximately 1/4 in = 1 ft.). Position the object cutouts in the scale model and test various exhibition object arrangements - make sure everything fits in the space. Do not fix down the cutouts (use pins or removable tape) so that the object staging can continue in the next phase. Photograph the completed scale model from different angles and arrange the photographs on a single page with brief explanatory captions (1 page).

STEP 3: **Floor plan:** Determine the preferred exhibition layout using the scale model and then record it on the floor plan. Render the exhibition plan (the floor plan is available on Canvas in formats that can be imported into Vectorworks, Illustrator, or Sketch-Up). Note the scale. The floor plan should include any temporary walls/dividers, new rooms, floor or ceiling changes, and the location

of each object – use the item number from the object list. Label each exhibit section (color code if necessary), interpretive element (e.g., exhibition title location), and entrance/exit on the floor plan (1 page).

STEP 4: **Peer review:** Compile steps 1–3 into a single document for review. Use 11 x 17-inch page format. Include the exhibition’s name, designer(s), and design completion date no bigger than 10 pt. on each page (see [book template](#)).

STEP 5: **Deliverables:** The final document should consist of 2 pages (scale model; floor plan). Upload phase 02 as a single PDF file to Canvas for class presentation and grading. Use <https://www.ilovepdf.com/> to keep the file size below 20MB. Name the file using your last name and, in this format, (185W23_lastname_02.pdf) and present to the class (via Zoom if online). Keep the scale model available for review.

Project 2, phase 03 – DUE WEEK 7

Exhibition Staging, Atmosphere, and Interpretation

Module/Phase	Student learning outcomes	Teaching assessments	Learning experiences
Design development and detailing (phase 2–4)	Demonstrate proficiency with the design tools to create exhibitions	Lectures with reflection and discussion Skill performance Lab/studio exercises Oral/visual presentation Interviews	Develop scale model, floorplan, sketches and renderings of exhibition space and exhibition graphic identity

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: Phase 03 concentrates on the exhibition details and how to evoke an appropriate mood or atmosphere using composition, materials, color, light, and architectural embellishment. The exhibition designer must understand basic construction principles, the appropriate materials to use, how to safely secure and stage objects, and develop interpretive and media elements to tell the exhibition story. The design team works closely with other allied professionals such as exhibition developers and educators, engineers, fabricators, technicians, media developers, and object conservators. It is the designer’s responsibility to provide a set of clear design drawings so that everyone has direction and understands the intent.

DESIGN PROCESS: Object conservators are charged with protecting and taking care of artifacts. They supervise the installation of objects according to a plan outlined by the curator and designer. The designer creates the aesthetic direction for the environment and helps place the objects. This includes the display furniture and/or mounts supporting or protecting an object, the color behind or around an object, and the lighting illuminating an object. A skillful designer emphasizes the content, this may include making interpretive text legible on a wall, a sound-proofed room for a film presentation, situating a key object as the focal point of an installation, or selecting a durable and safe material for people to touch.

PHASE 03 OVERVIEW: This is the most technical part of the exhibition design process. Develop a series of palettes that specify the aesthetic direction and architectural embellishment for the exhibition: color, materials, lighting. Decide if certain objects require display furniture, protection, or elevated pedestals for security and accessible viewing, and if people need somewhere to sit. Provide drawings or reference for what this furniture will look like. Render a series of drawings that capture this information and clearly convey the design intent for the exhibition. Review past student examples for this phase on Canvas. Employ McNeil’s 3-Rs (state your design Reference, explain your design Reasoning, develop your design Rationale).

STEP 1: **Material, color, and lighting palettes:** Develop a design palette to document architectural specifications and materials (e.g., floor finishes, moldings, fabrics), paint color and finishes (e.g., walls, exhibit furniture), lighting intent (e.g., light level, color, any additional light source beyond the existing track lighting). Use 1-inch square swatches for the materials and color palette and specify the name underneath (materials should be specific, e.g., “M.1. birch plywood”) paint colors should name the brand and reference number (e.g., “P.1. [Benjamin Moore](#) - Fire Dance 2171”). On the same page include a version of the floor plan with the wall colors marked as a paint number corresponding to the palette. Document the lighting intent/scenarios with descriptive notes on the same plan (e.g., “dark room for projection” or “spotlights on objects”). Add small reference images from other best precedence examples to help visualize material, color, and lighting effects (1 page).

STEP 2: **Furniture typology:** Display frames, pedestals, cases, platforms, activity units, and public seating should be documented as a system of “typical” furniture elements (a few sample pieces not the entire exhibition). Specify the furniture dimensions in

inches (H x W x L), the materials or colors (reference the palette), any built-in lighting. Include descriptive notations about the design next to the furniture renderings. The furniture can either be designed from the ground up or pulled from existing [off-the-shelf](#) exhibition products - note the source and manufacturer (1 page).

STEP 3: **Exhibition renders:** Produce 4 renderings of [typical exhibition views](#) to promote the overall design intent. Use elevation, cross-section, or perspective drawing conventions to capture viewpoints that show exhibit furniture, object groupings, color palette, architectural details (e.g., walls, flooring), and interpretive graphic elements (e.g., exhibition title, introduction, label). Include [scale people](#) and descriptive notations about the design in the renderings. Include a small floorplan to show the viewpoint. Render the views by hand, CAD, Illustrator, Photoshop, Sketch-Up (2–4 pages – 1–2 renderings per page).

STEP 4: **Peer review:** Compile steps 1–3 into a single document for review. Use 11 x 17-inch page format. Include the exhibition’s name, designer(s), and design completion date no bigger than 10 pt. on each page (see [book template](#)).

STEP 5: **Deliverables:** The final document should consist of 4–6 pages (palettes; furniture; renders). Upload phase 03 as a single PDF file to Canvas for class presentation and grading. Use <https://www.ilovepdf.com/> to keep the file size below 20MB. Name the file using your last name and, in this format, (185W23_lastname_03.pdf) and present to the class (via Zoom if online).

Project 2, phase 04 – DUE WEEK 9

Exhibition Visual Language and Graphic Identity

Module/Phase	Student learning outcomes	Teaching assessments	Learning experiences
Design development and detailing (phase 2–4)	Demonstrate proficiency with the design tools to create exhibitions	Lectures with reflection and discussion Skill performance Lab/studio exercises Oral/visual presentation Interviews	Develop scale model, floorplan, sketches and renderings of exhibition space and exhibition graphic identity

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: The graphic identity for an exhibition must be flexible enough to extend to both inside and outside the exhibition space and applied across a wide variety of formats: from object labels to promotional billboards, websites to brochures. The identity is the public face of the exhibition and is typically the responsibility of a graphic designer working in collaboration with the curator and marketing/communications team. The designer then works with UI/UX designers to push the identity into social media, and signage vendors to realize the identity in the physical world.

DESIGN PROCESS: Exhibition graphics are associated with environmental graphic design and follow many of the same criteria applied to wayfinding and signage systems. They must be legible, quick to read, carefully placed, conscious of the end user, and utilize production techniques that include wide format printing, vinyl lettering, laser cutting, silk screen and a variety of substrates. Each application of the graphic identity should be tailored to suit a particular format and can vary drastically in scale. The text on an object label requires a considered typographic hierarchy, while a promotional banner needs a succinct message for maximum impact. As a rule of thumb, promotional posters and banners display the exhibition title (perhaps abbreviated), the venue logo and run dates. A strong image that captures the essence of the exhibition is crucial, and a carefully selected detail or crop can be very effective.

PHASE 04 OVERVIEW: Develop a graphic identity that responds to and complements the content of the exhibition. Apply the identity to applications outside and inside the exhibition space – keep it simple. Document the components of the graphic identity in a palette that includes specifications for image, color, typography, exhibition title, and museum logo. Render a series of drawings that show applications of the graphic identity in their context. Review past student examples for this phase on Canvas. Employ McNeil’s 3-Rs (state your design Reference, explain your design Reasoning, develop your design Rationale).

STEP 1: Graphic identity: Design a graphic identity for the exhibition and extend into various communication formats. Apply the identity to interior applications: (1) exhibition title treatment (size TBD); (2) introductory text (36 x 48 inch); (3) object label (6 x 7 inch). And exterior applications: (1) set of promotional street banners (96 x 36 inch); (2) bus kiosk poster (60 x 42 inch). Render the object label at actual size and the other applications at a 1:24 scale. Use explanatory captions to describe how

the identity has been used. Decide the final exhibition name for the title treatment. Base the text for the object label on the exhibition content. Feature key image, exhibition title, venue (Manetti Shrem logo) and run dates on the banner and poster.

STEP 2: **Graphic palette:** Develop a design palette for the exhibition graphic identity. Include 1–3 key promotional images from the object list that succinctly capture the exhibition theme (use high-res images), color specifications that complement the exhibition color palette (use 1 inch square swatches for the color palette and specify the name underneath as Pantone/CMYK and RGB), upper and lowercase alphabet blocks that show the typographic palette (consider fonts with a variety of weights and/or mixing sans and sans-serif for typographic hierarchy). Include the logo for the museum venue and the design for the exhibition title treatment (1 page).

STEP 3: **In-situ renders:** Place the graphic identity applications from step 1 into renderings that visualize their scale and context. Draw them at a scale proportional to their surroundings and either in perspective or elevation. Include [scale people](#) and descriptive notations about the design in the renderings. Render the views by hand, CAD, Illustrator, Photoshop, Sketch-Up. If possible, re-use the drawings from phase 03 for the title treatment and object label (3 pages).

STEP 4: **Peer review:** Compile steps 1–3 into a single document for review. Use 11 x 17-inch page format. Include the exhibition’s name, designer(s), and design completion date no bigger than 10 pt. on each page (see [book template](#)).

STEP 5: **Deliverables:** The final document should consist of 4 pages (interior and exterior graphic applications; palette). Upload phase 04 as a single PDF file to Canvas for class presentation and grading. Use <https://www.ilovepdf.com/> to keep the file size below 20MB. Name the file using your last name and, in this format, (185W23_lastname_04.pdf) and present to the class (via Zoom if online).

Project 2, phase 05 – DUE WEEK 10

Exhibition Design Presentation and Design Intent

Module/Phase	Student learning outcomes	Teaching assessments	Learning experiences
Design documentation and presentation (phase 5)	Prepare, practice and refine written, visual and oral design presentation techniques	Oral/visual presentation Group assessment Skill performance	Develop a design intent document and final presentation

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: The designer serves as the conduit between the exhibition content and its implementation in the exhibition environment. Their role is to communicate clearly with the exhibit fabricators, contractors, and the installation team, and to provide the thorough documentation required to realize the exhibition design intent and oversee its production. This means the designer is frequently on-site overseeing the work during the exhibition installation.

DESIGN PROCESS: After the schematic design phases 01–04 the designer produces a design document to summarize the exhibition planning process and the final design intent. This document is presented to the museum planning team for review and feedback, or it goes out to tender for pricing and contract negotiation depending on who will fabricate the project. The next design phase (not in the scope of this project) includes highly detailed construction drawings, fabrication and production specifications that are used to build the exhibition.

PHASE 05 OVERVIEW: Create a final process book that combines all the previous phases of the project. Revisit completed phases to make sure they are current and up to date. Fine-tune the designs as needed. Focus on the presentation of the material and how well the book communicates the design intent and conveys a narrative – beginning, middle and end – the story should stand alone. Use the [book template](#) for guidance and be prepared to present and talk about the project.

STEP 1: **Design intent and process book:** Modify, update and complete phases 01–04 and collate the entire process into a final design intent book - 11 x 17-inch page format. Identify each page with a consistent title block. Refer to the exhibition design process [book template](#) for guidance. Separate the document into the following sections:

- Introduction: cover (use hero shot); contents page; exhibition big idea (3 pages)
- Exhibition Overview: section page; exhibition brief; object list; concept studies (9 pages)
- Exhibition Plan: section page; scale model photos with notations; floor plan indicating thematic divisions and object placement (3 pages)

- Exhibition Details: section page; materials, color, and lighting palettes; furniture typology; exhibition renderings (6–7 pages)
- Exhibition Identity: section page; in-situ renderings with graphic design applications; identity palettes (5 pages)
- Conclusion (appendix): section page; best precedence reference or inspirational images - use [MLA citation](#) style; “about the designers” include images and 100-word bio; peer review summary (4 pages)

STEP 2: **Deliverables and final critique:** Final process book should consist of up to 30 pages (see above). Upload phase 05 as a single PDF file to Canvas for presentation and final grading (see rubric). Use <https://www.ilovepdf.com/> to keep the file size below 50MB. Name the file using your last name and, in this format, (185W23_lastname_05.pdf) and present to the class (via Zoom if online). IMPORTANT – The final book should also be printed and bound.