ADS 442

DESIGN: Senior Project and Portfolio

TR 8:00 am–10:45 am | AJ 318

Spring 2026

COURSE SCHEDULE

FACULTY INFO

Instructor: Ryan James

Email: ryan.james@bsu.edu

Office Phone: (765) 285 3858

Office: AJ 313

Office Hours: TR 12-3 & By appointment

The most effective way to reach me is by email. I respond to emails during the school week. Expect a 24 hrs response time.

COURSE INFORMATION

CREDIT HOURS = 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

ADS442 involves advanced problem-solving in Visual Communication. Refinement of presentation techniques and résumé and portfolio development.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The application of accumulated knowledge and skills to propose and create a culminating project that depends on sound research, reasoned and well-conceived concepts, a rigorous design process, and impeccable presentation skills. Emphasis will be placed on professional and practical design solutions that can be applied to real-world design projects with the intent of positioning the student as an active force within the design profession.

COURSE OVERVIEW

ADS442 is a gateway to the professional world and will provide an opportunity for advanced application of the previously acquired graphic design learning. The design projects are expected to be of high quality in concept and technical execution. The content of

both the creative project and the project write-up will relate to current societal issues with the intent of positioning the student as an active force within the design profession.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply Design Thinking to create human-centered designs to solve the specific problems of your design project
2. Utilize the elements, principles, terms, and theories involved in the study of graphic design effectively in the context of your design project
3. Present design work in a way appropriate to your design project and a professional manner
4. Develop, administer, analyze, and/or compile research of various methods and incorporate findings into design decisions for your design project
5. Support and defend your designs and positions and critically analyze and evaluate the designs of others through critique
6. Utilize industry-standard technology to produce working designs, evaluating and selecting the appropriate technology for the specific problems of your design project
7. Demonstrate knowledge of professional and ethical behaviors and intellectual property issues

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course uses a studio format, meeting either three 1-hour 50-minute sessions or two 2-hour 45-minute sessions per week. This course will be taught in the following methods:

- Lectures and presentations
- Technical instruction and demonstrations
- Class discussions and critiques
- Studio work time

During class time, students will have the opportunity to work on their projects. Attendance for all classes is mandatory, and students are expected to actively participate in discussions and provide critiques for their own and their peers' work. The critique sessions aim to enhance communication skills by effectively discussing concepts and ideas, identifying errors, exploring alternative solutions, and acknowledging successful aspects of the projects.

The Canvas course site hosts a calendar containing weekly tasks, assignments, and due dates. Please note that the calendar is subject to revisions and updates throughout the semester.

COURSE TIME COMMITMENT

It is expected that students will spend approximately 2 hours of work time outside of class for every one hour in class. Since this is a 3-credit studio, students should expect to work an average of 6 hours outside of class each week.

COURSE MATERIALS AND FEES

Required Text: None

Course Materials:
Required:

- Computer with Adobe Creative Cloud
- Sketchbook/notepad
- Website domain and registration for portfolio website
- Mouse / Digital Drawing Tablet

Suggested:

- Computer Backup
  - Preferred: Online Storage (OneDrive, Dropbox, iCloud, etc)
  - Or: External Hard drive / USB Flash Drive (Mac or multi-platformed)

Course Fee: $14.42 per student.
The course fee will be used to purchase white presentation matte paper for the Epson P7000 printer.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

As a designer, you help to determine the worth of your work and to cultivate respect for the work that you create. You should take care of your work. The execution, craftsmanship, and maintenance of your work reflect on you. Maintaining a portfolio (physical/digital) is an important aspect of your development and education.

GUIDELINES FOR GRADING

The quality of work, progress, effort, participation, and attendance determine grades. Specific criteria will be handed out with individual assignments.

- Grading opportunities for this course are comprised of class projects and class participation/critiques.
- Projects must be completed and ready to present before class starts on the critique day.
- Late submissions will be penalized by one letter grade per day that it is late. Late work may only be turned in three days after the due date.
- All process discussions and projects, with no exception, will be presented to the class for critique.
- All process discussions, final submissions, and final presentations should be completed in the specified formats and submitted within your assigned OneDrive Folder prior to the deadline.
- Students who miss deadlines due to valid, extenuating circumstances may be able to submit the required work at a date agreed upon with the instructor. **Students MUST contact their instructor to discuss modifying the deadline a MINIMUM of 24 hours before the original deadline.**
- Class participation (active listening, constructive criticism, use of key terms, etc.) will be considered in your final grade.

The final grade will result from the following:

- 95% of your final grade will be based on two projects
  - Project 1 (Senior Design Campaign) = 60%
  - Project 2 (Personal Branding Project) = 35%
- 5% of your final grade will be based on professionalism*.

**Professionalism refers to completing and bringing in your assignments, sketches, books, and notes, contributing constructive feedback during critiques and group discussions, being prepared to discuss assigned readings, always acting professionally and punctually, and meeting project deadlines consistently.*

UNIVERSITY GRADING SCALE

Grades will be assigned per Ball State University definitions; plus or minus indicate performance relative to the letter grade definition. When reviewing major projects, grading is completed using an evaluation rubric specific to each assignment. Rubric categories are broken down into the following scale:

A = Accomplished - This grade is for work of clearly professional quality and is ready for publishing, requiring virtually no corrections. It is apparent much time and effort went into the planning and design, incorporating and exceeding all constraints and limitations.

B = Proficient - This grade is for work of professional quality and is ready for publishing with minor revisions. It is apparent a good amount of time and effort went into the planning and design, meeting all the constraints and developing the limitations to their fullest.

C = Competent - This grade is for work that has a problem in at least one area. It is an adequate first draft but needs major revisions before publishing. Student could have put in more time and effort at home or in the lab. No creative processes are used and no decisions are made or risks taken.

D = Novice - This grade is for work that is clearly unacceptable, even in the classroom setting. The design is flawed and needs to be rethought. Basic principles of design are ignored. The student falls short of the constraints of the piece or misses deadlines.

F = Failing Grade - Failure to meet the requirements of the course.

Ball State University Grading Scale

LETTER GRADE	% EQUIVALENCY	GPA EQUIVALENCY
A	94 to 100	4.000
A–	90 to 93	3.667
B+	87 to 89	3.333
B	84 to 86	3.000
B–	80 to 83	2.667
C+	77 to 79	2.333
C	74 to 76	2.000
C–	70 to 73	1.667
D+	67 to 69	1.333
D	64 to 66	1.000
D–	60 to 63	0.667
F	59 or lower	0

COURSE STATEMENTS AND POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Five unexcused absences are permitted for 16-week courses, meeting three times a week. Upon each additional unexcused absence, the final grade may be lowered by one letter (e.g., from an A to a B). More than eight unexcused absences will result in automatic failure of the course.

Three unexcused absences are permitted for 16-week courses, meeting two times a week. Upon each additional unexcused absence, the final grade may be lowered by one letter (e.g., from an A to a B). More than six unexcused absences will result in automatic failure of the course.

This course is a studio class where attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to arrive on time and remain in class until the class is dismissed. Three late arrivals (more than 15 mins) or three early departures without permission will equal one unexcused absence. Attendance will be taken promptly at the beginning of each class.

If a student has extenuating circumstances, they should inform the instructor as soon as possible so that we can work with the student to determine how best to mitigate the situation. A doctor's note will be required to excuse absence due to illness. If a student misses a class or series of classes due to illness, they are responsible for notifying the instructor via email as soon as possible. The student will be provided reasonable accommodations or opportunities, as agreed upon by the instructor, to make up course obligations that have an impact on the course grade.

All accommodations require official documentation and are subject to the instructor's discretion. Documents shall be considered timely if provided within 07 days of the absence unless circumstances beyond the student's control prevent them from providing the

information within the required period.

In all cases of absence, excused or otherwise, students are still responsible for completing any work they may have missed due to illness, including projects, assignments, and process work.

FUNERAL AND BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Students will be excused from class for funeral leave in the event of the death of a close friend or a member of the student's family or household. The number of excused absences allowed is determined by the distance of funeral services from Muncie, Indiana, as follows:

- three school days - Within 150 miles radius of Muncie
- four school days - Between 150-300 miles radius of Muncie
- five school days - Beyond 300 miles radius of Muncie
- seven school days - Outside of North America

If the student cannot attend the funeral services, the student will be allowed three school days for bereavement. Given proper documentation, the instructor will excuse the student from class and provide the opportunity to earn equivalent credit for the assignment missed.

PARTICIPATION POLICY

This course is designed with frequent critiques, demonstration of process work, and other regular discussions and communication forms. Depending on the class size, you will be part of a 3-4-person group that may remain unchanged during the semester. If you miss a class, your group acts as your first resource for notes. The participation part of your grade is based solely on how much you meaningfully contribute to in-class discussions/critiques. The more you contribute, the higher your participation grade.

ACTIVE COMMUNICATION

If at any point you need clarification about your standing in the course, please schedule an appointment to meet with me. As we work in the studio, please do not hesitate to ask me for assistance. You are responsible for actively participating in your learning and seeking clarity as you need it.

EMAIL POLICY

Email (aside from personal conversation) is my preferred method of communication. Any formal communication from me to the class will be sent to your Ball State University email or posted as an announcement on Canvas. There are times when I'll need to reach the class for submission guidelines, changes in due dates, and other important announcements. You must maintain a BSU email account and check it daily, or as close to daily as is reasonable. If you prefer using a non-BSU email address, set up your BSU account to forward the email to the other one.

Emails to me must be sent using your BSU email account, or they will not be opened. Your questions are very important to me. I am here, after all, to support your learning journey. However, please understand that I am not on call 24/7. I will answer emails within two business days. If you haven't received a response within that period, forward me the original email with a note that you are waiting for a response. Inquiries are not likely to be answered on holidays. Please do not expect me to return your email at 10 p.m. because you work late; that does not mean I will be available then.

CRITIQUES

Critiques are an important part of the creative process and should be an opportunity to provide and receive feedback from peers. But art can be controversial—as can new ideas. Images/work you may find offensive may not be to another or the creator. Think of these critiques as learning opportunities—**critique ideas, not people.** Inappropriate, non-professional remarks could be construed as disruptive interference in the classroom and will not be tolerated. The university, for ages, has been considered a special place where ideas can be freely explored and individuals not be persecuted for their opinions. You should feel free to voice your thoughts about

the work we are discussing and, at the same time, respect the rights of others to voice their views. Remember, a critique is not a personal attack against you but an invaluable source of feedback and information necessary for artistic growth. The responsibility of a successful critique lies both with the designer and the engaged observer.

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

- All deadlines will be announced either through the course Canvas, in-class announcements, or via an email from the instructor. All projects are due by the beginning of class on the due dates indicated.
- Projects submitted after the indicated due dates will be subject to a decreased letter grade for each day late. Late projects will be marked down one letter grade (from an A to a B) for each late day for up to three days (based on a seven-day week). Projects will not be accepted beyond these three days.
- Internet connectivity and technical issues may impede you from completing work on time. Turn in work early and often, and set up a backup plan, such as using the Graphic Design computer labs.
- If a student is absent or late, it is their responsibility to obtain missed information from another student in the class.

PROJECT SUBMISSION POLICY

- All projects should be submitted in the format requested in the project description. These may include a physical deliverable, PDFs, jpegs, or docs.
- Projects, unless otherwise indicated, should be submitted within a properly named subfolder in your designated OneDrive folder.

GRADING POLICY

It is my policy that appropriate evaluation of your academic performance is an integral part of your learning experience. Therefore, in the case of mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence, I will be the key decision-maker on the assignment of grades. For information concerning grade appeals, consult the Ball State website.

IMPORTANT DATES

https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/registrar/academic-calendar

Final Exam: Wednesday, April 30, 12:00-2:00 pm

SCHOOL OF ART LAPTOP POLICY

The laptop will serve as your creative tool and portable studio. Students are responsible for all digital work. Late work, lost data, and other issues related to your laptop will not be accepted. Students are advised to back up their digital files in multiple formats to transfer data to another computer, including external devices and Cloud storage. Every student has access to OneDrive storage through their BSU email address.

You can find the School of Art's laptop policy here:
https://www.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/art/admissions-and-financial-aid/laptop-policy

Students who do not wish to participate in the School of Art laptop program are still responsible for completing all required digital coursework using other personal or University resources. Laptops which vary from our specifications must be able to run the software required in School of Art courses.

CLASSROOM CLEANING

You are entirely responsible for cleaning up after yourself. In the classroom, you must clean up all workspaces and dispose of any scraps/debris you may have produced while working. If you leave any materials or works-in-progress in the classroom, they must be

clearly labeled and stored in the way of the other students who share the room. One person's trash is indeed another person's treasure, but the reverse is double true in an art school. If you don't want to lose your work, keep track of it.

EATING AND DRINKING IN CLASSROOMS

Please be mindful of others when eating or drinking in the classroom/studio space. Only drink containers with a lid are allowed. You are responsible for cleaning up after yourself. There will be no eating or drinking allowed in the resource room.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services (https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/disability-services) office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

BALL STATE ACADEMIC ETHICS POLICY

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to pursuing knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation and equitably assign academic and creative performance evaluations, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the complete Student Academic Ethics Policy.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

Plagiarism is not acceptable. Unless otherwise indicated for all assignments, you must work independently by yourself. Sharing of files is not permitted for any reason.

Potential Violations: Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Use or possession of a file created by someone else.
- Reusing work from another semester, course, or section.
- Fraudulent submission of work.
- Using unauthorized materials during Exams.
- Impersonating someone else or having them copy you.
- Making fraudulent or dishonest statements regarding your work.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.
- Posting course files and resources on study or content-sharing websites.

The Plagiarism Tutorial from UNC Libraries provides you with a great foundation in Academic Integrity.

Plagiarism Detection: The campus subscribes to SimCheck, a plagiarism prevention service, through Canvas. You may need to submit written assignments to SimCheck. Student work will be used for plagiarism detection and no other purpose. The student may indicate in writing to the instructor that he/she refuses to participate in the plagiarism detection process, in which case the instructor can use other electronic means to verify the originality of their work.

CANVAS AND STUDENT PRIVACY

CANVAS ACCESSIBILITY

Canvas provides a user experience that is easy, simple, and intuitive. Special attention has been paid to making Canvas screen-readable. The Rich Content Editor encourages users to create accessible content pages (i.e., text formatting is accomplished using styles). In addition, Canvas is designed to allow limited customization of colors and schemes to be accessible for all users. The National Federation of the Blind granted Canvas the Gold Level Web Certification in 2010. Find more information by visiting the Canvas Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).

FERPA AND PRIVACY

As a student, your educational records are considered confidential. Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances, your records will not be released without your written and signed consent. However, some directory information may be released to third parties without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to privacy by reading Ball State's FERPA and Privacy and Protection.

VIDEO CONFERENCING RECORDING

Software may be used in this class to record live class discussions. Your participation in live class discussions may be recorded as a student in this class. These recordings typically will be made available only to students enrolled in the class to assist those who cannot attend the live session or to serve as a resource for those who would like to review the presented content. Students who prefer to participate via audio only will be allowed to disable their video camera so only audio will be captured. Students who listen only must disable their audio capability and camera. If you have concerns, please discuss these options with me.

SUPPORT SERVICES

THE WRITING CENTER

All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295, Bracken Library, or online) to get additional feedback on your writing. To schedule a free appointment to discuss your writing, go to www.bsu.edu/writingcenter. Online and in-person appointments are available seven days a week; however, plan because appointments book quickly!

THE LEARNING CENTER

The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. All students are required to wear masks in the Learning Center. To make an appointment, visit my.bsu.edu and click “TutorTrac” in the Additional Tools section, or go directly to https://ballstate.go-redrock.com.

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center.

Supplemental Instruction is available in select courses. If you have an SI leader for your course, that person will provide students with information regarding weekly study sessions during the first week of school. For more information about all of our programming, visit bsu.edu/learningcenter or call 765-285-1006. Follow us on Instagram: BallStateLC.

THE COUNSELING CENTER

The Counseling Center offers free, confidential telehealth counseling services for BSU students. Students can call the Counseling Center at (765) 285-1736 to make an appointment. In addition, many of their outreach services can be accessed from anywhere, and they have online **resources** available 24 hours a day. They also have a free, self-help online tool --Welltrack, to help cope with stress, anxiety, and depression. This can be found at: https://www.bsu.edu/campuslife/counselingcenter. Click here to **find more information (PDF)** about services for Spring 2022.

CARDINAL KITCHEN

Cardinal Kitchen is Ball State's campus food pantry. The pantry is open to all Ball State students Tuesday nights from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. throughout the year. It is located in Room L26 of the Student Center, and you can contact them by phone at (765) 285-2621 or email at cardkitch@bsu.edu

SUBJECT TO CHANGE STATEMENT

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

ADS 442 Course Calendar: Spring 2026

This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change.

SDC = Senior Design Campaign

PB = Personal Branding

WEEK & DATE	DETAILS	DUE DATES
Week 1		
Tue, Jan 07	Course overview, Project 1 & 2 introduction	
Thur, Jan 09	Workday	
Week 2		
Tue, Jan 14	Workday	
Thur, Jan 16	Workday	**SDC Problem Statement Presentation**
Week 3		
Tue, Jan 21	Workday	
Thur, Jan 23	Workday	**PB Process Discussion #1**
Week 4		
Tue, Jan 28	Workday	
Thur, Jan 30	Workday	**SDC Process Discussion #1**
Week 5		
Tue, Feb 4	Workday	
Thur, Feb 6	Workday	**PB Process Discussion #2**
Week 6		
Tue, Feb 11	Workday	
Thur, Feb 13	Workday	**SDC Process Discussion #2**
Week 7		
Tue, Feb 18	Workday	
Thur,Feb 20	Workday	
Week 8		
Tue, Feb 25	Workday	
Thur, Feb 27	**Presentations**	**SDC Mid-project presentation**
Week 9		
Tue, Mar 4	Spring Break	
Thur, Mar 6	Spring Break	
Week 10		
Tue, Mar 11	Workday	
Thur, Mar 13	Workday	**PB Process Discussion #3**
Week 11		
Tue, Mar 18	Workday	
Thur, Mar 20	Workday	**SDC Process Discussion #3**
Week 12		
Tue, Mar 25	Workday	
Thur, Mar 27	Workday	
Week 13		
Tue, Apr 1	Workday	
Thur, Apr 3	Workday	**SDC Process Discussion #4**
Week 14		
Tue, Apr 8	Workday	
Thur, Apr 10	**Presentations**	**SDC Final Presentation**
Week 15		
Tue, Apr 15	Workday	
Thur, Apr 17	Workday	**PB Process Discussion #4**
Week 16		
Tue, Apr 22	Workday	
Thur, Apr 24	Workday	**PB Process Discussion #5**
Week 17		
Tue, Apr 29	**Presentations**	**PB Final Presentation**