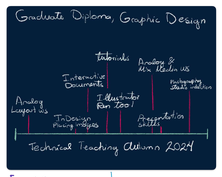
Curriculum Development Case study: Sprint course to build Graphic Design Technical Skills in Editorial Design

By: Sara Massieu

1. Where does this come from?

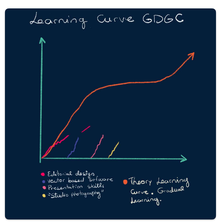
The academics team approach to technical teaching is just like a random set of workshops, Rather as an integrated part of the students journey, with a clear learning curve.



Example 1.

This is how I see the learning curves of last year's workshops.

This is how I think it should be.



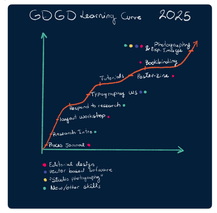
Because of this I decided to do a pilot mini course on Editorial Design as the students are working in a design Manual and design Portfolio.

The mini course consists in:

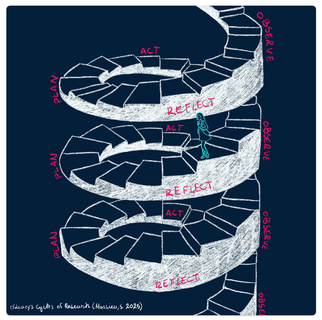
- 7 workshops (Full day 10:30–16:00)
- 2 Sign-up 1-1 tutorials
- 3 sessions after the holidays to support them with pagination, files for printing and **prototypes**.

+ Homework almost every Workshop

For me this has a clearer path and new skills for the students.



2. Where am I at?

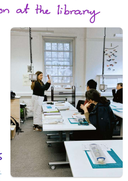


Kolb's Cycle of Research (Massieu, 2025)

3. Workload and Collaboration (I know is a lot of work)

Something that consumes me tons of time is finding examples and references for each activity and workshop.

For the design of this course I worked with the subject librarian (Rosaline Love) to bring examples to some of the sessions from the Special Collections section at the library



Students engaged a lot, so we think this was a success.

4. Notes about this particular Course

This is a Graduate Diploma in Graphic Design for Non graphic designers

This means we have students from many different backgrounds

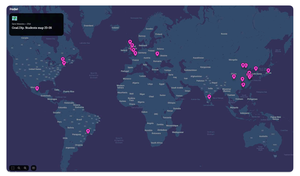
Eg: Social Sciences, engineering, other design disciplines, architecture and graphic designers.

It's a very hard course to teach!!

4.1. where the student's come from?

This year 75% of the students are international. With English as a second language. (Sousa, 2025)

(Similar to previous years numbers)



(Massieu, 2025)

The main teaching staff is from America (the continent, not the country)

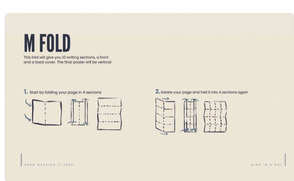
5. Culturally Responsible Teaching

Language Barriers and adaptive learning materials

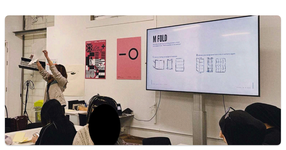
Language barriers affect how students engage and participate in the sessions. They affect every stage of the learning journey. (Olagunju et al, 2024)

For every Session I've designed the same teaching materials with the same information in different formats to create a variety of resources that students can translate if they need to, and follow depending on their learning style.

- Presentation
- Handouts
- I do a demo or example
- Padlet with extra resources and tutorials



Presentation Slide



Me doing the demo

Handouts with instructions

6. Students Feelings & Progress

First Session with Students week 2 of term

I asked the students to write down how were they feeling regarding their Graphic Design technical Skills.

Of 24 students 16 answered

66%

Anxious — 6

* Tired — 3

Curious — 4

Excited — 4

Confused — 2

I repeated the same activity on the last ws before the break.

Of 24 students 13 answered

54%

Again we repeated the task on the last session before the break

I also asked them to put how they perceived their tech skills on a scale from 0 to 100.

* Students tend to measure their skills higher than they are.

7. Next Steps

I need to analyse all the info and make adjustments tho The things that didn't work. Eg. merge the research workshops

CCM Feedback

Because of the different backgrounds students come from Some feel the sessions too basic and others too advanced How to level them?

Thanks!!

*To get more details about this go to my blog

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