PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / ART 650 / Fall 2025

Professor Karrie Simpson Voth   COURSE SYLLABUS

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01   INSTRUCTOR

Karrie Simpson Voth, *Department Chair and Professor of Graphic Design*
Office: AD 121
Phone: 785-628-5921 *or* 785-628-4247 (Art and Design office)
E-mail: klsimpsonvoth@fhsu.edu (preferred method of contact)
Schedule an Appointment: **https://calendly.com/ksimpsonvoth**

02   COURSE INFORMATION

Class Hours: 9:00-10:15 (TT)
Facebook Class Group: FHSU Professional Development in Graphic Design 2025–2026

03   COURSE DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OUTCOMES

An exploration of the graphic design field, from major design industries to design disciplines, the study of significant career development issues, and the creation of an optimum portfolio and marketing strategy in preparation for future employment opportunities.

Learning Outcomes
1. Students will learn the evolving graphic design market, including complete coverage of print and electronic media and the digital design disciplines that offer today's most sought-after jobs.
2. Students will learn graphic design theory through research and how it applies to current design trends.
3. Students will establish professional goals.
4. Students will address significant career development issues through research and learn how to correct them.
5. Students will prepare marketing documents to provide a platform for interviews.
6. Students will prepare for professional interviews through an analysis of different expectations.
7. Students will learn when and how to apply business and legal forms.
8. Students will create a portfolio that is professional, well-edited, and smartly paced.
9. Students will develop self-promotional materials and a website.

04   **TEXTBOOK & COURSE MATERIALS**

Required Textbooks *(for both fall and spring semesters)*:
- *"Stand Out: Design a Personal Brand. Build a Killer Portfolio. Find a Great Design Job"* by Denise Anderson

Required Supplies *(for both fall and spring semesters)*:
- 3-Ring Binder (2"), 7 Tab Dividers (labeled according to "Topics to be Covered")
- External Hard Drive or Solid-State Drive (1 TB)
- External Hard Drive or Solid-State Drive (1 TB)
  I suggest the SanDisk 1TB Extreme Portable SSD, #SDSSDE61-1T00-G25 ($83–120 on Amazon)

Technology Requirement:
All students enrolled at Fort Hays State University are expected to have a computer* for use in a variety of university learning experiences. *On-campus students are expected to have a laptop to ensure mobility. TigerTech only assists when accessing and using FHSU-hosted systems and University-owned equipment. FHSU does not sell computers and does not provide computer repair for student devices.

    Hardware:
    To meet basic security, networking, and upgrade requirements, your computer should be running Mac OS X (or newer). Students are encouraged to utilize the two Mac labs in the department (rooms 202 and 210). Ideally, your computer's warranty should be supported by the manufacturer throughout your college career. iPads are not recommended for use as your primary device due to limited functionality. Ask your instructor or academic department to learn about any specific technology requirements that may apply to your program/courses.

    Software:
    Enrolled students at FHSU can take advantage of a variety of options to get FREE and/or discounted software for use on personal devices at www.fhsu.edu/tigertech/software/. If you have any technical issues, contact FHSU TigerTech 785-628-3478, and notify the professor.

    Most courses in Graphic Design and Motion Design programs require some horsepower when it comes to hardware and software. The computers in either computer labs 202 or 210 are sufficiently updated and should be utilized as much as possible for student projects. In the event of hybrid instruction, students may also work from home on a personal computer or laptop.

05   **STUDENT RESOURCES**

Students have access to academic services, technical support, and student services at Fort Hays State University. You can find the resources online at FHSU Blackboard Student Tutorials. For more information, you can contact TigerTech at 785-628-3478 or FHSU TigerTech.

06   TEACHING METHODS & EXPECTATIONS

Delivery Method:
Below is a breakdown of each platform we will use for the semester.

- **Blackboard**
  This tool is a university standard and will serve as the central hub for this class. Here you will find your grades, announcements, links to video content, and more. Blackboard sends alerts, but it is always good to check the course page early and often.
- **Facebook**
  Please join the group called "FHSU Professional Development in Graphic Design 2025–2026." This will be one of the main communication platforms we use due to the versatility of the tools provided. Announcements will be posted here, and we will use it for critique when outside of class. Please turn your notifications on for this course.
- **Google Drive**
  Each student will have their own folder within the "Professional Development 2025–2026" Google Drive folder. Students will be responsible for putting specified projects into their folders to be graded.

07   ASSESSMENT METHODS & GRADING

Grading Criteria and Course Instruction
The subject matter will be taught through a combination of lectures, discussions, readings, collaboration, and independent research. Students will be responsible for completing assigned worksheets and projects given over covered topics. Projects and their equivalent point values are listed below. A total of 900 points is possible. Grades will be posted on Blackboard in a timely manner.

• Worksheets: 375 pts	955—810 A
• Marketing Package: 300 pts	860—720 B
• "The Big Interview" Project: 80 pts	765—630 C
• Mock Interview: 100 pts	670—540 D
• Website Plan: 100 pts	575—0 U

08   COURSE POLICIES

Class Attendance/Participation:
Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Lectures will be given on any day, and you will be expected to know the material for class discussions and projects. Three unexcused absences will result in the loss of a letter grade at the semester. Five unexcused absences will result in the final grade of "U". Excused absences are illness and official University travel. If you know you will have to be absent, please call, e-mail, or leave a message with the art office (628-4247). Please be on time for class. Being tardy two times will equal one absence, etc.

Assignment Due Date:
When a deadline is set, you are expected to meet it on time. You will have to spend extra time out of class to work on your projects. Only serious reasons will be accepted for an extension.

Unless prior arrangements are made, all projects are due on the noted day. For every day a project is turned in late, one letter grade will be deducted from the total grade. Assignments turned in late will be accepted up to two class periods late. After that, it is an automatic "U" (unless other arrangements have been made).

Procedures for Assignment Submission:
Each project will have an associated Learning Module on Blackboard. Students will be required to print and/or upload their finished project in the class Google Drive before class begins on the due date.

Cell Phone Policy
Unless using a mobile device for research or taking notes, please keep them silent and out of reach. Texting and taking phone calls are prohibited unless prior permission is obtained.

Facility Hours & Policies
The Schmidt Foundation Center for Art and Design Hall will be open from 7:00 AM–9:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Students will need to obtain a "Night and Weekend Pass" from the main office to be in the building after hours, on weekends, and on holiday breaks when the building is locked. Each student major will have access to enter the building with their Tiger ID card and must keep their pass with them while in the building, as the campus police will be patrolling the premises each night and will ask to see the student's pass and Tiger ID. Anyone who does not have their Night and Weekend Pass and ID with them will be asked to leave by campus police (if it is after regular hours or on a holiday break).

09 UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [Attendance](#)
- [Withdrawal](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services](#)
- [Health and Wellness Services](#)
- [Career Services](#)
- [Technology Services](#)
- [Title IX Policy](#)

10 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Visual Imagery Creation STRICTLY PROHIBITED:
The use of AI-generated imagery is strictly prohibited in this course. Academic integrity is essential. Assignments that are suspected of or found to be plagiarized or employ the use of unauthorized AI tools will be subject to the University Academic Honesty Policy and may result in a 0 for the assignment, failure of the course, and, if warranted, expulsion from FHSU.

Written Content Creation with Prior Permission:
Students can use AI-generated texts only on designated portions of written assignments in this course if the instructor's permission is obtained in advance and the content generated is properly cited. Unless given permission to use AI tools, each student is expected to complete each assignment without substantive assistance from AI. Unauthorized or suspected unauthorized use of AI will be subject to the FHSU Academic Honesty Policy and may result in a 0 for the assignment, failure of the course, and, if warranted, expulsion from FHSU.

11   COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is tentative and might change during the semester depending on how the course evolves. The content is subject to change depending on students' progress. Students will be notified of any changes through announcements either in class or on our Facebook and Blackboard pages.

SO = Stand Out textbook

	DATE	LESSON / PROJECT DUE	PROJECT
WEEK 1	August 19 Tuesday	• Discuss syllabus • In-class exercise: Positive Attributes	**PART 1: GOALS & IMAGING** **Worksheet 1:** Goal Setting worksheet DUE: Thursday, Aug. 21
	August 21 Thursday	• **DUE:** Worksheet 1: Goal Setting • 16 Personalities Test	**Worksheet 2:** Designing Your Time DUE: Thursday, Sept. 11 **Worksheet 3:** Joy and Balance packet and 1-page paper
WEEK 2	August 26 Tuesday	• **DUE:** Worksheet 3: Joy and Balance packet and 1-page paper	**Worksheets 4 & 5:** Inside Self _and_ Inside Self + Outside Self **SO:** Read pages 4–5 and 12–24 DUE: Thursday, Aug. 28
	August 28 Thursday	• **DUE:** Worksheets 4 & 5: Inside Self _and_ Inside Self + Outside Self • Lecture: Marketing Documents	**PART 2: MARKETING DOCUMENTS** Resumé, cover letter, references sheet, and business card ROUGH DRAFTS DUE: Thurs, Sept. 4 DIGITAL DRAFTS DUE: Thurs, Sept. 4 FINAL DRAFTS DUE: Tues, Dec. 9
WEEK 3	September 2 Tuesday	• WORKDAY	
	September 4 Thursday	• **DUE:** Rough drafts (Marketing Documents)	**Worksheet 6:** Self-Creative Brief **SO:** Read pages 25–27 and 66–77 DUE: Thursday, Sept. 11
WEEK 4	September 9 Tuesday	• **DUE:** Pages 43–58 • WORKDAY	**Project:** LinkedIn Profile DUE: Tuesday, Sept. 16

WEEK 4	September 11 Thursday	• **DUE:** Worksheet 2 & 1-page paper (Time Management) • **DUE:** Worksheet 6: Self-Creative Brief	**PART 3: EMPLOYMENT** **Worksheet 7:** Are You Career Ready? & Self-Reflection Paper (1–2 pages) DUE: Thursday, Sept. 18
WEEK 5	September 16 Tuesday	• **DUE:** LinkedIn	(**PART 3: EMPLOYMENT cont.**)
	September 18 Thursday	• **DUE:** Worksheet 7: Are You Career Ready? • Lecture: Leads	**Worksheet 8:** My Job Search Plan **Project:** Leads (2) DUE: Tuesday, Sept. 23
WEEK 6	September 23 Tuesday	• **DUE:** Worksheet 8: My Job Search Plan • WORKDAY (Leads)	
	September 25 Thursday	• **DUE:** Leads (2) • Lecture: Interviewing	**PART 4: INTERVIEWING**
WEEK 7	September 30 Tuesday	• Presentation by Career Services • **SO:** Read pages 210–237	
	October 2 Thursday	• Tour of Tailored for Tigers	**Worksheet 9:** Tell Me About Yourself DUE: Tuesday, Oct. 7
WEEK 8	October 7 Tuesday	• **DUE:** Worksheet 9: TMAY • WORKDAY	**Worksheet 10:** Strengths & Weakness **SO:** Read pages 10–11 DUE: Thursday, Oct. 9
	October 9 Thursday	• **DUE:** Worksheet 10: Strengths & Weakness • Decide groups for Mock Interviews	**Project:** The Big Interview (online interviewing platform) DUE: Tuesday, Oct. 28
WEEK 9	October 14 Tuesday	• Mock Interviews (Day 1)	**MOCK INTERVIEWS**
	October 16 Thursday	• Mock Interviews (Day 2)	

WEEK 10	October 21 Tuesday	• Watch Mock Interviews
	October 23 Thursday	• Watch Mock Interviews

(Right column, spanning WEEK 10 rows:) **MOCK INTERVIEWS (cont.)**

WEEK 11	October 28 Tuesday	• **<u>DUE:</u>** Big Interview links • WORKDAY (Marketing Docs) • **<u>Progress Check 1</u>: Concept development (Marketing Documents)**
	October 30 Thursday	• WORKDAY
WEEK 12	November 4 Tuesday	• WORKDAY (Marketing Docs) • **<u>Progress Check 2</u>: Layout and design development (Marketing Documents)**
	November 6 Thursday	• WORKDAY (Marketing Docs)

(Right column, spanning WEEK 11–12 rows:) **MARKETING DOCUMENTS**

WEEK 13	November 11 Tuesday	• Introduce Final: Website • **<u>Progress Check 3</u>: Design refinement (Marketing Documents)**
	November 13 Thursday	• WORKDAY (FINAL)
WEEK 14	November 18 Tuesday	• WORKDAY (FINAL) • **<u>Progress Check 4</u>: Design refinement (Marketing Documents)**
	November 20 Thursday	• WORKDAY (FINAL)

(Right column, spanning WEEK 13–14 rows:) **FINAL: WEBSITE PLAN AND <u>MARKETING DOCUMENTS</u>**
DUE: Tuesday, Dec. 9

FALL BREAK: NOVEMBER 24–28

WEEK 15	December 2 Tuesday	• WORKDAY	**FINAL: WEBSITE PLAN AND MARKETING DOCUMENTS**
	December 4 Thursday	• **DUE:** Digital Drafts of Marketing Documents (Google Drive folder) • WORKDAY (FINAL)	
WEEK 16	December 9 Tuesday	**FINAL PROJECT DUE:** Website Plan and Marketing Documents • Critique–day 1	
	December 11 Thursday	• Critique–day 2	

NOTES:

12   **TOPICS TO BE COVERED > Fall 2025**

Part 1:   **GOALS AND IMAGING > Fall 2025**
Creating goals based on values, ideals, and personality; designing time.

- ✎ **Goal Setting (#1)**
- ✎ **Designing Your Time (#2 + Google Calendar + 1-page paper)**
- ✎ **Joy and Balance Guide (#3)**
- ✎ **Inside Self: Personal Brand Self-Assessment Study (#4)**
- ✎ **Inside Self + Outside Self: Personal Brand Self-Assessment Analysis (#5)**
- 📖 Setting a Career Vision (resource)
- 📖 The Complete Creative First Aid Kit (workbook and video lessons—resources)
- 📖 "Fear About Procrastination in the Lives of Graphic Designers" by Pirowski Studio

Part 2:   **MARKETING DOCUMENTS > Fall 2025 / Spring 2026**
Creating a resumé, cover letter, reference list, business card, application letter, letters of recommendation, and creating an effective social media presence.

- 🗁 Social Media How-To Guides
- 📖 Designing Your Resumé
- 📖 Example Resumés
- 📖 Resumé Checklist
- 📖 The Cover Letter
- 📖 Examples: Student Cover Letters
- 📖 Resumé and Cover letter Guidelines
- 📖 Ten Common Mistakes: Resumés and Cover Letters (AIGA)
- 📖 Lifetime of Letters

Part 3:   **FINDING EMPLOYMENT > Fall 2025**
Researching design and advertising firms; developing a client base; finding an employer who has compatible goals; qualities employers look for; freelancing; internships.

- 📖 Job Search Guide (FHSU)
- 📖 NACE Career Readiness Competencies
- ✎ **Are You Career Ready? (#6 + 1-page paper)**
- ✎ **Self-Creative-Brief (#7)**
- ✎ **Leads (#8)**
- ✎ **My Job Search Plan (#9)**
- 📖 Resources for Leads I and II
- 📖 Networking
- 📖 How to Find Your First Job (AIGA)
- 📖 Creative and Production Jobs: jobs defined (The Creative Group)
- 📖 Client Communication Email Templates

Part 4:   **INTERVIEWING > Fall 2025**
Interview questions to ask and expect; illegal and inappropriate questions; strengths and weaknesses; employment application; interview checklist; assessing and accepting a job offer; mock interview.

- 📖 Successful Interviewing–FHSU
- ✎ **Tell Me About Yourself (#10)**
- 📖 Interview Questions to Ask, to Expect, and Illegal Questions
- ✎ **Strengths and Weaknesses (#11 + lecture notes)**
- 📖 Conversational Power
- 📖 Online Interviewing Tips
- 📖 FHSU Career Services Guide
- 📖 Job Search Guide–FHSU

13   **TOPICS TO BE COVERED > Spring 2026**

Part 5:   FINANCIAL PLANNING > Spring 2026
Negotiating salary strategies; budgeting; personal finance; calculating salary needs.

- 📖 2025 Salary Guide—*download from [Salary Guide-The Creative Group](#)*
- ✏️ **Calculating Your Salary (#1)**
- ✏️ **My Personal Budget (#2: Excel worksheet)**
- 📖 Money Resource
- 📖 Salary Negotiation Tips
- 📖 Asking For a Raise Script
- 📖 48-Hour Personal Finance Makeover
- 📖 Supplemental Budgeting Worksheets
- 📖 "The Infographic Guide to Personal Finance" by Michele Cagan and Elisabeth Lariviere

Part 6:   BUSINESS AND LEGAL FORMS > Spring 2026
Creating and negotiating contracts; pricing your designs; project proposal; ethical guidelines; creative brief

- 📂 "Business and Legal Forms for Graphic Designers" by Crawford and Bruck
- 📂 "The Dark Art of Pricing" by Jessica Hische
- 📖 How to Price Anything Guide
- ✏️ **Design Brief Project (#3: group project)**
- 📖 Client Questionnaire & Creative Brief
- ✏️ **Creative Brief (#4)**
- 📖 Project Proposal Template
- 📖 Getting Featured Guide
- 📖 Squarespace Online Shop Checklist
- 📖 12 Essential Keys to Pricing Your Design
- 📖 "The Infographic Guide for Entrepreneurs" by Carissa Lytle and Jara Kern

Part 7:   PORTFOLIO > Spring 2026
Preparing a professional portfolio; what to include and exclude; project touchpoints; portfolio types; maximizing your portfolio options; professional website plan.

- 📖 The Polished Portfolio Checklist
- 📖 Project Touchpoints
- ✏️ **Develop Your Portfolio Layout (#5)**
- 📖 Project Development Worksheet
- 📖 Website Cheat Sheet
- 📖 Book Smarts (The Creative Group)
- ✏️ **About Me Template for Website (#6)**
- 📖 Build Your Brand Guide: Creating Your Pitch
- 📖 Website Pitch Template
- 📖 Annual Career Assessment
- 📖 Website Plans (3 student examples)

SYMBOL KEY
✏️ Assignment / 📖 Resource / 📂 Folder