IDSN 599 Designing Brand Identity for Startups

Units: 2
Term—Day—Time: Mondays, 5:00-6:50pm
Location: IYH 213

Instructor: Steve Child
Office: HSH
Office Hours: by appointment
Contact Info: child@usc.edu

IT Help: https://iovine-young.usc.edu/ait/index.html
Hours of Service: 8:30am - 5:00pm
Contact Info: iyhelp@usc.edu, 213-821-691

Course Description

Branding is important for every business, institution, or group that wants and needs to be recognized. Visual identity brings awareness, triggers perceptions, and unlocks associations of the brand to the consumer. A company must ask and answer: Who are we? What do we stand for? Who are our consumers or tribe? What do they care about? How do they feel about our products? What and how do we want to speak to them? "Products are created in the factory. Brands are created in the mind." —Walter Landor, founder of Landor Associates

Every company needs to differentiate itself from the competition and stand out in an increasingly crowded marketplace. Brand identity design is an essential piece in the full production and promotion of any product, whether physical, digital, or service related. Successful brand identities are visually and structurally unified and speak in an authentic and cohesive voice to their customers. Students will be given a comprehensive overview of the brand identity design process, from the visual research involved in positioning and structure of the brand project management, to the design conceptualization and its various applications. Students will work in teams to create a style guide that is appropriate, cohesive, and expressive of the core values and spirit of the company.

Students will be assigned to teams that will produce a design strategy plan and a cohesive brand identity system for an assigned startup. Student's final presentations include the strategy plan document and the brand identity design in a formal style guide.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Know and use the universal stages of creative problem-solving
- Use both linear and lateral creative problem-solving methodologies
- Understand and implement the steps of the branding design process
- Use market research to write brand attributes and positioning statement
- Based on research of marketplace, create appropriate visual stylescapes
- Design one of the 6 types of logomarks for company
- Know fundamentals of the denotative, connotative, and hierarchical aspects of typography
- Understand and implement basic color theory methods
- Create brand elements and applications to develop a cohesive identity system
- Present those elements in a brand style guide
- Become aware of the social and ethical implications of brand design

Prerequisite(s): None / **Co-Requisite(s):** None / **Concurrent Enrollment:** None

Recommended Preparation: Familiarity with Adobe Suite of Illustrator, Photoshop, and InDesign. Undergraduate students may take ACAD 177 Digital Toolbox for Design, and graduate students may take IDSN 520 Design Essentials in order to gain familiarity with Adobe Creative Suite.

Course Notes
It is crucial for your understanding and practice that you attend to succeed. The demonstrations, lectures and Information given in class may not be imparted concisely through asynchronous materials, handouts, classmates, or notes. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to reach out to fellow classmates to get notes and assignment instructions.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required
Adobe Creative Cloud package is required to be purchased. Students will be introduced to various programs to support execution of concepts. See below information and links for purchasing. Link information for the USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program. Link information for software support and availability. USC Technology Support Links Zoom information for students, Blackboard help for students, Software available to USC Campus.]

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials
Designing Brand Identity by Alina Wheeler

Description and Assessment of Assignments
Assignments have been carefully crafted to bring about your understanding, practice, and vision in the areas of this class. Your concept: how did you solve the problem and what were the ideas you generated towards a solution? Your craftsmanship: how well did you execute your concept in the visual medium? Your creativity: How far did you go beyond predictable answers and search for a unique solution? Your commitment: Did you devote the necessary time needed in producing the solution? How much did you contribute to your team solution? How well did you work with others in your group? All of these factors are considered in the grading criteria.

Participation
Students are expected to pay attention to lectures, participate in in-class projects, critiques, and discussions. You will be deducted points if you are found paying attention to your phone during these important class session.

Grading Breakdown
[Including the above detailed assignments, how will students be graded overall? Participation should not exceed 15% of the total grade. Where it does, the syllabus must provide an added explanation. No portion of the grade may be awarded for class attendance, but non-attendance can be the basis for lowering the grade, when clearly stated on the syllabus. The sum of percentages must total 100%.]

Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tools	Points	% of Grade
All Projects	75	75%
In-class Work	15	15%
Participation	10	10%
TOTAL	100	100%

Letter grade	Numerical point range
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Assignment Submission Policy
Projects are due for both in-class critique as well as uploaded to Blackboard for grading. Projects are expected to be corrected due to distortion and oriented properly before being uploaded. Demo will be given on this process. Late work will be graded down 10% for each class day that it is turned in late.

Grading Timeline
Your projects will generally be graded within 1 week of its due date. If I am creating a video critique for a project, then it will generally be within 2 weeks of its due date. In an individual video critique, I bring up a student's work on my screen. This form allows me to take more time with the work and discuss conceptual and visual approaches. It also allows me to dig into the actual file to make important points about tools and technical processes.

Attendance
The Academy maintains rigorous academic standards for its students and on-time attendance at all class meetings is expected. Each student will be allowed two excused absences over the course of the semester for which no explanation is required. Students are admonished not to waste excused absences on non-critical issues, and to use them carefully for illness or other issues that may arise unexpectedly. Except in the case of prolonged illness or other serious issue (see below), no additional absences will be excused. Each unexcused absence will result in the lowering of the final grade by ⅓ of a grade (e.g., an A will be lowered to A-, and A- will be lowered to a B+, etc.). In addition, being tardy to class will count as one-third of an absence. Three tardies will equal a full course absence. Students remain responsible for any missed work from excused or unexcused absences. Immediately following an absence, students should contact the instructor to obtain missed assignments or lecture notes and to confirm new deadlines or due dates. Extensions or other accommodations are at the discretion of the instructor.

Automatically excused absences normally may not be used for quiz, exam, or presentation days. Using an excused absence for a quiz, exam, or presentation, such as in the case of sudden illness or other emergency, is at the discretion of the instructor. In the case of prolonged illness, family emergencies, or other unforeseen serious issues, the student should contact the instructor to arrange for accommodation. Accommodation may also be made for essential professional or career-related events or opportunities. All accommodations remain at the discretion of the instructor, and appropriate documentation may be required.

Classroom norms
Put away your phone and turn to silent during class. At breaks you may use them. This is a focused and professional space of learning. Students are expected to be fully present during remote class sessions.

Academic Integrity
The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct contrasts with the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic,

professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Creating a policy for the use of AI Generators in your course

[Note to Faculty: Review the considerations and sample options below to include language in your syllabi regarding the use of AI in your courses.
Considerations when crafting a policy for AI/Chat GPT use in your course:
- Does your department, program, or school have an existing policy?
- Under what circumstances is AI use permitted in the course and/or for specific assignments?
- How should students cite or credit AI-generated material? ([USC Libraries AI Generators Citation Guidance](#))
- How will students be held accountable for AI's tendency toward [hallucination](#) (i.e., deceptive data)?
- What are the ethical considerations of using AI in general and in your discipline?
- How can AI be used as an effective learning tool, rather than a content creator for course assignments?

Sample Option A–not permitted
Since creating, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually or in groups. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated tools is prohibited in this course, will be identified as plagiarism, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Option B–permitted on specific assignments
In this course, I encourage you to use artificial intelligence (AI)-powered programs to help you with assignments that indicate the permitted use of AI. You should also be aware that AI text generation tools may present incorrect information, biased responses, and incomplete analyses; thus, they are not yet prepared to produce text that meets the standards of this course. To adhere to our university values, you must cite any AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced in your work and provide the prompts used to generate the content. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Please review the instructions in each assignment for more details on how and when to use AI Generators for your submissions.

Option C–encouraged use
I expect you to use AI (e.g., ChatGPT and image generation tools) in this class. Learning to use AI is an emerging skill, and I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to provide guidance with these tools during office hours or after class. Keep in mind the following:
- AI tools are permitted to help you brainstorm topics or revise work you have already written.

- If you provide minimum-effort prompts, you will get low-quality results. You will need to refine your prompts to get good outcomes. This will take work.
- Proceed with caution when using AI tools and do not assume the information provided is accurate or trustworthy If it gives you a number or fact, assume it is incorrect unless you either know the correct answer or can verify its accuracy with another source. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool. It works best for topics you understand.
- AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Please include a paragraph at the end of any assignment that uses AI explaining how (and why) you used AI and indicate/specify the prompts you used to obtain the results what prompts you used to get the results. Failure to do so is a violation of academic integrity policies.
- Be thoughtful about when AI is useful. Consider its appropriateness for each assignment or circumstance. The use of AI tools requires attribution. You are expected to clearly attribute any material generated by the tool used.]

[Note to Faculty: Include common examples of activities and assignments that might occur in your class. See the following example.]
[Please ask me if you are unsure about what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.
Collaboration. In this class, you are expected to submit work that demonstrates your individual mastery of the course concepts.
Group work. Unless specifically designated as a 'group project,' all assignments are expected to be completed individually.
Computer programs. Plagiarism includes the submission of code written by, or otherwise obtained from someone else.]

Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies
USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Course Evaluations
Course evaluation occurs at the end of the semester university-wide. It is an important review of students' experience in the class. The process and intent of the end-of-semester evaluation should be provided.

Required Materials Kit: Separate document will be distributed prior to first class meeting.
Kits with materials can be purchased at this link: https://www.dickblick.com/myaccount/blicku/H746CTGRKHJ58/
Kits will be delivered first week of semester - Program coordinator Jen Ellis will collect and distribute to classes 12noon on Day 1, August 22nd.
Use this address or delivery: USC Iovine and Young Academy, 3780 Watt Way, Los Angeles, CA 90089

Course Schedule subject to change

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Date	Topics	Readings	Deliverables Due
Week 1: Introduction to Identity Design and Marketing			
	Brand Identity Fundamentals ● What is Identity Design? ● How is Product Identity Design Different? ● Creating Brand Identity that Aligns with Brand Strategy ● The Elements and Principles of Design 1 ● The History and Elements of Branding Design	READ: Designing Brand Identity (DBI) Book Intro and Brand Identity Ideals pp. 1–33	
Week 2: Stage 1 - Marketplace and Visual Research			
	Brand Identity Fundamentals ● The Client Relationship ● Brand Attributes ● The Strategy Brief ● The Elements and Principles of Design 2 Design Stage 2: Group Work ● Research Area of Product Marketplace ● Visual Research 1 ● Research Tribes	READ: DBI Brand Identity Fundamentals pp. 34–53 COMPLETE: Assignment 1a Marketplace and Visual Research Brand Attributes	Assignment 1a Brand Attributes and Visual Research 1
Week 3: Stage 1 - Marketplace and Visual Research			
	Design Research 1b: Group Work ● Research area of marketplace ● Visual Research 2 Brand Identity Fundamentals ● Systems Thinking ● Stages of the Branding Process ● Logo Types and the Design Process Design Research 2: Group Work ● Visual Research 2 ● Research 6 types of Logomarks	READ: DBI Brand Identity Process pp. 54–55 Research & Analysis pp. 56–69 COMPLETE: Assignment 1b Visual Research	Assignment 1a Brand Attributes and Visual Research
Week 4: Stage 2 - Team Project Introduction and Process			

Design Stage 2 ● Brand Typography 1 ● Logomark design – Lettermarks and Wordmarks	READ: DBI Creating Strategy pp. 70–79 COMPLETE: Logomark Sketching Wordmark Search	Assignment 1b Visual Research
Week 5: Stage 2 - Logomark		
Design Stage 1 ● Logomark design 3 ● Brand Typography 2 ● Logomark design – Pictorial Marks ● Signs, Semiotics and Archetypes	READ: DBI Brand Identity Design pp. 80–93 COMPLETE: Logomark sketching for pictorial or abstract mark	Logomark sketching for wordmark
Week 6: Stage 2 - Logomark		
Design Stage 1 ● Logomark design 3 – Abstract Marks ● Logo Iterations ● Building Logo in B/W Intro to Illustrator	COMPLETE: Typography iterations and building logomark in Illustrator	Logomark sketching for pictorial mark
Week 7: Stage 2 - Logomark		
Design Stage 1 ● Logo Iterations ● Building Logo in B/W Intro to Illustrator (Note: Fall Recess Oct. 10–11)	COMPLETE: Building logomark and developing color palette 1	Typography iterations and building logomark
Week 8: Stage 2 - Logomark – Intro to Color		
Design Stage 2 ● Logo Iterations ● Building Logo in B/W Intro to Illustrator Design Stage 3	COMPLETE:	Building logomark and developing color palette 1

● Color Theory, Science, Psychology, and Meaning ● Choosing Brand Color Palettes		
Design Stage 3 ● Brand Color Usage ● Brand Typographic Usage ● Brand Logo Usage ● Brand Imagery Usage	READ: DBI Managing Assets pp. 94–112 COMPLETE: Group work: Develop all brand usage elements	

Week 9: Stage 2/3 - Logomark - Intro to Color

Design Stage 2+3 ● Brand Color Usage ● Brand Typographic Usage ● Brand Logo Usage ● Brand Imagery Usage	READ: DBI Case Studies pp. 134–219 COMPLETE: Group work: Develop all brand usage elements	Group work: Develop all brand usage elements

Week 10: Stage 3 - Applications

Design Stage 3 ● Brand Applications – Website ● Brand Applications – Mobile App ● Brand Applications – Social Media ● Brand Applications – Advertising, Conventional and Unconventional	READ: DBI Case Studies pp. 134–219 GROUP WORK: Develop all brand applications	Group work: Develop all brand usage elements

Week 11: Stage 3 - Applications

Design Stage 3 ● Brand Applications – Website ● Brand Applications – Mobile App ● Brand Applications – Social Media ● Brand Applications – Advertising, Conventional and Unconventional	GROUP WORK: Develop all brand applications	

Week 12: Stage 3 - Applications		
Design Stage 3 ● Brand Applications – Website ● Brand Applications – Mobile App ● Brand Applications – Social Media ● Brand Applications – Print Advertising	COMPLETE GROUP WORK: Develop all brand applications	
Week 13: Stage 4 – Style Guide		
Design Stage 4 Style Guide Document	GROUP WORK: Develop brand style guide doc	
NO CLASS WEEK OF THANKSGIVING		
Week 14: Stage 4 – Style Guide		
Design Stage 4 Style Guide Document	GROUP WORK: Develop brand style guide doc	
Week 15: Stage 4 – Style Guide		
The Big Show: Final Presentation Final Presentations: Style Guides		
Week 16: Stage 4 – Style Guide		
Study Days Dec. 7-10		
Final Digital Submissions		

Schedule Subject to Change

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity:

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the student handbook or the Office of Academic Integrity's website, and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct.

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - *(213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - *988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call*
The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - *(213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - *(213) 740-5086*
Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - *(213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - *(213) 740-0776*
OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - *(213) 740-0411*
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - *(213) 740-2101*
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - *UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - *UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call*
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - *(213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)*
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - *(323) 442-2850 or* otfp@med.usc.edu
Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.