EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION
YORK/SHERIDAN DESIGN
School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Design Department
FA / YSDN 3003 3.0 SECTION G
TYPEFACE DESIGN
FALL 2019 / WINTER 2020

COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION
Introduces students to a number of methods for designing a typeface, with an emphasis in using vector
drawing software. Starting with a number of initial exercises, students will learn about the design decisions
that go into shapes, serifs/sans serifs, spacing, and other often overlooked details. Prerequisite: FA/YSDN
2007 3.00 or permission of the Department of Design. Note: For students not in the BDes program,
compulsory and voluntary supplementary fees apply.
Furthers the students knowledge of the typographic principles initiated in Typography 3. The investigation of
typography in various media to communicate with impact on the audience is emphasized through font
creation and type in motion. Optional course. Prerequisites: FA/YSDN 2007 3.00 or permission of the
Department of Design. Note: For students not in the BDes program, compulsory and voluntary
supplementary fees apply.

Section Responsible Faculty: FA
Section Responsible Unit: YSDS

INSTRUCTOR(S)

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Section / Format / Term</th>
<th>Contact Email</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>King, Kevin</td>
<td>Sec. G / STDO / F</td>
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SPECIAL FEATURES

Typeface Design
1 Special features
Prerequisite: Fa/ysdn 2007 3.0 or permission of the Department of Design
2 Topics and concepts
Typography lies at the very structure of communication design – from books to websites,
to signage and digital interfaces. Typefaces are the tools that form the building
blocks of these typographic structures, making the design of typefaces a branch of
industrial design. A deeper understanding of typography can be achieved by working
through the process of creating the tools that are used in professional typography.
With the release of OpenType Variations at ATypI 2016, a new typeface format became
available to the type user that allows for the entire designspace of a typeface (i.e.
weight, width) to be accessible from one single font file. This particularly enables
large benefits to interactive and experiential design in quicker application and website
loading times, and subsequently, more access and control over non-static typography
in UI/UX designs and website layouts. However, this new development pushes traditional
thinking in both applied typography and typeface design, and how this format
should be taught and integrated into practice. In this course, students will develop their own variable font, resulting in a clear vision of their useful applications in UI/UX and website design, while also investigating the broader processes of typeface design.

3 Learning outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will have:
- Acquired an understanding of how to use variable fonts in UI/UX and web design implementations, as well as why variable fonts offer such a large business and design benefit to these mediums and design methodologies.
- Developed a more in-depth knowledge of the creative and technical aspects of typeface design.
- Acquired knowledge of how to use variable fonts in CSS coding practice.
- Demonstrated an increased visual sensitivity to letterforms and their inter-relationship.
- Acquired intermediate knowledge of Glyphs font development software.
- Improved vector drawing abilities.

4 Graded assessment
The proportional weighting of the coursework is as follows:
- 25% Phase 1 Typeface brief due 30 September 2019
- 35% Phase 2 Typeface design
- 15% Initial upper and lowercase character set due 21 October 2019
- 20% Full character set due 2 December 2019
- 30% Phase 3 Type specimen due 2 December 2019
- 10% Preparedness/attendance/progress/participation

ysdn 3003 fall term 2019
York/Sheridan program in design
Course instructor
Kevin King
Contact information
kevin.king11@gmail.com
Office hours
Meetings by appointment
Time & location
Monday, 9:00am – 1:00pm, Room J219
Topics covered include:
- Variable fonts and their applications in experiential, interaction and web design workflows and methodologies.
- Sensitivity to the details of typographic structures and designspaces.
- History of typefaces and their making.
- Calligraphic structures of form and movement underlying typographic letterforms.
- Application of variable fonts to HTML
and CSS designs and workflows.
The fitting and kerning of typefaces.
Aspects of multi-script typeface
design practices.
Methodologies for refining and testing
typeface designs.
OpenType feature development;
CFF and TTF hinting.
Font licensing and buying fonts legally.

Course tools and materials

Students are required to use the Glyphs
font development software for this course,
which is used by the majority of font designers
working today. Glyphs is installed on the
Sheridan lab computers for rooms J219 and
J223. For use on students’ personal computers,
a 30-day trial version of the full app can
be downloaded, or, a mini version can be
purchased and downloaded from:
glyphsapp.com.

Suggested texts
Gerrit Noordzij, The stroke: theory of
writing. Hyphen, 2005
Fred Smeijers, Counterpunch: making type
in the sixteenth century, designing
typefaces now. Hyphen, 1996
Gerard Unger, Theory of type design.
nai010, 2018

Many courses utilize Moodle, York University’s course website system. If your course is using Moodle,
click here to access it.
Moodle @ York University