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Having taught part-time here for seven years, I am able to teach faithfully to the core curriculum and also introduce new needed curriculum. One such need was a Web-oriented workshop for sophomores.

My three session workshop, titled “Digital Bits,” used simple web programming to build different types of form each week: concrete, abstract and active. Plentiful readings and examples helped frame the course not as a technical workshop, but as a formmaking workshop. The first two weeks could be done with a marker, scissors and a photocopier. But, this is precisely the point: the web (and programming in general), is an ally in constructing form and layout. Technology is often seen as a means of execution, order-making and analysis. But it is just as powerful as a means to discover form or concepts. Almost none of the 64 sophomores had

taken any Web classes, and virtually all were eager to do so. Given it was a new course, there were a few projects that needed improvement, particularly in the area of abstract form. For the most part, I was able to make adjustments in the semester.

This past fall, I also taught Making Meaning, a required course for juniors. The course is team-taught, so many of the end products fall into line with the excellent output customary from the students in our Department.

Additionally, I taught a more standard Web course in the summer, and advised a senior in his degree project this fall. The summer course was open to anyone, so the results were mixed, but I believe everyone walked away with an elevated sense of web programming, access to professional examples and a more rigorous work ethic.

Fall Workshop:

Digital Bits

Digital Bits ran for three weeks, then was repeated. This provided me an opportunity to build readings and examples in response to unforeseen holes in the curriculum or unexpected opportunities.

[🔗 Course Website](#)



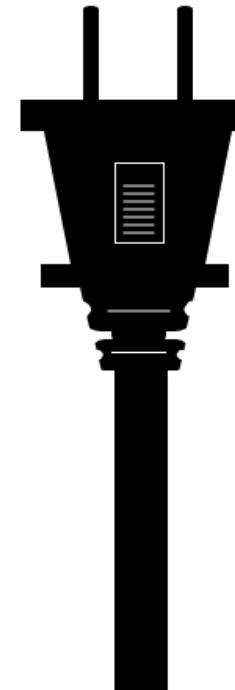
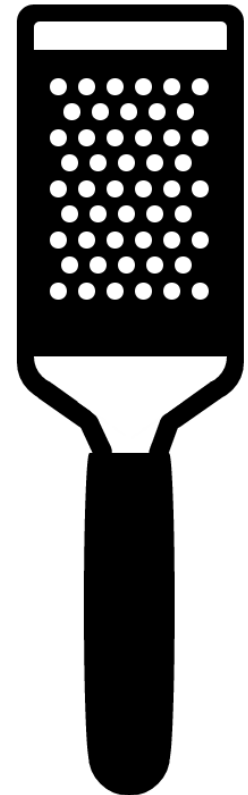
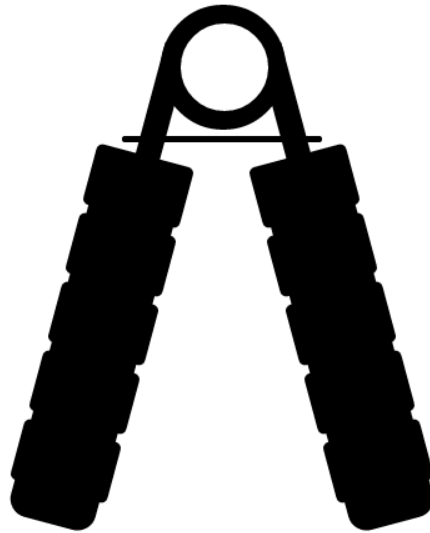
Week 1: Concrete Forms

Assignment 2

This assignment asked students to collect objects in their home, around town, at RISD 2nd life, etc., and to draw them using web coding. This forced students to think tactically, to make use of positive and negative space and to research code snippets to achieve certain shapes.

[↗ More bits](#)

[↗ Week 1 overview](#)



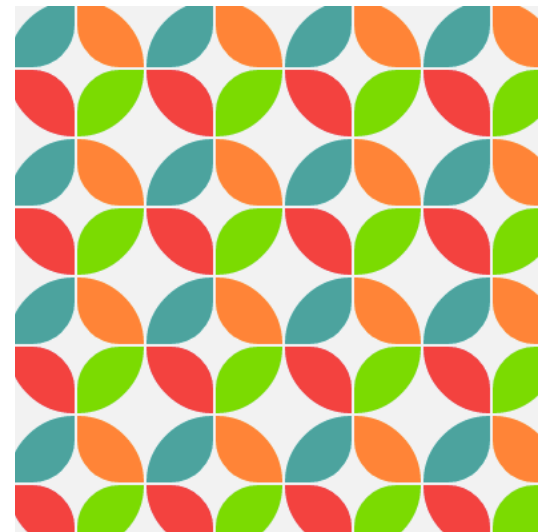
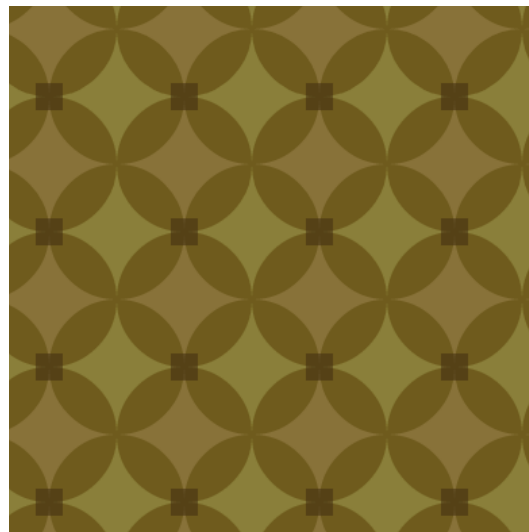
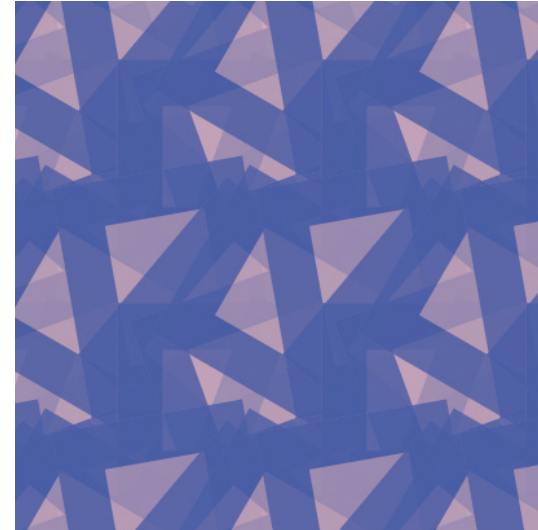
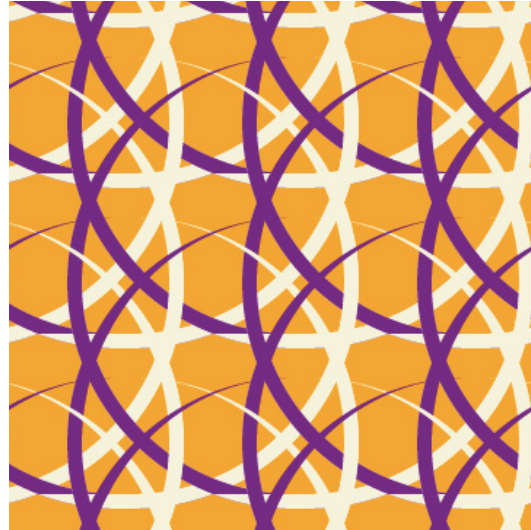
Week 2: Abstract Forms

Assignment 3

This in-class assignment asked students to create a pattern using web code. It is possible to layer objects on top of objects and to alter their relationships to each other all at the same time.

[↗ Pattern results](#)

[↗ Week 2 overview](#)



Week 2: Abstract Forms

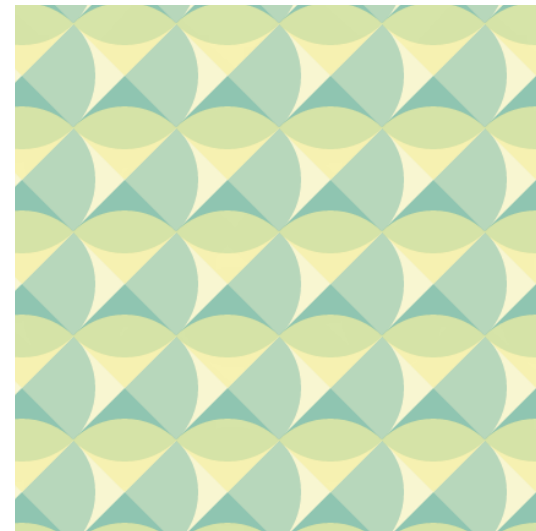
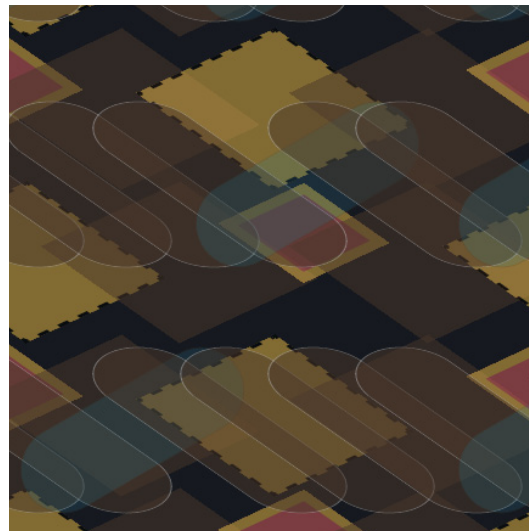
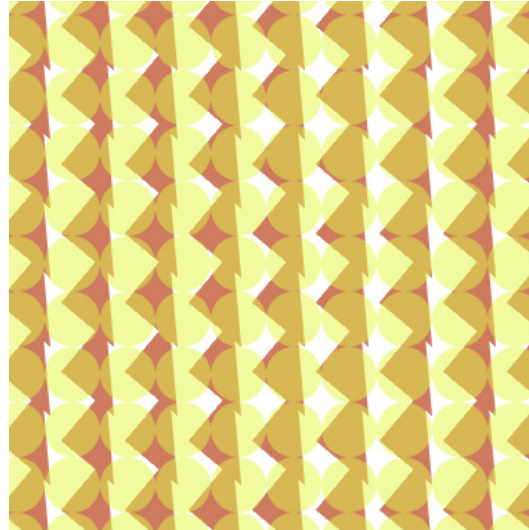
Assignment 3

This assignment required a lot of micro-critting as students were not yet used to what makes interesting form. Too often, students would make overly complex patterns and I found it necessary to find the areas that were working.

For the future, I would have them do this assignment after the next one.

[↗ Pattern results](#)

[↗ Week 2 overview](#)



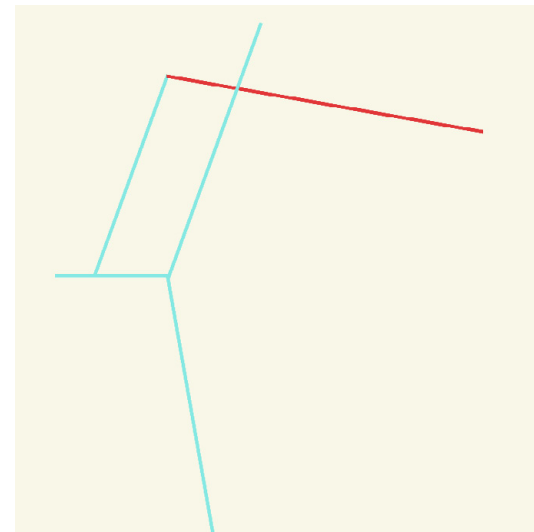
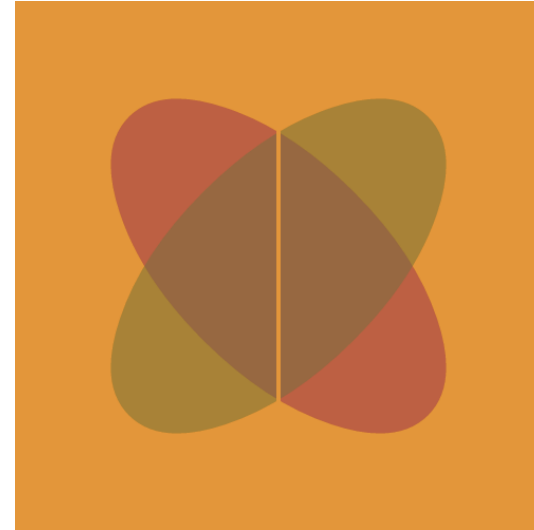
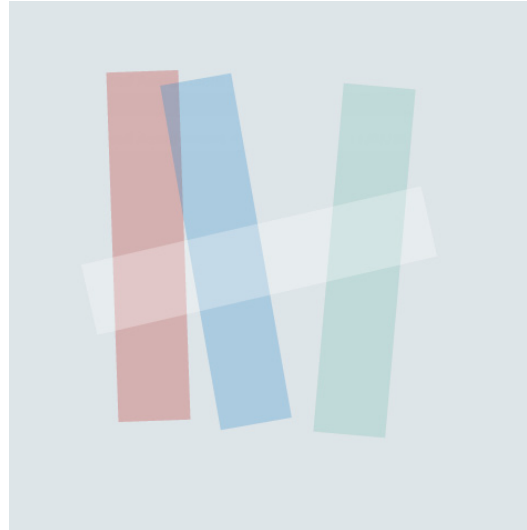
Week 2: Abstract Forms

Assignment 4

I kept simplifying this assignment each time the workshop ran. There was too much room for students to work in. It took an incredible amount of contextualizing to focus their attention on the details — existing as angles and intersections — that make abstract form an engaging and worthwhile end form.

[↗ Assignment 4 results](#)

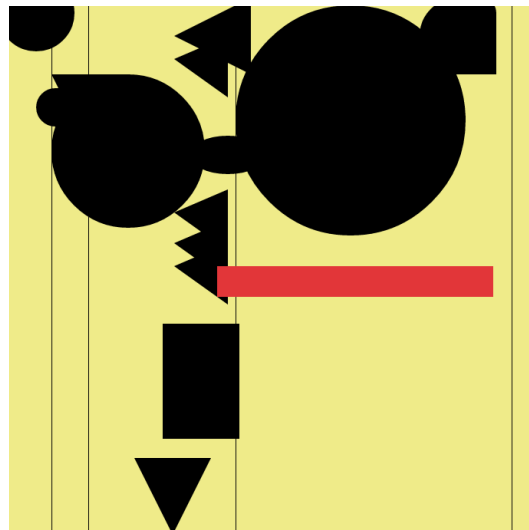
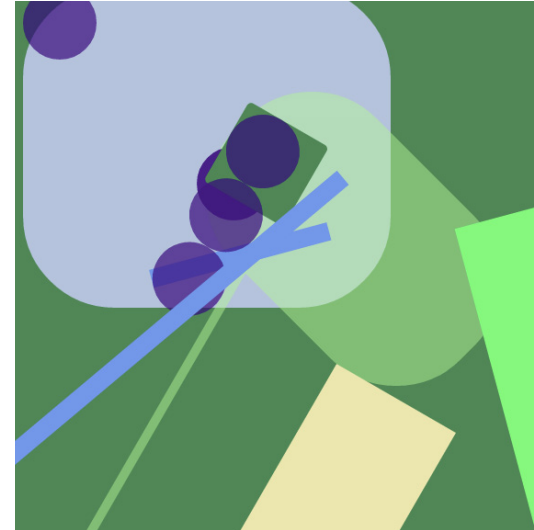
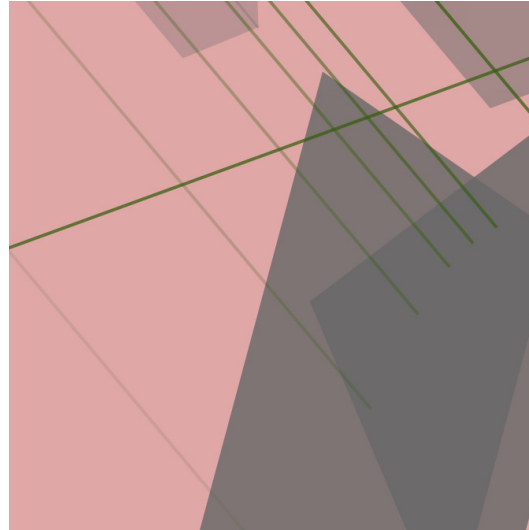
[↗ Week 2 overview](#)



The first three of four workshops did not quite get it right. This, I believe, was due to not framing the problem small enough for the sophomore level, and the speed of the workshop. What I asked them to accomplish over the three weeks was immense in scope, so if there was an opportunity to miss a connection, it was likely to happen at this point.

[↗ Assignment 4 results](#)

[↗ Week 2 overview](#)



Week 3: Active Forms

Assignment 5

I ordered balloons printed with an outlined square. The custom balloon was the focus of their in-class investigation. Like with the last assignment, it took half the semester to specify the assignment enough.

The students played with the balloons (and watched the *Red Balloon*) and created web-based animations. Most are too simplistic and raw as end forms, but the assignment did provide them a muse from which to learn interactive formmaking

[🔗 Assignment 5 results](#)

[🔗 Week 3 overview](#)



Week 3: Active Forms

Assignment 6

“This final assignment of the course asks you to work with simple shapes to construct five active compositions. Each composition should allow the visitor to change the default relationship in some way. Choose just one type of relationship from Christian Leborg’s chapter for each composition. More than one relationship may occur through your investigation of the one concept.”

[🔗 Example at right](#)

[🔗 Assignment 6 results](#)

[🔗 Week 3 overview](#)

Before



After clicking



Fall Core Studio (6cr):

Making Meaning

Making Meaning has been a staple of the fall junior year Graphic Design curriculum. Each instructor assigns the same projects. The following screens will show the performance with the assignment quoted.

As with the previous course, I have a website where the student can get materials from me and post written and visual work.

[🔗 Course Website](#)



Project 1:

Poster for Social Change

“Design a 24”×36” poster that promotes a social or political cause. The poster should be designed to post in public and timed before the election on November 6. The election may or may not be an important factor in your poster.”

[More posters](#)

[Project 1 overview](#)



Project 2:

Narrative Film

“Using photography and sound only, produce a 2-3 minute video to be projected on Thursday, November 8.”

[See Michelle's video](#)

[See all videos](#)

[Project 2 overview](#)



Project 3:

Mapping

“Using today’s lecture as inspiration, create a map of your site, place or journey.”

This image is a composite image of lights visible at night in Providence (taken from student’s window).

“The lights have been put together to create one place, and many places, both on earth and in the sky.”

[↗ More mapping projects](#)

[↗ Project 3 overview](#)

Project 4:

Interpretive project

“Use the film as a jumping off point — as your assignment sheet — to make a work that is your own. It is not important that the viewer of your project connect the movie to your project, it is only important that you start from the film and find a point of departure.”

[↗ More projects](#)

[↗ Project 4 overview](#)

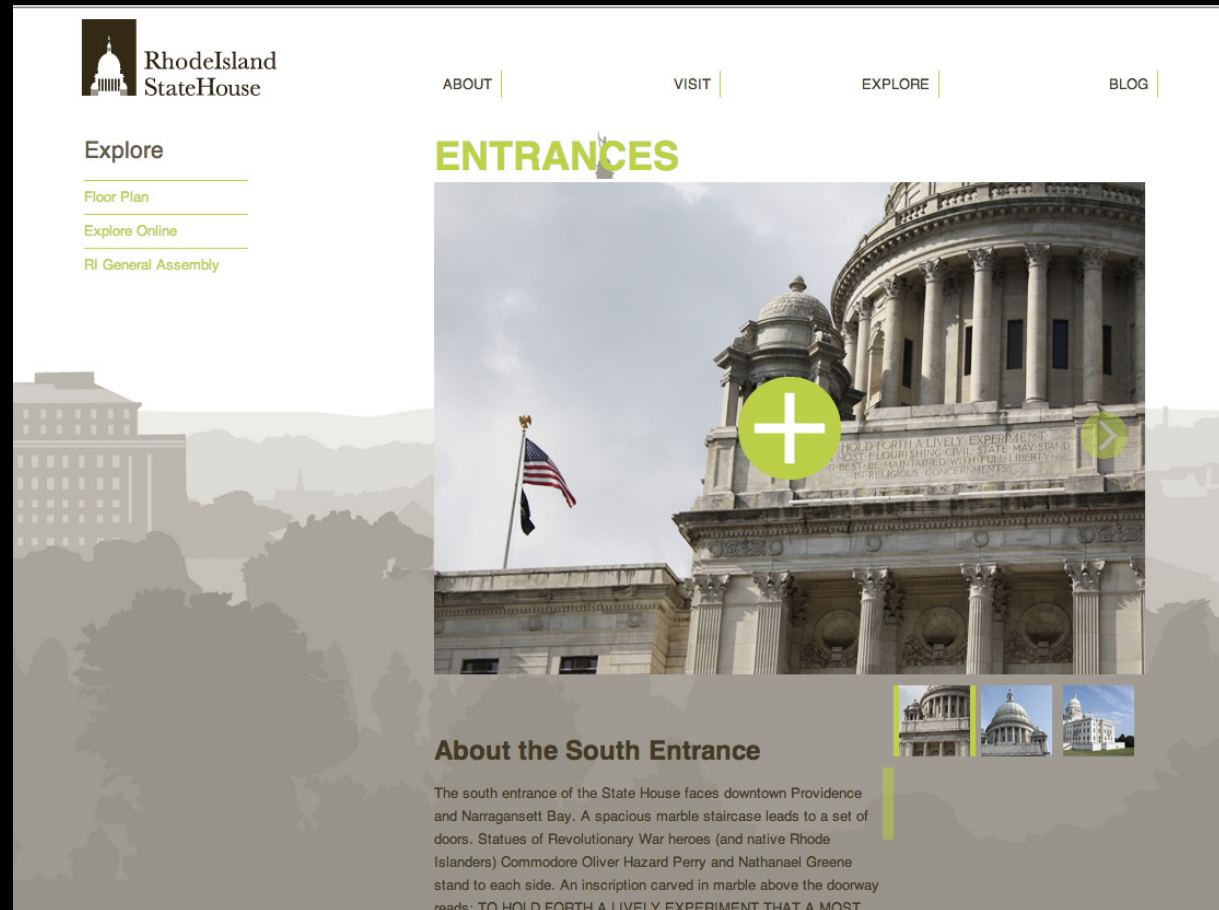


Summer Institute of Graphic Design Studies:

Web Design

I taught a two-week all day every day credit-bearing course for both RISD undergraduates (from Illustration, ID, GD) and from outside the University. Since it is a beginning web class, the first week includes intensive exercises and coding. The second week, the students focus on their own websites under my guidance.

[Course Website](#)





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End

