NEWSCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

WINTER QUARTER 2026-27

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Office Hours: Before or after class or by appointment

Course Number & Title

MD121 - Imaging I

Credit Hours & Work Outside Class Time

3 credit hours (2 lecture + 2 lab)
Students are expected to spend at least 2 hours outside of class time for every one hour spent in the classroom.

Meeting Times

TBD

Course Description

Ready to take your creativity into the digital world? In Imaging 1, you'll learn to transform ideas into compelling visual designs using industry-standard raster and vector graphics tools. Explore the power of digital image manipulation, color, layout, typography, and introductory digital illustration techniques while discovering which tools are best suited for different creative challenges. Building on foundational design principles, this hands-on course bridges traditional design concepts with digital workflows, giving you the skills and creative confidence to bring your visual ideas to life.

Room

TBD

Prerequisites

None

Recommended Text

Graphic Design Thinking: Beyond Brainstorming Ellen Lupton, Princeton Architectural Press

Basic Software Requirements

Adobe CC (Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign). Have access to online resources including Canvas. Have access to Microsoft Word, Google Docs or comparable word processing software.

Material Requirements

External hard drive or Cloud backup of your working files, Large sketch pad, straight edge, large white eraser, markers, drawing pencils and colored pencils.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate proficiency in raster & vector software, such as Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator.
- Apply image manipulation & digital retouching techniques.
- Develop digital illustration skills.
- Produce professionally-formatted artwork for both print and digital platforms, ensuring correct resolution, file format, and color settings.
- Articulate how their design choices fit the intended brief.

Course Assessment

A required professional course, students are expected to demonstrate a "developed" or "highly –developed" level of work as indicated above. This knowledge and understanding is demonstrated through individual student projects, presentations, assignments and exams

Evaluation is based on the course learning outcomes as well as these four standard NewSchool criteria:

- Completeness and timeliness – all work submitted on time; all submitted requirements met.
- Craft and communication – all work meets established academic standards for the program.
- Process and development – submittals evolve to a higher level of complexity, correctness, and refinement.
- Critical Thinking – is evident in critical observation, use of relevant criteria and contexts for making judgments, appropriate application of source materials, use of methods and techniques for forming judgments and in application of theoretical constructs.

Course Requirements

Regular attendance and participation at ALL lectures, field trips, group discussions, and presentations as well as completion of ALL assignments, papers, quizzes, and tests is mandatory to successfully complete this course.

Course Evaluation and Grading

Description	**Points**
Main Projects (2-3 projects throughout the course)	50
In-class participation	10
Homework	20
Final Presentation	10
Final Exam	10
TOTAL	**100%**

Letter Grade Criteria

EXCELLENT: 100% to 90%

This is work that demonstrates excellence, special care and depth in the fulfillment of the assignments. Both the work and the process add to a further understanding of the possibilities framed by the coursework's issues and constraints. This student's level of commitment and critical thinking sets the standard for the class:

A: 93% and above / A-: 92-90%

VERY GOOD / AVERAGE: 89% to 80%

The student has demonstrated an above average academic performance that represents a solid understanding of the course objectives. Both the work and the process exhibit a clear understanding of the possibilities framed by the coursework's issues and constraints. This student's level of commitment and critical thinking are appropriate and professional.

B+: 89-87% / B: 86-83% / B-: 82-80%

BELOW AVERAGE: 79% to 70%

The student has demonstrated satisfactory academic performance that represents a reasonable understanding of the course objectives. Both the work and the process exhibit a commitment and a desire to explore the possibilities framed by the project's issues and constraints. The work produced, however, falls somewhat short of this desire. This student's level of commitment and critical thinking meet the minimum requirements for academic and professional performance.

C+: 79-77% / C: 76-73% / C-: 72-70%

UNSATISFACTORY / 69-60% / FAIL: 59% AND BELOW

The student has demonstrated unsatisfactory academic performance that represents little understanding of the course objectives. Both the work and the process fail to exhibit a commitment and a desire to explore the possibilities framed by the coursework's issues and constraints. This student's level of commitment and critical thinking fail to meet the minimum requirements for academic and professional performance.

D+: 69-67% / D: 66-63% / D-: 62-60% / F: 59% and below

Instructional Methodology

The course may alternate between lectures with combined class sections followed by individual section seminars. Seminar content may include discussions, student presentations, guest lectures and short assignments.

Topical Course Outline

Week	Date	Topical Overview & Related Assignments	Expected Hours Outside of Class
1	4/7	Introduction to Digital Imaging - Raster vs Vector	8
2	4/14	Photoshop: Working with Layers & Adjustments	8
3	4/21	Raster: Image Retouching & Manipulation	8
4	4/28	Raster: Digital Color & Textures, Intro to Type & Output	8
5	5/5	Introduction to Vector Graphics & Digital Illustration, Shapes	8
6	5/12	Bezier Mastery with the pen tool	8
7	5/19	Vector: Pattern, texture, Color, Brushes	8
8	5/26	(Memorial Day, Campus Closed)	8
9	6/2	Output: Combining Raster & Vector Elements	8
10	6/9	Final Exam & Draft of final Presentation	8
11	6/16	Final Presentation	
		Total	80 at the minimum

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

- Regular and punctual attendance
- Study and performance necessary to obtain passing grades
- Professional conduct
- Compliance with NSAD non-smoking campus and alcohol- and drug-free facility policies, and with all local and state laws
- Compliance with NSAD instructors' and administrators' directions
- Respecting and following NSAD policies

Turn off cell phones and refrain from using electronic devices for texting, email, web surfing, or other non-class purposes during the class period. Please discreetly leave the classroom to attend to electronic communications in case of an emergency.

Course Assignments

It is mandatory that all assignments that are graded need to be uploaded in CANVAS. This is a requirement for accreditation, and it archives content for institutional publications. The required naming convention for student file uploads is *Academic Year – Course Code - Student ID - One word description*.
Example of proper naming: 2025-MD150-B0001234-Brochure.

Attendance

Due to the professional nature of education at NewSchool, students are expected to strive for 100% attendance in all on-ground, scheduled classes. NewSchool classes are experiential, and attendance is required for the entire class. The following attendance policy is modeled after attendance expectations in the workplace and is consistent with NewSchool's commitment to a culture of professional practice" (NewSchool Mission Statement). Instructors provide essential information and guided practice. Students are required to participate in discussions, reviews, critiques, and seminars. Lack of attendance and/or participation will impact the student's success and, potentially, progress through the program of study. Instructors may call the roll of the student names listed on the attendance roster at any time during the class for each day that the course meets during the quarter. Tardy students may have points or a percentage deducted from their cumulative course total (refer to the instructor's course syllabus for details on tardiness policies). Students are required to be in class on time and remain in class until the scheduled end time for each class session; leaving class early may result in the student being marked absent for that day.

Students who miss more than 20% of the on-ground meeting times of a course will receive a 10-percent reduction (a complete letter grade reduction) in their final grade. Students are required to attend at least 70% of all on-ground classes, regardless of whether the course is on-ground or hybrid. Students who miss more than 30% of the on-ground meeting times of a course will receive a failing grade for the course. However, faculty may establish a stricter attendance policy within the class syllabus to ensure that all students meet the required learning outcomes of that course. If the faculty introduces a more stringent attendance policy, this overrides the institutional attendance policy. Students who are absent due to an extenuating circumstance may submit documentation (e.g., doctor's note) to their instructor in support of a request for an excused absence. Students may make up work from excused absences; however, because NewSchool classes are highly participatory, even excused absences are counted against the attendance requirements for the course.

Absences approved by the head of the department of the course that the student is missing due to an academic school-sponsored event will not count towards the 80% or 70% requirements. Students who are absent due to an unexcused reason will not be allowed to make up missed assignments or exams. Faculty members are not required to repeat the content missed due to a student's absence, regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused. If a student cannot pass the class due to attendance before the end of the standard withdrawal period, the faculty member may notify the student and recommend withdrawal. If the student agrees, the withdrawal may be processed in accordance with institutional procedures and documented accordingly.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating and will NOT be tolerated. It is a serious academic transgression, and it is inexcusable, whether intentional or not. It is defined as taking and using, as one's own, the ideas, writings, and images of another individual without giving appropriate credit through proper documentation to that individual. Aiding a student attempting to cheat or plagiarize is also considered academically dishonest.

The school catalog details the possible consequences for plagiarism, which may include assignment and/or course failure or even dismissal from the school. Students are expected to be familiar with the school's policy. Give credit—in the appropriate format for all images and text—where credit is due.

To ensure academic integrity, NSAD recognizes the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style for all scholarly work at NSAD. Unless an alternate style is specified by an instructor and has been approved by the department chair, all students are expected to know and use APA conventions per the current APA Manual.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) including Generative Artificial Intelligence policy

AI Definition (from Coursera): Much of the AI that people interact with every day is the result of machine learning (ML), which uses algorithms trained on datasets to power a computer's ability to understand information, "learn" from it, and then make decisions. Generative AI Definition (from Coursera): Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence that uses large language models (LLMs), or machine learning models trained on massive data sets, to generate new content based on user inputs. Some people consider it the next generation of AI because, instead of relying on existing sources, it can produce new data, images, and other forms of content rather than just perform the same task repeatedly. Generative AI applications: ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, and Dall-E and more.

1. Responsible Use & Academic Integrity NewSchool embraces the appropriate use of AI. Students may use AI tools only when explicitly permitted by course instructors. Faculty will outline acceptable uses in the syllabus or assignment instructions. AI-generated content must be properly cited. Submitting AI-generated text, design, code, or other work without disclosure will be considered plagiarism and a violation of the university's Academic Integrity and Code of Conduct policies. Use of AI tools does not exempt students from producing original work or understanding core course concepts.

Misuse—such as unapproved assistance on assignments or overreliance on AI without critical engagement—will result in academic penalties.

2. Citation Requirement Any AI-generated content used to support coursework (e.g., text, visuals, research summaries) must include: - A clear citation of the tool used (e.g., "Generated using ChatGPT, OpenAI, August 2025"). - A description of how the tool was used to support—not replace—student work.

3. Limitations & Risks While powerful, AI tools are fallible. Users should be aware of the following: - AI output may be inaccurate, outdated, biased, or ethically inappropriate. - Privacy is not guaranteed—avoid submitting confidential or personal data. - Overuse may hinder creative development and critical thinking. 4. Classroom Variations Each faculty member may define specific rules for AI use in their courses. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with each class's guidelines. 5. Copyright Compliance All community members must respect copyright laws. AI tools trained on third-party content may generate copyrighted material. Use of such content without proper attribution or permission may constitute infringement.

Student Responsibilities & Conduct

Students are responsible for:

- Regular and punctual attendance.
- Study and performance necessary to obtain passing grades.
- Professional conduct always.
- Compliance with NSAD non-smoking campus and alcohol- and drug-free facility policies, and with all local and state laws.
- Compliance with NSAD instructors' and administrators' directions; and
- Respecting and following NSAD policies.

Turn off cell phones and refrain from using electronic devices for texting, email, web surfing, or other non-class purposes during the class period. Please discreetly leave the classroom to attend to electronic communications in case of an emergency.

Late/Make-Up Work

Late (or makeup) work will be accepted only by prior arrangement with the instructor or in cases of legitimate, unforeseen emergency or excused absence, which is defined in the "Attendance" section above. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor in such cases and make alternate arrangements. Note that late and makeup work, when accepted, may receive substantial grade deductions.

Arrangements must be made in advance for approved planned absences such as a religious observance, military or jury duty, and emergencies. *Computer malfunctions, personal travel, outside work schedules and similar issues are not considered legitimate excuses or emergencies in any event*. Consult the *Academic Catalog* for information regarding an incomplete grade. Failure to keep pace with the course is not adequate grounds upon which to base an incomplete grade.

Course Evaluation

Students are strongly encouraged to fill out the online course evaluation available towards the end of the quarter. Responses are used to improve delivery, add or revise content and otherwise assess learning: they are extremely important. The process is completely confidential. Student names, ID numbers or any other identifiers DO NOT appear on the evaluations. Note that some instructors may, at their discretion, choose to make completion of an evaluation a course requirement. In such cases, complete confidentiality is still maintained.

Disability Statement

NSAD is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities in compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA). Students may request accommodations by contacting Disability Services: **ADA@newschoolarch.edu** AND **ndean@newschoolarch.edu**. It is important to do this at the start of the quarter or as soon as possible since ADA accommodations are NOT retroactive. All discussions held between faculty / student / DSC are confidential.

The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is available for native and non-native English speakers for all assignments involving writing, reading, and grammar across the disciplines. Please contact Wendy Castellanos at wcastellanos@newschoolarch.edu.

Retention of Student Work

All student work including drawings, models, portfolios, photographs, artwork, furniture, papers, and tests submitted to NewSchool to satisfy coursework or degree requirements become the property of the NewSchool of Architecture & Design. This work may be used for exhibition purposes, documentation for accreditation proceedings, or for course instruction. Students in design programs must photograph their work for portfolio use prior to the final jury or presentation at the end of each quarter. NewSchool is under no obligation to retain student work.

NewSchool Email Requirement	Some course correspondence may occur via email. Due to federal privacy requirements, students must have and use a NewSchool email address (first name.last name@ student.newschoolarch.edu) for such purposes. Private email is not acceptable. Contact the instructors and IT Support at helpdesk@newschoolarch.edu immediately if NewSchool email is not viable for some reason.
Last Review Date	10/28/2026