

Become a Designer with COM 204

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Course COM 204 is about Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator. My major is Information Systems and Education, and I took this course as an elective. Before I started the course, I set myself the goal of learning how to make educational posters for children in my classroom. In this course I learned many things which I will use in my life, such as:

- How to make business cards and advertisements.
- How to make people focus on the important things.
- How to order and write important information.
- How to understand relations between information, picture and color.
- How to exploit everything in the poster to bring attention to the advertisement.
- How to draw cartoons with Illustrator.

My main source of help in this course was the teacher: he explained the subject in a simple way and gave us the time to do practice after each step. He also gave us sheets showing us the steps. For example, when he taught us Photoshop or Illustrator, first, he gave us sheets that included some sample pictures. Then he asked us some questions about what was right and wrong in these pictures. By this practice, we understood what we needed when using Photoshop or Illustrator. Before he asked us to make a poster or pictures, he showed us some work by other students. If someone made mistakes, he helped us to discover our mistakes by asking questions such as “Why did you do that? What is the connection between the font color and the picture color?” With these questions, he helped us to improve our design and to think more and more to create new designs.

The main thing that made it difficult for me to learn was time. I think I needed a lot of time to learn to use PhotoShop and Illustrator because these programs include a lot of features, and I needed more than 2 hours just to make one poster (I needed to think of design, color and picture). The lab was very busy with other classes, but I needed to work there because my laptop was not powerful enough.

This course helped me to answer many questions that were in my mind about advertisements. Whenever I walk in the street in Abu Dhabi, I see a lot of advertisements and I ask myself how this advertisement was made, and why they chose this picture with that color. Now, I understand the advertisements better, and I can read some drawing or picture and understand what the painter meant by this picture and what she or he felt when s/he drew the picture.

This course also helped to think and work with my friend Fakera, who took this course with me and helped me to create a nice cover page for our capstone (see Figure 1 below). I did not need to spend a lot of money getting a designer to make our cover page; and this helped me in my internship in a school: I could make nice pictures and attractive designs in PowerPoint to capture children’s attention in my classes.

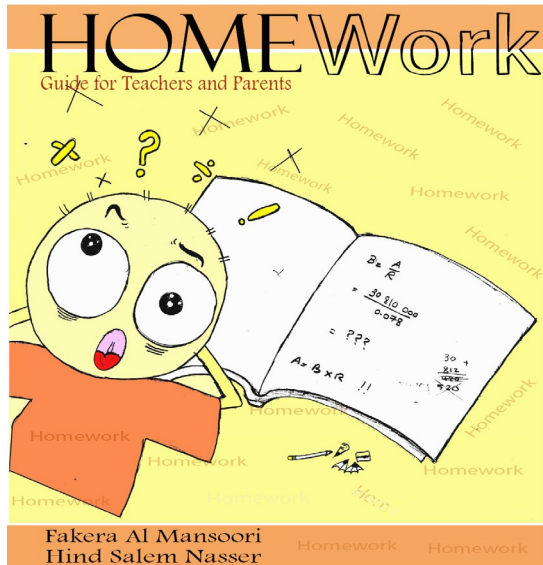


Figure 1: My cover page for Capstone, made using Photoshop and Illustrator. This cover page attracted the attention of teachers and students to read our Capstone project.

Using what I learned in this course, I can open my own business: a lot of people go to designers to make their business card and spend their money on business cards. I could be a designer of business cards at my house. In addition, a lot of new companies spend a lot of money to make advertisements: for example, some companies give design shops 10,000 DHS just for a poster. I could do this job by going to these companies and telling them that I can make a poster cheaper than a design shop.

I advise every teacher to give students practice after each step because this helps student to understand more. I also think that when a teacher sets an exam,

s/he should set a practical exam and think about the timing. In my opinion a practical exam helps the students to understand what she has learned better than a written exam.