# Fresh Graphics:
Approachable Accessibility

To exemplify the ideas and ideals of accessibility and visual communication, the class will focus on collaboration with those within the disability community; we'll spend time listening and learning, and, through experimentation with different techniques of visual communication, work to develop novel means of giving voice to what we learn. The students in the course will develop a series of outreach-based creative workshops, with each event building on the efforts of the previous one. This effort will involve being open to what we don't know about living with disability - specifically with the commitment that design for those with disabilities should always involve their input, ideas, and voices.

A key deliverable of the course will be the production of ' Approachable, Too,' a magazine focused on increasing understanding, opening up communication, and emphasizing the impact of art and design on inclusion and accessibility. The semester will conclude with a public event sharing our work and distributing copies of the magazine.

Workshops, gatherings, and the printing of magazines is funded through a UM Arts in the Curriculum grant.
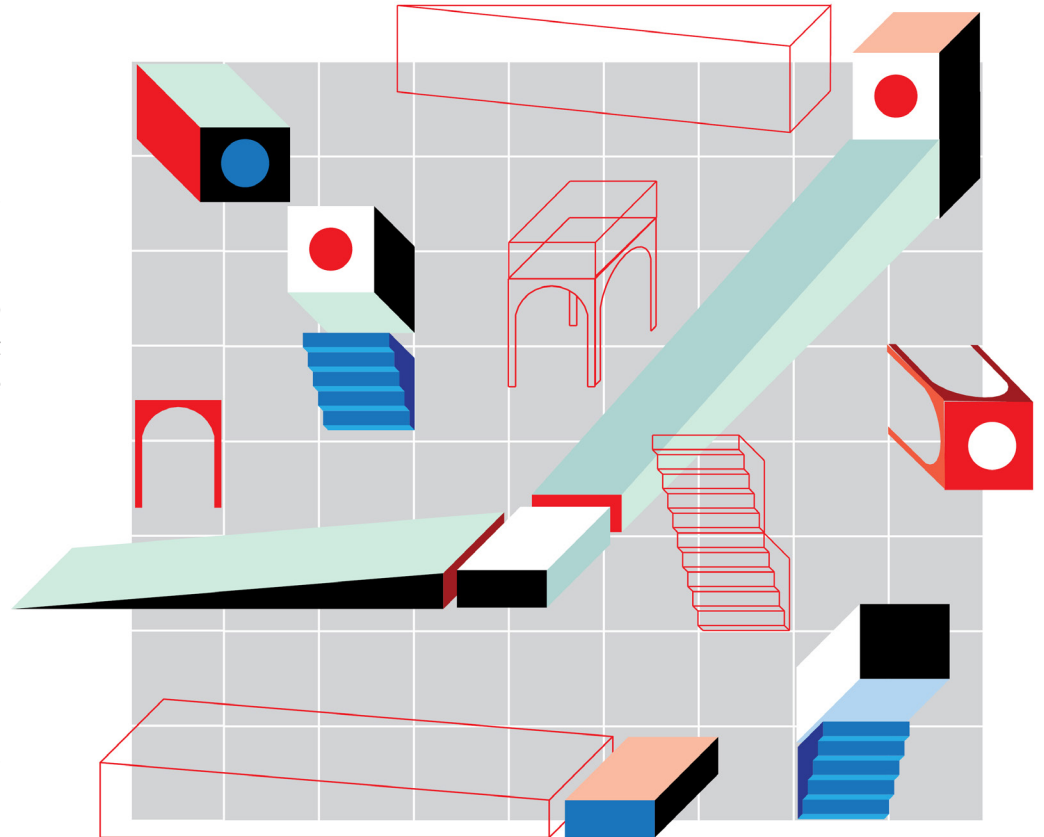
A significant challenge of making the world more accessible to those with disabilities involves making the topic of accessibility not only more easily understood, but more approachable. In simple terms, this can sometimes come down to the fact that it's difficult to understand what can't be seen, or to see what is not understood. This course will allow students to collaborate with members of the disability community, and to design innovative methods of communication about accessible design.

The seminar will study the history of graphic communication, beginning with the work of Gerd Arntz with Otto and Marie Neurath, who, one century ago, pioneered the design and development of the Isotype as a radically modern pictorial system of knowledge sharing. Neurath famously opined that 'words divide, pictures unite,' and argued that there was more to be gained by remembering simplified images than by forgetting 'accurate figures.' Among the achievements of these and other relevant visual thinkers is the core tenet of accessibility. Such visual work that is approachable and friendly, and invites a diverse audience into an inclusive conversation, is the basis for this course, with the goal, through innovative visual communication, of increasing interest, understanding, and commitment to accessible design and the creation of inclusive environments.