Typography is the design and use of typefaces as a means of communication. It is considered to have begun with Gutenberg and the development of moveable type. But typography has its roots in handwritten letterforms. Typography encompasses everything from calligraphy through digital type and type on Web pages. It also includes type designers who create new letterforms as well as designers and calligraphers who use the letters as part of their designs. Typography uses typefaces and the whitespace around and through them to create a whole design.

So... What do I have to do with this handout?

Below is the “anatomy” of what a font is made out of. Exciting stuff, considering every typeface follows certain rules within it’s own family. There are four font families mentioned in this handout, Serif, Sans-Serif, Script and Decorative. You will need to label the parts of the anatomy mentioned below this graphic of each typeface that’s provided. Also, read the rules and “FYI”s for each font family.

Stuff To Label

- Cap Height, X-Height, Baseline
- Serif
- Axis
- Ascender
- Descender
- Tail
- Cossbar
• Serif fonts are excellent for large bodies of text.
• In modern times, Serif fonts were originally designed for typewriters to make it easier for elderly people to read books.

“Sans-Serif Font”

• Sans-serif fonts have become the most prevalent for display of text on computer screens.
• Hint: the word “Sans” comes from the French word meaning “without.”
• Sans-serif fonts are sometimes, especially in older documents, used as a device for emphasis, due to their typically blacker type color.
Script fonts are any font that resembles handwriting, not just calligraphy. They are broken down into Formal (based on calligraphy) or Casual Scripts (based on less formal handwriting). Should not be used for large bodies of text.

Decorative fonts are commercial and vary from company to company, program to program. Not suitable for large bodies of text. At most, use this font for 3-4 words per page, or work.