

COURSE DESCRIPTION SPRING 2015

Junior / Senior Seminar explores issues relevant to advancing studio practice and developing a cohesive body of work for BFA exhibitions. Examines implications of pursuing a future in a fine arts studio discipline.

Throughout this seminar we will explore a multitude of ways to contribute to the complex creative ecosystem, which, now that you are in your junior/senior year, I assume you have made some level of commitment to continue participating with beyond your time at the University. Projects are devised to prompt dialogue within your community, spark inspiration for furthering material research (in and out of your studio), and encourage you to view your actions and creations within a broader context. To do so we will attend artist talks, engage with guest speakers, ask questions, write down our ideas, and get to know what is happening regionally. (Going to shows and exhibits are probably already habitual for you, if not, asking “why not” would be a good talking point for this class.) You will find, if you haven’t discovered this already, that “being an artist” means much, much more than making work in your studio. Throughout the course we will be investigating the interconnectedness of roles within a creative network and discuss how you can be involved.

Over the semester I will ask you to do many of the things artists do to promote their ideas and work. While some of these things—writing proposals (to convince people that they want to see something as badly as the artist does); writing artist statements and resumes (required by galleries, granting institutions, and businesses); and making websites (to be visible), etc.—are often described as a chore, we will discuss methods for seeing these in a new light. We will attempt to embrace these practices as opportunities for creatively sharing what you do with people who may not know you. Additionally, we will discuss how researching texts, reading art magazines, and studying like-minded artists contributes to your work and life and what you may want to give in return.

While some books and Internet sites may state otherwise, there is no guaranteed recipe for being a successful artist or even a concrete definition of success. Ultimately, you continue to develop your practice because you are interested in and committed to your own research. The objective of this class is to prepare you with basic presenting strategies for surviving as an emerging artist while emphasizing the importance of interacting with a creative network.

Course Structure: In-class time is devoted to developing a voice, shared conversation, artist talks, and public presentations. It is expected that you will spend quite a bit of time outside of class writing, researching and making. Research is the glue that holds all the varied activities we are doing together, and it is the fundamental thing that allows each part of the creative practice (the making, writing, historical cataloging, etc.) to influence the other. During the semester you should be conducting personal research furthering your studio practice. This process will vary greatly from student to student but might include researching historical, social or public, poetic or literary, mechanical, technical, material, and other components of your creative thinking.

Attendance: I expect you to do everything in your power to be present when we meet as a larger group. Due to the limited amount of time that we will gather as a group, **more than two absences from our full group meetings will result in failing the course. Tardiness over 10 minutes will count as an absence.**

Evaluation:* If you complete your manifesto, create an instruction for the class book, write two drafts and revisions of your artist statement, make a basic resume, compile an artist packet including work samples, give an artist talk on your work and influences, voice your opinions in discussions, attend the department artist talks, and participate fully in our group meetings you will pass. If you approach your projects with dedication and passion then you will do well in the class.

If you like math it might look something like what's below, but I would like to stress that this is an independently motivated course that focuses on your personal practice. My basic expectation is that you act like a self-directed artist who has been given time to pursue a line of investigation, something that is often difficult to manage outside of school.

Focus and participation during class: It is expected that you will come to class attentive and ready to contribute. The limited time that we will be meeting as a group is imperative to understanding the material covered and your focus is essential in generating helpful discussion. Participation in class discussion will be taken into account—particularly in the case of borderline grades.

Completion and evaluation of assignments: A completion date will be given for all assigned writing/other stuff so that we may respond as a group to your ideas. It is expected that as much as possible will be done to bring your work to a high resolution for these events.

There will be 6 major projects that will count towards the assignment-based grade for this course:

Project 1: Instruction Piece. Create a set of instructions for making a work of art. This may be a piece you have already made. In this case, the instructions will serve as a reinterpretation of an existing work. Or, this may be instruction for an impossible piece that you wish you could make. In this case, the instructions serve as a way to access your imagination with disregard to physical or financial limitations. For reference review the “Do It” booklet posted on Sakai, Yoko Ono’s Instruction pieces, and Sol LeWitt’s instructions for wall paintings. You will hand in a physical piece on paper AND scan your instructions according to the template posted on Sakai. The digital version will be used to create a pdf booklet representing the ideas of your immediate community.

[10% of the class grade.]

Project 2: Manifesto. The student will write a formal critical analysis of the readings presented. This paper should offer a summation of the point of view of the author, give a response to the ideas presented and give an opinion about the state of art today. The final paper should be 1 page (250 - 500 words) in length, and should include citations when applicable. **[10% of the class grade.]**

Project 3: Comprehensive Artist Statement. Compose a statement that defines and reveals key aspects of your studio practice. This statement must include a section that clearly places your work within its influences. This writing assignment will require logical and carefully edited prose. The final paper should be between 1-2 pages (500-750 words) in length. You will revise as many times as it takes to finalize. We will workshop statements in class twice. **[20% of the class grade.]**

Project 4: Application to Residency (full artist packet). The student will research and assemble the appropriate application for this type of professional support system. This written document will include a clear and carefully edited statement that positions your work within the realm of the agencies’ mission statement. You will also include a CV and a 10-image work sample with descriptions. **[20% of the class grade.]**

Project 5: Create (redesign) a website for your practice. The site can be created in squarespace, wordpress, or other web builder of your choice. Peruse artist websites. Focus on one or two that you like and use these as templates to reconsider your on-line presence. **[10% of the class grade.]**

Project 6: Professional Lecture. The student will be responsible for creating and presenting a PowerPoint presentation that addresses the development of their work over the course of their undergraduate studies. The student will be expected to articulate their unique vision, artistic goals, influences, target audience and speak clearly about how their work has evolved. **[This assignment will count towards 25% of the class grade and should synthesize the student’s experience in this class.]**

Ongoing: You will also research and discuss the artist talks and museum/gallery exhibits that you attended over the course of the semester. During this discussion you should speak about what you personally feel is happening in the work, how the artist articulated their methods and ideas, as well as connecting your individual response to the way others have spoken about the artist's work (yes, that means reading about the artist PRIOR to their talk). **[5% of the class grade.]**

More on Evaluation: *While one's response to art can be a very subjective experience, there are particular and concrete things that can be evaluated. One can see clear improvement in the ability to articulate the reasoning behind decisions, and, more importantly, it is quite easy to see the effort that a student has put into their writing and work. That said, you can be assured that I will not be grading your projects on whether I "like" them, but on your willingness to search for a solution to proposed problems.

*It is the student's responsibility to find out about and complete work from classes missed. You may, and should, call or e-mail me (or another student if they have agreed to this) to find out what you need to do for the next class.

*You need to take the responsibility to speak with me if there is a problem that is causing you to be uncomfortable in class, to miss many classes, or miss turning in assignments. Without your communication I cannot consider alternative options to get you through the course. I will post office hours on my office door for students who wish to meet with me privately.

These resources will serve as references and guides during class and after your graduation:

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. **Guide to Getting Arts Grants** by Ellen Liberatori (261 pages) **Publisher:** Perseus D (2006); **ISBN:** 9781581154566; **List Price** (approximate): \$19.95 New
2. **ART/WORK** by Heather Darcy Bhandari & Jonathan Melber (290 pages); **Publisher:** S+S (2009); **ISBN:** 9781416572336; **List Price** (approximate): \$18.00 New

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

1. **Seven Days In The Art World** by Sarah Thornton (287 pages) **Publisher:** Norton & Co (2008)
2. **In The Making: Creative Options for Contemporary Art** by Linda Weintraub
3. **The Artist's Guide: How to Make a Living Doing What You Love** by Jackie Battenfield (June 2009)

INTERNET RESOURCES

Local Art Organizations:

http://www.thedcca.org/	http://www.tigerstrikesasteroid.com/
http://www.philamuseum.org/	http://space1026.com/
http://voxpathuligallery.org/	http://www.marginalutility.org/
http://www.cranearts.com/wordpress/icebox	http://icaphila.org/
http://www.grizzlygrizzly.com/	http://www.fabricworkshopandmuseum.org/
http://littleberlin.org/	

Artists Residencies and other Information:

<http://www.artistcommunities.org/>
<http://www.transartists.org/>
<http://www.resartis.org>

Public Art and Grants:

<http://www.lvartscommission.com/artist-opportunities/>
<http://www.forecastpublicart.org>
<http://www.cranbrookart.edu/library/research/grants.htm>
<http://www.libraries.cca.edu/learn/research/grants>
<http://www.unitedstatesartists.org>
<http://grantspace.org/Tools/Knowledge-Base/Individual-Grantseekers/Artists/Funding-for-individual-artists>
<http://www.pacouncilonthearts.org/pca.cfm?id=55&level=Third>
http://www.americanartists.org/organizations_and_support/private.htm
<http://www.womenarts.org/fund/SourcesforIndividualArtists.htm>
<http://miraslist.blogspot.com/>

COURSE SCHEDULE SPRING 2015

Tuesdays, 6:00-9:00 pm. Attendance is mandatory.

2/10 Course Introduction. Artist Presentations & What I did to Prepare for Graduate School by current MFA students: **Jim Dessicino, Daniel Giordano, Tara Booth, Heather Ossandon, Charlotte Thurman.**

Write Instructions for making a piece. Peruse the "Do It" booklet published by Moore College (pdf on Sakai). On 2/17 you will hand in a printed (paper) version and a digital version. We will use your jpeg scans/documents to create a digital publication for on-line use.

Also, peruse Yoko Ono's Instruction pieces <http://www.a-i-u.net/yokosays.html>
Sol LeWitt: http://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/conceptual-art/sol-lewitt-and-instruction-based-art

2/17 **VA: Alex Baker, Smith Hall 130, 5:00-6:00 pm**

How artists talk about themselves (ART21 screenings). Describe approach to thinking about art. (Plus Dziga Vertov, Agnes Varda, and more TBA).

DUE Tuesday 2/24: *Write a manifesto.* Read Claes Oldenburg's "I am for an art..."
<http://www.walkerart.org/magazine/2013/claes-oldenburg-i-am-for-an-art-1961> and also
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art_manifesto

[Read ch 1, 2, and 3 from "Guide to Getting Grants," pp 1-46.](#)

2/24 *Manifestos Due. Read to class. Discuss.*

Jessi Taylor, Barrel of Makers, Inc: a makerspace (www.BarrelofMakers.org)

Additional Approaches To Consider: Andrea Zittel, Kara Walker and Trenton Doyle Hancock (Video Segments from Art 21: Artists in the Twenty-first Century)

Read selections from "The Artist's Guide" pdf on Sakai.

3/3 **Alyssa Kaminski (BFA/UD 2012) & Emily Bunker (BFA/UD 2009)** discuss practice and life post BFA. Ways of building a creative life in Philadelphia.

Discuss the Artist Statement, Artists' CV, Bio, and Work Samples. First Drafts Due on Friday 3/13 as a hard copy and digital file.

Read ch 1 and 2 from "ART/WORK," pp 1-47.

3/10 **VA: Black Maria Film Festival, Smith Hall 130, 5:00-7:00 pm**

Identifying Support Systems: Artist Residencies and Fellowships, Graduate School, Funding Agencies, Public Commissions and Assistantships. The artist packet & creating an artists' website. **Guest: Kevin Shields (BA/UD 2012)**

Read ch 3 and 4 from "ART/WORK," pp 49-85.

3/17 **Tim Belknap, artist/educator & Co-Director Icebox Project Space:** on his practice, being an artist-curator, and artist collectives in Philadelphia.

Send pdf to me and your group by Friday 3/13: First Draft of Artist Packet Due: Artist Statement, Bio, and CV. Statements to be work shopped in class.

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3/24 **VA: Clarissa Sligh, Smith Hall 130, 5:00-6:00 pm**
Dan Jackson, (MFA/UD 2011): a presentation on his practice and his show at DCCA. Why being a photographer improves his paintings. Discussion & Demo about documenting and presenting your work. How do you view your work? How can you encourage others to view it the way you do?

DUE 4/5 at 12 noon: Second Draft of Artist Packet.

Read ch 4, 5, 6, and 7 from "Guide to Getting Arts Grants," pp 47-153.

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3/31 SPRING BREAK

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4/7 **VA: JJ PEET, Smith Hall 130, 5:00-6:00 pm**
Maiza Hixson, Curator, DCCA, on being an artist and curator. Workshop on Artist Packets. Use this second DRAFT as a starting place to write your proposal for an artist residency, funder, and/or venue. (Revisit how to identify support systems.) 3rd Draft due 4/17.

Second Draft of Artist Packet Due: Artist Statement, Bio, CV, and work samples. Statements to be work shopped in class.

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4/14 **VA: Tristin Lowe, Smith Hall 130, 5:00-6:00 pm**
The Artist Talk: What is it? A performance or a lecture? Review and discuss the talks attended this semester. What did you learn? What inspired you? Why are these important?

Small Group sessions workshop your artist packet.

Read ch 5, 6, and 7 from "ART/WORK," pp 87-170.

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4/21 **VA: Chitrah Ganesh, Smith Hall 130, 5:00-6:00 pm**
Steven Earl Weber, (MFA/UD 2013), on his work and exhibition design.

Third Draft of Artist Packet Due: Gear it toward an organization (funder, residency, or art organization) of your choice after research conducted via the on-line resources provided. Include short artist statement (one paragraph), bio, CV, 10-image work sample with descriptions, and narrative written to align with the mission of the chosen organization.

Small Group sessions workshop your artist packet.

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4/28 Student Presentations: Your Artist Talk



5/5 Student Presentations: Your Artist Talk



5/12 Student Presentations: Your Artist Talk