

Search Committee:

Below is a sample of the syllabus for my art 103 class (Art Foundations), which I have taught for three semesters at the University of Tennessee. The themes of the projects vary each semester. The images of student work I have submitted are all two week projects from this course.

Course Syllabus: Art 103

meeting time: Tuesday & Thursday 12:20pm – 3:20pm

location: Art and Architecture (A & A), rooms 443 and 127

instructor: Edward Allen Miller

office hours: by appointment; arrange in class or by email

Overview

This class is a thematic introduction to visual literacy, basic art theory, and a diversity of techniques and materials. This is a studio class. We will emphasize hands-on experience and visual expression, while also reading, writing, and discussing art concepts and art history. This course will cover a wide range of topics and materials, and we require active participation in every class.

Required Text

But Is It Art? by Cynthia Freeland

We will discuss a chapter of the book every few weeks. We will focus on the critics and philosophers whom the book discusses as well as other contemporary writers and critics. We will discuss how the topics covered in the book relate to contemporary art. Everyone will need to be prepared to share your opinion and thoughts from each chapter. The chapters are simply a launching into a discussion.

Sketchbook

Your sketches will help you develop your projects. You must bring your sketchbook to class every day. It is the place to record, distill, expand, and retain your creative ideas, observations, and inspirations. Examples of what to include in your sketchbook are: photos, writings, drawings, collage, inspiration of other people's art, found poetry, notes on exhibitions, quotations, etc.

Projects

You will complete six projects in both two-dimensional (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) media. Five of these will be due throughout the semester, and the sixth will be the semester-long Artist's Book Project, to be exhibited and critiqued at the end of the semester. This takes the place of a final exam, and will be weighted accordingly. It should reflect an entire semester's worth of work, design, thought, and refinement. Projects will be introduced with a presentation of contemporary artists and historical artworks that relate to the theme of the project.

Project 1 - Relics of 2015 (wood and clay sculpture)

For this project you will choose an object of today and then recreate it as would exist in 50 years. How does time affect the meaning of an object? How could an object transform over a 50 years? How would it function in 50 years? Would it function in a new way, have no use all, or serve as relic of 2015? What story can you tell about our life today through an artifact?

Sketchbook exercise

- Choose three different objects that you would like to reproduce.
- Make a sketch of each object and how it will change over time.
- Write one paragraph for each of your 3 drawings.

Project 2 - Site Specific Installation (mold making / casting)

For this project, you will use multiples to create a site specific installation. First, you will choose a location that is interesting to you. Then, you will decide on an object to create in multiples and install there. You can either make a mold of an existing object or sculpt in clay to make a mold of.

How can you use the multiple to communicate your ideas about a place? Remember that you are not limited to what comes out of the mold. How could an object interact with a location to create meaning? How does scale in public art shift the understanding of the work? How can a number of small objects influence a large space?

Sketchbook exercise

- Choose a location and sketch it.
- Design an object to install at your location.
- Draw a minimum of 3 potential installations that you could make. Consider how you want to change the space and the viewer's understanding of it.
- Write one paragraph for each of your 3 installations.

Project 3 - Bodies In Space (inflatables)

For this project, you will create a large-scale inflatable body that will be installed in the space of the Art Building. The body you make is up to you and there are many options for creating bodies. Ask yourself what constitutes a body? It could be based on a human body, animal body, microscopic organism, plant, cloud, food, invention etc. What space does your chosen body exist in? How could it interact with the space of the art building?

Sketchbook exercise:

- Draw 3 potentials for a body in space
- Write a paragraph about each of your proposals

Project 4 - Observation and Invention (drawing and painting)

This project will begin with perspective drawing; you will pick a location in or around the art building to draw. You will make an objective rendering that focuses on realism and perspective. Once your chosen location is illustrated; will transform it into your own scenic utopia or dystopia. This will become your painting project. You can use reference material such as found objects and images. The drawing no longer has to be objective.

Sketchbook exercise:

- You will write about your painting after you have made it.
- Develop a narrative for your drawing, take note during creation of you painting

Project 5- Rally for a Cause (Block Printing)

For this project you will design a promotional flyer for a cause, idea, or subject that interests you. You cannot use words to describe your topic, only images. It could be a real cause you are interested in promoting or a fictional cause that you invent to promote to the real world.

Sketch Book Exercise:

- Design your flyer, write about it,
- Where will your flyers be displayed?
- What will the installation look like?
- Who is the audience?

Project 6 - Artist Book (semester long project)

The concept of “book” comes with an established set of characteristics: narrative, sequence (time), object, information (content), authority, and containment, to name a few. Books are inherently interactive: we touch, see, hear, and even smell them as we experience time flipping through the pages.

Artist’s books are not necessarily books about art; rather, often times art expressed in book form. In most artist books, the content and form are created together, given equal significance, so that the book becomes more than just a vehicle for information—it becomes an art object. The goal of many artist books is to involve the reader actively in the viewing process, visually, tactilely, and intellectually; not merely to see the words on the page but also to experience how the words, pictures, typography, and physical form of the object work together to communicate an idea.

Artist Book Preparation

You will submit 3 proposals, that will be typed documents with drawing. From those three you will select one and then submit a final proposal

Critiques

We will have critiques of all projects on the day they are due. These are a valuable opportunity to find out how others perceive your work, so please be thoughtful and constructive while evaluating each other’s work, and keep yourself open to suggestions from your peers. You must be present and contribute to all critics, including the Artist's Book Exhibition.

Evaluation

Students are expected to work a minimum of 6 hours outside of class each week. When evaluating assignments, I look for: effort, time invested, originality, presentation and installation, articulation of ideas, technical accuracy, and innovative use of materials. The amount of work, thought, research and participation that you put forth, beyond the basic requirements, will determine your grade.

After the project critique, you will be given a project evolution form with comments and suggestions. If you are unsatisfied with your project grade, I will gladly give you advice on how to improve your project. Revise your project, and I’ll raise your grade accordingly.