

ARTS 350: INTERMEDIATE STUDIO

FALL 2009

MWF 9:00-11:40, Flagg Hall

INSTRUCTORS:

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TEACHING ASSISTANT:

BOB BELOTE -----

Artists are expected to learn, problem-solve, innovate, self-analyze and complete projects on their own, without supervision. These artists are typically their own employers, and answer primarily to the deadlines of exhibitions, commissions and collaborations.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Intermediate Studio brings Painting, Sculpture, and New Media majors into one course sharing studios, instructors, discussions, and critiques. This course, commonly referred to as Junior Studio, gives students the space, time and one-on-one studio visits needed to take larger steps (or many, many small ones) forward on their path to becoming professional artists.

Our strategy for the fall semester is to build a bridge between the structured coursework and instructor-driven projects students experience at the freshman and sophomore levels and the highly independent, self-driven studio practices they will be expected to undertake as seniors. The course is also designed to facilitate the development of the studio community, helping students recognize who they are and fostering connections with their peers.

This course is modeled after the professional work environment and routine of practicing artists. Many artists approach the studio and their time management as one would approach a paying job. The student will be assigned a studio space, and expected to design a work ethic to mimic your eventual job. Students will learn - through work, critique, work, study, and work - how to generate and present an intentional, competent, and cohesive body of artwork. We will begin by providing the student with structures and schedules in the form of assignments and deadlines. Your assignments will not be based on particular themes or media, but on the demands that are common to the working artist.

Students will be expected execute a rigorous work routine. You will be asked to describe your process, discoveries, struggles, and strategies throughout the course of the projects. We encourage students to understand that art is not just a demonstration of technical skill and sensitivity, but also an object whose size, format, and media all contribute to its meaning. Breakthroughs will only occur if the student is genuinely pushing and searching. Hard work is a necessity. We invite students to approach their investigations with real sincerity and a focused sense of purpose. We expect students to expand their horizons and push their known terrain, even in formal exercises. Through continued experimentations the student will discover the complexities and nuances of visual aesthetics and communication.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance

Attendance is required at all class sessions. Class sessions begin at 9:00am. If a student is not present when her/his name is called, s/he will be marked absent. If a student arrives late, it is her/his responsibility to contact Professor Hamilton or Professor Hammie to have her/his absence changed to a tardy. **2 tardies** equal one absence. Students are allowed **3 absences** without penalty. Each absence beyond 3 will result in a full letter drop in students grade for the course.

Productivity

Being an artist requires a significant amount of time, personal dedication and intellectual commitment. It is not an overstatement to say that this should be the second most important course in one's professional degree, and therefore should represent a focused commitment of time and energy. If we are not in a group meeting, students are expected to be working in their studios during class. Students are expected to devote a substantial amount of time on research, reading and production beyond the **8 hours** spent in class each week. Students will be expected to spend an additional **16 hours** each week (3 hours a day) minimum on work for this class. Solo activities that do not benefit from the collegial atmosphere of the studio (shopping or going to the library, for example) should generally be conducted outside of class time.

Students are given a studio space, and will be expected to base their work there. If the media or research require the student to be elsewhere, we still expect her/him to spend some portion of her/his weekly routine in the studio, to use it as an extension of her/his "canvas" as a space for collecting and organizing inspiration, source material, drawings and plans.

Expect writing and research assignments.

Participation

We expect every student to participate in class discussions, critiques, readings and other group activities. This is a unique opportunity to develop critical thinking and verbal articulation skills that are necessary to one's success as an artist.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Each student will be graded individually based on the following considerations: timely completion of all assignments, seriousness of purpose, willingness to accept criticism and progress and improvement of time management skills and work during the semester, based on comparisons of earlier practices.

60 percent of your grade will be based on the timely completion of all assignments. 40 percent will be based on class participation via discussions, critiques, and wise use of class-time hours.

Grades will reflect the energy and commitment that the student exerts towards her/his work. We will adhere strictly to the following letter-grade system:

- A: Completes assignments going far beyond expectations in terms of ambition, research, quality and quantity. Succeeds in technical competency and resolution of projects. Given in exceptional circumstances. It is an exceptional grade.
- B: Completes assignments with above-average time spent. Work which demonstrates creative thinking and interpretive skills, displays competency through extra research where needed going beyond the requirements of the project.
- C: Completes assignments with minimum expected quantity, quality and time spent. Resolves problems and projects on time. Display average ambition or expertise.
- D: Does not complete projects or adhere to project parameters.
- F: Lack of attention to projects. Little time or effort spent in the studio.

Late projects will not be accepted.

CLASS STRUCTURE

Class sessions will begin at 9:00am with a group meeting on the first floor of Flagg Hall. Some days we will ask you to merely check in and proceed to your studio, other days we'll ask you to stay for announcements.

After an assignment has been given, class sessions will consist of scheduled individual studio visits. Schedules for these visits will be posted - students are expected to be in their studios working throughout class-time, but should be prepared for these visits by making their work available in the space, and ready to show in progress. These meetings will serve the purpose of advising you along the way, not as critiques of finished work.

Mondays and Wednesdays, students will meet with the two full-time instructors. On Fridays, students will meet with a T.A.

Deadlines for projects will typically be followed by large group critique. The semester's end will also consist of a group critique (no final exam), attended by the Junior Faculty and Senior Faculty.

FACILITIES

Students will be assigned a studio, and given a key to their studio room. Students will be expected to return their studio space to its original condition at the end of the Spring semester.

IMPORTANT: information about studio safety and proper use of the building will be covered in a separate document. Please exercise respect for others in everything you do in Flagg Hall. For the safety, peace, and security of others', please keep doors and windows secure, keep supplies out of walkways, and limit toxic materials to their proper places.

ASSIGNMENT ONE: Create a Weekly Schedule
DUE BY 9am AUGUST 31

Since this class is in part preparation for self-employment, the first thing you need to do is create a work schedule.

Create a weekly schedule across a 7-day week that includes 24 hours of work hours dedicated solely to projects in this class. **8 hours** a week for our class-time, and then schedule another **16 hours** of work in the studio.

Email your schedule to both instructors, print it out and post in your studio. THEN FOLLOW IT!!

You might consider teaming with others to schedule work at the same time, for companionship and safety. (It's sometimes easier to make yourself stick to a task when you know you're working up to a break with someone else.)

You might also consider breaking down your schedule into sub-categories. (for example, one hour a week on Tuesdays sanding panels, one hour a day in the computer lab altering images, one hour a week practicing HTML, 30 minutes a day writing, etc.)

ASSIGNMENT TWO: Project-a-Day
DUE BY 9am SEPTEMBER 16

For three weeks, starting August 26, you are to create one finished piece each day. (We'll exclude Saturdays and Sundays.) You should end up with at least 15 finished pieces by 9am on Wednesday, September 16.

For your media and scale, choose ONE of the following modes for the entire three weeks:

- Two-Dimensional work, in 16x20 inches or smaller
- Three-Dimensional work, each piece should be able to fit on a desk
- Time-based work, each piece around 30 seconds
- -OR- none of the above, but documented through at least **3 clear** photographs for each day's project

Each piece should be FINISHED and resolved. So choose your media and subject accordingly – if you need to keep your goals humble, do so. (for example, you may need to paint in monochrome, looking at a small still life, instead of in a full palette, and looking at a landscape). “I couldn't figure out the tech” is not an excuse for incomplete work, so either ask for help or choose media in which you have some experience so far.

We will be meeting with you each individually along the way to help you and check your progress. We'll let you know what this schedule will be, so please make sure that work is available to see when we visit.

ASSIGNMENT THREE: Call and Response
DUE BY 9am November 2

Collaboration is one way to discover new processes, new modes of learning. For this project, you will experience one, very minimal mode of collaboration - once in which you simply take turns working on the same piece. We will call this collaborative method "Call and Response." Here's how it works:

You will be partnered with one other person. You will each complete one artwork, then you will pass it to your partner to continue on to another finished state. Then you'll switch back, work some more, and keep switching until each work has been exchanged (at least) FIVE TIMES.

For each "turn" in this process, you should bring the work to a place you would be OK calling finished. Then your partner will "un-finish" it and take it to a different place.

Over three weeks, you should complete at least FOUR projects in this way. (For your scheduling, that means that each "turn" would need to take no more than a day or two, unless you work on two pieces at once, in which case you could take 1/2 a week.)

You may work in any medium, size, or format, and may vary size and format throughout the process. Each work may be in a different size or format.

Each project does NOT have to be materially cumulative - for example, if you decide to alter your partner's actions by scanning their work into a computer and printing it out 5x as large before drawing on it, you may. Consider each step of the collaboration as an answer to the previous step - think of it as a conversation, taking place in materials.

Spend as little time as possible in discussion with your collaborator about a plan for content or medium, or even about the results. Let your conversation in this collaboration take place as much as possible through the work itself.

ASSIGNMENT FOUR: THESIS
DUE BY 8am NOVEMBER 30

For three weeks, beginning NOVEMBER 2, you will explore and attempt to answer a written question posed at the onset of this project. You will reflect on the question's relationship to your investigation during and upon completion of the project.

The final presented piece(s) should be FINISHED and resolved. This project offers you the most freedom you have had this semester and this freedom should be reflected in ambition, willingness to accept criticism and seriousness of purpose.

We will be meeting with you each individually along the way to help you make those connections and check your progress. Remember that Senior Pool Instructors Tim Van Laar and Deke Weaver will join us for final critiques.