George Mason University
Fine Arts Department
Instructor: Jenna North
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Credits: 4 Required Foundation Course

Spring 2018 Syllabus

Course Description:

As a fine art course, focus is placed on two-dimensional form, color structure, and composition. Through various media, and with an emphasis on acrylic painting, we'll investigate ideas and principles of two-dimensional design and color theory. You will embark on both group and individual long and short-term projects and exercises. Through the working process and group discourse we'll evaluate our perceptions of the way color relationships affect optical as well as psychological dynamics. A primary component of the course is the study of the many ways that color/light modulates our interpretations of visual language. Using art (both historical and contemporary), nature and geometry as sources, students employ a variety of mediums to explore sensory and emotional, as well as intellectual and aesthetic concepts. All topics will be covered in theory and practice.

Goals and Objectives:

Though you will explore basic principles of two-dimensional design and color theory, emphasis is placed on learning via hands on projects. Over the course of the semester you will develop a deeper understanding of how to see and use color and design both conceptually and in a practical manner. Working both from life and from imagination you will apply the five elements of two-dimensional form in conjunction with basic principles of organization. During regular critiques we will analyze issues of compositional structure, unity, rhythm, balance, movement, flatness and the illusion of space. Additionally, we'll explore the abstract workings of color, color phenomenology, color mixing, observed color, and the effects of light on color and form.

The course is project-oriented and lectures and/or demonstrations are given for new material at the beginning of each assignment. A group critique and discussion of the work will be held upon the completion of most projects. All projects must be kept clean and safe in a portfolio and will be evaluated at mid-term and at the end of the semester. Students may also be asked to leave specific projects with the instructor to either be included in department displays, possible exhibitions, and/or used as an example for future demonstrations.

This class fulfills a Mason Core requirement for Arts. Arts goal: Courses aim to achieve a majority of the following learning outcomes: students will be able to identify and analyze the formal elements of a particular art form using vocabulary appropriate to that form; demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic technique and the expression of a work's underlying concept; analyze cultural productions using standards appropriate to the form and cultural context; analyze and interpret material or performance culture in its social, historical, and personal contexts; and engage in the artistic process, including conception, creation, and ongoing critical analysis.

Grades will be based on the following:

- Participation in critiques, class discussions
- Engagement with in-class projects
- Effort and improvement
- Homework and successful completion of projects, and meeting deadlines
- Overall quality of work (technical execution/craftsmanship, demonstration of an understanding of the concepts and guidelines of the projects, expression and conceptual integrity)
- Evaluation of your work at mid-term, and at final critique
- Attendance and arriving on time (3 absences allowed and grades will automatically drop a letter after three absences)
- Extra Credit will not take the place of missing assignments, however extra effort and expansion on projects will be taken into account during grading.

Visual Voices Professional Lecture Series

A year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater: http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/

Spring Semester: 2018
January 25, 2018 – Brian Noyes "Recipe for Change: If you can't stand the heat, get into the kitchen"
February 1, 2018 – Teresa Jaynes "Talking to the Fingers in the Language of the Eyes: Haptic Interpretations of the Archive"
February 22, 2018 – Dr. Sharif Bey "Artist, Researcher, Teacher: Problems, Paradigms, and Processes"
March 1, 2018 – Juliet Bellow "Performing Stillness: Rodin's Nijinsky"
March 8, 2018 – John R. Henry "The Quest for unintended consequences"

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences: If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need Academic accommodations please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Office of Disability Services (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the Office of Disability Services.

Technology: In accordance with George Mason University policy, please silence all cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Commitment to Diversity: This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design: As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours: SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time in the mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

Materials: (to be brought to *most* every class)

- bristol board (pad 14" x 17" or larger but no smaller)
- large sketch book (8.5" x 11" or in that range…)
- pallete paper or some sort of pallete
- acrylic paint (a variety of colors: at least two different types of each primary, and white, black and a variety of secondary's)
- brushes (a variety of small (#2-6), medium and a large 1" flat wash brush, synthetic brushes for acrylic will work best)
- pallete knife
- exacto knife and scissors
- ruler (at least 18")
- pencil set (variety of H & B) and eraser
- painters tape

other (optional):

- charcoal
- pastels (chalk, oil, etc)
- watercolor
- goache
- paint sticks, markers
- colored pencils
- a variety of substrates (such as: canvas board, other types of paper, etc..)