

Western University
Department of Visual Arts

VAS 9540a/9543a Graduate Studio Seminar

Fall 2019

Professor Patrick Mahon

Office:	VAC 121
e-mail:	pmahon@uwo.ca
Office Hours:	Thursdays, 13:00-2:30pm (or, by appointment)
Room:	VAC247 and MFA Studios and/or TBA
Time:	Thursday 2:30-5:30

1. Course Description

This course will provide a weekly forum for the critical engagement of the ongoing material production and research of MFA students. The course will be structured around presentations of student thesis-related research and the close analysis of contemporary artworks. Over the term these presentations will be complemented by both formal critiques and less formal studio discussions. Critique sessions will be directed towards sustaining discussion and debate concerning students' developing material, conceptual and theoretical engagements. Critiques will be scheduled by the instructor throughout the course and at the end of the term.

Students are required to schedule individual or class meetings with the instructor to discuss the development of their studio work. All students will also be expected to arrange studio visits with Visiting Artists, Faculty and other individuals.

2. Course Requirements

This course presupposes each student's vigorous and regular engagement with a studio practice and with the activities of the MFA community as a whole. All scheduled due dates must be respected. The following represents the principle requirements of the class:

Research Presentations: Key Works/Teaching Your Thesis Research

First year students will be graded on their choice of an artwork and reading for presentation, their preparedness to discuss the significance of the work and to develop a terrain for a fruitful discussion, and their success at facilitating a productive discussion.

Second year students will be graded on their ability to highlight and elucidate key issues relating to their developing thesis and in relation to their assigned reading, as well as their ability to productively facilitate discussion around this research and its relation to their studio work.

Peer Critiques/Research Discussions

All students will formally present recent studio work/experiments in a 60 minute critique. Work presented for discussion may represent recently completed projects and/or projects still in the developing stages. All work-in-progress presented in peer critiques must demonstrate sufficient commitment to warrant class discussion. The schedule for these critiques will be identified early in the course.

All students presenting studio work in these sessions are responsible to invite their advisor/mentor and are welcome to personally invite department adjunct professors or any other member from the university or broader community they would like to have participate in the critique. Students electing to support their critique with reading materials should notify the group about the reading at least one week in advance of their presentation.

Critiques will be scheduled for all MFA students in the week concurrent with the MFA exhibition. The student's mentor/advisor and all Graduate Studio faculty members will be invited/present and engaged in assessing students' works in these sessions.

In addition to formal critiques the course will allow for informal peer discussion of prospective projects or emerging work in progress. These discussions may be arranged to take place individually with the instructor or with the class as a whole.

Dossier

Studio visits with guest speakers will be arranged with/for students; typically, each student will have two guest visits/term. In addition, each MFA student is expected to independently arrange for a minimum of one studio meeting with a visitor from outside the Department proper, as well. Thus, a minimum of three studio visits will be arranged with external visitors, in total, for the term.

In addition to visits with guests of the Dep't., at least one visit from a department studio faculty member other than the student's advisor or mentor, or the course Instructor, must be arranged before mid-term. Students are welcome to arrange visits with PhD students. At the end of the course, students will submit a dossier that clearly summarizes each of these meetings, as well as discussions arising from the peer critique.

3. Evaluation and Grading Breaking Down

The final grade for the course will be broken down as follows:

<u>Studio work</u> (including work presented in peer, formal critiques and studio discussions).....	65%
<u>Research Presentations: Key Work/Teaching Your Research</u>	15%
<u>Participation</u> (including presentation and critique discussions, and critique facilitation).....	10%
<u>Dossier</u>	10%

Studio Work (weighted 65%)

Peer Critiques/ Research Discussions (weighted 30%)

Students presenting work for the peer critiques will be assessed on the ambition and level of development demonstrated in the work. A portion of the mark for this critique will be based on the student's ability to orally articulate their ideas and readily engage in critical discussion.

The course instructor will evaluate the peer critiques in consultation with the individual's advisor.

Critique Grade Breakdown (weighted 35%)

Department graduate faculty members attending the formal studio critique in December will submit to the course instructor recommended grades for the student. The critique grade will be determined by averaging the recommended grade of the Committee, the Advisor and the Instructor. This averaged grade will count for 35% of the total grade for the course (1/3 the Instructor, 1/3 the Advisor, and 1/3 an average of other faculty in attendance comprise the grade for the final critique)

Key Works/Teaching Your Research Presentations (weighted 15%)

All students will be graded on their preparedness to discuss the significance of the work in question and to develop a terrain for a lively group discussion. Students will be graded on their ability to highlight and elucidate key issues relating to their topic, or their thesis research, as well as their ability to productively facilitate discussion around this research and its relation to their studio work.

Performance and Participation (weighted 10%)

In addition to the evaluation of studio work in context of the critiques, assessment of individual course performance and participation will be based on an assessment of ongoing productivity throughout the semester and ongoing engagement in discussion in critiques, seminars and related materials and readings.

Dossier (weighted 10%)

The dossier will be evaluated on the basis of the rigor and clarity in the synopsis of critique and studio visit discussions.

4a. Key Works Guidelines - 1st Year students (45 minutes with discussion)

In preparing to present a modern/contemporary artwork, consider some or all of the following questions below. Be prepared to address these as you talk about the work and set it up for a discussion. In addition, you should spend some time (not a lot) researching the work in relation to its context: (art) historical, material, and more broadly "social." However, this is not a research presentation or an art history talk... it is way for you/us as artists to talk about artworks in ways they are significant to our discourses and practices.

In planning what to say about the work, integrate your responses to some of these questions with your understanding of the work's context. Plan a discussion in which participants may engage in a focused encounter with the image you are showing us (or with a sound artifact) that will lead to an engagement with the questions, "Why this work; why here; why now?" Though your presentation should focus on engaging these questions as directly as possible, you may provide an accompanying reading to the class in advance of the presentation to prepare the group and aid in facilitating discussion.

-Schedule a meeting with the Instructor to discuss your plans, in advance of your presentation.

1. MATERIALS. Of what materials is the work built? What are its materials? Are they conventional or unconventional? How do these connect us or disconnect us from specific social worlds?
2. PROCEDURES. What procedures produced the work? Are they like other art world methods, or like production methods from outside the art world? How do these connect us to the world?
3. ADDRESS. How does this work address a viewer? What kinds of behavior does it elicit?
4. QUALITIES: What kind of qualities do you see in the work? Does it produce beauty, difficulty, resistance, complacency, daring etc?
5. COMMITMENT: What is the work committed to? What position does it take?
6. ARTIST: What kind of artist does this work produce or require?
7. AUDIENCE: What kind of viewer or audience does this work produce?
8. ATTENTION: What way of paying attention does the work require? What does it ask us to pay attention to?
9. MEMORY: How is it that we can remember this work? (What are the means by which it was transmitted through time to us?)
10. HISTORY: What is its relation to the other artworks already in existence? Does it disturb them? Enhance them? What works does it light up?
11. ART: If you assume that every artwork is a statement of what art is or should be, what does this work say about art?
12. RISK: What was at risk in the work appearing at all, in its moment?
13. MOMENT: What now lost moment did the work erupt or emerge from?

4b. Research Presentation: Teaching Your Thesis Project – 2nd Year Students (45 Minutes with discussion)

In a half hour presentation with fifteen minutes of discussion, highlight and elucidate key issues relating to your developing thesis work (studio and writing) and in relation to an assigned reading (make available to students the week before). Your ability to productively facilitate discussion around the reading/research and its relation to your studio work will be considered very important. Schedule a meeting with the Instructor to discuss your plans, in advance of your presentation.

MFA 2nd Year Exhibition:

what we may become: Matthew Brown, Jerome Conquy, Yas Nikpour Khoshgrudi,
George Kubresli, Ramolen Laruan

Oct. 3 - 17, 2019

Opening Reception: Thursday, Oct. 3 from 5-7PM

Our Collective Responsibility:

(S. Schuppli)

In the making and doing of art, something happens that precedes the “knowing” of what has happened. Contrary to the ways in which theory understands its debates, practice isn’t predicated upon knowledge formation. Although we can understand actions and practices that come back to us as knowledge, they also come back as other things (surprises, triggers, provocations, etc). Art thus only performs itself as research retroactively, when we don’t know what the reaction or its outcomes are necessarily going to be.

The primary objective of this graduate studio seminar is therefore to create a useful context for all students to evolve their practice and the thinking around their artwork; to enter into a feedback loop with the ideas and work of others. This requires a robust commitment on behalf of all participants to engage actively in discussion and debate with thoughtfulness and a generosity of spirit. Moreover, it will require the collective energy of the entire group to sustain the momentum over the coming term. This means being present at all classes, participating in fieldtrips, and extending oneself publicly at other related activities such as Artnow lectures, screenings, and local gallery openings, etc. In short, assisting in creatively producing the event rather than merely attending it.

Western University Visual Arts Department

POLICIES

Student Conduct:

All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_19

Attendance:

A student who misses more than 15% of the course hours, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, can be debarred from writing final exams, or participation in final studio evaluations. Note that if a student consistently is absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and can be debarred.

Prerequisites:

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism, which may be defined as “The act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own,” will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from Black’s Law Dictionary, 1999, 7th ed., p. 1170). (Refer to

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_189 with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.) This includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or Aural Plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism – work submitted for assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to similar academic penalties as those identified in Western’s Academic Calendar.

Medical Policy:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. See course outline for specific arrangements regarding less than 10% of assignments.

Mental Health:

“Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western https://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

Building Access (September 1st to April 30th):

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:00pm each night Monday to Friday. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00pm-5:00pm unless otherwise posted; access by side entrances only. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm and 5:00pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

Permission re: Promotion:

You grant permission for Western University to reproduce your name, information describing your artwork, representations of your work and any other information you have provided for the purpose of display, promotion and publicity either now or in the future.

By installing your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you grant Western University an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free world-wide licence to photograph your artwork and use such photograph(s) for the promotion of your artwork and/or Western University, including, without limitation, advertising, display, editorial, packaging, promotion, television, social media, the Department of Visual Arts website, flickr, Twitter, Instagram etc.). Students wishing to not have their work photographed should not exhibit it in the Visual Arts Centre, Artlab Gallery or Cohen Commons. As the area is open to the public, students, faculty, staff and other visitors will not be prohibited from photographing your artwork while on exhibit at the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.

You otherwise retain all ownership in your artwork.

Artwork Installation Liability Release:

You understand that the area where your artwork will be hanging or displayed is unsupervised and is in a part of the building that may be open to the public, day and evening, whether or not the building is open. Western University accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of, artwork at any time while on display or while being transported to or from the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre. By displaying your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you accept all risk of loss or damage to your artwork. Western University does not provide insurance for the artwork on exhibition. **If you wish to insure artwork, it is your responsibility to do so.**

Removal:

Western University reserves the right to dispose of artwork not picked up by April 15th of each year.

Please remember:

One of the most important resources for course counselling, special permissions, course changes, grade appeals, etc., is the Undergraduate Chair of Visual Arts, Professor C. Barteet (tel. 519-661-3440; vaugc@uwo.ca). Please note, however, that should you encounter any serious difficulties due to illness, family emergency, etc., you should consult the Academic Counselor for your Faculty. Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the academic counselors in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities located in University College Room 2230.

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; www.sdc.uwo.ca) offers a wide range of useful services including workshops on learning skills, career and employment services, and an effective writing program, amongst many more.

The D.B. Weldon Library offers orientation tours from the first week of classes until Thanksgiving, where you will get acquainted with the numerous research resources available. As well, the University libraries have an extremely useful website where you can search the library system, the databases, view your circulation record, renew materials, access your UWO e-mail account, and much more. Check it out at: www.lib.uwo.ca.

Financial Aid Services is your main source of information for OSAP, bursaries, loans, scholarships, and the work-study program which offer part-time positions on campus for Western students. Tel: 519-661-2100; e-mail finaid@uwo.ca; or check out their website at http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student_finances/financial_counselling.html

Academic Sanctions:

In instances of non-payment of prescribed tuition and other fees, the University shall seal the academic record. When an academic record is sealed, the student will not be able to: a) view grades; b) register in future courses; c) receive transcripts or a degree diploma; d) obtain admission or readmission.

The above prohibitions shall be in force until such time as indebtedness to the University, including payment of fee for removal of the seal, has been cleared to the satisfaction of the University http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&Keywords=academic%20sanctions&SubHeadingID=169&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_169