

Western University - Faculty of Arts and Humanities - Visual Arts Department



Although this academic year might be different, Western University is committed to a **thriving campus**. We encourage you to check out the [Digital Student Experience](#) website to manage your academics and well-being. Additionally, the following link provides available resources to support students on and off campus: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

VAHISTORY 4690A/VASTUDIO 4690A Fall 2020
Making Art with Environmental Awareness

Classes: **ONLINE ASYNCHRONOUS CLASS (weekly release of class material)**

Professor: Kelly Wood

Office: Office hours will be held remotely using Zoom

Phone: *I will not be checking phone messages*

Email: kwood@uwo.ca

Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:00pm-2:30pm or by appointment

1. Course Description

Organized as a creative research intensive, *Making Art with Environmental Awareness* explores artistic responses to ecology, sustainability and related social issues in various global/local contexts. The course examines select themes in environmental discourse—paying particular attention to how artists have engaged with them. Some examples of lesson themes are: Extinctions; Petro-cultures; Accelerationism and Food. Each week, a new theme is introduced; and students will view online material, engage in critical writing and/or other online activities in response to these themes.

Throughout the course students will *simultaneously* develop one of these options for their final project:

HISTORY OPTION	CURATORIAL OPTION	STUDIO OPTION
a standard research paper	an imaginary curatorial project outline	an imaginary artistic project outline in any media

Students will be encouraged to **THINK BIG** and imagine an **IDEAL** kind of project that you likely could not accomplish other than in a virtual state.

Part of what we will be challenging in this course is our artistic resource consumption, and, what it may mean to change our ideas about our material sources for art-making and exhibition engagement. I will be encouraging eco- friendly options and conservation of materials. Students are expected to make a serious, sustained commitment to individual research and develop a final project over the course of the entire semester. This upper-level course is structured to be responsive to students' backgrounds, interests, and existing creative practices and/or curatorial goals or historical research.

The course will be delivered online and conducted in an asynchronous manner, so that students can access the course material at any time. However, weekly deadlines will be in place for shorter, student assignments. The instructor will act as a resource person, respondent, and creative facilitator for student work and can be accessed online during an office hour session or virtual meeting.

Mode	Dates	Time	Frequency
Virtual asynchronous	Monday release and due dates	3 hours	weekly

2. Objectives

- Understand key themes in contemporary environmental art practice through research, viewing, and discussion
- Develop a formal and critical vocabulary through presentations of artworks dealing with environmental themes.
- Enhance research and writing skills for critical and creative inquiry in the arts.
- Build aesthetic and conceptual sophistication through the creation of one major project exploring ecological issues through art.
- Engage in an interdisciplinary learning environment through presentation, research, and collaboration.

3. Expectations

This upper-level course is structured to be responsive to students' backgrounds, interests, and existing creative practices, or curatorial, or, historical research areas. Students are expected to make a serious, sustained commitment to individual research, which includes viewing course lectures online, taking notes on readings, synthesizing all information and developing your project ideas over the course of the entire semester. Students should expect to spend 1 hour homework time, per week on this course (*excluding* class material review time).

All lectures and course materials, even when such lectures or materials are posted online, are the intellectual property of the instructor. Students are not to post lectures or lecture materials to any other websites or platforms or use the lecture recording or materials for any other purpose without Professor consent.

As course instructor, I expect to be consistently challenged to expand my knowledge and deepen my understanding of art and ecology. I offer to personalize each student's experience of the course by meeting with students outside of class and office hours when necessary for discussion and technical assistance.

4. Course Requirements

Each student is responsible for knowing the assignments, procedures, and due dates. Students are expected to complete all assignments by the due date; failure to do so may result in a failing grade (F). Requests for deadline extensions cannot be considered unless approved by the instructor before the assignment is due and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Viewing all online class material is mandatory and missing 15% or more of class material can result in a failing grade.

4.1. Weekly Field Notes (Viewings, Readings, Activities, etc) 60%

Students will evaluate and synthesize lectures, presentations, readings and/or participate in research exercises and data gathering in what will be coalesced together as "Field Notes." Students will be required to submit short (200-250 words) written reflections and notes, in point form, EACH WEEK. Ideally, these points will be relevant for your final project. An accumulation of all readings will be evaluated for critical thinking, clarity of expression and relevance at MID-TERM and, at the FINAL WEEK OF CLASS.

4.2. Project Mid-term Proposal 10%

A brief summary statement and paragraph outline about the direction of your final project

4.3. Final Project: 20%

Students will develop final creative projects employing ecological forms and themes. This body of work will be drawn from conceptual or material investigations undertaken during the semester. The work should be devised in connection to personal research and the course material.

4.4. Participation 10%

Given the structure of the class as an emergency online delivery response to a global pandemic, all participation will be evaluated through the OWL platform. Data is collected for each element of online activity you engage with. Data tracking of your progress and activity with the course material will be reviewed for completion. Lessons will be released each Monday morning and due dates tend to fall the following Monday night. The Owl website should keep you notified of all participation deadlines.

5. Evaluation

Evaluation will be based upon the demonstrated ambition and resolution brought to meeting the creative, conceptual, and communication demands of assignments, as well as in the level of participation demonstrated in your OWL online activity. Students will be evaluated on their understanding of relevant theoretical issues introduced in class and their ability to integrate these ideas in their own practices.

Term Assignments Quantified	Grading Weight
Weekly Field Notes [12 responses] (due WEEKLY Sept 14th-Dec 7th)	
Mid-term Field-Notes (evaluated Oct 25)	30%
Final Field-Notes (evaluated at end of course from Oct 26 th)	30%
Project Mid-term Proposal (Oct 5 th)	10%
Final Project (all projects due Dec 7th)	20%
Participation	10%
Total	100%

Information about late or missed evaluations:

- Late assessments without illness self-reports will be subject to a late penalty 1 %/day
- Late assessments with illness self-reports should be submitted within 24 hours of submission of the last illness self-report

6. Materials and Equipment



Stable internet connection



Laptop or computer



Working microphone



Working webcam

You will need weekly web access to the OWL website, at least. Some material required for the course will be on Youtube and other world-wide-web sites; so, if you have difficulty accessing certain sites with

your computer, or, from your location—you may have a problem participating in class material review. Your assignments and projects are all virtual and will be uploaded to OWL.

The centrally administered **e-mail account** provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner. You can read about the privacy and security of the UWO email accounts [here](#).

Online Participation and Engagement



- Students are expected to participate and engage with content as much as possible
- Students can also participate by interacting in the forums with their peers and instructors

If students need assistance, they can seek support on the [OWL Help page](#). Alternatively, they can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#). They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education (AE) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation or review [The policy on Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

7. Learning Outcomes

A. Application of Knowledge

Students will use their capacities with the medium as a critical, discursive and expressive tool to develop creative works; understand the potential viability of their works, and will utilize their reflections on their works to explore and develop further projects in order to create a body of work

Students will utilize their knowledge of appropriate methods, the vocabularies pertinent to the field, and their ability to make appropriate judgements, in order to develop a sound argument regarding a particular historical development, and will be able to defend their argument according to a knowledge of scholarly works

B. Communication Skills

Students will be able to communicate in writing and orally regarding their projects and regarding relevant art and culture, and will recognize the range of language suited to differing communication opportunities (i.e. a grant application vs. a grad school application)

Students will be able to communicate orally and in writing with regard to their art history research, and will be able to utilize different genres of writing for different purposes (i.e., to write an academic paper, or a magazine article)

C. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge

Students will be aware of the field of research/inquiry in relation to which their studies are situated, and will understand the limits/opportunities inherent to their research capacities within the framework of their studies

Department Policies and Regulations

Statement on prerequisite checking:

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.

Prerequisite(s): Registration in years 3 or 4 of a Department of Visual Arts Module, or permission of the Department.

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). 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.

Electronic Devices

Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.

Attendance:

Under university regulations, if someone misses more than 15% of their classes (15% is equivalent to missing 8 hours of Lecture and/or Studio Lab, due to absence or lateness, or a combination of both, per semester) without written corroboration for health or bereavement, students can be debarred from participation in final evaluations and/or assignments.

Note that if a student is consistently absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and be debarred; assignments may stop being accepted and such assignments will receive a mark of 0 (zero).

Academic Consideration:

The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by extenuating circumstances, including short-term illness or injury. Reasonable academic consideration is a cooperative process between the University, the student, and academic staff. All participants in the process must act in good faith, and fulfil their respective obligations, if it is to succeed.

Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstance) sufficiently significant as to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements, may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

- i. Submitting a Self-Reported Absence form, provided that the conditions for submission are met;
- ii. For medical absences, submitting a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner, in order to be eligible for Academic Consideration; or
- iii. For non-medical absences, submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to Academic Counselling in their Faculty of registration, in order to be eligible for academic consideration.

Students seeking academic consideration:

- Are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying handing in work;
 - Are encouraged to make appropriate decisions, based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (e.g., upset stomach) or upsets (e.g., argument with a friend) are not normally an appropriate basis for a self-reported absence;
 - **Must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence;
 - **Are advised that all necessary documentation, forms, etc. are to be submitted to academic counselling within two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities**
- Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance (48 hours or less) that is sufficiently severe as to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements (e.g., attending lectures or labs, writing tests or midterm exams, completing and submitting assignments, participating in presentations) should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours or less. The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances:
- a. Students will be allowed a maximum of two self-reported absences between September and April, and one self-reported absence between May and August;
 - b. The duration of the excused absence will be for a maximum of 48 hours from the time the Self-Reported Absence form is completed through the online portal, or from 8:30am the following morning if the form is submitted after 4:30pm;
 - c. The duration of the excused absence will terminate prior to the end of the 48 hour period, should the student undertake significant academic responsibilities (e.g., write a test, submit a paper) during that time;
 - d. The duration of an excused absence will terminate at 8:30am on the day following the last day of classes each semester, regardless of how many days of absence have elapsed;
 - e. Self-reported absences will not be allowed for scheduled final examinations; for midterm examinations scheduled during the December examination period; or for final lab examinations
 - f. Self-reporting may not be used for assessments (e.g., midterm exams, tests, reports, presentations, or essays) worth more than 30% of any given course;
 - g. Students must be in touch with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the Self-Reported Absence form, to clarify how they will be expected to fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed

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.

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf

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

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.

For the 2020-2021 academic year the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be available by card access only for students who have in-person classes in the building.

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.

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

Support Services:

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Student Development Centre -- <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>
2. Student Health -- <http://www.shs.uwo.ca/student/studenthealthservices.html>
3. Registrar's Office -- <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
4. Ombuds Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>
5. Mental Health -- https://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Health and Wellness:

Western offers a variety of counselling services and several mental health resources for students. If you or a friend are feeling overwhelmed, confused or unsure of your mental health state, please don't ignore it. There are steps you can take to help yourself or help others. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help engage in healthy living while pursuing your

degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Further information regarding health and wellness-related services available to students may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>.

If you are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health Support at Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Gender Neutral Bathrooms:

Middlesex College does not have specifically gender-neutral bathrooms. There are two gender neutral bathrooms in the JLVAC. One is located in the Artlab and is open only during Artlab hours. A second single stall gender neutral bathroom can be found on the third floor of the JLVAC. Here is the full list of inclusive washrooms at

UWO: http://www.uwo.ca/equity/doc/inclusive_washrooms.pdf.

Please contact the Media Lab Technician, Jennifer Slauenwhite (jslauen@uwo.ca), for card access to the elevator and stairs if you are in need of the 3rd floor gender neutral/accessible washroom for the academic year.

VISUAL ARTS STUDIO GRADE DESCRIPTORS:

90-100 (Outstanding, A+) - The studio work shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated analysis and synthesis involving complex theoretical and conceptual thinking are demonstrated. Mastery of complex ideas is immediately evident. The studio work has originality, clarity and ambition. The project is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A) - The studio work shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. The work is clearly focused and intelligently presented. Mastery of complex ideas is demonstrated. The studio work has clarity and ambition. The quality of the studio production immediately engages the viewer. The studio work has been sufficiently developed and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are compelling. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is impressive.

75-79 (Very Good, B+) - The studio work shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. It demonstrates a clear awareness of the parameters of the assignment and a very good attempt to respond creatively to them. The work demonstrates reasonable depth and/or breadth and engages in a production that is appropriate to the level of the course. The quality of studio work engages the viewer and demonstrates above-average mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is very good.

70-74 (Good, B) - The studio work shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. It shows a good attempt to respond to assignment parameters. The work demonstrates some depth and/or breadth, making references to appropriate course material/art context. The studio production engages the viewer and demonstrates a sufficient mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is satisfactory.

60-69 (Competent, C) - The studio work demonstrates adequate engagement with the project. It shows an attempt to respond to assignment parameters but does so at a very basic level that lacks creativity. Engagement with studio production demonstrates basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is competent.

50-59 (Marginal, D) - The studio work shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The studio work waivers in its attempt to respond to assignment parameters and tends to be simplistic. Engagement with studio production demonstrates less than a basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is less than satisfactory.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F) - The studio work demonstrates a failure to comprehend/engage the topic. The studio work is incomplete and lacks redeeming creative merit. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is unacceptable.

VISUAL ARTS ART HISTORY/MUSEUM AND CURATORIAL STUDIES GRADE DESCRIPTORS

90-100 (Outstanding, A+) The writing shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background research is exemplary. Regarding research, all major secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

80-89 (Excellent, A) The writing shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Writing is probing through the use of comments and/or questions, and is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing immediately engages the reader. Mastery of complex materials and ideas is demonstrated. The writing is of appropriate length, and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are meaningful and not simplistic. Regarding research, a majority of the secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

75-79 (Very Good, B+) The writing shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Written claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The work is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. Written analysis is organized around focal points and the development of the argument is easily followed. The writer demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material. Regarding research, a representative selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

70-74 (Good, B) The writing shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Written claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The work is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. Written analysis is organized around focal points. The text is generally well written and well argued. Regarding research, a somewhat limited selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

60-69 (Competent, C) The writing demonstrates adequate engagement with the topic. The writing is on topic and is a reasonable response to material covered in the course, but goes no further. Written facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the text. Regarding research, an insufficient number of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted but proper citation has been used.

50-59 (Marginal, D) The writing shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The writing is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Written facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the text. Regarding research, few secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted; proper citation may or may not have been used.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F) The writing demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. Written material is disorganized and unintelligible. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Regarding research, secondary sources pertaining to the topic have not been consulted and proper citation has not been used.