

## University Western Ontario, Department of Visual Art

### VAS 3310 – Advanced Painting, 2015-16

<b>Professor:</b>	Sky Glabush	<b>Time:</b>	Tuesday: 2:30-6:30
<b>Course:</b>	VAS 3310	<b>Office Hours</b>	Tuesday: 11:30-1:30
<b>Location:</b>	VAC 230	<b>Email:</b>	sglabush@uwo.ca
<b>Section:</b>	001	<b>Phone:</b>	661-2111 ext. 86845

### Course Description

VAS 3310 (Advanced Painting) will explore the visual language of painting. Through exposure to a range of theoretical and conceptual concerns, and rigorous experimentation with material-specific processes, this course will investigate the discipline of painting while emphasizing the individuation of the student's pictorial language. Students will be encouraged to develop working methodologies in the realization of their own independent studio work while also exploring themes outlined by the instructor. The course materials will be shared through instructor and student-led presentations, group critiques and discussions, assigned readings, and studio projects.

Experimentation and a willingness to challenge inherited perceptual models will be encouraged as students develop greater independence and clarity of vision. The instructor will work with students individually to address technical and theoretical concerns specific to their studio projects. There will also be group critiques and discussions relevant to the course content.

### Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate technical, analytical and critical awareness of a wide range of material and conceptual problems specific to the painting practice and the visual arts
- Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of historical and contemporary issues relevant to the development and evaluation an evolving painting practice
- Demonstrate a sound, individuated and analytical awareness of the field of contemporary painting necessary for continued development within the faculty of visual arts and beyond

### Course Requirements

#### **Assigned Readings:**

The course includes required readings, followed by student and instructor lead discussions and presentations designed to foster a working knowledge of critical and theoretical concepts. Assigned readings will be made available through OWL.

#### **Participation and Attendance:**

“Advanced Painting,” as the name implies, is a course in which the student should truly develop the language, expressiveness, and intentionality of his or her practice. In such

an environment independent investigation and critical focus is mandatory. Students should be prepared to spend a minimum of one hour working outside of class for every hour of class time. Attendance is **mandatory**. Students are expected to show up to every class, on time, and with the appropriate material and must clean up after themselves at the end of each class. Missing more than 15% of classes (including late arrival and early departure) without prior consultation with the instructor may result in a failing grade. Students that miss class for medical reasons must present documented medical or bereavement excuses vetted through their academic advisor.

Students are expected to complete all assignments on the due date for critiques. Failure to hand in assignments in a professional, organized manner may result in instructor declining to grade portfolio.

Lastly, It is expected that students take notes on all lectures, presentations, and class discussions. A sketchbook or journal should be brought to each class along and the Course Outline.

### **Evaluation and Critiques:**

As an instructor I will attempt to provide an environment of respect and security in which students will be encouraged to engage in a wide latitude of experimentation. In this environment of mutual respect there will be regular critiques of student projects in which **participation is mandatory**. Participation will be will be evaluated and constitute a portion of the final grade. Grades for this course are based upon the submission of class assignments and failure to submit projects will result in the subsequent loss of their respective percentage of the final grade.

### **Evaluation:**

Studio Assignments	80 %
Presentations on assigned readings	10%
Attendance, participation, conduct and professionalism	10%

Studio assignments and subsequent critiques will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **effort**: the degree to which a student is willing to really engage with a project and the willingness to challenge inherited conceptual models
- **creativity and innovation**: the ways in which a student experiments and arrives at interesting and thoughtful uses of material language and structure
- **clarity of intent**: despite the wide range of possibilities and latitude for experimentation, it is important that a student can identify the parameters of his or her own practice and present this in a clear and cogent manner
- application of a **critical vocabulary** in relation to one's work and an expressed awareness of the **theoretical** issues that have emerged in this class .

Students may contact the instructor for additional assistance or critique of work, either in class, during office hours, or by appointment. (Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to speak one-on-one).

**Grading:** Based on the student's success in meeting the above requirements, grades will be assessed according to the following standard:

<b>A+ 90 - 100%</b>	Outstanding work, well exceeding the basic requirements of the project and demonstrating profound insight.
<b>A 80 - 89%</b>	Excellent work, well exceeding the basic requirements of the project and demonstrating creative insight.
<b>B 70 - 79%</b>	Very good work, showing thorough understanding of the course material and exceeding the basic requirements.
<b>C 60 - 69%</b>	Satisfactory work, meeting the basic project requirements and showing good understanding of the material.
<b>D 50 - 59%</b>	Satisfactory work that meets basic requirements and demonstrated some understanding of the course material, but not a thorough understanding.
<b>F below 50%</b>	Unsatisfactory work which shows insufficient effort or comprehension.

**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 [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental\\_health/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help."

**OWL:**

All students will have access to the OWL Sakai course site:  
<https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/owldocs>

## Term One

### Part One: Paint as Material Contingency

This first project will focus on the material language and possibilities of paint and its attendant structures. That is, through a close reading of the structural language of painting (canvas, gesso, stretcher bars, pigment, colour, texture, scale etc.) this project will both explore the inherent potential of painterly expression while also critically examining the generalizations, assumptions and the things we take for granted in this form of expression. For example certain key questions arise such as: Why are paintings

flat? Do they need to be rectangular? What is an image? Is a painting an object? What is abstraction?

Project One will place a great deal of emphasis on physical experimentation in an effort to help students become aware of their own methodology as well as forcing a closer examination of the material process involved the act of making a painting. Ultimately this project seeks to explore false dichotomy of subject matter/technique or even form and content.

**Artists to consider:**

Paul Klee	John Cage	Tom Humphries
Hannah Hoch	Agnes Martin	Elizabeth McIntosh
Gertrud Preiswerk	Jessica Stockholder	Sue Tompkins
Anni Albers	Sergei Jensen	Will Benedict
Ellsworth Kelly	Sandra Meigs	Julie Dault
Gerhard Richter	Shirley Wiitasalo	Anna Ostoya
Sigmar Polke	Israel Lund	Fredrik Vaerslev
Julie Mehretu	Matt Connors	Charles Mayton
Robert Ryman	Jacob Kassay	Marine Hugonnier

**Part Two: Transformers: Image / representation / abstraction**

While Project One focused on the literal materiality and objectness of painting this next assignment will explore the idea of image. In the introduction to the recent publication *Vitamin P2*, critic Barry Schwabsky writes:

I've often heard it said—and may even have said it myself—that the distinction between abstraction and representation (or, as I prefer to put it, between abstraction and images) no longer counts for contemporary painting. But on reflection I don't really think it's true. More accurate would be to say that the distinction has been reconfigured.

The distinction between abstraction and images is not so ideologically fraught. But that doesn't mean it is insignificant. On the contrary, the fact that so many painters today are working along the broad and very porous border between abstraction and images is a sign that this boundary is, in itself, an object of great fascination. It's as if the potential for transition had become more urgent than identification with a fixed position. Mobility trumps rigor. More than in images or abstraction per se, there is a tremendous interest today in what the art historian Dario Gamboni has called 'potential images', that is, 'those established—in the realm of the virtual — by the artist but dependent on the beholder for their realization, and their property is to make the beholder aware — either painfully or enjoyably — of the active, subjective, nature of seeing.' That is, seeing one thing rather than another is not a given; it is a commitment — and a form of painting that lays emphasis on this latent state of the image (which is also a latent state of abstraction) is one that throws back on the viewer the question of his or her own choice or predisposition in determining what to see.

**Part One** will explore the materiality of painting, and **Part Two** will examine the notion of “image” in light of the discoveries you made within your material investigations. A fusion or synthesis of these two parts will be brought together with the result being an exhibition in artLAB gallery from November 19 – December 3.

**Readings:**

Barry Schwabsky, Shirley Wiitasalo: *The Ineffability Effect in Shirley Wiitasalo* (exhibition catalogue), Toronto: The Power Plant, 2001  
Nickas, Bob. ‘The Persistence of Abstraction’ in *Painting Abstraction: New Elements in Abstract Painting*. Phaidon Press: London, 2009. Pages 5-11.

**Artists to consider:**

Henri Matisse	Luc Tuymans	Tomer Aluf
Pierre Bonnard	Shirley Wiitasalo	Rochelle Feinstein
Kurt Schwitters	R.H Quaytman	Brad Troemel
Milton Avery	Richard Tuttle	Ted Gahl
Raoul de Keyser	Thomas Scheibitz	Tuba Auerbach
Renee Daniels	Peter Doig	Lesley Vance

**Term Two: Independent Projects**

Bearing in mind the first two sections and their focus on **materiality, process, and image**, the Second Term will be devoted to working independently but within the framework and methodology advanced in the first term. Each student is free to develop an independent body of work that reflects one’s specific set of concerns but with a demonstrated awareness and proficiency with the ideas outlined in Term One.

The class will be structured in such a way that there will be a critique each week in which you are expected to have completed at least one work. The critiques will last an hour and thirty minutes. The remainder of the class will be devoted to one’s own work and also to one-on-one conversations with the Instructor. Lectures and readings will continue to inform our discussions but will develop organically and in response to certain key issues that arise in critiques and in our conversations about the development of your work.

#### Faculty Responsibilities:

- Inform students about safe use of toxic materials and solvent storage and ensure that students are following safe procedures. In case of an emergency, call 911.
- When using solvents, open the porthole windows, turn on the fan in the spray booth and **close** the spray booth door.
- The fan in room 230B should also be turned on. See the Main Office for the key to room 230B, in case it is locked.
- If a solvent spill occurs, pour sawdust from the container in the spray booth onto the spill to absorb it. Notify Marlene Jones who will ask the maintenance staff person to sweep it up when he does the regular cleaning.
- At the end of each class, return props and drapes to the model closet.
- At the end of each class, return space heaters, skeleton, opaque projectors, slide projectors, etc., to room 122. In the case of evening classes, equipment may be stored in your office and returned the next day.
- Notify Marlene Jones of any burnt-out bulbs, broken or missing furniture, broken window blinds, etc.
- Inform students about general cleanup, storage of work in progress, and removal of completed marked work. Supervise students' adherence to the maintenance requirements listed below, under the heading "Student Responsibilities".

#### Student Responsibilities:

- When using paint, the primary dangers involve the accidental ingestion of pigments and the inhalation of fumes from solvents such as turpentine and mineral spirits. Skin contact with these solvents is also a problem. Some pigments are more hazardous than others. Take special care with cadmium colours, cobalt colours, manganese colours, zinc white, flake white, cerulean blue, vermilion red, burnt and raw umber.

- Do not eat, drink or smoke while painting since these activities may lead to accidental ingestion of paint.
- Use aerosol fixative only in the spray booth or outdoors. Fine mists from these sprays can penetrate deep into the lungs.
- Do not pour solvents down the sink. Dispose of used solvents in the metal container in the spray booth. Never leave open solvent containers in the studio.
- Throw used jars and other containers, and dirty rags and paper towels, into the garbage containers.
- At the end of each class, remove work-in-progress from easels and store these works in the painting racks.
- Take home all completed graded work.
- Replace drawing boards in the model closet.
- Wash your hands thoroughly when you are finished working. Use a good hand cream after washing with soap, in order to prevent solvent damage to your skin's natural defensive barrier.

**Please note: According to University regulations guiding "Laboratory Use", students who fail to respect the responsibilities listed above will not have their final course grades sent to the Registrar. VA-232 & VA-322**

**The University of Western Ontario  
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.

**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 anti-requisite 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, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 1170). (Refer to

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2015/pg113.html> or the 2015/2016 Western Academic Calendar, with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.)

**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.

**Building Access:**

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:30 pm each night. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00 noon-5:00 pm. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:30 pm and 5:00 pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

**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, Prof. David Merritt (tel. 519-661-3440; [vaugc@uwo.ca](mailto: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, IGA Building, Room 1N20 (Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the counselors for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities).

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; [www.sdc.uwo.ca](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca)) offers a wide range of useful services to students 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](http://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](mailto:finaid@uwo.ca); or check out their website at [http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student\\_finances/financial\\_counselling.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student_finances/financial_counselling.html)