

**Western University
Department of Visual Arts**

**VAS 2104A
Drawing Explorations**

Term/Session: Fall 2016
Time: Tuesday, 6:00 pm-10:00 pm
Room number: 206
Professor: Michael Farnan mfarnan@uwo.ca
Office: Room 213, John Labatt Visual Arts Centre
Office Hours/Email: Monday, 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Office hours are held to discuss any course-related concerns or questions. I will respond to university emails within a 24-hour period, Monday through Friday.

Course Calendar Description:

An introductory course exploring a wide range of traditional and contemporary aspects of drawing in order to develop an understanding of its application to the Visual Arts as well as other frameworks.

In this course, we explore the practice of drawing as a form of knowledge production and problem solving. Through studio work, slide talks, group discussions and critiques, we will consider drawing's various media and techniques, as well as the development of skills such as hand-eye co-ordination, careful attention to perception, an exploratory approach, and focused conceptual engagement. Through the exploration of a range of media and techniques, this course will assist students in establishing a visual language and critical framework through which to create, look at, analyze and discuss drawing as a practice.

The course will benefit students who wish to continue in Visual Arts and those who are studying in other disciplines, by providing an introduction to drawing and its expressions in contemporary art.

Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

- Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to understand and creatively use the concepts, materials and skills involved in drawing – including the use of charcoal, inks, pencil(s), papers and various other drawing media.
- Students will be able to demonstrate their ability to participate constructively in group discussion and critiques in order to evaluate and express drawing as a means of problem solving, exploration and investigation.
- Students will be able to identify various ways the practice of drawing operates critically and responds to our experiences of the world. Students will also discover drawing's provisional quality relative to other art media, such as painting or sculpture and also gain an understanding for the ways in which drawing has relevance within a breadth of other disciplines including geography, architecture and medicine.

Course Requirements and Protocols:

Attendance:

Attendance, punctuality and preparedness for class are critical, as the teaching methods used will include class critiques, lectures and studio work. You are expected to attend and participate in every class. In particular, it is essential that you come prepared to work and be able to discuss the assignments and readings. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out from your classmates what you missed or make an appointment with the professor. It should be noted that under University regulations, if a student misses 15% of their classes, without written corroboration of accommodation for health or bereavement, they can be debarred from participation in final evaluations and/or critiques. 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.

Accommodation and Medical Policy:

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

Accommodation for missed assignments, or attendance, totalling less than 10%, due to medical reasons, may be arranged with the instructor as long as the student contacts the instructor no later than the day after the assignment or attendance is due.

For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html. Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): student.uwo.ca under the Medical Documentation heading.

Mental Health:

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

Studio work:

Each week of the course, you will be learning how to use a variety of drawing media through workshops, exercises and instructor feedback. Each section of the course covers a different facet of the practice of drawing from still life, exploring pattern, mark-making and abstraction, drawing from a model, and understanding architecture and systems of space. During each studio class you will be expected to produce a finished drawing, or a series of works/research related to that weeks themes. At the end of each section you will be expected to present one finished drawing chosen from that section’s studio sessions for your section/project critique. Each one of these drawings from the four sections is worth 5% of your final grade for a total of 20%.

Studio/project work, begun in class, may be completed outside class and is due on the day of the critique for the assigned activity. In general, it is expected that the in-class studio work may require extra time outside class in order to be completed, but this will vary depending on the assignment. Students are expected to work in the studio during class times, plus an additional 4 hrs/wk out of class. If the student is absent for a studio assignment, or misses a scheduled critique of assigned projects, it is up to the student to make arrangements to complete and hand in work. With fair notice, course assignments, procedures, and due dates may be changed by the instructor in response to individual or class needs.

All work for this course must be entirely the student’s own and must be done specifically for this class. All course work must be completed punctually by the end of the course.

Sketchbook: Students are required to work in a sketchbook for this course. You should be using this sketchbook as you would use a notebook for any other class. Use it to take notes during presentations, write down assignment details, and ideas you may have for your drawing projects. You are encouraged to draw in this sketchbook as much as possible and collect information to demonstrate your thinking process

for each assignment. An average of 3-5 pages should be used to prepare for each in-class studio project; an average of 5 pages should be used to prepare each of the major homework projects. **Please clearly label and/or date each page** according to each project.

Advice: Carry your sketchbook around with you as if it were a camera. You may discover how you see the world and be able to build on that knowledge. You will gain more confidence simply by drawing regularly during the week. In your sketchbook, include:

- Sketches, compositional or technical tests and ideas for class projects
- Images, writings or information on artists for inspiration
- Notes on in-class lectures, critiques or discussions
- Drawings of individual choice

DUE DATES: Sketchbooks will be collected for evaluation before mid term and final (5 % each).

Assignments/Late Assignments:

Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Failure to complete assignments without prior arrangements with the instructors may result in a failing grade. With prior discussion and approval, students may hand in late work with a 2% per day deduction from the total assignment grade. Unexcused late assignments (no prior discussion or approved arrangements) will lose a letter grade (10%) per day. Extensions will be given upon official notification from the student's faculty advisor due to documented serious health and bereavement reasons.

Course Readings and Reading Responses:

Three course readings will be posted on OWL throughout the semester. An in-class discussion of each reading will follow to engage students with current discourses in contemporary art and contribute to the conceptual development of the student's drawing practice. Students are expected to prepare notes and discussion questions in their sketchbooks before class as part of their involvement in the discussion. Participation in these discussions will contribute to the student's final participation mark.

Written Assignment:

We will have one short written assignment in this class. This will primarily serve as a written review, approximately 500 words, related to one of the readings and a current exhibition either locally or on campus. Alternative documentation and production strategies such as visual responses to the exhibition and reading will also be considered within this assignment. Please consult professor well in advance if interested in doing any work that does not involve a traditional writing format. Assignment details will be given in class and posted online. Students will be expected to visit the gallery in order to complete this assignment. As stated previously, all work for this course **MUST** be entirely your own. All sources that you use for your assignments must be accurately cited. If you have doubts about how and when to cite sources, consult the Chicago Manual of Style guide posted on OWL in the Resources section, visit the Writing Centre, or talk to me well before the assignment due dates. All course work must be completed specifically for this course. Submitting the same work for credit in more than one course is considered cheating. Plagiarism and cheating are the most serious of academic transgressions and they will be dealt with strictly.

End of Term: Students are required to clear out their lockers and remove any art projects at the end of each term. The department cannot be held responsible for any materials or work left after this time.

Course Evaluation:

This course is a mix of in-class studio work, assigned projects, readings, and written work.

All grades will be based on the student's ability to clearly demonstrate the following. Note that grading rubrics using a combination of these criteria, with percentage weighting adjusted on a project-specific basis, will be used for marking:

- Understanding of project concepts and ability to express that understanding
- Ambition, resourcefulness, creativity
- Technical development
- Completion, quality and presentation of assignments
- Development and maturity of ideas
- Attendance and participation in class activities

Course Evaluation Breakdown:

10% Attendance & Participation

10% Sketchbook

- Handed in twice during the term. Once at midterm and once on last day of classes

10% Written assignment.

- 500 word review of exhibition and assigned reading. Due Nov. 08.

20% Studio Session Evaluation (in-class drawings due at section critique: 4 @ 5%)

- Each week you are expected to produce a finished drawing, or a series of works/research related to that weeks themes. In addition to being evaluated on your work and participation within the studio sessions, at the end of each section during the scheduled critique (see below), you will be expected to present one finished drawing from that sections studio sessions. Each one of these drawings from the four sections is worth 5% of your final grade for a total of 20%.

Assignments

10% **Project #1 – Observation/Still Life**

- homework project
- due Oct. 04

10% **Project #2 – 50 drawings**

- start in class. 50 drawings/studies on 8.5 x 11 inch paper
- due Oct. 18

10% **Project #3 – 50:1 drawing**

- start in class. Make one large finished drawing from 50 drawing project
- due Nov. 01

10% **Project #4 – Self Portrait**

- homework assignment
- due Nov. 15

10% **Project #5 – Architectures, Spaces and Systems**

- start in class. This project will be given lots of class time
- due during final critique on last class of term, Dec. 6th
- The project builds off ideas discussed in class and your final reading. Research drawing done through collage work, and final drawing will be presented for critique on the last class.

Assignments are considered independent drawing projects. Depending on the project, class time will be provided to work on these projects. You are expected to complete these projects as homework. Due dates for class critique of these projects is provided above and below. Specific assignment details will be discussed in class and posted on OWL.