

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Visual Arts

Course: Practicum

Title: SA 4605

Time: Wednesdays and Fridays 8:30-11:30

Room: JLVAC 300 and 148

Term: Fall 2022/ Winter 2023

Professor: Anna Madelska (abarelk@uwo.ca)

Office Meetings can be arranged by Appointment.

Course Description

Practicum is a studio course designed to allow students to develop an individual studio practice in the context of contemporary art issues and a variety of media processes. It will, at all times, emphasize critical analysis and energetic discussion in combination with an intensive commitment to probing ideas through creative exploration.

Alongside the independent material and theoretical research, students will be introduced to the business of a successful art practice. This course will discuss the Canadian gallery system, the Canadian Arts Councils, the successful writing of artist statements, application processes for exhibitions, residencies, grants and schools, how to develop artist talks and how to build an online presence.

Students are immersed in the contemporary art scene through a series of class trips that focus on experiencing art in a wide variety of locations. The class will visit galleries in London and Toronto, and organize a class trip to New York City for four days in November.

Course Objectives

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

- Present a honed and cohesive independent body of work and research.
- Demonstrate perceptual, visual and conceptual skills through art making and as a critical viewer.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional artist career trajectories and how these may relate to their own practice.
- Create a professional artist dossier and present their work in a professional manner.
- Prepare written and visual work for publication through the creation of a catalogue.
- Install and present their work in a professional gallery setting.
- Prepare an application for an exhibition, residency, school or grant.
- Build a professional online presence.
- Demonstrate a grasp of historical and contemporary issues relevant to the making and evaluation of contemporary practices in the visual arts.

Learning Outcomes

- A. Autonomy and Professional Capacity

- Students will understand the range of opportunities for artists within and beyond the academic setting, and will have an awareness of the routes that must be taken to make advancements toward further study and/or professional practice.
 - Students will understand the range of opportunities for art researchers within and beyond the academic setting, and will have an awareness of the routes that must be taken to make advancements toward further study and/or professional practice.
- B. 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.
- C. 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 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).

Course Requirements

Practicum meets twice a week for a total of 6 hours of in class time. Practicum is a double credit course which means that's students are also expected to spend a minimum of 12 hours a week outside course time on studio work and research.

Students must work on their independent projects consistently. Meetings with the instructor and TA are scheduled weekly, and there must be new work to show for each meeting. Each meeting should be seen as a form of deadline and students should be prepared to introduce what they have done since the previous meeting. This allows each student to progress gradually and build on feedback and consultation in their work.

Each student is responsible for knowing the assignments, procedures, and due dates. Students are expected to complete all assignments by the posted due date; failure to do so may result in a failing grade. Requests for deadline extensions cannot be considered unless approved by the instructor at least 24 hours before the assignment is due and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Attendance is mandatory and missing 15% or more of class time can result in a failing grade. All students are expected to be present and available for discussions at the **beginning** of each class meeting, even in the case that there is no scheduled activity and students are engaging in their work in another area of the building.

Late Penalty

Failure to complete assignments without prior consultation with instructor may result in a failing grade.

With prior discussion, students may hand in late work with 10% per day late penalty deducted from the assignment (Monday to Friday, weekend considered one day).

Course Materials

Students must arrive to class with all necessary materials in order to continue their individual studio projects. Not having materials is not a valid excuse to miss class or studio time.

Course Readings

Students will participate in a number of seminar-like discussions on a variety of provided texts. Thorough knowledge of these texts will be required for active participation. On the day of each discussion, students must prepare three engaged questions related to the reading. We will use these questions in class to discuss the reading. Good questions should show an engagement and understanding of the ideas presented in the text, and should be as specific as possible, rather than general. Participating in discussion is an integral part of the participation grade.

Over the course of the first semester, students will develop **a research file of their own research interests** (books/essays/articles, films, podcasts, and other cultural material/sources may be included). The finished file should have a minimum of 10 sources listed and each annotation should describe the text and why it is of interest. It is assumed that these sources will be a valuable help in preparing both the written component (artist statement) and studio component (critiques) of the course research.

Critiques

Each term, students will have two opportunities to formally present their most recent studio work for discussion with instructors and peers. The schedule for these critiques will be established before the critique. Studio work presented for discussion in the critiques should represent recently completed projects. In some cases, very major or multi-faceted projects may be presented still in development. All finished and work-in-progress projects presented must demonstrate a vigorous commitment to process as well as demonstrate an evolved conceptual and material practice. For all formal critiques students should provide instructors with a list of (working) titles, material details and installation notes. For some critiques students will assume responsibility for effectively introducing and facilitating discussion around their work and the work of their peers, however students may also be asked to take the role of an observer, making notes of the direction and topics of discussion in relation to their work. These notes will be reviewed with the course instructors during studio meetings/visits to assess what expectations of the work were met, and if expectations of the work were not met what future directions could be investigated. All class members are expected to actively participate in these critiques and will be evaluated on both the presentation of their work as well as their generous engagement with the work of others.

Committee Work

Committee work is an important part of the Practicum Course and a large part of the participation grade. Each student will volunteer or be assigned a role in a committee. Specific roles will be discussed in class. Each student will submit a short report on their activities on the dates requested. Committee

positions will often rely on each member to do a good job, so good planning and communication are essential.

Grading Breakdown Per Term

TERM ONE

Independent Studio Project: Midterm	15%
Independent Studio Project: End of term	20%
Research File	5%
Preparing Applications	5%
Participation	5%

TERM TWO

Independent Studio Project: Midterm	15%
Independent Studio Project: End of term	20%
Artist Talk	5%
Website	5%
Participation	5%

Evaluation

Students' work and performance will be evaluated on an ongoing basis and numerical grades will be posted on the course Owl site at the end of each project. All student work will be evaluated according to the following criteria (for more detail on terms of reference for studio grading see [Department Grading Criteria](#) below)

Department Grading Criteria

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.

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.

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.

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

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

Additional Course Material Request Policy:

For online courses the material may be presented in a variety of ways at the instructor's discretion.

Requests for additional material can only be made in cases necessitating academic accommodation. If a student requires Academic Accommodation for the course material, they can contact Western's Academic Support & Engagement department. <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>

Academic Consideration:

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Dean's office (the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration/home Faculty) together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. These documents will be retained in the student's file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University's Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy. Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic accommodation shall be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty. Academic accommodation shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset,

duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. (Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill.”)

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

Documentation from Family Physicians/Nurse Practitioners and Walk-In Clinics A Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic accommodation. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. An SMC can be downloaded at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

At the time of illness, students should make an appointment with a physician/nurse practitioner at Student Health Services. During this appointment, request a Student Medical Certificate from the Physician/Nurse Practitioner.

Students should request that an SMC be filled out. Students may bring this form with them, or request alternative Emergency Department documentation. Documentation should be secured at the time of the initial visit to the Emergency Department. Where it is not possible for a student to have an SMC completed by the attending physician, the student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that their ability to meet their academic responsibilities was seriously affected.

Instructors are encouraged, in the first instance, to arrange participation requirements and multiple small assignments in such a way as to allow students some flexibility.

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)

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Electronic Devices:

During Lectures and Tutorials: Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in class. **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.**

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.

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.

Support Services:

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

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.

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 Administrative Officer, Meghan Edmiston (meghan.edmiston@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.