

University of Western Ontario
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Department of Visual Arts
VAS 2105B Explorations 3: Making Art with Accessible Technology

Professor: Daniela Snepkova
Class times: Tuesday 2:30-5:30
VAC room 135 and 134
Office: NCB216
Office hours: Monday 4-5pm
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Course Description

An introduction to making art using readily available technology, tools and materials. Students will produce creative 2-D, 3-D and time-based projects exploring the possibilities of various accessible media technologies, including digital photography, video, animation, freeware, and creative construction techniques. The fundamental skills and historical/contemporary contexts of media art will be addressed through studio projects, lectures, workshops and reading discussions.

Over the course of the semester, students will develop a project across different media forms. We will follow an experimental structure this term in which students will be asked to create, recreate and remake their work from various perspectives and mediums. Through the exploration of different possible manifestations, students will gain a greater understanding of and facility in contemporary studio practice. Students are expected to work independently outside of class time to produce their projects.

Learning Objectives

1. Identify and apply the basic fundamentals of art making, including the design principles of image and object construction.
2. Identify and apply the production process of media art, using a variety of different technologies to fully explore and work through one project idea.
3. Acquire and employ technical skills in digital media and three-dimensional construction in order to develop creative projects.
4. Develop a vocabulary to discuss and analyze artworks by gaining familiarity with relevant historical and contemporary art contexts, and so advance their ability to conceptually synthesize theory and practice.

Grading and Evaluation:

Student performance will be based on an evaluation of:

1. Participation and attendance in class activities, active engagement in class discussions and critiques, including any online discussions assigned.
2. Innovation, determination and resolution in studio work as demonstrated in class projects and assignments. Grades for studio assignments are based on 4 categories: creativity, conceptual development, technical execution and resolution.
3. A demonstrated understanding of relevant issues and theoretical problems introduced in the class, and the ability to integrate them into studio work and assignments.

Assignments: The creative projects for this course will develop as a consecutive process, each one realized in relationship to the previous. Assignment details will be handed out in class and will be available on OWL. Digital assignment files should be submitted through OWL. Each student has their own dropbox on the class Owl site for digital file submissions. Hard copies should be submitted in class to the professor. All files **must** have your name on them, **clearly label** everything, digital and hard copy.

1. *Line exercises* 15%
 - A) 3 pencil and pen sketches of environment – in-class, Jan 12
 - B) 3-D paper construction of best line drawing from exercise 1A,
For Jan. 19 bring in documentation of your building process – 2 digital images.
 - C) light and photograph the 3-d construction (photo of exercise 1B). Stage 3 different lighting set ups/angles of the 3-D construction. Deposit the 3 digital photo files onto owl and also upload your best one to the class site (TBA) for everyone to view. Print the best photo on paper minimum size of 8” x10” 11”x14” or larger preferably.
Hand in a 1-page, typed, double-spaced, hard copy assessment of your photograph and process. Bring both the construction and the photo to class for viewing.
Due: Jan. 26

2. *Historical Visualization: Digital model using Sketch-Up* 15%

Students will develop and implement a virtual plan for a three-dimensional set that will serve as the backdrop for their subsequent creative projects. This set is to be based on their research into a historical event.

 - 2a) Research a historical event (can be current) that resonates with you. The research should be documented as a 2-page double spaced paper that describes the event, and the reason for the choice and any notes, sketches (digital or paper). Due Feb. 2

 - 2b) (re) create the setting for it using the free 3-D application sketch-up. Hand in 3 views of the environment to your dropbox on Owl.
Due: Feb. 23

3. *Surreal group* 8%

Group 3-D sculpture: using elements of 3 of the group members’ sketch-up sets (decide as a group which elements to use and how to combine them), design a surreal object to be printed on the new 3-D printer. We will be scheduling the 3-D printing in class utilizing the department’s new 3-D printer. Groups of 5 will be assigned. There will be some class-time for this production. You should each try to come up with a composition

and then, as a group decide on the most successful object to print.

File Due: Feb 9

4. *Physical model: Build the set* 20%
Drawing from their digital sketch from Assignment #2B, each student will construct a real world model of their virtual plan using basic construction techniques and readily available materials (cardboard, tape, wood, wire, recycled materials, paper, etc). Consider recording parts of the building process using audio, video or photo, as this may be useful material for your final assignment #6.
Due: March 8
5. *Photo-play* 12%
Students will then make a series of photographs of their built set. Minimum of 4, maximum of 8, one must include the student in the scene insert digitally or as a projection or as a cut out placed into the scene (or any other creative manifestation of yourselves you can invent). Print your best one. Submit the digital images to Owl.
Due: March 15
6. *Make a video/animation or installation with audio* 20%
Using the set as a backdrop, students will develop a short video or animation that explores the aesthetic principles and creative approaches covered in the course. Can also be an exploration of installation or performance as long as the project utilizes digital media and the set in some way.
Due: April 5
7. *Attendance/Participation* 10%

Studio assignments are graded on the following criteria:

technical requirements

technical integration with the idea

degree of inventiveness and ambition of assignments

understanding of the theoretical implications of the work

the progress of conceptual development and skills over the semester

Written work will be graded for grammar, style, research and conceptual development.

Required readings: Course readings will be available on-line @ owl. Check the weekly schedule for details.

Required materials: pencils (2B, 4B), felt pen, sketch book, portable drive (hard drive or usb stick), some kind of portable digital device capable of taking digital images such as mobile phone, tablet, or laptop. For this course you will be required to print at least 2 photographs at 8"x10" size or larger and part of a printed 3-D object. You will also need materials such as paper, wood, wire, glue, tape, etc., for building your 3-D structure (which materials and how much you may need will depend on what it is you will be building and at what scale).

Access to VAC computer lab is available when other classes are not using it. Check that your card access is functioning by week 2. Access to equipment is available through the VAC sign out office on the second floor.

Rules to know

- ▶ **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Do not** hand in work you created in or for another class, or work done by someone else (including words, ideas, images, or sounds). This is considered plagiarism, a serious scholastic offense resulting in an F on the assignment or in the course or ultimately in expulsion. For more information see the University's document on plagiarism in the undergraduate student handbook. If you use any material you did not create yourself you are responsible for **citing it** appropriately. In the case of a media work this means you must acknowledge all stills, video/film clips and audio, including music (even if it is from the internet). If you intend to have your piece broadcast, you would need to get signed contracts and releases for all material included and for all the identifiable people who appear on screen. For more information regarding plagiarism see the U.W.O. Calendar.

- ▶ Attendance is mandatory for all screenings, workshops, reading discussions and lectures. In the case of group assignments, you are responsible for keeping in contact with your group outside of class time in order to complete all required assignments.

- ▶ Missing class time without proper (medical or other) documentation will have a negative impact on your final grade. Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation must be submitted to the Academic Counseling office of a student's home Faculty. For UWO Policy on Accommodation For Medical Illness, see: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf> (downloadable Student Medical Certificate -SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading.

- ▶ Being consistently late for class will be penalized. If you are more than 20 minutes late for class, you will be marked as absent.

- ▶ Refrain from texting or using email during class time, since we only have 3 hours each week.

- ▶ All assignments must be completed; failure to do so will result in an automatic F for the course.
- ▶ Assignments and papers not directly handed to me must be handed in at the VA main office for date stamping. Each assignment must be clearly labeled with: instructor name, student name, assignment, course title and number. Owl does not support large video files, so digital video assignments must be handed in on a USB stick, hard drive or a DVD. ☐Late assignments will lose 5 points for each day late. Assignments more than 7 days late will not be accepted.
- ▶ You must keep a **copy** of all submitted projects/papers. **Back up** all of your digital projects (often). In case of lost materials, **you are responsible** for providing a replacement.

OWL: All students will have access to the OWL Sakai course site:

<https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/owldocs>

**BASED ON THE STUDENT'S SUCCESS IN MEETING THE ABOVE CRITERIA
GRADES WILL BE ASSESSED ON THE FOLLOWING:**

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 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.

VAS 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, 7th 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.) VAS

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/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

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). Please note, however, that should you encounter any serious difficulties due to illness, family emergency, etc., you should consult the Academic Counsellor for your Faculty, IGA Building, Room 1N20 (Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the counsellors for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities).

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; 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 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