

Course: **Advanced Visual Art Foundations**  
Visual Arts Studio 1025 – Section 001

Term: Fall 2016/Winter 2017

Time: Monday and Wednesday 2:30 – 5:30pm  
Location: JLVAC rm. 302

Professor: **David Merritt**  
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Office Hours; Mon. 1pm- 2pm  
Wed. 1pm- 2pm

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Course Anti- requisite: VAS 1020

### Course Description

**VAS 1025** is an advanced level introduction to core studio practices in the visual arts. The course embraces an immersive, exploratory approach to art making, one informed by the creative tactics, critical concerns and historical precedents underpinning recent artists' practices. Organized around formal, material and thematic frameworks, class, lectures, field trips and workshops are offered in support of hands- on studio exercises and assignments. Working with 2D, 3D and time- based media and including drawing, painting, sculpture, photography and multi- media practices, VAS 1025 facilitates the technical, creative and critical understandings of these approaches and provides students a formative groundwork for continued practice and study.

### Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

1. *Depth and Breadth of Knowledge:* Students will acquire a range of fundamental skills required to engage both technically and conceptually with the material art practices being studied. Students will also be familiar with relevant historical precedents relating to these practices as well as contemporary reconsiderations and adaptations.
2. *Knowledge of Methodologies:* Students will gain an understanding of conceptual/material methodologies through application of both traditional and non- traditional processes, developing and presenting ideas via drawing and other modes as well as through resources such as lectures and demonstrations and consultations with the instructor.
3. *Communication Skills:* Students will be able to communicate in writing and orally regarding their projects and with respect to an informed foundational understanding of contemporary art and its precedents, and will be skilled with a variety of formats of critique at the university level.

### Important Course Resources

**Owl.** To facilitate aspects of VAS 1025, students can access the VAS 1025 Owl site through <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/owldocs> . Course outline, readings, slide lectures, class assignments and assignment grades will be posted to Owl in a timely manner.

**Facebook.** This site offers the opportunity to grow a social connection among the students, while also providing a playful discussion space that can continue to exist beyond the timeline of the course.

**Tumblr Postings.** Primarily used personally, but also provide another venue for fostering discussions, interest and community among students.

## Course Requirements

### Studio Assignments and Critique Discussions

Critiques and shorter artwork discussion sessions are regularly scheduled in VAS 1025 and represent important assessment situations for the course. Student preparation and active participation in these sessions are a requirement of the course. In addition to affecting participation grades, students late or otherwise not prepared for scheduled critiques or discussions will forfeit the opportunity for class feedback on their work.

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 2% per day late penalty deducted from the assignment (Monday to Friday, weekend considered one day).

Assignments submitted for evaluation in portfolios must be submitted in a protective enclosure with each requirement clearly labeled and dated. Failure to hand in assignments in a professional, organized manner may result in the instructor declining to grade a portfolio. Accommodation for missed assignments, or attendance, totaling less than 10% of the course grade, due to medical reasons, may be arranged with the instructor (rather than the academic counseling office of their home faculty) as long as the student contacts the instructor no later than the day after the assignment or attendance is required.

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

With fair notice, the course syllabus may be subject to change in response to class needs. It is the student's responsibility to stay apprised of all such discussed changes.

### Participation and Attendance

Due to the intensive nature of VAS 1025 students will be required to work on some assignments independent of in-class studio work. This may occasionally involve undertaking more than one way of working at a time. In response, students should be prepared to spend at least one hour working outside of class for every hour of class time to meet the course requirements. Studio space is available outside of class time as room scheduling permits.

Attendance is mandatory and regularly taken. Students are expected to show up to every class, on time, and with the appropriate materials and must clean up after themselves at the end of each class. Students who miss class for medical reasons must present documented medical or bereavement excuses (see Department Medical Policy below). Missing classes, or part of a class without documented excuse or prior consultation with the instructor, will adversely affect students' grades. Missing more than 15% of classes, including late arrivals or early departures, may also result in student's being debarred from final assessments.

Workshops designed to orient students to specific facilities or media areas will be scheduled during class time. Attendance to these workshops is particularly important; workshops cannot normally be rescheduled for students who have missed class and may affect studio privileges in that area.

Students are expected to make themselves aware of all assignments, procedures and due dates, and are required to complete all assignments by the announced date of submission or critique. With fair notice to students, the course syllabus may change to adapt to class needs. It is the students' responsibility to remain apprised of such changes.

### **Note:**

*An aim of this course is to expose the student to a very broad range of contemporary art practices. Some of the most canonical or universally esteemed works depict what might today be called 'mature subject matter'. Please be forewarned that a small percentage of the visual material students will be expected to view may be of an explicit nature, containing for example, scenes or depictions of sexual and/or violent acts. Students must accept that by taking this course they have consented to viewing such material. Also some class activities will involve working from nude models. If either of these class activities poses a problem for a student, for any reason, it must be brought to the attention of the instructor **immediately**.*

### Assigned Readings, Written and Oral Presentations

Readings in support of class exercises and projects may be assigned throughout both semesters of the course. As specified, students will prepare and submit electronically a brief a written response or a reflective question for each of these readings before each class discussion. Writing assignments relating to organized field trips will also be a requirement in both semesters. In the second semester students will also be required to work with a partner to prepare a research presentation on the work of a contemporary artist.

### **Evaluation**

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

<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.

### **Grading Breakdown**

Studio Assignments	80%
Research (gallery reports, readings, web postings, presentation)	10%
Attendance, participation, and professionalism	10%

#### Studio Assignments (80% of each semester)

All grades studio grades will reflect the student's ability to clearly *demonstrate*

- understanding and engagement of project concepts and parameters
- effort and ambition
- technical resourcefulness, proficiency, follow through
- inventiveness and initiative
- presentation, organization, communication of intent

Work will be handed in for regular grading and will be given a number grade based on the following grading scorecard: **Idea/Concept, Preparation, Material Execution, Presentation**. Students' artwork will be provided verbal comments during critiques. Formal evaluation of students' progress will take place after the presentation and at the end of the semester.

#### Attendance, Participation and Professionalism (total 10% of each semester)

Attendance and participation in all class activities is mandatory. Grades for attendance are tallied as follows: 5% percent per semester. Perfect attendance= 5%, 1 absence= 4%, 2= 3%, 3=2%, 4 = 1%, please note any more than 4 absences in a semester could lead to being debarred from participation in final critiques. 2 Lates = 1 Absence. A student is considered absent if they miss more than half a class on a given day. *See course requirements for more detail regarding attendance policy.* Class Participation will be weighed 5% per semester on the basis of demonstrated engagement in class activities, oral participation in critiques, class discussions. Marks are deducted for lack of preparation (for example, attending class without having materials to work with).