

**Western University
Department of Visual Art**

**VAS 2204A
Introduction to Drawing**

Term/Session: Fall 2016

Time: Monday, 11:30am to 2:30pm; Wednesday, 11:30am to 2:30pm

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 introduction to drawing as an independent practice, and as a tool for conceptual, perceptual, and technical problem solving. This course focuses on historical and contemporary drawing issues and practices, through studio work, slide talks, group discussions and critiques.

In this course, we will consider “drawing” as a tool of material and conceptual inquiry and as the basis of a studio practice in its own right. We will explore the practice of drawing as a form of knowledge production and problem solving. 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.

Students will develop an understanding of both the historical and contemporary uses and ideologies surrounding drawing, via lectures, discussions, critiques of student work, and studio demonstrations. Beginning with traditional drawing methods that focus on developing observational skills, students will advance their technique in value, line, composition, tone, and gesture. Studio sessions and projects will range from nude life model drawing, collaborative drawing games, exercises in developing abstraction, and drawings inspired by the imagination. In-class critiques and instructor feedback will assist students in developing their formal drawing skills and a critical language within which to discuss their work.

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. These finished works will make up your **In-Class Exercises Portfolio** and will be presented during final section critiques alongside your assigned homework projects. 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.

In-Class Exercises Portfolio

These drawings will be evaluated on the basis of demonstrated comprehension of exercise objectives, engagement and degree of completion evident in the presented work.

Independent Archive/ Drawing Folio

On an ongoing basis over the term students will develop an archive of drawings and related research materials. As a whole this archive will provide the basis of the material and conceptual possibilities for the terms independent projects.

The archive/drawing folio will exist primarily in sketchbook format and act as a personal research archive. The number of pieces may vary with scale involved in student responses. Expectations for this archive will be discussed in class and during one on one meetings with the professor early in the semester. Unbound drawings (or related materials) will serve to advance the students' own independent research and thematic development. In the first quarter of the course, I may assign and direct self initiated exercises for the folio in order to expand the student's visual and material experimentation. With an eye towards developing further possibilities, the tools, media, ground, time involved and approach (from imagination, memory, observation, tracing or other transfer techniques, etc.) should vary widely from the outset. In the second quarter of the course the folio will increasingly act as a space to develop the material and thematic framework used in the final independent project. In addition to instructor feedback, collaboration, and discussion within peer workgroups will serve to support and develop these drawings.

This file should include images immediately relating to course exercises and assignments and can be expanded to include any material of interest deemed relevant to the development of an independent research path. These may include image and/or textual materials drawn from public (print and/or electronic), current and/or historical sources, personal photographs, or snapshots that relate to more immediate investigations as well as examples of drawing-based or related work by artists of personal interest. Personal responses to articles, exhibitions, lectures or conversations deemed relevant to furthering the students' research base should also be included. It is a requirement of the course that all materials deemed of interest be represented in **hard copy** in the archive.

The drawing/archive folio will be evaluated on evidence of the engagement, experimental range, ambition and the overall potential as a resource in developing the student's independent research and projects throughout the semester.

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, students may hand in late work with a 2% per day deduction from the assignments total 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:

A few course readings will be posted online 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 come prepared for discussion questions 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 will 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 related class activities

Course Evaluation Breakdown:

10% Attendance & Participation

10% Independent Archive/Drawing Folio

- Reviewed twice during the term. Once before Thanksgiving (Oct. 5th) and during last week of classes (Dec. 5th and 7th).

10% Written/Visual Response Assignment.

- Short 500 word review or visual response to local exhibition and related assigned reading. Due Nov. 2nd.

20% In-Class Exercises Portfolio (drawings due at final critique for each section: 4 @ 5%)

- Each week you are expected to produce a finished drawing, or a series of works/research related to that weeks themes and exercises. In addition to being evaluated on your work and participation within the actual studio sessions, throughout the term you will be expected to present one finished in-class drawing from each of the four sections during your final critique in that section. 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/Landscape/Still Life**

- homework project
- due Sept. 28th.

10% **Project #2 – 50 drawings**

- start in class. 50 drawings/studies in a variety of media on 8.5 x 11 inch paper
- due Oct. 12th.

10% Project #3 – 50:1 drawing

- start in class. Make one large finished drawing from 50 drawing project
- due Oct. 24th

10% Project #4 – Self Portrait

- homework assignment
- due Nov. 14th

10% Project #5 – Archive - Generator Project/Mail Art

- start in class. This project will be given lots of class time
- due during final week, Dec. 5th or 7th.
- The project builds off ideas discussed in class and developed within your research archive. For additional marks, any research drawing done through collage work, and/or leading to final drawing can be mailed into professor in form of a postcard or enveloped package and subsequently 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 online.