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ARTZ 106A.01: Visual Language - 2-D Foundations

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The University of Montana, *School of Art*
ARTZ 106A: Visual Language: 2D Foundations
3 Credits, Spring Semester 2014
Tuesday/Thursday, 2:10 pm-4:00 pm, Fine Arts 404

Prerequisite Courses: None

Instructor: James Louks (james.louks@umontana.edu)
Office: Schreiber Gym 127 (Graduate Painting Studios)
Office Hours: Thursday, 12:00-1:30 p.m.

“Artists of many diverse types began using simple forms to their own ends.”
Sol LeWitt

Textbook (NOT REQUIRED): Mary Stewart. *Launching the Imagination: a Comprehensive Guide to Basic Design*, 3rd ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2008. Second edition may also be used.

All required readings for this course will be posted to Moodle.

Course Materials: A kit for the class will be available to students at the University Bookstore. These kits should be available during the second week of the semester. The instructor and the School of Art will attempt to provide any additional materials but students are going to have to purchase some materials/supplies that they will need to complete the assignments for the course.

Course Description from Catalogue: 2D Foundations offers students an introduction to the formal elements and principles of design, color theory, and predominant western and non-western historical styles, with an emphasis on solving specific design problems.

Course Objectives and Description:

Objective 1: Art is about communicating **ideas**. This course explores the relationship between art principles and **meaning** in your work. We will specifically explore:

- How form and aesthetics can contribute to meaning
 - Composition
 - Color, both additive (light-based such as digital video monitor) and subtractive (pigments like acrylic paint)
- How materials and process relate to meaning.
 - Every material and process has a different perspective and unique voice. Artists often select a medium because of it can articulate an idea in a very particular way. Throughout the term we will explore many different materials and processes, including digital, drawing, printing, painting and collage, to begin to become familiar with the implications of each.

Objective 2: This course will also introduce several specific processes.

- Digital: Students will gain familiarity with input, editing and output.
- Manipulation of paint and color mixing.

Course Format: Because this is a studio course, the majority of our time will involve working on projects. We will use short exercises as well as longer projects to explore different aspects and

possibilities for composition and color. During in-class studio time, I will work one-on-one with you to provide suggestions and help refine your solutions. In addition to class time, expect to spend five hours a week working outside of class. Your openness to taking chances, following unexpected new directions and engage seriously and creatively with each assignment is essential for your success. Do not be satisfied with your first idea or the easiest solution.

In addition to exercises and assignments, we will use other way to understand concepts: Class critiques will be held at the end of major assignments to give you feedback and allow you to see other student's solutions. Lectures will highlight major ideas and introduce artists to illustrate various concepts. Regular required readings will also elaborate important ideas and concepts.

Attendance/Absence Policy: This is a studio art class and therefore regular attendance is essential. Each student will be permitted **3 unexcused absences**. After three unexcused absences, your grade will drop one letter grade for each day missed. **If you miss more than 6 classes it will be impossible for you to receive anything but a failing grade (F) for the course.**

If you have a cell phone that disrupts the class or you use the phone during class time for anything unrelated to the course, it will count as an absence. Students who habitually arrive late, arrive without necessary materials, leave early or take extended breaks will also be considered absent.

Work schedules, minor illness, oversleeping, studying for other classes, etc. are not acceptable excuses for missing class.

When you are absent or late for a class, you are still responsible for the information and assignments presented. All presentations and readings will be posted on Moodle but In-Class demonstrations will **NOT** be repeated for the convenience of an individual student. The instructor reserves the right to review attendance problems on an individual basis.

Withdrawal Policy: Full Information on the Withdrawal Policy for University of Montana courses can be found at <http://www2.umt.edu/catalog/acpolpro.htm>.

Academic Misconduct/Cheating and Plagiarism Policy: Any evidence of academic dishonesty in this course will result in an automatic "F" for the course. To view the university's complete policy and repercussions please refer to the current UM Catalogue.

Access/Special Needs/Disabilities: Full information can be found at <http://www.umt.edu/disability>. Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting the instructor. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. For more information, please consult <http://www.umt.edu/disability>

Health and Safety: The School of Art uses environmentally sound methods. Required materials from your supply list are in compliance, with the exception of spray fixative. Spray fixative is **NOT** to be used in the building at any time, other than in the spray booth. Please use fixative in the spray booth or outdoors. You are individually responsible for clean up at the end of each session in the classroom. No creatures or children will be allowed in the studios during class time or open studio times. No food or beverage containers will be allowed in the School of Art facilities while art making is in progress. All artwork must be picked up by Monday after finals week or it will be discarded.

Building Access: The use of studio space requires current enrollment in a specific studio course, as course fees are used to purchase supplies. Those not currently enrolled will be asked

to leave. Building hours are 7:00 am to 11:00 pm daily. Fridays are open studio days in the School of Art Building---no classes are scheduled.

Requirements and Grading Policies: Students will mostly be evaluated on the work they complete in the studio and in their sketchbooks. In addition to evaluation of student work, students will be graded on participation. This includes but is not limited to: in-class discussions, working on all assigned projects in class as well as outside of class, completing the assigned readings and taking the quizzes, and regular attendance.

While the evaluation of any artwork is always somewhat subjective, the instructor will, nonetheless, clarify to each student how successful or unsuccessful their work has met the objectives of each assignment.

Remember, you will NOT be graded in comparison to other students in the course. You will be graded on how well you've completed the requirements of the specific assignment/project and how well you've personally progressed throughout the semester.

Make-up Policy: All assignments must be done on time to receive full credit. For every day that your assignment is late, your grade for that particular assignment will be reduced by one letter. Assignments later than one week will not be accepted. If you have an extenuating circumstance preventing you from turning in an assignment on time, please see the instructor.

Extra credit assignments are **NOT** offered in this course.

Grading Scale: The traditional grading scale will be used for this course.

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

Detail of Assignment Point Values:

Formal Projects	200 Points
Quizzes	50 Points
In-Class Discussions	30 Points
Gallery/Visiting Artist Write-Ups	30 Points
In-Class Exercises	30 Points
Artist Statement	10 Points
Total	350 Points

DETAIL OF ASSIGNMENTS

GRAY SCALE PORTFOLIO: Students will work on two gray scale compositions, one dealing with foreground/background relationships and the other combining the elements of collage, assemblage and found object with the elements of gray scale theory and design principles. Each composition(s) will be worth 25 points, totaling 50 possible points for this portfolio.

COLOR THEORY PORTFOLIO: Students will work on three compositions rooted in color theory. These compositions will be composed of multiple or repetitive imagery of some kind and will focus on the following color schemes: Primary, Secondary and Tertiary. Each composition will be worth 25 points, totaling 75 points for the portfolio.

DIGITAL COMMENTARY: Your final project will be a composition of your own choosing. The only requirement is that it must have a digital component involved. This could include, but is not limited to: video, digital photography, audio, performance, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, social media, etc. Demos on Photoshop and Illustrator will be given in class. This project is worth 25 points.

SOCIAL PRACTICE PROJECT: In an attempt to engage you and your artwork with the community of Missoula as well as introduce you to collaborative art making practices, you will be separated into 5 groups of 4 artists and asked to create a collaborative work rooted in the ideas of social commentary and social practice, as well as the challenge of how to create meaning through color. Readings and artists to look at will be provided for you. In addition to the artwork, you will be participating in a 3rd Friday exhibition at FrontierSpace on April 18th. This exhibition will feature your class, a section of 3D Design and a section of Foundations Drawing. Finally, you will be required to draft a brief artist statement for the work, detailing your group's artistic intent. This project will be worth 60 points in total (25 for the work, 25 for the exhibition and 10 for the artist statement).

QUIZZES: Two quizzes over terminology will be given throughout the course. One will focus on color theory and the other will focus on compositional concerns. These quizzes will be worth 25 points each, totaling 50 points.

DISCUSSIONS: Students will participate in 3 In-Class Discussions about their Formal Drawings and the Formal Drawings of their peers. These discussions will take place on the due dates of the 3 Formal Drawings and will be worth 10 points each.

IN-CLASS EXERCISES: Students will be graded on their participation in the course (attendance, working in class, etc.). A possible total of 30 points will be awarded in this category.

GALLERY/VISITING ARTIST REVIEWS: In an attempt to engage you with the artistic culture of Missoula, students will be required to visit three galleries/artist lectures during the course of the semester and then provide a short write-up of what they observed. These will be worth 10 points each and can be turned in during any point of the semester.

TENTATIVE OUTLINE

SECTION ONE: GRAY SCALE THEORY

Tuesday, January 28 th :	Introduction to Syllabus, Supplies, Course Outline
Thursday, January 30 th :	Materials Demo, In Class Exercises
Tuesday, February 4 th :	Foreground/Background Relationships
Thursday, February 6 th :	Foreground Background Relationships

Tuesday, February 11th: Foreground/Background Relationships
Thursday, February 13th: Black and White Collage

Tuesday, February 18th: Black and White Collage
Thursday, February 20th: Black and White Collage

Tuesday, February 25th: **GRAY SCALE PORTFOLIO DUE, DISCUSSION #1**

SECTION TWO: BASIC COLOR THEORY

Thursday, February 27th: Introduction to Color Theory, Materials Demo

Tuesday, March 4th: Primary Color Studies
Thursday, March 6th: Primary Color Studies

Tuesday, March 11th: Secondary Color Studies
Thursday, March 13th: Secondary Color Studies

Tuesday, March 18th: Tertiary Color Studies (GUEST INSTRUCTOR)
Thursday, March 20th: Tertiary Color Studies (GUEST INSTRUCTOR)

Tuesday, March 25th: **COLOR THEORY PORTFOLIO DUE, DISCUSSION #2**

SECTION THREE: DIGITAL COMMENTARY

Thursday, March 27th: Introduction to Digital Commentary Project, **QUIZ #1**

Tuesday, April 1: NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)
Thursday, April 3: NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

Tuesday, April 8th: Work on Digital Commentary Project
Thursday, April 10th: Work on Digital Commentary Project

Tuesday, April 15th: Work on Digital Commentary Project
Thursday, April 17th: **DIGITAL COMMENTARY PROJECT DUE, DISCUSSION #3**

SECTION FOUR: SOCIAL PRACTICE AND COLOR AS MEANING

Tuesday, April 22nd: Introduction to Social Commentary Project, Work on Social Practice Project
Thursday, April 24th: Work on Social Practice Project

Tuesday, April 29th: Work on Social Practice Project
Thursday, May 1st: Work on Social Practice Project

Tuesday, May 6th: Work on Social Practice Project, **QUIZ #2**
Thursday, May 8th: Work on Social Practice Project

**EXHIBITION AT FRONTIERSPACE, FRIDAY MAY 9TH INSTALL FRIDAY
MORNING/AFTERNOON**

FINALS WEEK:

During Finals Week you will meet individually with the instructor to discuss your Final Project. A sign up sheet will be passed around class two weeks prior to Finals Week. If you have a conflict with the meeting times you will need to make arrangements with the instructor to schedule an alternative meeting time.

(HIGHLY) SUGGESTED MATERIALS LIST

- Box to hold supplies (fishing tackle boxes work great and are less expensive)
- White vinyl eraser (Mars Plastic, Magic Rub)
- Cork-back metal ruler (12" or larger---any ruler will work, but you'll probably want a sturdy one)
- Various glues and adhesives (Permanent glue stick, Matte Medium, Mod Podge, Grafix adhesive paper, etc.)
- Scissors
- X-acto knife and replacement blades
- Self-healing cutting mat
- Black and White paper 9" by 12" or larger (Mi-Teintes, Canson or acid free card stock/scrapbook papers)

- Brushes (Flat and round primarily, if you are planning on pursuing a BFA, BA or just plan on pursuing a lifelong interest in Painting or Drawing, talk to me and I will give you a base set of brushes you should be purchasing at this point. If not, flat and round brushes will serve you well for this course.)
- Large flat brush for priming (GO TO ACE HARDWARE AND BUY A CHEAP FLAT BRUSH OR ROLLER!)
- Palette knife
- Paint palette (Plexiglas or actual glass work best and are the easiest to clean)
- Cans, jars, lidded containers to hold water, store excess paint and house painting mediums
- Sketchbook (Not required but highly recommended...you are in an art course after all)
- Acrylic or Gouache (not watercolor or oil) paints
 - Neutrals: Mars, Ivory or Lamp Black and Titanium White
 - Reds: Alizarin Crimson and/or Cadmium Red
 - Yellows: Yellow Ochre and/or Cadmium Yellow light
 - Blues: Cerulean Blue and/or Cobalt Blue
 - Any other colors you want to pick up are fine with me, but a major aspect of the painting component of the course will be the mixing of colors from the primary colors. So, during our color theory section, you will be required to produce secondary and tertiary tones from red, blue and yellow.

I will tell you that there are certain hazards with certain paints, mainly those of the cadmium variety. As you may know, cadmium is a potential carcinogen, albeit a preventable one. But obviously, this is a concern, and proper precautions should be used when handling this material. Essentially, it is imperative that you not ingest or consume this material when working with it. So, yes, as strange as it may sound, I am asking you not to eat any paint that contains cadmium. However, all other paints are free to be consumed. (Not really.)

MATERIALS YOU MAY NEED THROUGHOUT THE COURSE

- High quality drawing or watercolor paper (Arches is great, believe me. I use it but I'm also paid to teach this course and another course, i.e., the University is begging me to use it. It is way too expensive and there are plenty of quality alternatives out there---one good alternative is printmaking paper for wet media. Bee paper is a good choice for dry media)
- Drawing pad (Bee paper is the way to go again)
- Drawing board
- Stretched canvases
- Pre-made panels
- Quality set of graphite pencils