ARTZ 501.01: Graduate Critique Seminar

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Catalog Description: “Offered autumn and spring. Prereqs., graduate student status and consent of instructor. Weekly meetings to critique graduate student work. Level: Graduate”

Course Goals:
This course is a dialogue of both process and ideas, focused on expanding and refining your creative development. Using a Socratic-style of inquiry, and drawing on the expertise and experience of all participants, we will work to clarify and deepen intent and content, identify opportunities for growth, and suggest new strategies for making. Our discussions develop criticality, and articulation of ideas and positions.

Course Components
1. Critique: The main focus of this course is the critique of each artist's work. We will begin most classes by first briefly writing about a student’s project (15 minutes), followed by a group discussion (40 minutes). You will have at least 2-3 opportunities through the term to have your work considered.

   About writing: Writing allows a first stab at organizing your thoughts, contemplating new work, while providing each artist a written record to refer to later. A possible approach is outlined in Terry Barret’s classic Criticizing Art. He provides a simple but effective structure when approaching the unfamiliar which might be a useful:

   a. First, simply describe what you see. This allows you to catalog all the components presented to you without judgement. Subject matter, style, formal decision, material, media, etc. are all possibilities.
   b. Next, interpret what you see. What, in your mind, is this about? What feeling, idea, perspective is conveyed? What visual decisions made by the artist especially drive your interpretation? Often considering what the artist did NOT included/choose is useful...
   c. Finally does it work? (this step is not always necessary). Are there elements which interfere or contradict with your interpretation? Is there a more direct, clear way to communicate ideas? Or conversely, is there something which is essential to this work which the artist should know?

   About our group discussion: This is a welcoming space to try ideas out: you are allowed a generous number of free “take backs”, meaning you can propose a line of thought, but then modify or recant after closer consideration. Questions can be just as revealing as statements, and often can lead to rich discussions. Be kind of course, but be intellectually adventurous!
2. **Readings:** This term I will ask you to share with the class a few readings which you find important to your research. These might either refer directly to your investigation or provide an important insight into relevant cultural/theoretical currents in our society.

3. **Expansion Unit:** In the middle of the term, we will pause our discussions to examine a particularly important development in the art world. Artist regularly explore new ideas and process to test the relevance and currency of their studio practice. This term we will debate and experiment with Artificial Intelligence tools and explore how they might relate to your work.

4. **Exhibition:** If the group is interested, we may work towards an end-of-term group exhibition, possibly based on a theme or idea.

**Participation:**
The success of this class is dependent on a high-level of engagement by all participants. Because graduate art-making spans a wide range of process, material, ideas and interests, it is essential to empathetically and sensitively step into each artist’s perspective, even if different than your own. Keep an open mind—and forefront each artist’s intent—as you navigate sometimes unfamiliar terrain. Your frequent and thoughtful suggestions are at the core of this class.

**Grading and Assessment**
Grades will reflect:
- Completion of exercises (20%)
- Participation (80%)
  - Attendance
  - Contributions to critiques

**Announcements and Information Dissemination**
I will try to let you know important, grad-related information at the beginning of each class. I will also post this information in a Moodle document. Let me know if you know of something to share with the group.
Also, keep up with school events and happenings via Instagram.
[https://www.instagram.com/umt_svma/](https://www.instagram.com/umt_svma/)

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**University of Montana statements and info**

**Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code**
All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the professor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](https://www.umt.edu/studentconduct).

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Disclosing exam content during or after you have taken an exam,
- Removing exam material from the classroom or professor’s office without permission,
• Copying any material from another student, or from another source such as the Internet, that is submitted for grading unless the instructor gives you explicit permission to do so,
• Plagiarism, including use of Internet material without proper citation,
• Using cell phones or other electronics to obtain outside information during an exam without explicit permission from the instructor,
• Submitting your own work in one class that was completed for another class (self-plagiarism).

Accommodations

[See ODE for a sample statement]

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact the ODE at: (406) 243-2243, ode@umontana.edu, or visit www.umt.edu/disability for more information. Retroactive accommodation requests will not be honored, so please, do not delay. As your instructor, I will work with you and the ODE to implement an effective accommodation, and you are welcome to contact me privately if you wish.

Information for Students

Land Acknowledgement

The University of Montana acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people. Today, we honor the path they have always shown us in caring for this place for the generations to come.

Inclusion Policies

[May be school-specific or use the UM Diversity Statement below.]

The University of Montana values leadership, engagement, diversity, and sustainability, because our institution is committed to respecting, welcoming, encouraging, and celebrating the differences among us.

As members of the University of Montana community, we aspire to:

• Respect the dignity and rights of all persons.
• Practice honesty, trustworthiness, and academic integrity.
• Promote justice, learning, individual success, and service.
• Act as good stewards of institutional resources.
• Respect the natural environment.

Cultural Leave Policy

Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student’s customs and traditions or to participate in related activities. To receive an authorized absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event the student or their advisor (proxy) must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and the importance of the student’s attendance or participation.

Authorization for the absence is subject to approval by the instructor. Appeals may be made to the Chair, Dean or Provost. The excused absence or leave may not exceed five academic calendar days (not including weekends or holidays). Students remain responsible for completion or make-up of assignments as defined in the syllabus, at the discretion of the instructor.

Food & Housing Insecurity
Any student who faces challenges securing food or housing, and believes that this could affect their performance in this course, is urged to contact any or all of the following campuses resources.

**Food Pantry Program**
UM offers a food pantry that students can access for emergency food. The pantry is open on Tuesdays from 12 to 5 PM and Fridays from 10 AM to 5 PM. The pantry is located in UC 119 (in the former ASUM Childcare offices). Pantry staff operate several satellite food cupboards on campus (including one at Missoula College). For more information about this program, email umpantry@mso.umt.edu, visit the [UM Food Pantry website](https://www.umt.edu/student-life/food-pantry) or contact the pantry on social media (@pantryUm on twitter, @UMPantry on Facebook, um_pantry on Instagram).

**ASUM Renter Center**
The Renter Center has compiled a list of resources (https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog) for UM students at risk of homelessness or food insecurity. Students can schedule an appointment with Renter Center staff to discuss their situation and receive information, support, and referrals.

**The Writing and Public Speaking Center**
The Writing and Public Speaking Center provides one-on-one tutoring to students at all levels and at any time in the writing process.

**The Math Learning Center**
The Math Learning Center has in-person, drop-in tutoring to help students with homework and test preparation needs. Check their website for drop-in hours and location.

**UM Information Technology**
Get the technology, tools, and services you need, whether you are a student, faculty, staff, or someone partnering with the University of Montana. Visit the [UM IT webpage](https://technology.umt.edu) for services and self-help articles, or contact the help desk directly by calling 406.243.HELP (4357) or emailing ithelpdesk@umontana.edu.

**Supporting Mental Well-Being of Students at UM**
At UM, we value every student’s wellbeing and believe that taking care of yourself is imperative to your success as a student. College students often experience issues that may interfere with academic success such as academic stress, sleep problems, juggling responsibilities, life events, relationship concerns, or feelings of anxiety, hopelessness, or depression. If you or a friend is struggling, we strongly encourage seeking support. Helpful, effective resources are available on campus.

- If you are struggling with this class, please visit during office hours or contact me by email.
- Check-in with your academic advisor if you are struggling in multiple classes, unsure whether you are making the most of your time at the University of Montana.
- Reach out for Counseling Support at Curry Health Center Counseling. To make a counseling appointment call 406-243-4712 or go online to the Curry Health Portal to schedule an appointment.
- If you feel you need accommodations for a mental health concern, reach out to the Office of Disability Equity (ODE) at 406-243-2243.
- If you feel that you would benefit from general wellness skills to support your overall stress reach out to CHC-Wellness at 406-243-2809.
- If you have experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, bullying, intimidation, or discrimination contact the Student Advocacy Resource Center (SARC) 406-243-4429 *24/7 support line 406-243-6559.
• If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and seeking immediate help, call 911, go to the nearest hospital emergency room or call Campus Safety at 406-243-4000