

2900 Sophomore Seminar		Thursdays 9 - 12 / 1 - 4	John Bowers, Professor	
		Studio 1115	jbowers@saic.edu	
School of the Art Institute Chicago			Th 12-1 and by Appointment	
		Visual Communication Design	Visual Communication Office / 11th Floor Sharp	S 2019
3 Credits			Teaching Assistant TBA / Writing Fellow TBA	
			Sophomore Seminar Mentor TBA	

# sophomore seminar

## Sophomore Seminar (All Sections Course Description)

What are the concerns that drive one's creative practice? How does one set the terms for its future development?

This course offers strategies for the evaluation and communication of students' individual practice as artists, designers, and/or scholars. Through essential readings, studio projects, and writing, students will generate narratives about how and why they make art.

<http://www.saic.edu/academics/departments/academicspine/sophomoreseminar/>

design  
strategies

## Objectives

**Sophomore Seminar**

- This section of Sophomore Seminar focuses on the experience of journey and place (past, present, and future) through visual communication design methodologies of conceptualization, strategy, and evaluation.
- The experience will further your ability to identify interests, abilities, and opportunities, plan a course of study at SAIC, and lead your on-going creative practice.

**Learning Outcomes**

At the conclusion of the Sophomore Seminar course, students will be able to:

- Present self-motivated work of an iterative nature that demonstrates conceptual focus and technical ability as well as the beginning of a personal direction. (Evidence: progression and documentation of studio work shown for critique; evaluated via rubric on Canvas; this rubric will be piloted in the 2014-2015 academic year)
- Communicate a rationale for a self-designed curricular pathway for the junior and senior year at SAIC as well as a post-graduation goal. (Evidence: Curricular mapping essay; evaluated via rubric on Canvas)
- Participate in a rigorous critique process in the art and design context that integrates peer-to-peer analysis as well as faculty to student feedback. (Evidence: Record on syllabus of a minimum of three critique times; two of these critiques should be large group critiques)
- Demonstrate the ability to think, speak, and write clearly and effectively especially in regards to the developing body of creative work (Evidence: Self-reflective essay and/or optional documentation/notes related to student performance at critique)
- Display an empathetic capacity to respect, understand, and evaluate work made by a wide variety of artists pursuing creative expression in a broad array of disciplines. (Evidence: Student self-reflective essay as well as optional documentation of student performance at critique)

## Activities

**Exercises (12)**

- Conceptualization Exercises and Writing Exercises

**Writing (1)**

- Comparison / Contrast

**Projects (1)**

- Open-Ended Project on Personal Journey and / or Chosen Place

**Lecture (1)**

- All 2900 Lecture / Visiting Designer TBA

**Assignments (3)**

- All 2900 Curricular Mapping
- All 2900 Self-Reflective Essay
- All 2900 Documentation of Practice

Course  
Structure

The class meets once a week for 3 hours per session and outside advising as scheduled. Instruction takes the form of large group critiques, discussions, lectures, work sessions, small group critiques, and individual advising meetings. **You should expect to spend time outside of class working on projects.**

Cellphones should be set to vibrate and/or light only. Headphones are allowed only during scheduled work sessions; set volume to low. You must be able to work and present your work in class. **Watching YouTube videos or DVDs is not allowed.**

## Attendance

**You are allowed two absences.** Any absence beyond two, except in extenuating circumstances, will lower your final grade 1 letter grade. **Arriving to class** more than 15 minutes **late**, or leaving class early, twice (and every time thereafter) **will count as an absence.** You are responsible for obtaining material distributed during class.

Reasonable cause to miss a class might include an illness or hospitalization (the student should contact Health Services, who will relay information to the faculty in whose class the student is enrolled), observation of a religious holiday, and/or family illness or death.

If a student needs to miss class with reasonable cause, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to receive instruction for how to make up for the missed class. It is the instructor's responsibility to give this information to the student. Missing class for other than a reasonable cause may jeopardize the student's academic standing in the class.

If a student misses MORE than three classes, whether or not for a reasonable cause, s/he will fail the class, if s/he does not withdraw from the class prior to the deadline for withdrawal with a grade of "W". Deadlines for withdrawal: March 30, 2016 (Spring Semester). If a student attends FEWER than three classes his/her financial aid, merit scholarship, academic standing, and/or immigration status will be compromised, regardless of an individual faculty member's modifications of these recommendations.

## Grading Criteria

**To be successful** in this class you must display a **curiosity and openness to new concepts**, willingness to **share ideas**, and ability to thoroughly **develop your work** in and outside of class.

**Your work should demonstrate progress each time it is reviewed in class.**

Failure to consistently show progress will lower your project grades and final grade. Work not presented at the respective critique will be considered late. Work turned in after a given deadline will be lowered for every class late. **Work is evaluated on concept, development, design and progress** as demonstrated through process, revisions, final forms, and presentations. Inappropriate classroom behavior is unacceptable; see <http://www.artic.edu/saic/life/studenthandbook/rights.pdf>

## Grading Scale

**40% Project**  
**10% Exercises**  
**20% Writing Assignment**  
**30% Assignments (All Sophomore Seminar Sections) / Rubric Graded**

Project  
Grading Weight

**Grading is not done on a curve but based on individual effort and results.** Due to the limited amount of time we have in the studio, grades/attendance can be discussed only by appointment.

**CR Credit** Thorough to exceptional understanding and interpretation of concepts, principles and issues; ideas thoroughly developed; active participation

**NCR No Credit** Concepts, principles, and issues not adequately addressed; ideas not fully developed; little participation

Books  
and Journals  
Available  
at SAIC Library

**Resources**

*Introduction to Two Dimensional Design*  
John Bowers

*Introduction to Graphic Design Methodologies and Processes*  
John Bowers

*Design Writing Research*  
Ellen Lupton

*Graphic Design Referenced*  
Armin Vit

*Citizen Designer*  
Steven Heller

*Fifty Key Contemporary Thinkers*  
John Lechte

*Design Issues*  
*Eye*  
*Print*

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**Journals/Blogs**

Online  
Resources

[www.aiga.org](http://www.aiga.org)  
[www.designobserver.com](http://www.designobserver.com)  
[www.pbs.org/art21/](http://www.pbs.org/art21/)  
<http://artport.whitney.org/>

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**VCD Resource Room**

Journals

*Communication Arts*  
*Design Statements*  
*Emigre*  
*ID*  
*Visible Language*

Accommodations  
for Students  
with Disabilities

SAIC is committed to full compliance with all laws regarding **equal opportunities for students with disabilities**.

Students with known or suspected disabilities, such as a Reading/Writing Disorder, ADD/ADHD, and/or a mental health or chronic physical condition who think they would benefit from assistance or accommodations should first contact the Disability and Learning Resource Center (DLRC) by phone at 312.499.4278 or email at [www.dlrc.saic.edu](http://www.dlrc.saic.edu). DLRC staff will review your disability documentation and work with you to determine reasonable accommodations. They will then provide you with a letter outlining the approved accommodations for you to deliver to all of your instructors.

This letter must be presented before any accommodations will be implemented. You should contact the DLRC as early in the semester as possible. The DLRC is located on the 13th floor of 116 S Michigan Ave.

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Plagiarism

SAIC prohibits "dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the School" (Students' Rights and Responsibilities, Student Handbook). Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft. **One plagiarizes when one presents another's work as one's own**, even if one does not intend to. The penalty for plagiarizing may also result in some loss of some types of financial aid (for example, a No Credit in a course can lead to a loss of the Presidential Scholarship), and repeat offenses can lead to expulsion from the School.

To find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, you can (1) go to the portal, select the "Resources" tab, and click on "Plagiarism" under "Academic Advising and Student Success"; (2) go to the SAIC Web site, select "Departments, Degrees, and Academic Resources," then select "Libraries," then select "Flaxman Library," and then click on the plagiarism links under the "For Our Faculty" tab; or (3) read about it in the Student Handbook under the section "Academic Misconduct." See: <http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism.pdf>

Week 01	Th 01.24	<b>Discussion</b> Introduction to Course and Writing Fellow
Week 02	Th 02.07	<b>Discussion</b> * Documentation of Practice Due*
Week 03	Th 02.14	<b>Exercise</b> Conceptualization
Week 04	Th 02.21	<b>Exercise</b> Conceptualization
Week 05	Th 02.28	<b>Exercise</b> Writing
Week 06	Th 03.07	<b>Work Session</b> Writing // Students Schedule Meeting with Writing Fellow Outside of Class
Week 07	Th 03.14	<b>No Class</b> Spring Break
Week 08	Th 03.21	<b>Work Session</b> Writing Essay Design // Introduction to Journey Place Project
Week 09	Th 03.28	<b>No Class</b> Critique Week
Week 10	Th 03.30	<b>Final Critique</b> Writing Essay Design
Week 11	Th 04.04	<b>Work Session</b> Journey Place Project // Fall 17 Schedule Advising // *Curricular Mapping Due*
Week 12	Th 04.11	<b>Work Session</b> Journey Place Project
Week 13	Th 04.18	<b>Critique / Work Session</b> Journey Place Project
Week 14	Th 04.25	<b>Work Session</b> Journey Place Project
Week 15	Th 05.02	<b>Work Session</b> Individual Meetings // *Self-Reflective Essay Due*
Week 16	Th 05.09	<b>Final Critique and Assessment</b> Journey Place Project