

# **TRUST ME! I'M AN ARTIST**

**(How to get your art stuff together and become the soul of the party)**

SOPHSEM 2900- Sophomore Seminar: 3 credits  
Semester: Spring 2019  
Fridays, 9 am-12 pm

Instructor: Veronica Casado Hernandez  
Email Address: vcasad@saic.edu  
Mentoring Hours: before or after class, and by appointment.

Writing Fellow:

Student Mentor:

## **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. To do so, students will investigate methods (visual, critical, written, and creative) for the reconsideration of their work and of its aims and priorities. Individual mentoring with the faculty member is a central and dedicated component of the class as a means of fostering the self identification of goals and priorities. Students will also examine historical and contemporary precedents that relate to their own work in order to consider the ways in which their individual explorations can be brought into dialogue with other perspectives. Students participate in broad ranging discussions about the present status and future prospects of art and design through workshops, dialogues, and collaborations both in class and in SAIC-wide conversations with other Sophomore Seminars. An important function of this course is to build upon these insights in forming a practical plan that helps students effectively map the curriculum and resources of SAIC into their own needs.

## **SECTION DESCRIPTION**

How can we define our artistic practice? Is it contained within the studio walls, or it is a cosmology of actions, relationships, and daily activities and rituals? In this section of Sophomore Seminar we will explore the poetics of making as a continuum messily embedded in the artist as thinker, critic, and first and foremost, human being with a quotidian life. Through readings, discussions, assignments, and critiques, we will develop a rigorous critical dialogue with one's practice and the group's practice. We will discuss notions of pleasure and failure as locations in which to work. We will analyze strategies of time play to disrupt dominant grand narratives and illuminate equality or difference by radically rethinking binary systems of power and domination.

## **STUDENT LEARNING GOALS**

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

1. Present self-motivated work of an iterative nature that demonstrates conceptual focus and technical ability as well as the beginning of a personal direction. (Linked to BFA LG 1. Example of evidence: Documentation of Practice assignment)
2. Communicate a rationale for a self-designed curricular pathway for the third and fourth year at SAIC as well as a post-graduation goal. (Linked to BFA LGs 2, 3, 4. Example of evidence: Curricular mapping essay)
3. 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. (Linked to BFA LGs 2, 4. Examples of evidence: At least three critiques, including at least two large group critiques)
4. Demonstrate the ability to think, speak, and write clearly and effectively especially in regards to the developing body of creative work (Linked to BFA LG 4. Examples of evidence: Self-reflective Essay, Documentation of Practice Written Contextualization, participation in critiques)
5. 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. (Linked to BFA LGs 3, 4. Examples of evidence: Self-reflective Essay, participation in critiques)

### **COURSE TEXTS AND MEDIA (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

ALL TEXTS AND MEDIA CAN BE FOUND IN CANVAS

- Bianco, Mykki *I Want a Dyke for President*
- Buster, Kendall and Crawford, Paula *The Critique Handbook: The Art Student's Sourcebook and Survival Guide* Prentice Hall. 2017.p 87-107
- Chadwick, Jennifer *Hand Catching Cupcake* (video, 2015)
- Cocker, Emma. "Tactics For Not Knowing"
- Dirie, Clement and Hicks, Sheila "I tie knots and then I untie them to understand" from *Apprentissages*.
- Freeman, Elizabeth. "Time Binds or Erotohistoriography"
- Halberstam, Jack. "Low Theory" *The Queer Art of Failure*. Duke University Press
- Leonard, Zoe: *I Want a Dyke for President*.
- Lorde, Audre. "Uses of the Erotic. The Erotic as Power" *Sister Outsider*. Crossing Press. 2007.
- O'Hara, Frank "Lana Turner Has Collapsed" *Lunch Poems*
- Roydson, Emily *From "Social Movement" to "Ecstatic Resistance"*

### **ADDITIONAL TEXTS AND MEDIA (OPTIONAL. MORE TEXTS MAY BE ADDED DURING THE SEMESTER)**

- Freeman, Elizabeth. "Packing History"
- Lambert-beatty, Carrie "Make-Believe, Parafiction and Plausability"
- Lopez Munuera, Ivan. "Soft Activisms"

- Moten, Fred and Harney, Stefano. "The University and the Undercommons. Seven Theses" Social Text, 79 (Volume 22, Number 2), Summer 2004, pp. 101-115
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Additional suggested readings will be uploaded on Canvas or on reserve at the Flaxman Library.

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

Bodies  
 Minds  
 Laptop  
 Sketchbook, pencils, pens.  
 Additional materials upon request

### **MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS**

#### Writing Assignments:

- Simon Says Essay: write a short essay (no more than 2 pages, double space) from the notes you took in the first critique. Think about what you may have or not have taken from the feedback of your peers. What have you learned and think may be convenient to pursue, change, and look closely in your practice? (upload to Canvas)
- Writing response to visiting artist talk (upload to Canvas)
- Self Assessment Evaluation/Reflective Essay
- Curricular Mapping Essay

#### End-of-Term Assignment:

- Documentation of Practice

#### Additional Assignments:

- S&M Critique (after an original idea by Dana de Giulio)  
 (Bring what you are working on, or a finished piece that you would like feedback on)  
 This critique is an exercise of trust and (tough) love. Many times we find ourselves in critiques not wanting to be "too harsh" to people who show their work, and we may not be doing our peers any favors. This critique aims for the group to identify both strengths and weaknesses in the work critiqued, making very clear that we are not critiquing the artist, but their work. Critiques are an excellent way to see how your work-in-progress is going, or if a piece one may consider finished may need some extra work. Critiques are hard and one may feel vulnerable (I still do!), but they are extremely helpful and a way of building community. Please keep in mind: IT IS ABOUT BEING RIGOROUS, NOT CRUEL. Of course, we will previously agree on a "safe word" in case the artist feels uncomfortable during the crit and needs a break.
- Kill your Idols: As a response to O'Hara and Chadwick's naughty and fun artworks, make something in naughty response to an artist you admire. Laugh at (or with) your idol.
- A Space of Infinite Possibility: this is a common assignment for the group. It is not as mandatory as it is suggested. We will set up a document (the format will be decided in class) in which we will share whatever has ring our bell: readings, art, memes, ideas. You name it. Sharing is caring, so please contribute at least twice during the semester.

- Genealogical presentation: 10 minute presentation on your inspiration and questions you are currently exploring. Don't just show us the artwork you have made over the years. Take us on a journey with you

**Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series: TBC**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

*THE SYLLABUS IS A LIVING DOCUMENT THAT ADAPTS ITSELF TO THE RHYTHM AND NEEDS OF THE CLASS. THERE MAY (OR MAY NOT) BE CHANGES TO IT. I WILL LET YOU KNOW IN ADVANCE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR EMAIL DAILY TO KEEP UP WITH ANY CHANGE OR REMINDER. THANKS!*

| Week                    | Class Details<br>Assignment(s) Due  |
|-------------------------|---|
| Week 1<br>January<br>25 | <p><b>In class:</b><br/>           Presentation of course<br/>           Discussion of Syllabus and policies<br/>           Introduction of Writing Fellow<br/>           Introduction of<br/>           Group discussion on the readings.</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>           Read Jack Halberstam's "Low Topics" and Audre Lorde's "Uses of the Erotic" (will be uploaded to Canvas, or sent to you by email)<br/>           Come prepared to class to discuss the texts by bringing 2 generative questions for discussion</p> <p><b>Homework:</b><br/>           Reading- Elizabeth Freeman-Time Binds<br/>           1-2 page response to reading: Upload to canvas by February 1, 1 pm.</p>  |
| Week 2<br>February<br>1 | <p>Group meetings after class.</p> <p><b>In class:</b><br/>           Mind map- we will map how we place ourselves-as artists, thinkers, community members- genealogically among our influences-be it family, friends, artists alive or dead, current society, etc. It will help you to prepare next week's presentation</p> <p><b>Due:</b> response to Freeman's text uploaded to Canvas</p> <p><b>Homework:</b><br/>           Finish map if has not been finished in class<br/>           Presentation: 10 minute presentation on your inspiration and questions you are currently exploring. Don't just show us the artwork you have made over the years. Take us on a journey with you.<br/>           Bring the powerpoint or keynote on a flash drive and copy to the computer in the classroom.</p> |

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| <p>Week 3<br/>February<br/>8</p>  | <p>Group meetings after class.</p> <p><b>In class</b><br/>Discussion of Curricular Mapping<br/>Genealogical Presentation 1<sup>st</sup> group</p> <p><b>Homework:</b><br/>Critique Handbook excerpt.</p>  |
| <p>Week 4<br/>February<br/>15</p> | <p>Group meetings after class.</p> <p><b>In class:</b><br/>Genealogical Presentation 2d group<br/>Critique prep</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>Bullet point response to reading uploaded to Canvas</p> <p><b>Homework:</b><br/>Reading. TBA</p>   |
| <p>Week 5<br/>February<br/>22</p> | <p><b>In class:</b><br/>S&amp;M Critique group 1<br/>Discussion of reading</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>2 generative questions from reading</p> <p><b>Homework:</b><br/>Simon says essay group 1</p>  |
| <p>Week 6<br/>March 1</p>         | <p><b>In class:</b><br/>S&amp;M Critique group 2<br/>Visiting artist presentation &amp; workshop: Kate Watson-Wallace.<br/>(Bring comfy clothes. We'll do some fun moving)</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>Simon Says Essay group 1</p> <p><b>Homework:</b><br/>Simon says essay group 2</p> |
| <p>Week 7<br/>March 8</p>         | <p><b>In class:</b><br/>Documentation of Practice Workshop</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>Simon Says Essay group 2</p> <p><b>Homework:</b><br/>First Draft of Curricular Mapping</p>  |

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| <p>Week 8<br/>March 15</p>  | <p>Spring Break. No Classes</p> <p><b>Homework:</b><br/>Poetic intermission (kill your idols): <i>Lana Turner has Collapsed</i> by Frank O'Hara, and <i>Hand Catching Cupcake</i> by Jennifer Chadwick.</p> <p>Start working on your Kill your Idols response.</p> <p><b>Due:</b></p> <p>Written response to visiting artist lecture (upload on Canvas-You have time until March 23)</p> <p><b>First Draft of Curricular Mapping is Due on FRIDAY MARCH 15. Upload on Canvas.</b></p> |
| <p>Week 9<br/>March 22</p>  | <p>Individual meetings to discuss DIY project</p> <p><b>In class:</b><br/>Kill your Idols presentation. Please, bring an image of the Idol, or Idol's work so we all have a reference.</p> <p><b>Due:</b> First Draft of Curricular Mapping</p> <p><b>Homework:</b> Reading.</p>  |
| <p>Week 10<br/>March 29</p> | <p><b>Critique Week No Class</b></p> <p><b>Homework:</b> Keep reading! Start writing!</p>   |
| <p>Week11<br/>April 5</p>   | <p>Individual meetings to discuss DIY project</p> <p><b>In class:</b><br/>Reading discussion</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>1-2 page response to the readings</p> <p><b>Homework:</b><br/>Read/Watch the sample manifestos. Prepare a 1 page manifesto</p>  |
| <p>Week 12<br/>April 12</p> | <p><b>In class:</b><br/>Manifesto presentations</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>Manifestos upload on canvas</p>  |
| <p>Week 13<br/>April 19</p> | <p><b>In class:</b><br/>Critique groups sign up<br/>Student Mentor Presentation</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>Curricular mapping final draft.</p>  |

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| Week 14<br>April 26 | <p><b>In class:</b><br/>Critique 1st group<br/>Writing activity in class</p> <p><b>Homework:</b> Self-assessment evaluation</p>                  |
| Week 15<br>May 3    | <p><b>In class:</b><br/>Critique 2d group<br/>MFA show visit</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>Self Assessment Evaluation</p>                               |
| Week 16<br>May 10   | <p><b>In class:</b><br/>Critique 3d group<br/>Digital course evaluation. Please, bring your laptop!</p> <p><b>Due:</b><br/>DIY Futures Essay</p> |
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## **REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS**

This course is a credit/no-credit course. Students need to be receptive to engaging with class. Personal involvement and enthusiasm in these projects is important to making the collective experience a vital and engaging one. You will receive credit if you successfully complete all of requirements listed below:

- Finish all projects on time and to the best of your ability
- Turn in assignments on time
- Come to class on time and prepared to work
- Participate in all critiques, discussions and field trips
- Be active and constructively helpful peers to one another
- Strive to build a creative and productive environment
- Maintain a process book throughout the semester and keep track of all information, exercises, and research
- Read and be prepared to discuss all readings
- Expect to spend a minimum of 3 hours to 5 hours a week outside of class on the assignments.

The use of cell phones, iPods, and laptops, or other distractions will be restricted, particularly during lectures. You will receive credit if you successfully complete all of the above-mentioned requirements. You are expected to conduct yourself as an adult in this course and your primary responsibility is to be a student. Receiving credit for this course means you have worked at a 'C' level or higher. We believe you should be working at an 'A' level, and will teach you accordingly. It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to determine at what level you should work to challenge yourself.

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

Students will have at least two opportunities to provide feedback on the course:

- 1) Mid-Semester Evaluation: This is a chance for students to informally reflect on their learning experience during the midpoint of the semester (around Week 7), so that potential changes and suggestions can be implemented before the course ends. What are you learning? What do you hope to still learn? What suggestions do you have to enrich your learning experience, in the form

of constructive feedback for the instructor, the classroom community, and yourself as the student? Unlike the semester-end course evaluation form that is officially collected by SAIC, this feedback is for the instructor and students only. The format of this evaluation will be determined by the instructor (questionnaire, form, discussion, etc.).

- 2) End-of-Semester Course Evaluation: At the end of the semester, students will be asked to complete a digital course evaluation. The instructor will reserve about 15 minutes of class time, and students will need to bring in laptops to complete the evaluations during one of the last class meetings.

## **RELEVANT POLICIES**

### **Student Attendance**

SAIC policy states that students are expected to attend all classes regularly and on time. Students should miss class only with reasonable cause. 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 as his/her/their schedule permits. Missing class for other than a reasonable cause may jeopardize the student's academic standing in the class.

**PLEASE EMAIL ME, ON DAY OF CLASS, IF FOR ANY REASON YOU ARE GOING TO MISS OR BE LATE.**

SAIC's recommended institutional policy is as follows: If a student misses MORE than three classes, whether or not for a reasonable cause, the student will fail the class, if the student does not withdraw from the class prior to the deadline for withdrawal with a grade of "W." Deadline for withdrawal: Wednesday, March 30, 2018 (spring semester). Reasonable cause to miss a class might include:

- 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
- Family illness or death

Arriving late to class on two occasions will result in one absence. Missing a critique day is unacceptable and you will be in danger of failing immediately. Arriving late to critique counts as one absence. Leaving early without prior permission equals an absence.

### **Academic Misconduct**

From the SAIC Student Handbook:

Academic misconduct includes both plagiarism and cheating, and may consist of: the submission of the work of another as one's own; unauthorized assistance on a test or assignment; submission of the same work for more than one class without the knowledge and consent of all instructors; or the failure to properly cite texts or ideas from other sources.

Academic integrity is expected in all coursework, including online learning. It is assumed that the person receiving the credit for the course is the person completing the work. SAIC has processes in place, including LDAP authentication, to verify student identity. Specific procedures for faculty to follow in the case of academic misconduct are detailed in the Student Handbook.

Additional resources for students:

- Read "Plagiarism: How to Recognize It and Avoid It: a short guide prepared by the Faculty Senate Student Life Subcommittee in 2004."  
[http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism\\_packet.pdf](http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism_packet.pdf)
- Read the Flaxman Library's quick guide titled "AVOID PLAGIARISM."  
<http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism.pdf>



### Accommodations Statement

#### 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 condition who think they would benefit from assistance or accommodations should first contact the Disability and Learning Resource Center (DLRC) to schedule an appointment. 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 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 within the Wellness Center on the 13th floor of 116 S Michigan Ave. and can be reached via phone at 312.499.4278 or email at [dlrc@saic.edu](mailto:dlrc@saic.edu).

### Writing Center Information

SAIC offers free, hour-long writing tutorials at the Writing Center, which is located in the basement of MacLean. Tutors are available to assist all currently enrolled students with any stage of the writing process.

#### The Writing Center

MacLean Center Basement, 112 S. Michigan Ave., B1-03

Fall and Spring Semester Hours

Monday–Thursday 9:00 a.m.–7:15 p.m.

Friday 9:00 a.m.–5:15 p.m.

4:15–7:15 p.m. are designated as walk-in hours Monday–Thursday

#### Appointments

To schedule an appointment with a Writing Center tutor, students first need to create an account through the online sign-up system: <https://www.supersaas.com/schedule/saic/WritingCenter>.

Once students have set up their own account, they may sign up for appointments. Weekly standing appointments are available upon request. When students come to their tutoring appointments, they should make sure to bring their assignments with them and have any work printed out. Online schedule instructions are available outside of the Writing Center suite (in the hallway outside of the MacLean Center B1-03).

#### Contact Information

Leila Wilson, Writing Center Coordinator: [lwilson@saic.edu](mailto:lwilson@saic.edu) or 312.345.3588

Writing Center Suite: 312.345.9131 (Call to see if there are any last-minute openings.)

### Other Resources

FACEBOOK: FMS PAGE <https://www.facebook.com/SaicFiberAndMaterialStudies>

This is a great place to get up to date information about VAP talks, exhibits, and opportunities for emerging artists.

### Statement on Shared Responsibility

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago is a diverse community of artists and scholars that celebrates both individual freedom and a strong sense of shared community values and responsibility. Students who enter this intellectual and social community make a commitment to an exchange of ideas and acknowledge that living and working within a community requires compromise and sensitivity to others. A strong community depends on respect for the rights of others, considerate behavior, and good judgment. Students are expected to maintain high standards of personal conduct; behavior should reflect maturity and respect for the rights of all members of the community. The School of the Art Institute of Chicago affirms that the responsibility to create an environment conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the academic community.

### Statement on Diversity

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago is committed to an equitable, just environment where the voices of all our students, faculty, and staff are valued and respected.

As an instructor, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a faculty member. While my goal is for you to be able to share information related to your life experiences through discussion and written work, I want to be transparent that as a mandatory reporter, I am required to report disclosures of sexual violence, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or gender-based harassment. SAIC has Confidential Resources available if you choose to speak with someone confidentially. On-campus Confidential Resources include: Confidential Advisor April Knighton (312.499.4283 or [aknighton@saic.edu](mailto:aknighton@saic.edu)), Counseling Services (312.499.4271 or [counselingservices@saic.edu](mailto:counselingservices@saic.edu)), and Health Services (312.499.4288 or [healthservices@saic.edu](mailto:healthservices@saic.edu)). For information on reporting options, confidential resources, and SAIC's policies and procedures, visit <http://www.saic.edu/lifeatsaic/stopsexualviolence/>.

Please refer to the SAIC Student Handbook for additional information on policies, procedures, and resources, including information about SAIC's Non-Discrimination Policies and Title IX contact information.