



"My name is Kurt, and I am a mid-career artist."

The Name of the Game

Arts Administration - Sophomore Seminar
SOPHSEM 2900 – 070
Spring 2019
Monday 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Classroom XXX

Instructor:
Nicolás Rodríguez Melo
773-664-8586
nrodr7@saic.edu

Office Hours:
Monday 10:00AM – 12:00 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Find your truth, face your truth, speak your truth, and be your truth. We've been led to believe that all the players in the arts ecosystem develop their practice based on radically opposite impulses, ranging from the raw, complex and painful stings of the creative individual, to the rigid and calculative world of institutional planning and "The Excel Spreadsheet". This course will explore the concerns that drive your creative practice, but at the same time it will examine the place your artistic process has in relation to other players in the art world: schools, museums, audiences, communities, foundations, galleries, etc.

This course offers intensive faculty mentoring as well as interdisciplinary 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.

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.
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.
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
4. Demonstrate the ability to think, speak, and write clearly and effectively especially in regards to the developing body of creative work
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.

CLASSROOM CULTURE AND PARTICIPATION

All participants will read the selected texts and come to class prepared to discuss the material assigned for that day. All participants will actively participate in critiques, discussions and presentations

- All participants will maintain a positive and safe classroom environment
- During class, laptops, cell-phones, and other digital devices may only be used for course related work

COURSE TEXTS

The spine of the course will be driven by Pablo Helguera's book *The Manual of Contemporary Art Style: The Essential Guide for Artists, Curators and Critics*. The rest of the course's readings will be provided in Canvas.

COURSE MATERIALS

Although this class is a seminar whose mayor purpose is to explore and expand self-knowledge, critical thinking and writing skills, you'll be required to document personal notes, interviews and your own work. Because of this, basic photographic and audio recording equipment is required.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Every week students will archive the materials they will be asked to bring to class. These materials will vary in a range of topics from inspirational references, to organizations they want to be involved with, etc. This archive will help inform and support the writing assignments and the end of term assignment.

Writing Assignments:

- Network Assignment
- DIY Futures Essay
- Self-Reflective Essay

End of Term Assignment:

- Documentation of Practice

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

- Arriving late or leaving before dismissal will equal half a of day absence.
- Two excused absences are permitted per semester, and a doctor's note is required if you are ill. Any absences beyond 2 will result in no credit (NCR) for the class.
- Email the instructor for assignment if you are going to or have missed a class
- You are responsible for materials missed during class and are subject to the same deadlines.
- Assignments due during an absence must be turned in no later than the next class period
- Students must present required assignments to the class and be prepared to discuss their work methods, influences, and field questions
- Students are required to participate in each critique both as a presenter and a commentator
- Students are required to complete all work assigned to receive credit for the course
- Work that is not presented on time is not guaranteed a critique
- Work that is incomplete will not be critiqued
- Work that is messy will not be critiqued
- Instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus timeline
- The use of laptops, cell phones, and tablets is restricted in this class, be prepared to take all notes by hand with a writing instrument

REQUIRED SOPHOMORE SEMINAR VISITING ARTIST LECTURE

Distinguished Alumni Lecture: **TBD**
Date/Time/Location

Attendance at the Sophomore Seminar Visiting Artist Lecture is mandatory for all Sophomore Seminar students; instructors will be taking attendance. If a student is absent from the Sophomore Seminar lecture, they must work with their instructor to create an alternative assignment. Recent accomplished SAIC Alumni Speakers include Sonya Clark, Joshua Mosley, Angel Otero, Amanda Ross-Ho, Emily Pilloton, Trevor Paglen, Wafaa Bilal, Tom Kalin, and many others.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. FIND YOUR TRUTH

Where do we come from? How do we place ourselves in The Big Picture?

Week 1 – 1/26

Discussion: Introductions, and in depth syllabus review

In class watch: Chef's Table SE02EP02, on Alex Atala

Sign up: Individual meetings

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Pablo Helguera, *Manual of Contemporary Art Style*, Pages 1- 49
- Read: James Elkins, *Art Critiques: A Guide*, Pages 1-24
- Gather: Music, shows, artists, whatever inspires you, bring a sample for next class

Week 2 – 2/2

Discussion: The artist and it's place in the world. Diffusing boundaries in the art world.

Presentation of the first class assignment, the Network.

Presentations: Each student will present their inspirational material, we'll trace connections in between the materials of different students

Individual Meetings (4pm-5pm)

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Hito Steyerl, *Politics of Art and the Transition to PostDemocracy*, Pages 30-55
- Read: Damon Young, *How To Think About Exercise*, Pages 1-27
- Gather: Interview questions for the Network assignment

Week 3 – 2/9

Discussion: Well talk about discourse and The Big Picture in the art world, and re-evaluating dualism in creation and arts management. We'll explore the questions for the Network Assignment and workshop them as a group.

Individual Meetings (4pm-5pm)

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Keith Yamasita, *Make Your Mark*, Pages 25-37
- Read: Tom Kelley, *Creative Confidence*, Pages 37-67

Week 4 – 2/16

HAND IN: NETWORK ASSIGNMENT

Discussion: All the layers in the art world. The Rhizomatic nature of of art communities. Students will present their Networks schemes.

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Pablo Helguera, *Manual of Contemporary Art Style*, Pages 69 - 79
- Read: Henk Slager, *The Pleasure of Research*, Pages 15-37

2. FACE YOUR TRUTH

Where are we now? What role do we play in The Big Picture?

Week 5 – 2/23

Discussion: Overview of the DIY Futures essay. How do we build a curriculum outside of school? How does our past inform our practice?

Sign up: Individual meetings

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Bad at Sports, *Talking to Give: Interview with Ted Purves*, Pages 34-64
- Read: James Elkins, *Why Art Cannot be Taught*, Pages 167-189
- Gather: Do a quick overview of SAIC course listing. Which classes catch your attention? Which ones have you taken and you would recommend?

Week 6 – 3/2

Discussion: Organizations started by artists. Artists that are no longer artists. Institutional relationships and institutions that absorb institutions.

Individual Meetings (4pm-5pm)

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Romi Crawford, *Antisocial Aesthetics*, Pages 92-110
- Read: Paul Durica, *The Future of the Past*, Pages 110-116
- Gather: Which organizations inspire you? Where would you like to work or see your work in?

Week 7 – 3/9

Discussion: What's your organization? Where do you fit in inside of an organizations? DIY skills that support alternative practices.

Individual Meetings (4pm-5pm)

HOMEWORK:

- Read: *ART/Life Syllabus* by InCUBATE
- Read: Charles Esche, *Include Me Out: Preparing Artists to Undo the Art World*

Week 8 – 3/16 – SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS

HAND IN: DIY FUTURES ASSIGNMENT

3. SPEAK YOUR TRUTH

Where are we going? Where do we want to be in The Big Picture?

Week 9 – 3/23

Discussion: Presentations of the DIY Futures assignment. How do we build a curriculum for the future? Introduction to the Self Reflection Essay assignment

Sign up: Individual meetings

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Ute Meta Bauer, *Under Pressure*, Pages 219-228
- Read: James Elkins, *Art Critiques: A Guide*, Pages 1-24
- Gather:

Week 10 – 3/30 – CRITIQUE WEEK, NO CLASS

ATTEND A CRITIQUE AS AN INVISIBLE GUEST. TAKE NOTES.

Week 11 – 4/6

Discussion: What do you need to be a politician? What do you need to be an artist?

Sharing of the Critique watching

In class watch: Gnarr, Documentary

Individual Meetings (4pm-5pm)

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Jon Gnarr, *What Do You Need to be a Politician?*, Chapter 7
- Read: Nina Simon, *What Is Relevance?*, Chapter 1

Week 12 – 4/13

HAND IN: SELF REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT

Discussion: Days of Future Past, or how our past pushes us forward. In class presentations and critique on self reflection research.

Individual Meetings (4pm-5pm)

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Jocelyn Gleib, *Making Your Own Luck*, Pages 53-83
- Read: Jonathan Fields, *Leaning Into Uncertainty*, Pages 215-237

4. BE YOUR TRUTH

Why are we doing it? How do we collaborate in The Big Picture?

Week 13 – 3/23

Discussion: Introduction to the Documentation Of Practice Assignment. This class every student should present the archive they have been gathering during the whole semester, and contrast its contents with the three previous written assignments.

HOMEWORK:

- Read: Judith Clark, *Spectres*
- Read: Pablo Helgueras, *Success and Failure*, Pages 79-89
- Gather: Re-think your archive after today's critique. How to present in a better, more cohesive way?

Week 14 – 3/30

Discussion: Find your truth, face your truth, speak your truth, and be your truth. We'll do an overview of the whole class in preparation for the final presentations.

SUGGESTED READING FOR THE FINAL PRESENTATION:

- Read: William Allen, *Communicating for Speed and Clarity*, Pages 217-245
- Read: James Elkins, *Art Critiques: A Guide*, Pages 1-24

Week 15 – 4/6

IN CLASS PRESENTATIONS: DOCUMENTATION OF PRACTICE

THE WRITING CENTER

MacLean Center Basement, 112 S. Michigan Ave., B1-03
writingcenter@saic.edu

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.

Fall and Spring Semester Hours

Monday – Thursday: 9:00 AM - 7:15 PM; and Friday 9:00 AM - 5:15 PM

Walk-in hours - Monday–Thursday 4:15–7:15 PM