

2 LEGIT 2 CRIT

SOPHSEM 2900 080, 3 credits
Thursday, 1-4pm, Spring 2019
Class Location: TBD

Instructor: Hope Esser
Email: hesser@saic.edu
Mentoring hours : 4-6pm + by appointment

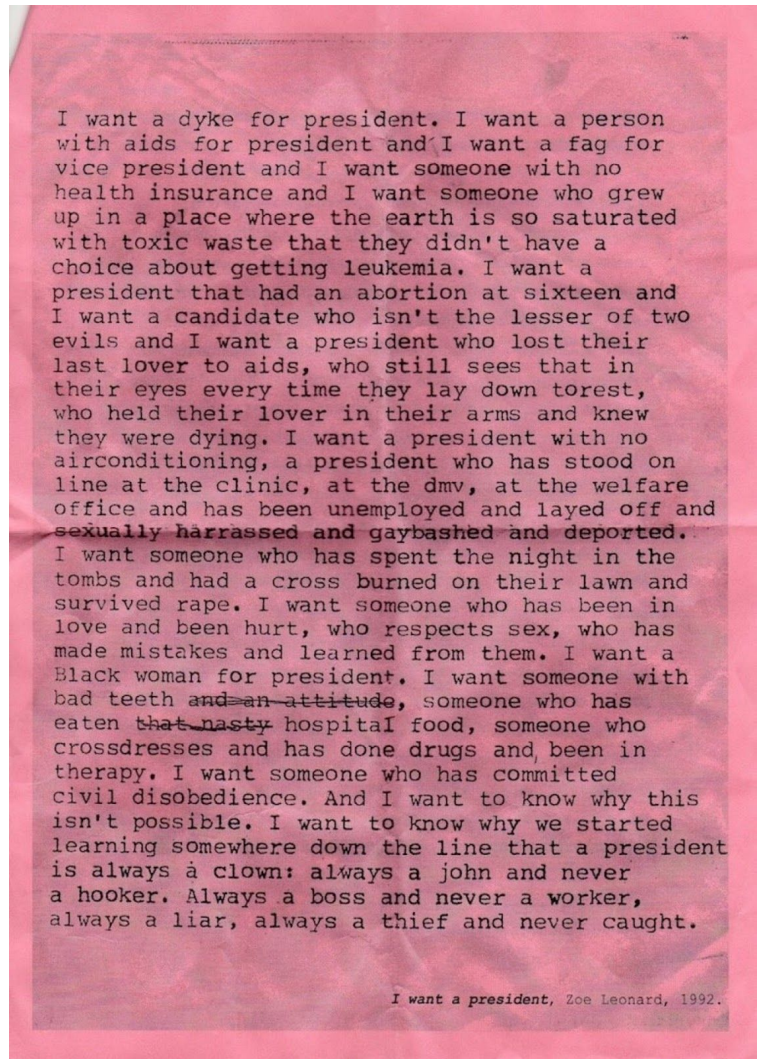
Peer Mentor: TBD
Writing Fellow: TBD

Course Description

What happens when the artwork that we make is so close to us that criticism is hard to take? As an audience, how do we provide feedback for work that comes from a place of personal experience? And how does one's own identity as a viewer play into the interpretation and response to the work? In this course, we will engage with these questions, and come up with strategies to approach one another's work with empathy and care while providing critical response. We will also consider how such work can be made the most poignant through a variety of strategies, including personae, humor, endurance, metaphor, trace, and site.

The course will provide opportunities to present and get critical feedback on live work, and/or work that is personal in nature. While the focus of this course will be on embodied practices, it is open to all disciplines and areas of study. Studio assignments, readings, and writing projects are aimed to contextualize discussions around identity and the body, with particular attention to performance.

We will look at artists that complicate and question the agency of the body, the performer, and the viewer, including: Santiago Sierra, Andrea Fraser, Vito Acconci, Clifford Owens, Ron Athey, Coco Fusco, Guillermo Gómez-Peña, Tino Sehgal, James Luna, Adrian Piper, Sharon Hayes, Tania Bruguera, Leigh Bowery, and Bob Flanagan. We will also read critical responses of these works to expand our own notions of critique.



More information about Sophomore Seminar and the Academic Spine curriculum can be found on the SAIC website:

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

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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.

You are responsible for keeping track of your assignments and due dates. Remember to ask for help or clarification when you need it. **I want you all to excel.**

Course Materials

Bodies, minds, laptop, sketchbook, pencils, pens

Additional materials upon request

Course Texts + Written responses:

All texts available on Canvas in PDF format. Please consult the course schedule for deadlines. All assigned readings require a written response by the class on which the reading is due. This should be at least one paragraph, addressing the main point(s) of the text as well as your own thoughts. Failure to turn in responses by the due date will negatively impact your grade.

List of Major Assignments:

- **Critique 1:** present a work that you have had critiqued previously that you feel you did not get enough feedback on or are still unsure of what the next step should be.
- **DIY Futures Essay:** Write an essay that describes who you are as a creative practitioner, where you imagine your practice might take you, and how you plan to utilize the time, space, and resources during your remaining time at SAIC.
- **Critique 2:** Present a work in progress. This should be something new, but it can be something you are working on in another class.
- **Artist Manifesto:** Inspired by assigned readings, write a manifesto or statement for yourself as an artist, art movement, activist, etc.
- **Critique 3:** (final critique) Present another iteration of the work presented in Critique 2, alongside previous iteration(s) and your manifesto.
- **Self-Reflective Essay:** Write an essay that reflects on what you have learned during your sophomore year at SAIC.
- **Documentation of Practice:** Please choose 3-5 items (images, PDFs, video clips, etc.) to represent a documentation of your practice. One item will show the finished work, while the others will show work in progress.

Please see the course schedule and Canvas course page for expanded project narratives.

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.

Student Attendance

SAIC policy states that students are expected to attend all classes regularly and on time, and prepared to participate with assignments that are due, materials for studio time, and the ability to engage with work vocally, cognitively, and physically. Simply showing up is not enough.

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.

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: Friday, 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

Lateness: Please arrive before class with your lunch already eaten so that you are ready to participate promptly at 1pm. For a class that meets once a week, 3 latenesses will count as an absence on your record.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES:

Digital Devices: The student use of various digital devices in class such as laptops, phones, tablets, etc. should be limited only to appropriate use given the lecture and discussion format of the class.

Use of digital devices in class to do non-class related work will not be allowed or tolerated. Similarly, use of digital devices in class during screenings will not be allowed or tolerated.

If a student has a software or hardware related problem please visit the CRIT Helpdesk on the 9th floor of the 112 S. Michigan (Maclean) Building for assistance addressing these issues.

You are requested to come to class on time and prepared to actively engage with your peers. Texting and/or Facebook, etc. during class means that you are no longer present in the activity taking place in the classroom. Plus, it's rude.

Critiques:

A critique is a critical analysis of work that you have developed. During critiques, we articulate our sensory and intellectual response to your work. We discuss the formal and conceptual merits of the work and note areas for improvement. You are expected to discuss your own work as well as that of classmates with generosity and a devoted interest in assisting your peers to improve their work. You will listen to others and provide each other the challenging, compassionate, direct feedback that is essential to creative development. In this class, we will be examining the critique closely as a means to furthering your understanding of it, and empowering you to take control of the critique process so as to benefit your work! Critiques are an essential component of this course. **Missing a critique day, or failure to show work without a reasonable cause, may result in a grade of 'No Credit.'** If you are struggling with an assignment, it is your responsibility to contact me prior to the due date. Please allow 24 hours for a response as I always have a full inbox.

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
- 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.

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 or 312.345.3588

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

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.

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.

My Commitment to Inclusion

I believe that protecting freedom of speech and expression in the classroom is vital. However, hate speech, discrimination, harassment, bullying, or targeting will not be tolerated. I am dedicated to maintaining a classroom environment where every member feels comfortable expressing their diverse ideas, beliefs, and values consider this to be the responsibility of the whole class community. I will make every effort to provide content “trigger warnings” for sensitive course material and but ask that you try to engage with challenging material so that we can learn from our differences. I believe that our differences, which may include differences in race/ethnicity, socioeconomic background, physical and cognitive ability, culture, religion, gender identity, citizenship/visa status, and/or sexual orientation, create a rich and positive learning environment.

*Please make every effort to learn one another’s pronouns. If I misgender someone, I will point out the mistake, apologize, and move on. Further information can be found here:

<https://shcs.ucdavis.edu/blog/why-pronouns-are-important>

COURSE SCHEDULE: The course schedule is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.

class #	IN CLASS / DUE TODAY	HOMEWORK FOR NEXT CLASS
1	<p>Introductions Go over syllabus</p> <p>In class reading: selections from James Elkins, “Art Critiques: A Guide”</p> <p><u>Group activity/discussion:</u> ground rules for productive learning environment and critiques</p>	<p>READING: Art Spiegelman, “MAUS,” pages 129-159 [PDF on Canvas] (Since this is the end of the book I recommend that you start from the beginning if you have time, but I want you to focus on the last chapter.)</p> <p>+ RESPONSE: Combine writing and drawing to illustrate something autobiographical about your life. It does not have to be in comic format. You will be sharing these with the class on 2-5, and I will collect these on 2-12.</p>
2	<p>Work time for student presentations: 10 minutes about previous work and current interests</p>	<p>Student presentation due 2/12</p>
3	<p>Student 10 minute presentations / introductions to your work</p>	<p>READING: bell hooks, “Understanding Patriarchy” and Patty Berne, “Tenets of Disability Justice”, From <i>Disability Justice: a working draft</i></p> <p>+ writing responses</p>
4	<p>Finish presentations</p>	<p>READING: Judith Butler, excerpts from “Subversive Bodily Acts” + writing response</p> <p>Prepare for Critique 1</p>

5	<p>CRITIQUE 1: present previous work that you need more feedback on</p>	<p>Written reflection from crit</p> <p>Visit MCA: MICHAEL RAKOWITZ: BACKSTROKE OF THE WEST + writing response</p>
6	<p>Finish critique 1</p> <p>SCREENING: <i>Paris is Burning</i>, Jennie Livingston dir. (1991)</p>	<p>Reading: bell hooks, "Is Paris Burning?"</p> <p>Begin research for DIY Futures Essay</p>
7	<p>DIY Futures Essay draft due to writing fellow March 15</p> <p>SCREENING: <i>The Couple in the Cage: Guatianai Odyssey</i>, Coco Fusco, Paula Heredia, 1993 [from Video Data Bank]</p> <p>*Sign up for individual meetings w/me 3-5:20pm*</p>	<p>+</p> <p>Prepare for critique 2</p> <p>DIY Futures Essay draft - *Sign up to meet with writing fellow*</p>
8	<p>READING: Coco Fusco, "The Other History of Intercultural Performance," <i>The Drama Review</i> 38:1, Spring, 1994. + Writing response</p> <p>Midterm course evaluation</p>	<p>DIY Futures Essay</p>
9	<p>DIY Futures Essay due</p>	<p>Drew Daniel, "All Sound is Queer," <i>The Wire</i>, London, Issue 333, November 2011.</p>
10	<p>CRITIQUE 2: present a new work in progress to get feedback on</p>	<p>READING: Manifestoes</p>
11	<p>Meet in small groups and begin reading manifestoes Manifestoes: group presentations and discussion</p>	<p>Prepare for final critique. You will present your manifesto along with your work.</p>

	IN-CLASS WRITING: manifestoes sign up for individual meetings w/me	
12	Manifesto presentation	Prepare for final critique. You will present your manifesto along with your work.
13	CRITIQUE 3: present the final version of the work from the previous critique, alongside previous version(s) of the work. Include your manifesto. sign up for individual meetings w/me-documentation of practice	Self-reflective essay - Sign up to meet with writing fellow
14	self-reflective essay due CRITIQUE 3: present the final version of the work from the previous critique, alongside previous version(s) of the work. Include your manifesto. Digital course evaluation	Incorporate feedback from final critique for Documentation of Practice assignment
15	Attend MFA show Documentation of Practice due	

DIY FUTURES

Sophomore Seminar Learning Goal #2: Communicate a rationale for a self-designed curricular pathway for the third and fourth year at SAIC.

OVERVIEW

The SAIC undergraduate curriculum is built on an academic foundation that celebrates individual choice and creative risk-taking. DIY Futures is an opportunity for students who are midway through their studies to research, design, and articulate their own individualized plans for unique pathways through the School and beyond. The purpose of this assignment is 1) to reflect on who you are as a creative practitioner, 2) to envision your future creative, professional, and/or educational life, and 3) to thoughtfully take leadership in designing an individualized curricular path during your remaining time here at SAIC.

ESSAY PROMPT

Write an essay that describes who you are as a creative practitioner, where you imagine your practice might take you, and how you plan to utilize the time, space, and resources during your remaining time at SAIC. In other words, while holding who you are as a practitioner and your future vision in mind, how can your time here at SAIC work in service of your vision and goals as an artist, designer, scholar, professional? In order to design your own curricular map, you will need to research specific SAIC classes, summer work, and/or co-curricular experiences.

SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

OVERVIEW

Write an essay that reflects on what you have learned during your sophomore year at SAIC. The essay must address each of the following: Strengths, Creative Production, Contextualization, Critique, and Community.

Identify the most important catalyst for your growth: reading, writing, projects, critique, or some combination? Drawing from both your DIY Futures Essay and experience in this course, articulate **how** you will leverage the tools, time, and space needed to best support the development of your creative practice. Write a two- to three-page paper that summarizes your experience in the Sophomore Seminar.

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR YOUR PLANNING PROCESS

Below are sample questions to help generate material and ideas for the essay. We recommend that you answer these questions for yourself to help you plan. However, unless otherwise instructed by your faculty, you do not need to submit answers to all of these questions for the assignment.

- What are your greatest strengths and challenges as a student?
- What are your greatest strengths and challenges as an artist/scholar/practitioner?
- Since starting college, how has your approach to learning evolved?
- What tools, methods, or processes have you acquired to capture and reflect on the development of your creative work?
- How does studying in an interdisciplinary art context influence your creative practice?
- How do you prepare for critiques?
- How do you encourage active participation from your peers during critiques?
- What skills have you acquired that help capture and utilize input and critique from faculty and peers?
- In what ways has input from critiques impacted the way you think your work?
- As an individual, how do you encourage that diverse perspectives and openness are valued within both the classroom and school community?
- What tools have you developed for understanding and thinking critically about the classroom community? How can these be applied to a larger social body (family, neighborhood, city, etc.)?

FORMAT

1. Essay should be 2-3 pages, 12 point, Times New Roman or similar font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins.
2. Include the following: Title, your name, instructor's name, date
3. Unless otherwise instructed by your faculty, use MLA-style formatting and citations: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

DOCUMENTATION OF PRACTICE

OVERVIEW

All artists, designers, and writers revise work based on peer critique, personal growth, and new insights. This assignment is about documenting your practice while pieces are still developing and in process. Tell us a story of your making. It is important to be able to demonstrate how an idea, technique, theme, etc. is evolving in your work over time.

DOCUMENTATION (3-5 items)

Please choose 3-5 items (images, PDFs, video clips, etc.) to represent a documentation of your practice. One item will show the finished work, while the others will show work in progress. For example, you could choose images of three to five separate works that all share the same conceptual focus. Or, you might choose sketches, storyboards, material studies, test strips, or any items that show the development of the final work. Alternatively, you could choose a series of images or pieces of writing that document the same piece in different stages of development.

Format/Guidelines for Documentation:

As practitioners, it is important to develop the professional skills needed to share work within specific parameters; this aspect of the documentation assignment will help you to develop these important skills. Below are the documentation guidelines:

1. For image submissions online: Submit three to five images, size (1200 px on the longest side), resolution (72 dpi), format (jpg or png).
 2. Time-based works (film, video, games, sound): Submit one clip no longer in duration than three to five minutes.
 3. For interactive or performative works: Record a three- to five-minute clip using a screen recorder or other appropriate tool.
 4. For written works: Submit your drafts and finished work in PDF format.
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WRITTEN CONTEXTUALIZATION (up to 250 words per question)

In addition to the images or items in your documentation, please provide a written contextualization of the development of this work by answering the following short questions. There will be a space for you to answer each question in the assignment on Canvas.

1. Discuss your use of iteration and revisions in the work submitted. How has your understanding of your work evolved over time? What have you learned about from making this work?
2. What is the conceptual focus or theme of your work?
3. How do formal considerations (material choices, composition, technique, skill-level, presentation) support and relate to the thematic/conceptual focus you have cited?
4. Discuss your chosen medium and materials. How do they relate to both contemporary artists and art history? What are their social or cultural significance?
5. What are the technical skills you are developing in this work? How does this work relate to the overall trajectory of your skill sets as a developing artist?