

**ART 142-B: Visual Foundations: Composition, Color and Design**  
**Fall, 2009, Tuesday and Thursday 1:15 to 3:45 pm, room 8, Art Building**  
**Instructor, Doug Zucco**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION: Visual Foundations: Composition, Color and Design** is a guided investigation of basic concepts and techniques of visual organization. The course will address both the theory and application of two-dimensional design and color using a variety of concepts, media, and techniques. Through a series of weekly projects, students will develop awareness of the formal elements of composition, a working knowledge of fundamental design principles, and an understanding of the interrelationship between form and content. The formal elements of design include line, shape, value, color, and space and principles of organization – harmony, variety, balance, proportion, scale, dominance, movement, and economy. Learning to analyze one’s own work and the work of others is as important a skill as making the work. Students will learn and use the appropriate vocabulary necessary to verbalize their creative process and critical thinking.

*(This course replaces ART 141, Color, and ART 105, Fundamentals of Drawing and Painting.)*

**TEXT:**

No text required. A variety of texts will be provided, which may be used during class or signed out by students for longer periods of time.

**MATERIALS:**

This course provides art materials in a kit, which will be distributed at the first class. Each student will be billed for the cost of the kit to their student account approximately the third week of class.

**GOALS / OUTCOMES:**

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

- Describe and utilize basic working components and formal elements of a composition – line, shape, value, color and space. Projects will build sequentially upon the student’s knowledge of these elements.
- Develop basic two-dimensional design skills in different media.
- Learn painting and drawing techniques; understand how choice of the medium has an impact on visual communication.
- Analyze historic and contemporary examples of visual images using the formal elements of design, including cultural context.
- Articulate personal and universal art themes and subject matter using vocabulary germane to the discipline.
- Describe how design determines a successful work of art.

**CRITIQUES:**

At the end of each project there will be a major critique during which each student’s project will be presented for group analysis. The instructor leads, with full student involvement, a discussion in which the work of each student is assessed in terms of meeting the project’s objectives (technically, formally, and conceptually), originality, creativity, degree of involvement, problem-solving ability, craftsmanship, and presentation. There will also be many individual and small group preliminary critiques.

**STUDIO:** Students are responsible for the studio and equipment and should get into the habit of cleaning up at the end of each work session. No personal listening devices are allowed in class. **Turn off cell phones before class begins.**

GRADING: Each project must be successfully completed in order to receive credit for the course. Grades on projects (both class work and homework) will be based on fulfillment of objectives of each project, level of achievement, creativity and imagination, craftsmanship, and presentation. Class participation and attendance are a crucial component of assessment. Preparation for class, work during class, and participation in critiques and discussions also influence grades.

**Assignments/ Grading: Students will receive in-progress grades throughout the semester.**

In-Class Work and Homework	30%
Participation in critiques and reading discussions	30%
Readings, papers and quizzes	10%
Sketchbook	15%
Final	15%

**Grading Criteria and Scale:**

- A. Superior: 93-100, A- 91-92  
*Creative work:* shows evidence of critical thought, research, revision, and effort. Exceeds requirements of instructor. Can intelligently discuss and critique work using appropriate vocabulary.  
*Initiative:* contributions exceed the assignment, show independent resourcefulness  
*Attitude:* positive, beneficial to class; works outside of class  
*Individual Improvement:* continually developing, responds positively to criticism  
*Sketchbook:* Shows consistent investigation and exploration of form, line, and composition
- B. Good - Above average: B+ 88-90, B 84-87, B- 81-83  
*Creative work:* accurate and complete, meeting all requirements of assignment, but needs more time and effort to resolve. Can discuss and critique work using appropriate vocabulary.  
*Initiative:* good, meets requirements of assignments  
*Attitude:* proper, beneficial to class  
*Individual Improvement:* shows signs of progress, responds positively to criticism  
*Sketchbook:* Shows some investigation of form, line and composition, but reflects less than 100 per cent engagement with process of revision
- C. Average: C+ 78-80, C 74-77, C- 71-73  
*Creative work:* reflects average amount of engagement and effort; barely meets requirements of assignment  
*Initiative:* uncertain, apparent only at times  
*Attitude:* generally neutral, but not objectionable  
*Individual Improvement:* marginal signs of progress; does not respond to criticism or revise work  
*Sketchbook:* Reveals insufficient investigation and exploration
- D. Below average, yet passing: D+ 68-80, D 64-67, D - 70-61  
*Creative work:* inconsistent and inadequate; does not meet requirements of assignment  
*Initiative:* not meeting requirements of assignments, not completing assignments  
*Attitude:* indifferent, possibly objectionable  
*Individual improvement:* not noticeable  
*Sketchbook:* not enough work to evaluate
- F. Completely unsatisfactory: 60 and below  
Has not attended classes, work not turned in, does not participate in process or critical evaluations

## **ATTENDANCE:**

All students must attend all classes and required lectures. Poor attendance and or consistent tardiness will negatively impact a project's grade and the overall course grade. Class participation and attendance are considered when assigning grades for projects and final grades. How well students prepare for class, work during class time, and participate in critiques and discussions influences final grades.

Work that is late due to illness or other emergencies will not be penalized. A doctor's excuse, notification by the health center, or some other form of written notification (an e-mail) is necessary for all absences. Without some form of written excuse, students will receive an unexcused absence. Students are responsible for assignments given on a day when they are not in class. All missed work must be made up within a week, except in extreme circumstances which will be handled on an individual basis by the instructor.

Official Art Department Attendance Policy: *After the second unexcused absence, final grade will be dropped by one full letter. After the fourth unexcused absence, student will receive a failing final grade.*

*An excused absence is one confirmed by a note from the Dean's Office, Student Services, the Learning Center, or verified with a doctor's note (within 24 hours of illness). Death in family should be confirmed with Student Services.*

*Documentation is required for sports.* Coach should email a note to instructor confirming matches, meets, departure time for away games, or anything that would require absence from class. Practice is not an excused absence.

Job interviews or doctor's/dentist's appointments are not to be scheduled during class.

### **Missing Portions of Class: The following count as unexcused absences**

- More than 15 minutes late for class
- Failure to bring supplies to class
- Failure to return from break
- Leaving class half an hour or more early
- Being tardy more than 3 times. Tardiness: being 5 to 15 minutes late for class

ATTENDANCE AT ALL CRITIQUES IS MANDATORY. Students absent without a doctor's excuse or some form of written explanation (e-mail) will receive a partial grade reduction of up to 10 points for the assignment. Students who attend the critique but do not hand in work will receive up to a 4 point reduction for each class that the work is late. All projects may be resubmitted if the student chooses to rework them after they are graded. Resubmitted projects must be handed in within two weeks.

*Students: If you are late or absent, it is your responsibility (not the professor's) to find out what you missed and to catch up in a timely manner.*

## **LECTURES and TRIPS:**

Types of events include gallery openings, panel discussions, visiting artist presentations, and field trips. Gallery openings usually include a short talk by the artist being shown or the curator of the exhibit. Lectures may include slide talks by visiting artists, art historians, critics, and/or art professionals such as conservators, illustrators, and art editors. The bus trip is usually to New York City, although additional trips to museums and galleries are often scheduled on weekends. More information about the bus trips will be distributed later in the semester.

## **STUDENTS with DISABILITIES or SPECIAL NEEDS:**

Students who require accommodations for this course must first contact the Learning Services Office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Students should have a dialogue with the professor concerning needs and the recommended accommodations.

## COURSE OUTLINE      Visual Foundations

*Days*                      *Assignment*

Week 1                      Introduction to course / materials                      Sept. 1 2009

**Introduce:** Line Project: working with the physical and expressive properties of line and an introduction to composition: directionality, movement, rhythm, repetition, variety, harmony, unity, etc. Students will gain the knowledge of diagrammatic, structural, contour, calligraphic, and expressive line. Line project two; Directional Line Drawing from still life. Sketchbook assignment one.

Week 2

**Critique:** Line Project

**Introduce:** Shape Project : understanding and working with shape (both positive and negative) and positive and negative space; in composition we will be studying balance, rhythm, emphasis, repetition, variety, economy, and scale and proportion. Project one, students will produce black and white, and complementary, and analogous pastel drawings using the concepts of positive and negative space and shared edges. Project two, Organic objects enlarged using contour and structural line with extreme detail.

**Due:** Line Project, Directional Line Drawing – Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>.

Week 3

**Introduce:** Perspective 101: Students will practice and understand the theory of one point, two point, and three point perspective. Project One; using these principals, students will create abstract geometric compositions utilizing color, shape and line. Project two; Students will produce a one point and two point hallway drawing using the theories of vanishing point, and horizon line.

**Critique:** Organic Drawings and Positive and Negative Pastel Drawings

Week 4

**Introduce:** Value / Space Project: working with the grey scale, value keys, local value, shape, spatial recession, and over-lapping planes; also continued compositional experimentation Students will create 10 step grey scale exercises using various medium. Students will create samples of natural and invented textures to understand the surface state value, volume, and shape. In class still lives will be used and various light sources will be utilized to create expressive qualities using value. Sketchbook assignment two.

**Due:** Shape Projects due Oct. 5th

Week 5

**Introduce:** Color Project 1: an introduction to understanding and working with Hue, Value, and Intensity, combined with compositional experimentation. Students will produce a color wheel and practice color blending and complementary and analogous exercises. An historic look back at the use of color by other artists will be presented and a cultural look at the use of color will be discussed. Color demonstration, where pigments come from and how paint is made will be covered. Using still life set- ups, we will explore acrylic glazing techniques and color in light and shadow. Several in-class color studies will be required.

**Critique:** Color studies and Still life paintings

Week 6

**Finish in-class color studies:** Students will finish color studies and prepare to work for still life set ups. Gray scale and monochromatic studies will begin. Students should prepare for mid-term portfolio, and vocabulary reviews. Projects and vocabulary Due. Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>.

Week 7

Color Studies continue: Warm red, cool red, and warm green, cool green studies in-class. Also Warm brown and cool brown studies in-class. Positive and negative paintings using complements and analogous colors will be required. Color as change, two still lives painted at different times of day will be assigned as out of class work. Due. Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>. Sketchbook assignment three.

## Assignments Continued:

- Week 8            Color Studies continued: The effects of warm and cool, in-class studies.  
**Introduce:** Collage project, discuss the four collages. Demonstrate collage techniques.
- Week 9            Color Studies continued: Exploring the expressive and emotional aspects of color. Using a list of abstract emotions we will communicate expressively with color and shape.  
Collages due. Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Week 10           **Critique: 4** Collages Due, Class critique, Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>. Continue color studies. Sketchbook assignment four.
- Week 11           Color Studies continued: Using realistic organic form and shape students will work with a limited pallet to create effects of advancing and receding in space. Edge, background and foreground will be stressed.
- Week 12           **Introduce:** Painting Project using complements. Discuss the two color combinations for each panel in project. Demonstrate color composition options. Also continue color studies in-class. Discuss final portfolio completions. Reminder about vocabulary word test. Painting Project Due, for final portfolio.
- Week 13           **Critique:** Painting project. Dec.1st. Sketchbook assignment five.
- Week 14           Painting project Continued: Final time to complete all in-class and out of class color studies. Final time to complete all techniques learned, and changes made before final portfolio is due. Review all vocabulary words for final test. Discuss requirements for final portfolio. Complete all sketchbook assignments.
- Week 15           Portfolio and Sketchbook Drop off on the final day of class. Portfolio pick up and consultations during exam week.

**This outline is a guide and may be subject to change.**

NOTE: Students who undertake projects which are larger or more involved than that which is normally undertaken by the rest of the class may receive extended working time; this must be requested in advance of the due date.

## **SAFETY PROCEDURES:**

1. Read, understand, and follow all recommendations for health and safety precautions labeled on products.
2. Read, understand and follow all manufacturer recommendations for the proper use of products, materials, and tools.
3. Always follow all recommended studio rules and procedures.
4. Wear proper protective eyewear; dust masks, protective clothing, etc. as indicated.
5. Do not operate tools or equipment without being instructed in their proper and safe use.
6. Do not use materials without being instructed in their proper and safe use.
7. Always work in a well ventilated, well lighted, and safe workplace.
8. Report any unusual incident with materials, tools or equipment immediately to the instructor.
9. A first-aid kit with band-aids, etc., is available in the Art Office. For more serious problems, contact the Health Center (x.1567). After hours, contact the Campus Safety Office (x.1421).