

## Moravian College

**ART 142 Visual Foundations Instructor: Aron Johnston**

Email: astrogato@hotmail.com

Spring 2010 Monday/Wednesday, Room 8

Section A: 1:15-3:45

Section Z: 6:30-9:00

Office Hours: between classes, Monday/Wednesday: 4-6pm, Room 8

### Course Description:

Visual Foundations is an introduction to the theory and application of two-dimensional design as it applies to the creation of pictorial space. Students will be guided through a series of weekly and bi-weekly projects in visual expression, introducing them to the formal elements of design: line, shape, value, color, and space and the principles of organization: harmony, variety, balance, proportion, scale, dominance, movement, and economy in a variety of concepts, mediums, and techniques.

### Text:

A text will not be required. Assorted handouts and reading materials will be assigned throughout the semester.

### Course Goals:

- To develop an understanding of the interrelationship of the elements of art and the principles of design.
- To realize the conceptual through pictorial composition.
- To promote visual thinking.
- To introduce a critical framework for thinking and looking at design.

### Attendance Policy:

Attendance is mandatory. Each meeting of class is considered a session. Attendance is taken at the beginning of each session. Students arriving 5-20 minutes late for any class session are considered tardy. Three tardy counts equal one un-excused absence.

- Arriving more than 20 minutes late or missing an entire class session is considered an absence.
- Students who do not return to class after break or who leave early will be considered absent.
- Showing up without your supplies is also considered an absence.
- Three unexcused absences may result in your grade being decreased one whole letter. Four un-excused absences is automatic failure.
- An absence may be excused if there is a medical reason, family emergency or extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control. The determination of whether an absence will be excused is left to the discretion of the instructor.
- ***It is the responsibility of the student to ask his or her colleagues what information was missed during an absence and to make-up the work missed.***
- ***Students, not the professor, are responsible for assignments given on a day when they are not in class. All missed work must be made up within one week of the due date, unless another date is arranged and agreed upon with the instructor.***

**Grading:**

Due to the volume of material to be covered it is essential that you be in class every class (unless an excuse has been presented and permitted) have completed the homework and are prepared to fully engage in class discussion. This is a secure space where every idea, comment or question will be addressed with respect. You will be graded on participation, intent, creativity, and technique. Work that is truly exceptional and moves beyond expectation will be graded in the A range. Work that is interesting and moves beyond average will be graded in the B range and work that exhibits good/ average quality will be within the C range. Individual meetings will be scheduled mid-term and 2 weeks before the final to assess your strengths and weaknesses. This will allow you ample time to address any issues before a final grade is submitted.

It is the responsibility of the professor to assist the student with the development of each and every segment of the class. The professor should give opinions in a helpful and collaborative manner. It is, however, the responsibility of the student to ask for help when he or she is confused, a misunderstanding exists, or there is simply a question that may hinder the student's development if not addressed. This is a safe environment where learning is the primary goal of both parties. Yet, if the student does not ask questions when help is needed the professor has no choice but to grade accordingly (i.e. the professor is not a mind reader and will assign a grade based on the criteria above). Please feel free to meet with me at any moment throughout the course. I have posted office hours but am also available by appointment.

**CRITERIA FOR GRADES ARE DETERMINED AS FOLLOWS:**

- A. Superior: 93-100, A- 91-92  
Scholarship: strong exceeding requirements of instructor  
Initiative: contributions exceeding the assignment, showing independent resourcefulness  
Attitude: positive, beneficial to class  
Individual Improvement: continually developing
- B. Good - Above average: B+ 88-90, B 84-87, B- 81-83  
Scholarship: accurate and complete, meeting all requirements of instructor  
Initiative: good, meeting requirements of assignments  
Attitude: proper, beneficial to class  
Individual Improvement: shows signs of progress, responds positively to criticism
- C. Average: C+ 78-80, C 74-77, C- 71-73  
Scholarship: barely meeting requirements of instructor  
Initiative: uncertain, apparent only at times  
Attitude: generally neutral, but not objectionable  
Individual Improvement: not showing signs of progress, not responding to criticism
- D. Below average, yet passing: 70-61  
Scholarship: not meeting requirements of instructor,  
Initiative: not meeting requirements of assignments, not completing assignments  
Attitude: indifferent, possibly objectionable  
Individual improvement: not noticeable
- F. Completely unsatisfactory: 60 and below

**Disability-** Any student with documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities should also contact Disabled Student Services.

**Cell Phones-** must be turned to the Silent position. Texting in class is not permitted. If you have an emergency and need to use the phone please talk with me first. Talking/Texting on the phone in class will negatively affect your participation grade.

**Cleanliness-** It is the job of every student to leave the studio better than the way they found it. Disrespecting your environment and those around you implies poor participation and will affect your grade.

**Wear appropriate clothing-** you will get some kind of art material on everything you bring into the studio... it just happens.

### **CRITIQUES:**

At the end of each project there will be a critique during which the entire class presents their individual project's solution (as a group) and the instructor leads, with full student involvement, a discussion in which the work of each student is analyzed in terms of: meeting the projects objectives (technically, formally, and conceptually), originality and creativity, degree of involvement, problem solving ability, craftsmanship, and presentation. Learning to analyze one's own work and the work of others is as important a skill as making the work. There will also be many individual and small group preliminary critiques.

### **LECTURES and TRIPS:**

During the course of the semester you will be required to attend an on-campus art event and one off-campus (generally a bus trip to NYC to visit museums and galleries) art event and write a short (300-400 word) paper on one of these events in addition to your design project requirements. The paper is generally due one week after the date of the event. Types of events include Gallery Openings, Visiting Artists, and Bus Trips. Gallery Openings are public events which occur at some point during the course of each Gallery Exhibition. These generally include a short talk by the artist being shown or the curator of the exhibit. Visiting Artists may feature slide talks by art department faculty, 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, where we might start the day viewing classic works at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and finish with contemporary artwork in museums and galleries downtown.

Date for Bus Trip to NYC: Friday, March 26. After the Met we will visit the Whitney Biennial.

Note: I must receive all papers by \_\_\_\_\_. I must receive them as hard copies, not email attachments. The papers will not receive a grade, but will count toward the class participation portion of your grade. Not handing in a paper will seriously jeopardize the class participation portion of your grade.

### **ATTENDANCE AT ALL CRITIQUES IS MANDATORY.**

Again, if you are absent without a doctor's excuse or written documentation from student services, you will receive a partial grade reduction of up to 10 points for the assignment. If you attend the critique but do not hand your work in on time, you will receive up to a 4 point reduction for each class that the work is late. All problems may be resubmitted if you choose to rework them after they are graded. You have two (2) weeks to do so.

## **STUDIO:**

Students are responsible for the studio (room 8) and equipment. Please get into the habit of cleaning up after yourself at the end of each work session. Our drafting tables are a valuable resource. Their surfaces must be kept clean and undamaged. Any cutting must **not** be done directly on the table's surface, but rather on one of the many grey cutting mats located in the studio. Anyone caught cutting directly on a drafting table (without using a grey cutting matt) will be billed for the cost of a new table top. No personal listening devices are allowed in class (no earphones, etc.). Turn off cell phones before class begins. You may drink in class, coffee, soda, etc., but you may not bring food to class.

## **SAFETY PROCEDURES:**

1. All acrylic paints and gesso should be used in a well ventilated area.
2. Discarded acrylic paint, and rinse water from brush cleaning, should never be disposed of in the sink. Always use acrylic waste disposal containers provided in the studios for that purpose. The used rinse water will be screened to remove paint particles.
3. Wear latex gloves for hand protection and an apron to protect your clothing.
4. Spray paint, aerosol glues, and fixatives are extremely flammable, do not use near an open flame.
5. Only use aerosols in the spray booths provided in the studios.
6. Turn on the spray booth first and follow the instructions on the can. Avoid breathing these vapors as they are a health hazard. After the work has dried, discard scrap papers in the metal cans provided. When finished, turn off spray booth and store spray cans in fireproof metal cabinet with other flammable supplies.
7. Use matt knives, exacto knives, and scissors with care. Retract, or cover blades after use. Dispose of used blades properly.
8. Read, understand, and follow all recommendations for health and safety precautions labeled on products.
9. Read, understand and follow all manufacturer recommendations for the proper use of products, materials, and tools.
10. Always follow all recommended studio rules and procedures.
11. Wear proper protective eyewear; dust masks, protective clothing, etc. as indicated.
12. Do not operate tools or equipment without being instructed in their proper and safe use.
13. Do not use materials without being instructed in their proper and safe use.
14. Always work in a well ventilated, well lighted, and safe workplace.
15. Report any unusual incident with materials, tools or equipment immediately to the instructor and to the College Health Center, 610-861-1567 (evenings, to Campus Safety Office, 610-861-1421)

## **Materials & Supplies**

Students will be provided with all materials required for this class. The cost of materials will be billed to each student's Moravian account. You may find that you want to add to your materials, by necessity this must be done on your own time and at your expense.

## **OPTIONAL MATERIALS:**

Cutting matt  
set of color markers (with or without a thin and a thick end)  
french curve (various drafting devices)  
mechanical pens and/or pencils  
container for brushes

Area art supply stores may give a student discount. Bring your student I.D.

## **Suppliers:**

Dick Blick Art Store  
3152 Lehigh St  
Allentown, PA  
Phone: 610- 791-7576

A.C. Moore Co.  
2633 MacArthur Road  
Whitehall, PA  
Phone: 610-264-4003

## Syllabus

**\* Note: this is a working syllabus subject to change.**

- 01/18: Introduction, syllabus, supply check and distribution**  
Home work (HW): Email Instructor Due: 1/25
- 01/20: Defining the picture plane, understanding craft, Simple Shape Composition (work in class.)  
Due first of class 01/25
- 01/25: Crit Simple Shape: Hand out. Terms and usage  
lecture: Defining elements of visualization (seeing) and craft (doing) Thinking about what you see and do. What is a Composition and a Composition studies?
- 01/27: Composition studies positive and negative space, Define the Subject, Color and Ground  
HW: Find 1 photograph and 2 images that define you (HAND OUT)
- 02/01: Positive and negative space, Subject, Color and Ground (work in class.)
- 02/03: Positive and negative space Crit,  
Introduce Texture/ Line (Hand out)  
HW: Find 20+ distinctly different 2d example of texture
- 02/08: Texture/Value lecture: Define texture visually: What is texture & how does it affect light?  
Value Scale (Texture: Value Part 1/2): texture hunt: Line – Texture (work in class)
- 02/10: Value/Texture/Line (work in class.)  
Introduce Value Scale (Paint: Value Part 2/2)  
HW: Find 2d Media examples of value
- 02/15: Value Scale (Paint: Value Part 2/2) (work in class.)
- 02/17: Lecture: Graph and Grid ? Introduce Project: My Face Space  
Introduction, hand out and examples  
Completed value scale (work in class.)  
Parts 1&2 due end of class (individual crits)  
HW: Photo Copy Photograph of self and examples that define you  
Define your idea(s) to be introduced in next class
- 02/22: Project: My Face Space Introduction, hand out and examples  
Introduce your ideas and intent
- 02/24: Project: My Face Space (work in class.)
- 02/26: Mid term (individual crits as needed by appointment)**
- 03/02: Project: My Face Space (work in class.)

03/04: Project: My Face Space (last day to work in class)  
Hand out: Color terms and usage  
HW: Find 2d examples that express each color in the color wheel  
What emotive quality can be defined with each color?

**03/08-03/10: Spring break**

03/15: My Face space Crit (group)

03/17: Lecture: Color / project introduction Color scales tent and shade example and handout. Color value scales, color mixing

03/22: Project: Color scale Primary, secondary (work in class.)

03/24: Project: Color scale Primary, secondary (work in class.)

**03/26: NY Field Trip**

03/29: Color crit (Individual/Written)  
Composition Project introduction: Balance, Complements and Contrast

03/31: Composition Project: Balance, Complements and Contrast (work in class.)  
HW: Develop thumbnails and proposals for final project:  
Pattern and Repetition

**04/02-04/05 Easter Break (*Note: evening classes scheduled to meet on 04/05*)**

Composition Project: Balance, Complements and Contrast (work in class.)

04/07: Composition Project: Balance, Complements and Contrast (work in class)  
Final Project Proposal  
Introduce Final Project: Pattern and Repetition handout

04/12: Composition Project: Balance, Complements and Contrast (Group crit)  
Project: Pattern and Repetition (work in class)

04/14: Project: Pattern and Repetition (work in class)

04/19: Project: Pattern and Repetition (work in class)

04/21: Project: Pattern and Repetition (work in class)

04/26: Project: Pattern and Repetition (work in class)

**04/28: Last class day Final project critique. (group)**

05/03: Final critique- individual.

05/05: Final critique- individual.