



"...the computer is the computer. The role of the human is not to be dispassionate, depersonalized or neutral. It is precisely the emotive traits that are rewarded: the voracious lust for understanding, the enthusiasm for work, the ability to grasp the gist, the empathetic sensitivity to what will attract attention and linger in the mind. Unable to compete when it comes to calculation, the best workers will come with heart in hand."
David Brooks

Course Description:

This introduction to studio art will enable you to utilize digital tools to engage in aesthetic and conceptual practices in contemporary art with an emphasis on experimentation. Personal studio projects will investigate a variety of subjects such as: the role of digital media in the history of artistic practice, the relationship of the arts to popular culture, the aesthetics of abstraction, the development of metaphor, new versions of magic-realism and the effects of social issues on the creation and interpretation of art work. You will come to understand the fundamentals of composition and develop technical skills with a variety of computer tools including still-image and video-editing programs. Through theory and practice, effective art criticism skills will be developed, allowing for creative group interactions and defining of your personal aesthetic vision. Presentations by the professor will be supplemented by elements on the class website and student preparation on artistic and technological issues.

Class Structure:

This class will include demonstrations and presentations by the professor related to the current assignment. You are expected to be prepared for class by working outside of class on your projects and on training supplied through the class website. Approximately the first half of the semester will be spent investigating *still imaging* with assignments that lead to understanding of the techniques and concepts of digital printmaking. We will use Photoshop and Lightroom software for this section. The second half of the semester will be centered on *moving images*, utilizing video techniques and concepts to express ideas that lend themselves to movement/ sound/ etc. Video editing will be done with Adobe Premiere. You will need card access to Horvitz 206 digital lab to do most of your homework.

Evaluation Criteria and Class Goals:

Aesthetic Merit:

- An approach that is visually (formally), intellectually (conceptually) and emotionally **compelling**. Is there something that initially draws the viewer in to want to see more?
- Originality/ creativity/ **innovation**/ surprise/ cleverness. Does the work avoid clichés and pat expectations? Did you take a risk ...step away from your comfort zone?
- **Conceptual depth**, sophistication or complexity that allows a **sustaining** interest by the viewer. Did you develop metaphors, irony and mystery in your work while avoiding clichés? Does the form of the piece support the content? Is the work resolved, finished?
- Artistic Integrity: An awareness of the **appropriate audience/ assignment/ social context** of your work as relating to other artists and non-artists, those of your generation and beyond, what era you are working

within, what cultural knowledge you can refer to and what will be lost on the viewer. The piece should be appropriate for experimental galleries and/or video festivals. It should be a creative response to the guidelines of the assignment.

Personal Commitment:

A **commitment** that involves creative problem solving, development of technical skills on your own as well as through class, attention to detail, meeting deadlines, showing effort, having an appropriate amount of ambition for the work (not just to complete the assignment), a willingness to learn from others including faculty and students, generosity in participation in group critiques and discussions, respect for others (electronic etiquette), attendance during class and TA hours, working consistently outside of class hours and caring for equipment.

Class Etiquette:

- ***Critiques:*** You don't need to raise your hand to comment, and I encourage you to participate. Make sure to speak loudly enough for everyone to hear and give everyone a turn.
- ***Bodily care:*** Please plan to eat before and after class but not *during* class. If you must have a snack for health reasons, please speak to me about it and *never* eat near a computer. A closed container of water may be placed below your desk for urgent care. Try to use the restroom before and after class but not during class if possible.
- ***Internet/phone/ Computer work:*** **Do not use your phone at all during class. Please leave it in your backpack at the front of the room. Put your computer to sleep for critiques, demos, discussions.** Take notes in your journal. Being a full participant in the critique observation and discussion is part of what I evaluate you on. Email may be done before or after class, or during a break. If you are waiting for something to render, please plan other aspects of your project during wait time rather than get distracted by e-communications.

Instructional Aides:

You will be processing a lot of information technically and developing conceptually. To aid this process, I have many alternatives that I expect you to take advantage of. You will not be graded individually on them, but your effort in attending and viewing/reading will affect your performance and bump your overall grade a bit one way or the other.

- TA's are available Sunday and Tuesday from 7:30-10pm. You must attend one of these sessions for at least an hour. Attendance will be taken (sign in).
- Online videos and handouts are available at www.esslingersclasses.com password: bexleyhall. You are expected to view these videos while we are working on that particular topic and be ready for a pop quiz any time! If you are absent, watching these will HELP though not replace the class demonstration.

Communication and grading:

You are responsible to read your email and respond to me as well as be familiar with the class website.

Grading comes in the form of comments and number grades. I really value talking to you in person, writing emails in response to your work and I only give grades as a supplement to these more important tasks. Nevertheless, these can tell you how I think you are doing in relationship to my overall expectations which are based on a history of knowing what students can do, what the rest of the class might be able to do in the allotted time, and what I think you personally are capable of all in relationship to the goals mentioned above. Please do not compare your grades with others! There are many reasons for variations in grades. What is taking a risk for one person might be comfortable and predictable for someone else with more experience. Good work comes in many forms! Please take initiative in scheduling conversations with me if you don't understand something. It is your responsibility to catch up on work you have missed. Communication is key to understanding! To do the best in this class you should start work right after the assignment is given so that you can revise as needed. If you miss a presentation, demonstration or lecture, you will have to work with a TA and will not be able to visit the material as thoroughly.

Grades will use the 100% scale, but will be weighted by percentage of final grade, depending on the intensity of the project. For instance: a shorter project may be worth 5-10% of the final grade where as a longer project could be 30%.

The evaluation criteria will all be taken into account for each due date, not just the final result.

90-100 (A range) The high end of this indicates *exceptional work to which nothing can be added*, on time, following the assignment and with special insight, effort, risk-taking and creativity. All of the evaluation criteria are met. Excellent participation in critique and discussions.

80-89 (B range) This indicates above average work, competent, safe and interesting but still lacking something or it could be innovative work without a high enough skill level. Good comments during critique and discussions.
70-79 (C range) This indicates average work, average effort, basic amount of skill and creative ideas. Low participation in critique and discussions. Questionable preparation.
65-69 (D range) The work is handed in but shows less than acceptable effort creativity and skill. Little to no participation in critique and discussions. Not prepared for class.
Up to 64 (F range) Little effort, skill, imagination, not prepared, etc.

Due Dates: Projects are due *at the beginning of the class period on the date of the progress or final critique*. A project is considered late if it is not ready at that time and will receive an 0 until submitted. The 0 will then be averaged with your grade if the piece is handed in BEFORE the next scheduled critique. If you have an excused absence coming up on a critique day, the work is due *before* you leave. Most projects will have one or more progress critiques for which you will receive credit toward the final score. ***The final project is due before the last day of class, not during final's week. The final portfolio for the semester is due the next class day after the final critique.***

Re-submission: You may always improve and resubmit work and the new grade will be averaged with your initial grade if it is submitted within a week and before the next critique. This doesn't apply to the final project. That is due the last day of class.

Attendance Policy: Attendance in this class is **mandatory** because you cannot make up lost days by just reading or any other independent work. The class time is full of demonstrations, presentations, critiques and workshop time. If you miss demos you may never catch up and not know how to use the equipment. Workdays in class allow personal assistance from the professor on assignments and should be prepared for (you should work outside of class to be at the next stage of work, ready for assistance. Expect to spend at least 10 hours per week outside of class). You will always do better on an assignment if you are ready for the workdays in class (have completed more work on your project). Video screenings are wonderful opportunities to inspire your work and describe the nature of the assignment. Students who miss these invariably don't do as well on the associated project. For all of the above reasons, I am strict about attendance and accountability. If you DO miss a class **you are responsible for finding out what was covered and learning from others as much as possible**. I cannot recreate the class for you.

After three (3) unexcused class absences I will begin to *lower your final grade for the course by three points (out of 100) for each additional absence*. Unexcused absences should be saved for occasional minor illnesses and you should still notify me through a call or email before class. ***Two times late (10 min after class starts) will count as one absence***. Excused absences are only given for illnesses that require a doctor, death in the family, Kenyon sanctioned activities such as athletic events, etc., and must be okayed *before* the missed class whenever possible. Do not leave for these events early. All work must be ***handed in before*** an excused absence if it is due on the date of the absence or it will be considered late. If you have more than three excused events that pull you away from class, you will have to start using your three allowed unexcused absences (for instance, if you have 5 scheduled events, two of them will use up some of your allowed unexcused absences.) Excused absences do not include taking a friend to the airport, leaving early for break or the common cold.

Collaboration: You all have different aptitudes and experiences. Working together will improve all of your pieces. You are expected to help each other out and to pull your part of the load. Groups will also be important at idea sessions and critiques. It is here that feedback from your peers becomes collaborative. Your participation at critiques and discussions will influence your grade on each project.

Equipment policy: You are expected to care for all equipment both on the premises and off. If something breaks or is lost while in your care, you are responsible for it financially and you must tell me immediately. You may sign out equipment through Lisa Dilts between the hours of 8:30 and 3:30 (except the lunch hour, 12-1pm) Return time is determined by the assignment in agreement with me (sometimes you may keep it for the length of the assignment, other times you must share).

We are trying a new option for equipment storage: you may choose to leave the equipment in the locking cabinets in 206 instead of bringing them to your room, but you are still responsible for their safety. You will be sharing the cabinets.

Make sure you clean up after yourself, don't leave personal elements on or near your station, don't bring food or drink to your desk (you may leave food at the table in front.) You are sharing your computer with at least one other student (from the film class and advanced art students)...get to know them and arrange times to work. You should only book 3 hours at a stretch in order to be fair to each other. Only students enrolled in Installation art, Digital Imaging, Digital

Photo, Experimental Video and Film, Acting and Directing for the Camera and Photography and Advanced Studio may use Horvitz Digital Studios. Anyone else, for any other project is not allowed (even with you helping them!)

Copies: All documentation of your work will be handed in as an electronic file for inclusion in the Kenyon Art Department Archives. They may be exhibited on our website or for promotional reasons within the college.

Academic Honesty: Being honest academically in an art class is more difficult to define than in other classes. Sometimes using another image is intended as a cultural reference. It even has a name: “appropriation.” Whenever this is intended, the image is well known enough in the culture for most people to know where it came from, and therefore it evokes some ideas or feelings tied to the original. This is fine for an artist to do. Taking another artist’s image, composition or idea directly and passing it off as your own is a case for dishonesty however. I suggest that if you have a question, come talk to me first.

Disability Statement: If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your ability to carry out assigned course work, I would urge you to contact the Office of Disability Services at 5453. The Coordinator of Disability Services, Erin Salva (salvae@kenyon.edu) will review your concerns and determine, with you, what accommodations are appropriate. All information and documentation of disability is confidential. Please notify me as well.

Privacy vs Confidentiality: *If you are having a particularly hard time for any reason, please let me know early and keep me in the loop...this need not be specific, but some general communication.* I am happy to talk to you about issues you are concerned about...just know that I am not mandated to confidentiality the way a counselor, doctor or clergy person is (though I will keep your confidence unless there is danger to yourself or others, especially in terms of sexual harassment/ misconduct/ assault)..in that case I would need to notify the college titleIX coordinator about the basic facts of the incident (you may choose whether you or anyone involved is identified by name). For more information about your options at Kenyon, please go to: [http://www.kenyon.edu/directories/offices-services/office-of-equal-opportunity/sexual-assault-and-harassment/...](http://www.kenyon.edu/directories/offices-services/office-of-equal-opportunity/sexual-assault-and-harassment/)

Civil Rights: Kenyon College does not discriminate in its educational programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by institutional policy or state, local, or federal law. The requirement of non-discrimination in educational programs and activities extends to employment and admission.

Textbooks, Tutorials and Supplies:

A History of Art and Technology, (by Esslinger, online at esslingersclasses.com)

Multiple Tutorials at esslingersclasses.com

Digital Currents by Margot Lovejoy: recommended, in library

Photographic Inkjet papers as needed (available in Art Office or in print lab)

Sketch/ note-taking journal (Available at the Bookstore) please keep notes from class in here.

We provide camera equipment, including an SD card (this year for the first time)...so please make sure you don't leave the card out of the camera and clean it off for the next person.

For additional help contact Visiting Artist/ Contemporary Technology Specialist Emily Zeller (individual appointments available) Contact Emily at Zellere@kenyon.edu or at her office in Horvitz Hall. Teaching Assistants are also available in the digital studio several nights a week (look for schedule).