

Visual Procedures in Drawing – ARTS 040 01 Spring Semester 2010

M/W 9:00 AM to Noon

Instructor: Don Harvey

Office: Allen Art Bldg. Rm. 111 – Office Hours M/W 12:15 to 1:15 PM

E-mail: don.harvey@oberlin.edu; cell phone: 216-548-9946

Course Description

The focus of this class will be primarily on representational drawing from direct observation. We will utilize objects set up in the classroom, models, and field trips to various architectural or natural sites as our subject matter. The assigned exercises will emphasize development of observational skills and techniques as well as a thorough grounding in various drawing materials and the appropriate techniques to utilize them. Composition and visual organizational skills will be important in all exercises.

As this is an introductory level course, development of a student's individual style is not an emphasis, however my instructional approach will begin with a respect for each student's individuality, and I will work with each student to find solutions to the various assignments that capitalize upon the uniqueness of their own hand, eye and mind. Even within group assignments, each student will, in turn, be expected to search for their own individually creative approaches.

Group discourse about the work we undertake in class will be conducted in both informal and formal discussions. Group and individual critiques will happen regularly throughout the semester; dates of major group critiques are announced on the calendar of activities contained within this syllabus. Additional discussions will be structured around occasional assigned readings or visual research. It is an expected part of each student's performance in class that they actively participate in these classroom discussions.

In addition to the in-class assignments, there will be regular out-of-class assignments.

Objectives

The objectives of this course are: (1) To develop in each student a more acute sense of visual observation and perception as they relate to the act of drawing; (2) To apply this awareness to the development of illusionistic and expressionistic drawing abilities; (3) To advance each student's technical abilities in working with drawing tools; and (4) To set for each student a reasonable base line of competency which they should strive to attain.

Evaluation and Grading

Because of the varied backgrounds and levels of experience normally present among the students in this class, student progress and accomplishment will be judged based upon each student's individual abilities. Students without prior drawing experience will not be in grade competition with those who have had several prior drawing courses, for example. At the same time, a base level of competency must be attained by each student; I will work with each individual to set reasonable goals and will then use those as a standard for evaluation.

Using those goals as a foundation, your semester grade will then be based upon your success in completing both in-class and out-of-class assignments. All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade for the semester. Beyond that, the following factors will be taken into consideration in determining individual portfolio credit and final grades: your degree of mastery of the observational, conceptual and technical issues presented in each assignment; your diligence and determination in working out ideas in your drawings and in working through technical problems; your willingness to push yourself past your comfort zone in order to find alternate, and perhaps better, solutions to problems you are working on; your ability and willingness to make critical judgments about your own work; your participation in critiques and class discussions.

Work must be turned in on assigned due dates in order to receive full credit unless you make arrangements with me in advance. I will work with you on this, but you must take the initiative on your own behalf. I will make the final determination as to whether or not a request for an extension is justified.

You will be required to submit four portfolios during the course of the semester; each will include in-class and out-of-class assignments. You will also be required to keep a sketchbook for the semester.

Letter grades will not be assigned to the separate portfolios, but rather a point system will be used. A total of 100 points will be possible for the four portfolios combined, with each one carrying the potential for 25 points. Shortcomings in a given portfolio may be made up through additional assignments designed by the instructor to help address deficiencies and points up to the total of 25 for the relevant portfolio may thereby be earned. The sketchbook will carry the potential for 20 points, bringing the total points possible for the semester to 120.

Adjustments for excessive absences (see below) will be made on the final semester grade, not on individual portfolio grades.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Arriving to class on time and working until the end of class are also mandatory. Unexcused absences in excess of three will result in your semester grade being lowered one letter grade for each additional absence. Documented illness, mishap and death in the family are the only reasons for which absence will be excused. Four late arrivals or early departures from class in any combination will be calculated as an absence. An unexcused absence on the date of one of the critiques announced on the calendar of activities in this syllabus will be counted double (as two absences).

Attendance at the final session of class during finals week is mandatory.

Calendar of Activities

February 8: Introduction to the course.

February 10 - 17: Using the tool box; understanding line weight, line quality, the expressive use of line; use of value and contrast.

February 22: Portfolio 1 due; class critique

February 24 –March 10: Volumes observed and invented; control of pictorial space; elements of perspective; line and tone, their relationships.

March 15: Portfolio 2 due; class critique

March 17-April 12: Introduction to figure drawing; gesture; fluidity; weight distribution.

April 14: Portfolio 3 due; class critique

March 29 and 31: No class; Spring Break

April 19-May 10: Continuation of figure drawing; structure; proportion; foreshortening; the figure in space.

May 12: Portfolio 4 due; class critique

Materials List

- 1 – 18”x24” pad of smooth newsprint paper
- 1 – 18”x24” pad of Strathmore (or similar) white drawing paper
- 2 – bull clips (to hold drawing pad to drawing board)
- 1 each – 100% graphite pencils in 2B, 4B, 6B, 9B leads
- 1 each – charcoal pencils in 2B med., 4B soft, 6B soft leads
- 1 – sandpaper block for pointing pencil leads
- 1 pkg. each – soft vine charcoal
- 1 pkg. of 4 sticks - round compressed charcoal in assorted hardness
- 2 sticks – extra soft compressed charcoal
- 1 pkg. each – conté crayon in 2B black and sanguine watteau
- 2 – 1/4” paper drawing stumps
- 1 each – erasers: gum, pink pearl, kneadable, stick
- 1 – utility knife (not an X-acto knife)
- 1 roll – 1” white artists tape
- 1 – sumi brush, medium size
- 1 - sketchbook

Term Bill/Materials Fee

A fee of \$30.00 will be assessed each student to help offset the costs of materials used in common such as specialized papers, inks, models, etc.

