

Western University - Faculty of Arts and Humanities - Visual Arts Department

VAS 4430 Practicum – Fall/Winter 2016-2017

Classes: **Wednesdays and Fridays 8:30-12:30**

Room: JLVAC 300 and 148

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1. Course Description

Practicum is a studio/thesis course designed to prepare students to develop a studio practice in the context of contemporary art issues and various media processes. It will, at all times, emphasize critical analysis and energetic discussion in combination with an intensive commitment to probing specific ideas and interests through creative exploration.

As a two-course load, practicum provides time for studio development and production with a related research component. The course will encourage students to experiment with materials and methods as they develop a critical studio practice informed by theoretical investigations. The university setting and the local communities offer access to information, ideas, and facilities that students are expected to use to enrich their creative practices. Attendance at speaker events and gallery openings is recommended and should be considered an important adjunct to the weekly studio classes.

2. Learning Outcomes

- **Autonomy and Professional Capacity**
Students will gain familiarity with the range of opportunities for artists within and beyond the academic setting, and will have an awareness of routes to be taken to make advancements toward further study and/or professional practice.
- **Communication Skills**
Students will be able to communicate, both verbally and orally, the strengths and weaknesses of their projects. Additionally, students will be able to apply specialized terminology to discussions in critiques, and be able to articulate the relevant historical and contemporary contexts to each project under discussion.
- **Application of Knowledge**
Students will use their capacities within their chosen medium as a critical tool to develop creative works: this will include the ability to assess the work's viability and explore, expand and hone the work further into a coherent body.

3. Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Present a honed and cohesive independent body of work and research.
- Demonstrate perceptual, visual and conceptual skills through art making and as a critical viewer.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional artist career trajectories and how these may relate to their own practice.
- Demonstrate an understanding of publishing.
- Create a professional artist dossier and present their work in a professional manner.
- Prepare written and visual work for publication through the creation of a catalogue.
- Install and present their work professionally in a professional gallery setting.

- Demonstrate a grasp of historical and contemporary issues relevant to the making and evaluation of contemporary practices in the visual arts.
- Demonstrate the ability to translate and present information through various presentation strategies and media and understand shifts in meaning generated through this process.

4. Course Requirements

Practicum meets twice a week for a total of 8 hours. *Students are also expected to spend a minimum of 8 hours a week outside course time on studio work and research.* Each student is responsible for knowing the assignments, procedures, and due dates. Students are expected to complete all assignments by the due date; failure to do so may result in a failing grade (F). Requests for deadline extensions cannot be considered unless approved by the instructor at least 24 hours before the assignment is due and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Late work will be accepted with a 10% penalty per day. Attendance is mandatory and missing 15% or more of class time can result in a failing grade. All students are expected to be present and available for discussions at the beginning of each class meeting, even in the case that there is no scheduled activity and students are engaging in their work in another area of the building. Students are also responsible for the preparation, installation, and de-installation of class exhibitions. Failure to deliver or remove your work by a required deadline could result in loss of sign-out privileges and will affect your participation grade. Additionally, failure to use studio space safely and professionally will also impact your participation grade and could result in the loss of studio privileges.

5. Evaluation

Evaluation will be based upon the demonstrated ambition and resolution brought to meeting the creative, conceptual, and formal demands of assignments and studio work, as well as in the level of participation demonstrated in all other aspects of the course. Students will be evaluated on their understanding of relevant theoretical issues introduced in class and their ability to integrate these ideas in their studio practice. Qualitative evaluation will take the form of a numerical breakdown of each assignment grade in reference to the above criteria as well as through oral feedback from the course instructors.

6. Course Evaluation

First Term (45% of final grade):

First Term Assignments Quantified	Grading Weight
Self-Designed Project	10
Independent Studio Project: Midterm	20
Independent Studio Project: End of term	30
Bibliography, Reading Discussion and Reflections	10
Artist Statement	5
Participation (Professional Conduct, Committee Work & Reports, Participation in Exhibition Planning & Development, Participation in Critiques, Working in Class)	15
Total	90 (/2=45%)

Second Term (55% of final grade):

Second Term Assignments Quantified	Grading Weight
Independent Studio Project: Midterm	30
Independent Studio Project: Final	40

Presentation	10
Dossier, includes: Letter of Intent/exhibition proposal, updated statement, biography, images/video, list of works, artist CV.	10
Catalogue Entry	5
Overall Participation (Professional Conduct, Committee Work & Reports, Participation in Exhibition Planning & Development, Participation in Critiques, Working in Class)	15
Total	110 (/2=55%)