

Appendix I:

Guidelines for Studio Art Classes

These guidelines were developed during our retreat in the summer of 2000, and are meant to help us establish common goals for studio courses, especially those taught in common including Art 151, 155/156, 580, 583 and 600. In addition, we also discussed supplemental means for exposing students to the art-making process in an effort to show them how art is made. We agreed to do this via exhibits such as 8-Hour Drawings, studio visits to colleagues and friends, web site and on-line dialogue with artists, connections to artists participating in the Public Events Programs, travel to NYC, etc. We need to expand the number of such opportunities that are available to our students, as they are critical to their development as artists. To this extent we agreed to integrate as many such opportunities as possible into all of our classes. We also agreed to the following:

- I. 100 level classes – every 100-level studio course will include some experience with research presentations and proposal writing, as well as developing written statements about work produced. Students should also be involved in a process of writing self-evaluations/reflections of work they produce. The idea is to begin this process long before the junior seminar so that it is not so foreign to students at that point. If we begin this process early and provide frequent opportunities we hope the connection between writing about one's art and making it will become clear.
- II. Art 155/156 –the focus of these intro classes (regardless of section or professor) is on concept rather than technique. This has typically been one of the strengths of these classes, and we want to maintain this approach. The emphasis in Intro to Studio Art should be getting students to learn about art-making and ideas, and helping them discover the tools for judging works. We agreed to build the following into these classes if we aren't already doing so:
 - 1) experimentation with a variety of materials and processes
 - 2) artist research
 - 3) units/projects that explore:
 - a) basic issues of color
 - b) 2D and 3D composition/visual literacy. These will include discussions of the following: positive/negative space; picture plane; variety/contrast; balance; golden section/rule of thirds/golden mean; tangents; repetition; issues of size; format/shape and the orientation of the picture plane and the stuff in it; edges of picture plane; use of text; proportion; economy of design/composition
 - c) an awareness of performance and installation art
 - d) collaboration or group work - the idea here is to help students get more insight into the creative process and the idea that artists ultimately collaborate with themselves; that is, artist/inventor; artist/researcher; artist/critic)

- e) exercises that will help students understand the nature and purpose of critique, thereby developing the ability to evaluate their own work
- f) an understanding of the role of intention in art making

The possibility of developing web pages with basic visual literacy information was discussed. George has been working on developing booklets of 2D and 3D vocabulary and offered to develop these into web pages that would be available to all students. Continued discussion of what else we might want here will be important.

- III. 200-level courses –the emphasis in these courses, where appropriate, should be placed on how to push ideas to reveal the depth and full range of possibilities for the idea, and developing skills that will allow students to move from one media to another with ease. We agreed to encourage self-directed work in these classes and to emphasize proposal and self-reflective writing. We also agreed to encourage students to move from these classes to seminars and then the senior project. The goal here is to help students learn to mine a direction deeply through broad experimentation. To help students do this, we must establish a pedagogical balance between technique, creative thinking, and the development of ideas.
- IV. 580 Junior Seminar – this course should include the following:
 - 1) Individual research presentations in which students are asked to describe how their research findings were/are helpful to them in developing their work.
 - 2) Discussion about what it means to be thinking about your work vs. making it.
 - 3) A greater emphasis on experimentation and process. To this end we agreed to develop a new structure for the class. Students will begin by developing a proposal (to be called the “experimental plan”) that will outline experimentation possibilities for the work they are proposing. This will include discussion of various ways in which the idea may unfold. The idea here is not to let them narrow the idea down too quickly.

Students will then spend the first four – six weeks fulfilling their experimental plan. We hope that this will create an atmosphere of “permissional play” within this class so that students can get more insight into how ideas unfold and evolve. At mid-semester students will be asked to write a reflection paper that is then developed into a formal proposal. The last half of the semester will then be spent working towards the fulfillment of that proposal. Students would still develop a four – six page paper at the end of the seminar that outlines their work and presents the research they did to support the development of that work (possibly called the artist’s reflection paper). In addition they would also develop a 50-word artist’s statement that would be extracted from this longer discussion.

Readings will include something on the nature of process and creativity (Art & Fear as an example); a broad based book on contemporary art and theory post-1960 (Avant Garde & After or Art on the Edge are examples); and something on an artist (Giacometti Portrait was an example). Students would be responsible for presenting the material from the readings and making connections between the readings and the work their colleagues are doing.

- V. 583 - Advanced Studio Seminar – we will continue to run this class as we have been doing, but we will need to keep a close eye out to see how the presence of studio art minors impacts the workings of the class. Space problems are likely to be increased as a result of this new requirement, and it is possible that the minors enrolled in the class may not be as prepared to carry on advanced individual work as our majors. If this occurs changes will need to be worked out.

It was agreed that we would use one book in this class that explores issues in contemporary art. This would be supplemented with Xerox readings.