

ART 4110- Advanced Drawing (3 credit hours)

Matthew Choberka, Office Phone: 626-7270

matthewchoberka@weber.edu

Kimball Visual Arts Center KA 305

Office hours by appointment, please schedule with Cynthia Kurien in the DOVA office

“In spite of everything I shall rise again: I will take up my pencil, which I have forsaken in my great discouragement, and I will go on with my drawing.”

Van Gogh

“From the age of six I had a mania for drawing the shapes of things. When I was fifty I had published a universe of designs. But all I have done before the age of seventy is not worth bothering with. At seventy five I'll have learned something of the pattern of nature, of animals, of plants, of trees, birds, fish and insects. When I am eighty you will see real progress. At ninety I shall have cut my way deeply into the mystery of life itself. At a hundred I shall be a marvelous artist. At a hundred and ten everything I create; a dot, a line, will jump to life as never before. To all of you who are going to live as long as I do, I promise to keep my word. I am writing this in my old age. I used to call myself Hokusai, but today I sign my self 'The Old Man Mad About Drawing.'”

Hokusai

Course Overview

Drawing holds a vital and evolving place in contemporary art. Many contemporary artists maintain drawing as an important part of their studio practice, and in several notable cases as their primary practice. However, in an age of site-specific work, digital influences, and the common use of mixed-media, just what is defined as drawing is open to a great many interpretations. We will work not to arrive at a single definition of drawing, but to find a range of interpretations of this form, and to do so by working in the studio in an experimental and committed way.

Core Themes and Learning Outcomes for the class

The Department of Visual Arts' Learning Outcomes include several that are particularly applicable to the advanced study of drawing. These outcomes state that we can judge our success when our students can:

- *Demonstrate advanced abilities in generating innovative solutions to traditional and non-traditional problems in 2D and 3D visual media.*
- *Be able to think critically. Students should be able not only to analyze a work of art using traditional methods, but should also be able to develop thoughtful new interpretations.*

- *Be able to express their personal thoughts, ideas, or emotions through visual media.*

It is important for me to state from the outset the most important themes of the class, and the goals I have for your development as artists at the conclusion of the course. There are many ways to understand the challenges of contemporary drawing, and to consider how drawing fits into the world of art more broadly, but

... put simply, the key objective of the course is for each of you to work toward a full understanding of the essential interplay of concept, form, and materiality that characterizes drawing in its fullest realization.

Great drawing is always strong on all three fronts. The concepts that are embodied in the work must be complex and pertinent to the contemporary world. The formal pictorial elements must work together with surprise, dynamism, and vitality. And the material qualities of the object must reflect the artist's conscious choices, further strengthening the viewer's experience in front of the work. If we each can broaden and deepen our understanding of drawing, we will find it to be a form that still speaks with unique authority to human experience. At this advanced level, I will expect each of you to constantly examine your own decisions in your drawing practice, and to be willing to make hard changes to push that practice further. Within the framework of **concept, form, and object** I have presented above, we will explore diverse ideas related to contemporary drawing, including:

Widening definitions of drawing in contemporary contexts

Importance of process to development in art

Sourcing in art

Drawing as metaphor

Relationship of representation and abstraction in drawing

Narrative in art

Sequential art/thematic development

Media/technical decisions and their impact on content

Drawing in art history and contemporary art

Classes will consist of drawing sessions, critique and discussion of student work, and image presentations for discussion and analysis. In-class drawing sessions will be used to develop the long-term drawings and independent studio work.

The main objective of the course is for each student to develop a fully realized body of work based in drawing principles, materials, and techniques. Rather than emphasizing completion of assigned projects, our focus will be on the individual conception and execution of a suite of between 12-18 finished works. In doing so, each artist will have to consider what defines a work of art as drawing, and what

constitutes completeness. Decisions as to content, scale, media, and installation will likely evolve as our work continues, although it is important to initially arrive at a proposal for how this work will proceed. In addition we will explore the complex role of drawing in art. In contemporary art, drawing has taken on an increasingly visible role as an autonomous form, in which ideas can be developed into their most complete expression. Still, throughout the history of art, drawing has often served a more of a responsive, analytic role, a stage in a larger process, and a means to an end. It will be this investigative aspect of drawing we will explore in several in-class assignments, to be announced.

Coursework

Our principal work in the course will be as follows:

- Completed body of 12-18 works that function as a related whole, and reflect understanding of the learning outcomes described above.
- Developed artist statement related to this body of work.
- Approximately 4 supplementary assignments (shorter-term, usually in class) to challenge and re-affirm the main body of work.

NOTE: The class schedule is subject to change. I will keep everyone informed as to our plans at least a few weeks in advance.

Attendance Policy

Since we will be discussing ideas and working on projects throughout each class meeting, attendance of all meetings is very important. If you must miss a class session due to illness or personal emergency, contact me as soon as you know that you will miss class. A written excuse (i.e. from a doctor) will be required for all such absences. Any absences that don't meet this requirement will be considered unexcused. Students should be sure to contact peers in order to catch up on any missed material or assignments.

Each unexcused absence after the first two will result in a reduction of points from your overall grade on the course. In addition, you must arrive at class each session on time, and stay for the entire session. For every two late arrivals to or early departures from class (10 minutes or more), you will be assessed one unexcused absence. Arriving in class 30 minutes late will be considered an absence.

The point deductions for absences will be as follows:

3 Absences (including first 2 unexcused): 5 Points

4 Absences: 15 Points

5 Absences: 25 Points

IMPORTANT: Students with 6 absences will not be able to pass the class. See me to discuss withdrawing/dropping the course.

Grading Policy

Please be aware that a minimum grade of C is necessary for any art major to receive credit for a course in the Department of Visual Arts toward his or her major. In other words, a grade of C- or below will not count as credit towards a degree in any art major.

Each student is responsible for completing all assignments and projects fully and on time, and will be graded on this basis. **In general, you should be prepared to spend a minimum of 6 hours per week outside of class to complete drawing projects.** Your grade for the course will be determined not only by the development of your work throughout the class, but also by your full participation in all aspects of the course, including class discussions, critiques, and work sessions. Letter grades will be determined according to the following guidelines:

- A** Your work consistently embodies dedication and excellence.
- B** Your work meets and, occasionally, exceeds requirements on a consistent basis.
- C** Your work consistently meets minimum requirements of the course.
- D** Your work meets course requirements only occasionally.
- E** Your work consistently fails to meet requirements.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	E	0-59

Evaluation

In order to maintain an atmosphere of dedication and rigor with regard to our study of drawing, I will meet with each of you individually four times during the semester, reviewing recent work and progress on your project, then provide online feedback to you based on our discussions, using a rubric that addresses the content, form, and object criteria discussed above. These marks will indicate my assessment of your work for the ongoing project, taking into consideration your engagement with the goals of a given assignment, effective use of studio time, meaningful participation in discussions/critiques, preparedness in terms of required materials and assigned readings, and attendance. Through this periodic feedback, you will get a sense of how well expectations for the course are being met. Each of these four evaluations will be worth 25 points, for a total possible of 100 points for the term. Our last individual meeting will be scheduled during exam week.

Critiques/Discussion

Critiques are an essential part of the class, and offer us a chance to take stock of how the principles explored in class are being put into practice. Once again, the importance of participation for both your grade and the overall value of this class cannot be overestimated. Remember that, while the term itself implies criticism, it is much more valuable to discuss in precise terms how a drawing is working, rather than to make vague value judgments.

Discussion of formal and conceptual ideas in drawing will be a part of each and every class, whether in a structured or more casual setting. Keep looking at drawing, in whatever form you can, and be ready to bring your observations and questions about what you see into the class discussion.

IMPORTANT: Our schedule, assignments, class materials, and grades will be posted through the **Canvas** system on the **My Courses** menu of your Student Services tab in **eWeber**. You must check this site regularly for discussions, announcements, and messages. I will also communicate with the class through the mail function and announcements in Canvas, which you must check on a regular basis. I will announce class changes (i.e. cancellations) through these channels, and it is each student's responsibility to get current information. The class schedule will be based on our progress, and is subject to change. I will keep everyone informed as to our plans at least a few weeks in advance.

Class policy in the event that unforeseen circumstances necessitate school closures

In the event of an extended campus closure, I will use **Canvas** to provide instruction utilizing that online course system. Text-based mini-lectures will be provided each week and I will expect you to login to the system on a regular basis to keep up with coursework. Assignments will be provided through the online system with clear due dates and expectations. If you should need to communicate with me, please use my regular (Weber) e-mail. If you are not familiar with the Canvas system, please sign up for orientation to the new online learning system as soon as possible.

Note Regarding Course Content

This course may deal with material that may conflict with your core beliefs. It is my judgment that this material is relevant to the discipline I am teaching and has a reasonable relationship to my pedagogical goals. If you do not feel you can continue in this course, please drop it within the designated time frame to do so without penalty. I am not willing to make alternative assignments to the material in the syllabus.

PP-M 6-22 outlines the procedure for students to follow:

Determine before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with the student's core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs.

University Policy: Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

Materials

In this course, where more advanced students will be working on developing a coherent and unified body of work, I will allow you to choose the media in which you draw. You may use whatever media are practical and appropriate to your ideas. I encourage you to think boldly and experimentally in terms of “defining” drawing for

yourself, in order to find the tools that suit your content. You also need not stick with one choice as to medium for the whole semester.

For our periodic in-studio drawing assignments, I will from time to time require changes of media to deal with specific issues, and whenever possible will supply materials in these cases.