



aces ECA

Educational Center for the Arts

VISUAL ARTS
DEPARTMENT

Course Descriptions

Four-Dimensional Design/Digital Fabrication I

4D Design / Digital Fabrication I introduces students to the creative and conceptual aspects of designing media arts experiences and objects, including techniques, genres and styles from various mediums and forms, such as moving image, sound, spatial and interactive design. Students work with a diverse array of unique and experimental approaches that explore 3D modeling and fabrication, photogrammetry, virtual and augmented reality, time-based and interactive media. Art history and theory lectures, museum and gallery visits, peer-to-peer workshops, and written reflections are incorporated into all 4D Design classes. Students will share their work in critiques and participate in class discussions in order to develop skills in both formulating ideas for their work and the technical processes required. Students will learn the fundamentals of composing, capturing, processing and programming of media arts objects, create a series of media-based artworks, and explore the contextual, cultural, and historical aspects of digital art.

Four-Dimensional Design/Digital Fabrication II

In this course, students continue to explore the creative and conceptual aspects of 4D Design / Digital Fabrication I with greater emphasis on technical precision and employing coding to create interactions in open sandbox environments. Student projects are designed to encourage experimentation with advanced use of modeling and motion software and cross-platform technology. Emphasis is placed on building a greater understanding of digital art aesthetics and contemporary art practices using digital design and fabrication.



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Digital Photography I

Digital Photography I focuses on the creation of original artwork with the use of a digital SLR camera and the utilization of Adobe Lightroom and Adobe Photoshop. Students will become adept at the use of manually-operated cameras, understanding exposure and the relation between camera controls and the aesthetics of the captured photograph. Students will gain a foundational understanding of the components of digital files including color spaces, bit depth, file format, and resolution, and how these factors relate to the editing and refining of photographs as well as in the translation of media across devices and from a digital form to an inkjet print. This Digital Photography course provides an in-depth look at a variety of both historical and contemporary artists and the role of digital technology within commercial and creative industries. Students will explore the relationship between context, concept and content as we examine the connection between the meaning that artwork expresses and the form of its final output. Students will share their work in critiques and participate in class discussions in order to develop skills in both formulating ideas for images and their technical execution. Students' work will be exhibited and displayed as archival pigments prints, made on an Epson photographic printer.

Digital Photography II

In this course students explore techniques and concepts in digital photography in greater depth, and practice developing interconnectedness of ideas, form, technique, and execution through the medium of photography. Students will develop conceptually cohesive bodies of work that demonstrate their advanced photographic abilities, fluency within the Photoshop and Lightroom environments, and their understanding of their work in the context of the history of photography and contemporary art.



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New Ways of Seeing

In this exploratory foundation course, students study a variety of two-dimensional artmaking practices in a range of media. Students build their observational drawing skills with charcoal and pastel, creating self portraits and life-drawings from a clothed figure model, and drawing a large-scale collaboratively created sculpture with graphite and ink. Through painting, students explore strategies of abstraction to create an imagined world, populated with sections of observed landscape and architecture. Students study color, composition, texture and develop visual language for personal expression by experimenting with collage. By completion of this foundational course, students strengthen their understanding of the Elements of Art and Principles of Design. Students develop new visual vocabulary in New Ways of Seeing that they will build upon in future classes at ECA.

Black & White Darkroom Photography

Black and White Darkroom Photography courses are designed to provide instruction and experience in analog film photography with manual cameras and a traditional film wet-process darkroom through a combination of historical lectures, hands-on demonstrations and guided work sessions. All students are provided with a manual Single-Lens Reflex 35mm film camera for the duration of the course and will learn the features and functions of the camera including loading film, adjusting ISO, shutter speed, aperture and depth of field. Students will learn how to properly expose, develop and hand process film. All students will work in the darkroom to learn the process of negative enlargement, creating contact sheets and test strips, using filters, dodging and burning to control exposure, basic darkroom chemistry, and developing final prints. Each quarter is centered on a theme or concept, which is explored through the study of both contemporary and historic artists. Students complete several directed assignments and develop and execute their own individualized final projects which center on the specific theme of the course. Each student ends the course with a coherent body of finished images that are displayed as part of the quarterly Student Exhibition.



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Portfolio Seminar

In the Portfolio Seminar course, Juniors and Seniors prepare their physical and digital art portfolios for the college application process, in addition to creating new artwork both independently and as a class. Students will create research and concept-based independent projects, learn professional 2D, 3D, and 4D art documentation and digital editing techniques, create a curated digital and physical portfolio to be presented at Portfolio Day, craft a thoughtful and dynamic artist statement, and learn/practice advanced digital image, portfolio and media management strategies. Each student will have an individual portfolio review with faculty and develop a guided plan for independent work to expand the breadth or depth of their portfolio. Students participate in small group workshops on portfolio curation strategies to reflect each student's unique creative strengths. The course culminates with all students participating in individual portfolio-based interviews during our annual Visual Arts Department Portfolio Day, a private college fair featuring counselors representing the top twenty five to thirty art schools in the country.

Interdisciplinary Media

Students explore contemporary art practices that combine multiple disciplines, media and processes with an emphasis on 3D, 4D and technology-based approaches, such as multi-media installation, projection mapping, site-specific and interactive experiences, sound art, performance, social practice and relational art forms. Students develop collaborative or individual concept and research-based projects in an experimental studio laboratory environment including a digital media lab and sculpture studio/shop. Gallery visits, class discussions, lectures and critiques enhance students' understanding of the creative possibilities of interdisciplinary art and the development of a personal visual language. Student work will be created for exhibition in site-specific settings on campus or in off-site professional galleries or local provisional spaces.



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Sculpture I

Sculpture I is designed to introduce students to foundational methods of creating three-dimensional art. Students create artworks based on criteria and guidelines which are designed to develop and enhance students' understanding of form, structure, scale, materials, and techniques. Students learn to interpret and analyze artwork for conceptual, formal, cultural, and personal meaning through museum and gallery trips, architectural tours, group critiques, visiting artist workshops, and art history and theory lectures. Students explore the properties and expressive qualities of various materials as they design and build sculptural objects and develop spatial problem-solving and technical skills in three-dimensional form-making using additive, reductive, replicative and assemblage techniques. All students are trained in basic shop, tool and equipment use and safety practices. Students display their artwork in a final student exhibition at the end of the course.

Sculpture II

Sculpture II is a continuation of the exploration of materials, forms and techniques with an emphasis on advanced technical processes and student-designed concept and research-based projects. Topics may include casting, figuration/anatomy, large-scale forms, site-specific installation, analog to digital workflow and conceptual explorations. Gallery visits, class discussions, lectures and critiques are designed to deepen students' understanding of spatial, environmental and historical contexts and the development of a personal visual language.



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Painting I

Painting I introduces students to paint as an expressive tool. Through a wide range of foundational experiences, students learn about painting tools and techniques, how to stretch canvas and prepare painting surfaces, color-mixing, composition, form, and spatial relationships. Students produce representational and/or abstract art depending on the quarterly theme and engage with a variety of subjects ranging from still-life, interiors, self portraits, abstraction and the figure. Museum and gallery trips, visiting artist workshops and art historical discussions help students develop their understanding of paint as a personally expressive medium so they can develop, practice and hone their own painterly language. Each student completes the course with a coherent body of work to be presented in the departmental Student Exhibition.

Painting II

Painting II students explore advanced techniques and concepts in painting to expand their visual vocabulary and approaches to pictorial construction. Students develop their own projects based on course topics and guided parameters designed to raise questions about color, surface, scale, technique, historical context. Gallery visits, art lectures and discussions about art historical precedent, surface and support, abstract versus representational strategies, and more enhancing students' understanding of the interconnectedness of ideas to form, technique, and execution. Students will create a cohesive body of work to be exhibited at the end of the quarter.



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Drawing I

Drawing I is a comprehensive, foundational, hands-on introduction to the techniques, processes, and principles involved in the creation of observational and abstract drawing. A variety of media including graphite, charcoal, ink, watercolor, erasers, collage, and oil pastels are used to study composition, perspective, value, mass, line, texture, and scale. Process is as essential as product; students make studies, sketches, experimental drawings and work of substantial content and duration. Students develop and create individual work based on course topics and guiding parameters. Lectures, discussions and group and individual critiques enhance student's understanding of their work in historic and contemporary art contexts. Students will develop visual and perceptual acuity and deeper understanding of the expressive potential of drawing as a medium. At the end of each course, students have a body of work that is shown in the quarterly student exhibition.

Drawing II

Drawing II students will explore advanced approaches to two-dimensional art-making, building on the fundamental perceptual and technical skills developed in Drawing I. Students will develop an understanding of figurative proportion through work from a live model and experiment with contemporary and traditional processes in wet and dry media with a greater emphasis on developing each student's individual voice. Students will create a cohesive body of work for exhibition in the quarterly student exhibition.



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Printmaking I

Printmaking courses introduce students to the methodologies and concepts of traditional and contemporary printmaking practices in a non-toxic printmaking studio. Students will explore the graphic visual language unique to printmaking and experiment with the elements of composition and design to create editions of multiple prints on a press. Students will learn about technical processes and aspects of printmaking including tools, inks, paper, plate preparation, registration, printing processes and qualities of prints such as overlays, transparency, offset, and multiple images. Through lecture, demonstrations, discussion and critique, students will be introduced to the history and tradition of fine art prints, experimental printmaking processes, relief printing, monotype, intaglio, collagraph and collage. Students will share their work in critiques and participate in class discussions, and show their work in a student exhibition at the end of the course.

Printmaking II

Printmaking II students will build on foundational skills developed in Printmaking I, exploring advanced techniques and approaches to creating graphic images in multiples. Greater emphasis is placed on student decision-making in regards to concept development, process, formal considerations and technical execution. Students will complete several directed assignments and develop their own individualized final projects. Each student ends the course with a coherent body of finished images that are displayed as part of the quarterly Student Exhibition.



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Video Art

Video Art I provides students with the opportunity to develop foundational skills and knowledge in cinema, sound, video, lighting, digital live production, and electronic time-based media. Students will learn to use modern software applications that are related primarily to communication technologies including Premiere Pro, Audition, Media Encoder, After Effects, iMovie, VLC, Procreate, Photoshop, Clip Studio Art, and stop motion apps. Students will experiment with digital and analog technologies, hack obsolete technologies and work with both PC and Mac platforms. Students will learn file management in coordination with different technologies and gain technical competencies. Students will explore individual or collaborative projects in the form of single or multi-channel videos, video or multimedia installations, synchronous or asynchronous video, closed circuit live video, site specific projection installation, digital live stream, live performance or documentation of live performance. Students engage in critique of their multimedia work, that of others, and the multimedia video, digital, and live production work of practicing artists for the purpose of reflecting on and refining work for presentation.

Video Art II

In Video Art II students continue to explore the creative and conceptual possibilities of video and multimedia art with greater emphasis on technical precision and advanced use of equipment, software and cross-platform technology. Student projects are designed to encourage deeper exploration of contemporary social, cultural, personal and political issues. Lectures and discussions on the history and development of multiple forms of media including combinations of text, audio, still images, animation, video, interactive content, and installation enhance students' understanding of video art aesthetics and contemporary art practices using multimedia processes, and of video art as a personally expressive medium.