Art 101A: Visual Concepts I  
Spring 2010  
Monday and Wednesday 1-3:50

Elise Richman  
Office Hours: Wednesday 4-5:00, Friday 10:30-12:30, and by appointment  
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Course Description

Art 101: Visual Concepts I examines the nature of drawing and 2-dimensional design as inter-related means of visual thinking. The purpose of this course is to introduce a shared visual language that heightens perceptual sensitivity, explores visual relationships, conveys ideas, and expresses sensory and psychological experiences. A primary focus of the class is learning to see more acutely. In order to hone perceptual skills, we will work from observation as well as explore abstract compositional problems. As a means of broadening expressive possibilities, a variety of subjects, materials, techniques, and methods will be explored. Throughout the semester students will engage in writing and sketching exercises as well as generate more sustained, involved projects.

Goals

1) To develop and hone technical skills and build familiarity with a range of materials and tools.  
2) To build an understanding of formal elements and principles, which underlie visual phenomena.  
3) To cultivate a sense of personal vision and investment through the act of drawing.  
4) To develop critical and analytical abilities used in discussing and considering visual art.

Content

1) The course begins with an overview of formal and technical issues such as line, value, perspective, and proportion using a variety of media and approaches.  
2) While continuing to build skills, as the course progresses, formal elements and various materials will be applied to communicate ideas and evoke moods on a more conceptual and metaphorical level.  
3) Class critiques will provide the opportunity to develop critical judgment and a visual vocabulary.

Student Responsibilities

1) Attendance is critical. However, given that minor illnesses and unexpected obligations may arise, two unexcused absences are permitted without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence results in a five point drop in your final grade. In other words, each additional unexcused absence reduces your grade by half a letter. Excused absences require a written explanation such as a doctor’s note. Five or more absences, excused or unexcused, result in failure of the class.  
2) Complete and submit assignments on time. Late assignments will be reduced by one letter grade for each day they are late, including weekends.  
3) Midterm and final portfolios will not be accepted after the due date.
4) Attend all class critiques.
5) Participate in class discussions and critiques.
6) Arrive on time and come to class prepared. Tardiness and premature departure will be penalized with a loss of points. Three tardies and/or pre-mature departures equal one unexcused absence. If you are more than fifteen minutes late for class or leave more than fifteen minutes before class is over, you will be counted as absent.

**Studio Environment**
- The classroom is a shared space. You must clean up after yourself on a daily basis.
- Do not cut directly on the drafting tables. The back of your drawing pads works well as a cutting surface.
- Do not cut painted paper with the paper or mat cutters.
- When using wet media such as ink and acrylic paint, cover the tabletops with Kraft paper.
- Socialize outside of class.
- Turn off cell phones before class begins.

The studio is like a laboratory, a space for experimentation, discovery, and the hands-on development of ideas. As such, it is necessary to jointly create an atmosphere that is conducive to promoting the development of each student’s creative process.

**Grades**
The quality (craftsmanship and convincingness) and conceptual understanding of assignments will determine 80% of each grade. Class participation in critiques and discussions and writing assignments will determine the remaining 20%. The following point system provides the basis for your final grade:

- **In Class and Preparatory Exercises:** 20%
- **Sketchbook/Journal:** 10%
- **Major Assignments:** 50%
- **Critiques, Class Discussion, and Participation:** 10%
- **Writing Assignments:** 10%

**Expect to spend 5-9 hours per week on homework.**

**A 93-100%**
- **A- 90-92%**: Excellent understanding of concepts, creative approaches to assignments, well crafted work. Full engagement in the artistic process and notable progress made throughout the semester.

**B+ 87-89%**, **B 83-86%**, **B- 80-82%**: Very good work and consistent engagement in the artistic process.

**C+ 77-79%**, **C 73-76%**, **C- 70-72%**: Good/average work, uneven engagement and participation in class critiques, discussions, and assignments.

**D+ 67-69%**, **D 63-66%**, **D- 60-62%**: Poor work and lack of engagement in class.
F 59% or lower: Failure to grasp goals of course and/or 4 or more absences.

Keep all work produced throughout the semester. The sum of all exercises and projects as well as your sketchbook/journal will form your final portfolio, which will be evaluated at the end of the semester.

Improvement and growth throughout the course will be factored into your grade. Please feel free to discuss your progress in the course with me at anytime!
I want to accommodate all students. Please inform me as soon as possible of any disabilities.

Course Outline

Week One and Two
1/20, 1/25, and 1/27: Visual Field: An Introduction
Explore how line and shape can act as spatial markers and compositional elements that create underlying visual forces/dynamics in the work of established artists.
Materials and Tools: Ink and Bristol board, Photoshop

Mike Johnson and Ted Vogel Opening Reception in the Kittredge Gallery, 1/20, 4-6:00

Week Three and Four
2/1, 2/3, 2/8, and 2/10: Line and Form
Express form using gestural line. Use organizational line to measure and analyze proportional relationships. Consider line as a boundary, delineating outside contours.
Materials: Graphite and Charcoal

Week Five
2/15, 2/17: Figure/Ground, Positive/Negative Shape
Clarify and emphasize the mutually interdependent shapes that form the basis of figurative and many abstract compositions.
Materials: Black and White Acrylic Paint, Collage

Week Five and Six
2/22, 2/24, 3/1, and 3/3: Shapes as Planes, Value as Light
Create the illusion of dimension by pairing planar analysis and value relationships. Explore how value relationships create a sense of light and mass. Examine the shape of shadows and highlights and how these shapes are determined by the light source as well as how planes shift direction in space. Manipulate materials to control quality of edges, create tonal variations, and modulate or blend tones.
Materials: Graphite and Charcoal

Lisa Sweet Opening Reception in the Kittredge Gallery, 3/3, 4-6:00

Week Seven and Eight
3/8, 3/10, 3/22, and 3/24: Space: Linear and Atmospheric Perspective
Use organizational line and sighting; evaluate base lines and points of intersection to create accurate proportional relationships and the sensation of space. Learn the laws of one and
two point perspective. Use value, relative scale, and varying qualities of edges to create the illusion of space and depth.
Materials: Graphite, Charcoal, and Ink

No Class 3/15-19 Spring Recess

Week Nine and Ten
3/29, 3/31, 4/5, and 4/7: Composition: Shape Texture and Visual Weight
Explore how the character of shape, texture, and placement in the picture plane carry visual weight. Consider compositional elements such as shapes, lines, and marks as visual forces. Activate these forces within several different compositional structures.
Materials: Ink and Black and White Acrylic Paint

Week Eleven through Fourteen
4/12, 4/14, 4/19, 4/21, 4/26, 4/28: Color and Composition
An introduction to the three properties of color and the ways in which different color schemes inform and affect compositional dynamics.

Senior Art Show Opening Reception in the Kittredge Gallery, 4/22, 5-7:00 pm

Week Fifteen:
5/5, 5/7, Final Project: History Redrawn

Due: 5/12, day of scheduled final critique, 12-2:00

This schedule is subject to change.
Materials List
Art 101
Richman

Art Kit

Dry Media
Vine Charcoal
2 Compressed Charcoal Sticks
2B, 4B, 6B Graphite Sticks
Charcoal Pencil

Erasers
Kneaded Eraser
Gum Eraser
Staedler Eraser

Brushes and Pens
Crow Quill 102 Holder
Crow Quill 102 Nib
#4 Round Brush
#6, #8 Flat Brushes
#6 Sumi Ink Brush

Wet Media
India Ink
Acrylic Paint:
Hansa Yellow Light
Napthol Red
Quinacridone Rose
Ultramarine Blue
Phalo Blue
Titanium White (750 ml)
Mars Black

Miscellaneous
Pencil Sharpener
Blending Stumps (a small and large one)
Exacto Knife
Scissors
Plastic Palette Knife
Drafting Tape

Paper
17”x14” Bristol Board Pad
24”x18” Strathmore 400 Series Drawing Pad
24”x18” Newsprint Pad
22”x30” Hot Press (smooth) Watercolor Sheet
22”x30” Rives Heavyweight Paper
Notebook Sized Sketchbook

Additional Supplies
18-24” Metal Ruler
24”x36” Portfolio
Palette (plastic or ceramic plate, sheet of Plexiglas, or disposable palettes)
Jar or Cup for Water

**Art Supply Stores**

Arteco  
5401 6th Ave Ste 401  
Tacoma, WA 98406  
Phone: (253) 759-9585

Tacoma Art Supply  
1552 Jefferson Ave., Suite 101  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
(253) 444-2341  
info@tacomaartsupply.com

Utrecht  
1124 Pike Street  
Seattle, WA 98101  
Phone: (206) 382-9696

Daniel Smith  
4150 First Avenue South  
Seattle, Washington 98134  
(206) 223-9599

Artist and Craftsman Supply  
809 Northeast 45th Street  
Seattle, WA 98105  
(206) 545-0091
Bibliography


Dexter, Emma. *Vitamin D: New Perspectives in Drawing.*
New York: Phaidon Press, 2005

Brock, Charles. *Charles Scheeler: Across Media*