



EAST TEXAS A&M

UNIVERSITY

ARS 503 (Section 01E): Grad Seminar, 20396

COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2025

EAST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Instructor: Josephine Durkin

GA: Vinusha Pukkalla

Office Location: Sculpture Lab, and A116

Office Hours: Thursdays, 4:45 - 5:45 p.m. and by appointment

Office Phone: 903.886.5208

Email: Josephine.Durkin@tamuc.edu

Class Information

Spring 2025: 1/13/2025 through 5/9/2025

Credits: 3.00

Meeting times: Thursdays, 6-9 p.m.

Location: Sculpture Lab (ASL 119) + grad studios and other locations, as needed

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Make sure to email both me and Vinusha

Response Time: 24-48 hours during weekdays

Course Description

This course works to strengthen individual (and team) problem solving skills, as it relates to writing, research, critique and studio strategies.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

- Discuss class readings and student-driven research
- Discuss the relationship between material and meaning
- Discuss the relationship between artists, viewers and affect
- Discuss strategies involving processes, materials and installation methods
- Discuss art formally and conceptually
- Demonstrate knowledge about quality craftsmanship
- Demonstrate the ability to respond to, and talk about their work and the work of others
- Demonstrate the importance of documentation through a professional website of their work
- Demonstrate the ability to talk about their work directly, openly and organically, as well as the work of their peers and other artists
- Demonstrate the ability to write a strong, specific and concise artist statement using specific strategies given in class
- Demonstrate and discuss research, as well as various research approaches
- Demonstrate growth as it applies to technical, material and installation-based practices

Course Requirements

Textbooks, Technologies and Materials

Textbook(s) Required: No textbook is required.

Software Required: You will need a camera or cell phone to take photographs (and possibly video) of your work. You will need to use either a free or paid for website host for your website. Options will be discussed. Please contact the instructor and GA if you have questions or concerns about using the technology.

Suggested Text Books And Resources

- Gallery and museum websites
- Art 21(free, online videos)

- Other online research (technical and material)

Required Materials

Individual tools:

Sketch book

Pencils and pens

Tools and materials specific to individual project needs

Write your name on all your tools and supplies. Make sure to label your materials and projects when storing them in the storage area.

Instructional Methods

This course is 16 weeks long. It will consist of:

Lectures

Discussion of readings, research and your studio work

Writing Workshops

Demos of materials and techniques

Short-term projects

Website portfolio

In-progress, constructive feedback throughout the course

Expectations

1. Working in and outside of class is required. Expect to spend at least 6 hours per week outside of class to pass this class. Access to the studio at night and on weekends (with the exception of holidays) will be through the swipecard system.
2. Completion of required work by the critique dates is required.
3. Criticism and discussion are important aspects of artistic activity and development. Attendance and active, thoughtful verbal participation at all critiques is mandatory.
4. Participation in class activities, including installation, critique, meetings and clean-up is required. Making art often requires teamwork and group problem solving - both technically and conceptually!

5. Students are expected to engage in personal research, depending on project needs. This includes visits to galleries and museums in the DFW area.
6. Students are expected to attend all exhibitions in The University Gallery as well as other events hosted by the Department of Art.
7. General Studio Rules:

Clean up at the end of each class.

Specific safety rules will be given at the beginning of the semester.

Grading

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

90-100% A | 80-89% B | 70-79% C | 60-69% D | 0-59% F

Assignment Grading Details:

Grading is based on a completion of course assignments, quality of individual technical and critical development, personal commitment and ability to work in a community studio setting. Personal commitment involves regular attendance, consistent effort, following demos and instructions, completion of work and participation in group critiques, as well as the willingness to try new things and take creative risks. This includes technical and material problem solving. In addition to learning from me, students learn from each other as well as outside of class, safely, on their own- through the process of learning by doing, trial and error. Successfully finding out what does and doesn't work is valuable - and should be shared with the group to add material and technical knowledge to our growing "toolboxes".

Assignments: 80%

Class participation: 20%

Late Work:

Assignments may not be turned in late unless there is a legitimate documented emergency. You must contact me before the due date and ask for an extension. I will consider each request on a case-by-case basis. Late assignments will automatically lose 20% of the grade and must be submitted by the final critique.

Assignment Submission & Format:

All work is due completed by the due date listed in the assignment. **Images of your finished projects should be posted in the assignment in D2L, within a week of the critique, to receive full credit. Turning assignments in via D2L is not a substitute for turning them in in-person. Assignments will not be graded in D2L unless they are first turned in in-person. Due dates may change if needed.**

Assessments

Projects will be graded as follows:

A (Excellent) will be given to ambitious projects that demonstrate superior conceptual, expressive, and technical abilities. A sustained and committed work ethic must be evident.

B (Good) will be given to those projects that complete the requirements of the assignment in a creative manner, display a good level of technique, and in which a good work ethic is evident.

C (Average) is given to those projects that satisfy the specifications of the assignment on an adequate level. Reasonable effort has been demonstrated in order to complete the assignments.

D (Passing - Minimum) will be given to those projects which attempt to address the assignments but which fall short in understanding, creativity of solution, quality of technique, and effort.

F (Failure) is given to projects that show a complete lack of understanding, creativity, and effort.

Course Procedures and Policies

Attendance Policy

Attendance is critical for your success in this course. Students are expected to be present in each class, with materials ready to work. Demos and critiques will usually start about 20 minutes after the start of class - so make sure to not miss a demo or critique. Due to the physical nature of the environment and processes, clean-up as well as lab set up (covering tables, etc. for demos) is a team effort. Missing this teamwork will negatively affect your grade. You may not miss a critique unless it is arranged in advance, or due to documented emergencies. No distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences. Please contact the instructor in advance of any absence. Students are expected to communicate with each other, as well as the GA, to catch up on homework and demos. Demos and homework direction will not be repeated in their full capacity. Should you need to miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact other students and the GA, in order to keep up with the homework, projects and information provided in class.

Studio culture and cell phone usage

We will be working together in a shared space. Each student is expected to treat other students, the instructor and GA with respect. Cell phones should either be turned off or muted. In the case that you are expecting a call related to a family emergency, please let me, as well as Vinusha know at the beginning of class. In this instance, you are expected to step outside of the class to take the call before answering it. Should you need to do online research for your current projects in this class, please let me and Vinusha know. Students are not permitted to engage in online research during lectures and demonstrations.

For the health and safety of everyone, please clean up your workspace, table, floor and all tools and equipment that you used before you leave the studio. Good life, very much appreciated, life rule of thumb: Always leave the studio (or any other space) cleaner than you found it!

Headphones: You may wear headphones when working on your individual, long-term projects, but may not wear them during announcements, lectures, demos,

discussions, clean-up, group set-up or critiques. This is a safety issue, and is necessary for your progress in this class.

Video and audio recording is prohibited during this class. In certain circumstances, please discuss and gain permission in advance (documenting certain projects and processes for reference and presentation).

Respect for Diversity

Each student is welcome, and should also *feel* welcome in this class. Everyone is different, as well as embraced (gender, age, race, orientation, etc.), and offers their unique life experiences, perspectives and histories. This adds to our shared learning environment, as well as the work that we make and discuss! Should you have any concerns, please let me know so I can assist. I want to make sure that each student feels welcome, safe and valued in my class.

Safety

Always wear closed-toe shoes and studio-appropriate clothes that you can work in. It is important that your body be protected from certain tools and materials. Athletic wear (shorts, crop tops, flip flops, crocs with holes, etc.) or other minimal clothing is not encouraged for safety reasons. Jeans, work pants, tennis shoes, work boots - clothes that provide coverage that you feel comfortable getting dirty (mold making and casting materials can be messy!) are important to wear. Aprons are great for protecting clothing, and you can also leaving a set of studio clothes in your plastic tote should that work best for you.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Technology Requirements

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

Access and Navigation

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Should you have a personal computer issue, please problem solve as needed. This may include reaching out to a friend or family member to borrow a computer, using computers available at the local library or accessible computer labs on campus, accessing wifi at Starbucks or on campus, etc.

Communication and Support

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor (and the GA).

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students 'Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling

Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit

www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Department of Art, Health and Safety Guidelines: All students enrolled in face-to-face art courses are required to comply with the procedures and policies of the Department of Art's Health and Safety Guidelines. The Guidelines cover activities in all East Texas A&M art facilities on both the main campus and off-campus sites. Please report any safety issues immediately to your instructor(s), per health and safety guidelines outlined, studio/lab assistant, or the Department of Art, studio technician & health/safety liaison.

https://inside.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/art/documents/DOA_health_safety_handbook.pdf

Health and Safety Form (to be signed online by all students)

<https://dms.tamuc.edu/Forms/ArtLabPolicy>

Please, click on the following link to access East Texas A&M's Covid 19 Information,

<https://new.tamuc.edu/coronavirus/>

Course Schedule

Course Schedule: Grad Seminar

Thursday, January 16th Welcome

Discuss Goals:

Writing: Artist Statements

Making: Studio Goals

Seeing / Experiencing: Gallery Visits

Readings: (Provided) class articles

+ your individual research (strategies)

Intro, Reading 1: DFW, *Nature of the Fun*

Intro, Writing 1: Stuff means stuff. Things mean things.

Formal Descriptions

ONE, 3 x 3 ft. (approx.) blank sheet of paper / web / map
per work. Choose one to start.

Thursday, January 23rd

Discuss assigned reading.

Discuss maps with your work/earlier + in-progress

Intro, Reading 2

Intro, Maps 2 - 3

Demo/Making: Sewing Machines

Art, Viewer + Affect

Again: Stuff Means Stuff. Things Mean Things.

Matter Matters.

Associations / Tangents / Personal Histories

Visual Pleasure, Craftsmanship, Aesthetics

Material Choice / Sheen / Contrast / Tension

Installation Choices

Conceptual (Context)

Teamwork (Roles): Artists, Directors, Critics

Thursday, January 30th

Intro: Artist Statements (connect maps)

Find commonalities.

	ONE sentence per work
	Discuss assigned reading.
	Intro, Reading 3
	Team challenge: Sewing Machines / Custom Patterns
Thursday, February 6th	Intro: Reading 4, Discussion of reading 3
	Intro/lecture/questions (mold making and casting)
	Tape Casts
	Lifecasting demos/workshop)
Thursday, February 13th	Discussion of Reading 4
	Workshop: Artist Statements
Thursday, February 20th	Workshop: Artist Statements
	Individual Research: Intro, Updates, Discussion
	Gallery Visits (5+)
Thursday, February 27th	Demos + mini crits / studio visits
Thursday, March 6th	Discussion / installation
Thursday, March 13th	Spring Break
Thursday, March 20th	Workshop: Artist Statements (ONE paragraph)
Thursday, March 27th	Group Studio Visits
Thursday, April 3rd	Workshop: Artist Statements + Related Research
Thursday, April 10th	Due: Artist Statements (Draft: ONE page)
Thursday, April 17th	Mini Artist Talks (Themes to Highlight)
Thursday, April 24th	Share (project websites, suggested revisions)
Thursday, May 1st	Mini Artist Talks / Wrap-Up
Thursday, May 8th	Spring Finals Week / Wrap-Up