



East Texas A&M University

ART 397 01E

PUBLIC ART: CONCEPT, PROPOSAL & PRACTICE

Fall 2026

Friday 10am - 3:50 pm

119 Art Sculpture Lab

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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Course Description

ART 397 - Public Art: Concept, Proposal & Practice

Public Art explores the history, theory, and professional practices associated with creating artwork for public spaces. This course introduces students to the social, historical, and technical dimensions of

public art while guiding them through the process of developing and executing a public artwork proposal.

Students will research and analyze significant examples of public art in the United States, with particular emphasis on the mural programs of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the 1920s–1930s and the Chicano Mural Movement. Through lectures, readings, and discussion, the class will examine how public art has historically reflected civic identity, political ideals, and community engagement.

A major component of the course will focus on the professional process of responding to Calls for Proposals (RFPs). Students will learn how to develop a competitive public art proposal including concept development, site analysis, scaled renderings, budgets, and written statements.

The studio portion of the course emphasizes practical strategies for producing large-scale murals and public artworks. Students will explore techniques for enlarging imagery using digital projection, grid systems, and emerging methods such as 3D immersive visualization for planning site-specific work. Murals based on selected proposals will be created using archival and environmentally responsible materials and processes designed to withstand outdoor conditions.

The course will also investigate alternative public venues for art presentation, including window exhibitions, temporary exhibitions, and community-based sites. Through these projects, students will gain experience working beyond the traditional gallery while considering issues of audience, site, and public engagement.

By the end of the course, students will understand the historical foundations of public art, develop professional proposal materials, and produce **completed public-facing artworks** that engage real sites.

ART 397 – Special Topics Organized class dedicated to special topics that are not part of the normal art curriculum. Students are expected to work on special art topics representative of junior-level competency. Topics will vary each semester. Repeatable to 12 semester hours.

Student Learning Outcomes

The student will:

- Identify and discuss significant examples and historical movements in public art.
- Develop professional public art proposals incorporating concept development, site analysis, scaled renderings, budgets, and written statements.
- Apply appropriate materials, tools, and processes in the planning and production of large-scale public artwork.
- Consider site, audience, community, and public engagement in the development of public artwork.
- Professionally present and document completed public-facing artwork.

Textbook and Materials

Textbook: There is no required textbook for this course.

Course Materials: Required readings, artist research resources, proposal examples, videos, and other course materials will be provided through D2L.

Students are responsible for obtaining the materials and supplies necessary to complete course assignments and mural projects. Additional materials may be required as needed based on project requirements.

Assessments and Assignments

Students will complete research, proposal, studio, and public art projects throughout the semester. Course assignments and assessments are organized into the following categories:

Proposals – 25%

Course Mural Proposals #1 & #2, Children's Museum Mural Proposal, and Independent Public Art Call Proposal.

One Collaborative Mural Project – 30%

Collaborative planning, preparation, production, participation, problem-solving, and completion of the mural project.

Window Exhibition – 15%

Preparation, selection of work, installation, participation, documentation, and presentation of the Window Exhibition.

Weekly Discussion Posts + Peer Feedback – 15%

Weekly documentation of work, participation, progress, and collaboration throughout the course.

Preliminary Work, Studies & Research – 15%

Artist Research & Introduction Presentation, material studies, VR studies, projector drawing experiments, sketches, planning, and other preliminary work supporting the major projects.

Detailed assignment requirements, deadlines, and submission guidelines will be provided throughout the course.

Grading

Assignments	Weight / %
Proposals	20
Collaborative Mural Project (Mural #1 or #2)	30
Window Exhibition	15
Weekly Discussion Posts	20
Preliminary Work, Studies & Research	15
Total	100 points / 100%

FINAL GRADES

A = 90–100%

B = 80–89%

C = 70–79%

D = 60–69%

F = 59% or Below

GRADING SCALE

A—Excellent Work: All requirements have been met and many have been exceeded. Work demonstrates strong technical and conceptual development, thoughtful use of materials and processes, experimentation, and continued growth. Critical and conceptual understanding is demonstrated through studio participation, research, and critique.

B—Very Good Work: Course requirements have been met. Work demonstrates competence in technical skills, materials, processes, craftsmanship, and conceptual development, with thoughtful engagement in the course.

C—Average Work: Course requirements have been adequately fulfilled. Work demonstrates satisfactory technical and conceptual development and participation in critiques, midterms, and finals.

D—Poor Work: Course requirements have not been adequately fulfilled.

F—Failure: Course requirements have not been fulfilled and/or there has been insufficient participation, preparation, or completion of assigned work.

Course Guidelines and Policies

Attendance & Participation

Regular and punctual attendance is expected and required. Art is a practice-based discipline, and this collaborative course requires active and dedicated participation. Students are expected to attend each class for the entire class period.

Because this is a collaborative, site-based course, **absences must be made up independently**. After the first absence, students must make up **1.5 times the number of class hours missed**, generally at the mural site or through another make-up activity approved by the instructors. **All absences must be made up by the end of the mural project**, and documentation must be submitted to the faculty within one week of completion.

Students will receive a **letter grade deduction for their third absence and each additional absence, regardless of whether the absence is made up**. Being tardy for class equals **½ of an absence**. Making up missed class hours does not replace attendance or remove an absence from the attendance record.

Lectures, demonstrations, and assignments will not be repeated for students who arrive late or have an unexcused absence. **In-class assignments missed due to an absence may only be made up with official documentation of an excused absence under ETAMU policy. Due to the nature of critiques, they may not be made up.** Students are responsible for finding out what they missed and what is expected from classmates and D2L.

Administrative Drop Policy for Attendance

If a student has been absent for **40% or more of the course at the midterm/midpoint of the semester**, they will receive an administrative drop from the course and will need to re-take the class when they are better able to attend and successfully complete the course.

Late Work

Assignments are due on the dates listed in the course calendar and D2L. **Final proposal deadlines, weekly discussion posts, sketches, preliminary work, and other time-specific assignments cannot be submitted late due to the nature of the course.**

Because this is a collaborative, project-based course, students are expected to complete and submit work by the stated deadlines.

Course Expectations

This is a studio/seminar course with a strong emphasis on active participation, research, preparation, and production. Students are expected to make full use of class time, complete required work outside of class, and come to class prepared to work.

Students are expected to participate professionally and respectfully in lectures, discussions, critiques, research, collaborative projects, and mural production. Students are responsible for communicating with the instructors, keeping up with D2L, and completing work by the stated deadlines.

Because the course includes collaborative and site-based projects, students are expected to contribute to the work of the class and to communicate effectively with their classmates and instructors throughout the production process.

Class Participation & Professionalism:

Participation is very important in studio and seminar classes. You are expected to participate fully, actively, and professionally in class. This means that you work efficiently and effectively both individually and within small groups. You are also encouraged to speak up and to share your thoughts in discussion and critique.

Professional and respectful conduct is expected from everyone at all times. The use (even silent use) of cell phones is absolutely prohibited during class. Please turn these items off, and do not take them out during class. Each time your phone rings or vibrates in my class, your final grade will drop by two points. Each time I notice you texting or otherwise engaging in social media or games in class (on any device), your final grade will drop by two points.

Safety

Students are expected to follow all studio, equipment, material, and site-specific safety procedures. Come to class prepared to work and wear appropriate clothing and footwear for studio and mural work.

Students must follow all safety instructions and demonstrations provided by the instructors and must ask for assistance when they are unsure about a material, tool, equipment, or procedure. Do not use equipment or tools without appropriate instruction and approval.

Students are responsible for maintaining a safe and clean work area and for working respectfully and safely around classmates, instructors, equipment, and the public.

Additional safety requirements may apply to specific materials, equipment, mural sites, or off-site work.

Studio Safety & Handbook

Health and Safety Handbook

The Art Department's Health and Safety Handbook provides important information about working safely in the studios. Students should review the section specific to their studio area.

[ETAMU Art Department Health and Safety Handbook](#)

Health and Safety Agreement Form

All students enrolled in Art courses must read the Health and Safety Handbook and complete the Health and Safety Agreement Form for their studio area.

[Health and Safety Agreement Form](#)

This requirement applies to all studio courses and must be completed by the first week of class.

Technology & D2L

Students are responsible for regularly checking D2L and course announcements and for submitting assignments through D2L as directed. Students should make sure they have reliable access to the internet and the technology needed to complete and submit digital work.

Course materials, assignment instructions, deadlines, research resources, and announcements will be provided through D2L.

Students are responsible for keeping digital copies of their work and documentation throughout the semester.

AI Use Course Policy

Generative AI & Student Responsibility to Document Authorship

Generative AI is not permitted in this course for writing, artwork, or other course assignments unless specifically allowed in an individual assignment. When permitted, AI may be used only in the manner and for the purpose outlined in that assignment and may not replace the student's original creative, conceptual, or technical work. Undocumented use of generative AI as original student work constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

All submitted work must be the student's own original work. Students are responsible for documenting their creative process and maintaining evidence of authorship throughout the semester. This is particularly important for digital, hybrid, experimental, and process-based work.

Students are expected to document the process and development of their work, particularly when working digitally or through processes that may be difficult to document after completion. Documentation may include sketches, studies, photographs, process documentation, digital files, layers, screen recordings, time-lapse recordings, or other evidence of development. Process documentation may be requested by the instructor at any point during the course.

Writing & Editing Tools

Students may use **Grammarly or similar AI-assisted software for final proofreading, revision, and editing only**. These tools may not generate or substantially rewrite student writing. Use of these tools should be documented and noted with the corresponding submission when applicable.

Course Schedule & Calendar

Please see attached **Course Schedule & Calendar** for the complete course calendar, including weekly course content, assignments, deadlines, and final exam information.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus and course schedule is subject to change with notice. Any changes will be announced via D2L.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

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: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you are having difficulties with the course material or content, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulties please contact the program technical support resource (ie Adobe or Brightspace) or the ETAMU Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of D2L/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.

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>.

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

Students participating in sports or other University activities can be excused from the Departmental policy if they have made arrangements with the instructor to address missed class-work BEFORE the

scheduled event. A schedule of the days they are planning to perform or play must be provided at the beginning of the semester or at least a month before their first planned absence. Excessive absences may result in the student being administratively dropped from the course.

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedures 13.99.99.R0.01](#)
<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce 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>

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

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Student Disability Services](#) <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-disability-services/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce 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 Texas A&M University-Commerce 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 A&M-Commerce 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 A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

ETAMU AI Use Statement

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed. In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.