



**ART 497.01E CRN 84790 (3cr)**  
**SPECIAL TOPICS: Found Object Sculpture**

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2026

**Instructor Information**

|                           |                                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Instructor:               | Dr. Laurel Jay Carpenter        |
| Office Location:          | ART 208                         |
| Office Hours:             | Monday + Wednesday 3:00-4:00 pm |
| Art Office:               | 903.886.5208                    |
| University Email Address: | laureljay.carpenter@etamu.edu   |

**Whether Mr. Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it. He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view—created a new thought for that object.**

**-Marcel Duchamp, “The Richard Mutt Case,” 1917**

**Course Description**

Through attentive object experiments and spatial investigations in this studio course, students examine the fundamental techniques of found object artwork, using accumulated or altered mass-manufactured or discrete handmade objects in hybrids or series to create artwork in the disciplines of sculpture, installation and/or other socially-engaged 3D forms with humor, tenderness, lovely awkward truths, and other personal meanings. Through research and hands-on experimentation, students will have an opportunity to further appreciate how material, space and intention cooperate to form the basis of three-dimensional art. Direction of the course will be led by student interest and may include traditional assemblage sculpture, site-specific installation and prop-driven participatory artforms, with attention paid to the interaction and collaboration often called upon in large-scale work. Slide presentations, assigned personal research, contemporary art readings and discussions will further explore the historical, theoretical and popular aspects of the found object in art.

Class trips to source materials will be arranged to collect inexpensive vintage, second-hand, and manufactured materials from junk shops, old barns, dollar stores, and hardware stores. Support in researching and requesting local donations will also be provided. Old t-shirts! Clock parts! Broken Barbies! Plastic Combs! Garden tools! Kitchen Sponges! Butter Wrappers! The possibilities are endless.

Speculative inquiry, curiosity, creative risk-taking and sharing of resources is highly encouraged!

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

## **Working Methods**

This is a studio course including a theoretical component as introduction to, and grounding for extended discourse. Image/video presentations, readings, class discussion and critique will introduce a variety approaches to making and understanding this work. Class sessions will include work time, collection excursions, presentations and discussions of contemporary artwork, and critiques of students' works-in-progress and final works.

## **Materials**

Students should have a sketchbook (at least 8 ½" x 11") and pencil/pens/drawing tools for each class. Other materials will be necessary as projects develop, and will be specific to each student; as the professor, I will always endeavor to source and provide whatever materials possible. However, you must prepare to be resourceful (perhaps the most important skill for any artist!) to support your own ideas and projects.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Become familiar with the theory and practice of the field of found object art.
- Demonstrate a deepening commitment and responsibility to personal expression using this discipline as a space of learning.
- Decode and manipulate the social, cultural, and historic imprints surrounding the notions of object, ownership, space and place.
- Discover practical, real-world tools and methods for conceiving, designing, and implementing art projects beyond traditional materials and forms.
- Challenge your own and viewers' expectations of your material, tools and content.
- Distinguish between inspiration, subject matter, form, content and context.
- Increase access to critical language concerning the work being made by—and the art historically significant methodologies of—leaders in the field. Also increase access to critical language concerning your own work, and the work of your peers.

## **Minimal Digital Skills Needed**

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L course shell, Microsoft Office, and Zoom or other video conferencing platform.

## **Course Expectations**

Your work and activity in class will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Your self-motivated, sustained and thoughtful attention to your work, and the reflection of that attentiveness in the quality in your completed assignments.
2. Your genuine commitment to the class and the course as reflected in your:
  - Attendance and preparedness for each class, including studio work time and discussions
  - Active participation in class activity, discussion and critique
  - Honoring assignment due dates
3. Your cooperation in collaborative production processes, and in maintaining a safe and productive environment.

## GRADING

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

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

A = 451- 500 Points

B = 401- 450 Points

C = 351- 400 Points

D = 301- 350 Points

F = 300 & > Points

Since practice and theory will be integrated in this course, each of the component/project grades will be determined by the quality of the student's artwork and the accompanying proposal/project statement, and participation in classroom discussions and critiques. Students are required to maintain a sketchbook of images and ideas, which will also support the grade for each unit.

Attendance is emphasized, as the class is composed of lectures/discussions and studio practice. Students should expect to be in class at all times and email Dr. C if you have an urgent issue that prevents attendance before class takes place. 3 late appearances/early departures count as an absence; 3 absences result in a reduced letter grade – no exceptions. Any late work will result in a lower grade, unless delays are cleared in advance in discussions with the professor. Cell phones must be turned off before class begins, unless they are being actively used for art production.

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Semester-Long Sketchbook             | 10% |
| Explorations:                        |     |
| Self Portrait                        | 10% |
| 2 Objects/Hybrid                     | 15% |
| De/Reconstruct                       | 15% |
| Mash Up                              | 15% |
| Found Object Star                    | 15% |
| Final Mystery Material Collaboration | 20% |

Your written responses/statements and shared discussion concerning each project, as well as the associated research collected in the Sketchbook, comprises a component of each project grade.

Note: Students who show significant investment and improvement over the duration of the semester may be rewarded by a slightly higher grade, especially when the average is borderline.

## **Other class requirements include:**

### SketchBook

Please keep a written and visual reflection of your class and project experience. The Sketchbook should include, but is not limited to: art-specific journaling; project idea/proposal notes and sketches; written and visual research, influences, and references; post-assignment reflection; class/critique notes and questions; artist research, etc. You must bring this to every working class. We will use it frequently to communicate visually. I will periodically flip through the book with you, using it as a way of communicating about conceptual work, but I will not collect nor read from it without your approval, so feel free to make it any form that supports your personal process.

### Documentation

Students are required to document all projects. A wide variety of documentation strategies will be encouraged.

### Class Time Commitment

Be on time to class, and expect to be working for the full duration of each class period. Late arrival and early departure are not acceptable, and consistently doing so will constitute an absence. More than three absences will lower your final grade by a step. Missing a presentation or critique of your own or other's work will also lower your grade on that project by step.

### Outside Time Commitment

Expect to do a significant amount of work every week outside of class. If you expect more than an average evaluation of your work, give your work more than average time and attention.

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## **UNIVERSITY-WIDE INFORMATION FOR EVERY COURSE**

### **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](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](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](mailto: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 ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and Announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

#### **Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:**

- Course name and subject in the subject line
- Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Carpenter)
- Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)

### 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 on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### 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.

### Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable

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behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The [Code of Student Conduct](#) is described in detail online 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 view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

<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/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm01d.pdf>

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

## **Artificial Intelligence (AI) use policy [as of May 25, 2023]**

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.

### **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](mailto: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.

### **ETAMU Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at ETAMU, 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](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



### **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 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.

<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.