ASTU 5600: MFA Praxis
University of North Texas College of Visual Arts and Design
Syllabus

Professor: Lari Gibbons, Professor
Office: ART 204
Office Hours: MW 10 – 10:50 am (or appt)
    Need an appointment? email me, preferably 24 hours in advance
    Zoom meetings available on request
Email: gibbons@unt.edu • I also answer Canvas messages
Telephone: (940) 369-6684 (email or messenger preferred)

Class Time: MW 2 pm – 4:50 pm
Class Location: ART 275/274, ART 266

This syllabus is a set of guidelines for instruction in this class. The instructor may modify the content, schedule, and requirements.

This class meets concurrently with 4600: Senior Print Studio. Expectations differ between the two groups. Please reach out to me if you have questions or concerns.

Course Description

Readings, discussion and/or studio exploration of various art issues. Praxis graduate seminars are intensive topical or single discipline-based courses which encourage innovation, the development of a new method, idea, and results. Seminars vary in structure offering a blend of reading/writing/presentation/discussion and studio practice/group critique.

Prerequisite: MFA or PhD candidate (and exceptions by consent of professor).

3 hours (0;6).

Course Content

This is an advanced-level course with an emphasis on producing a body of creative work, developing your professional practice as an artist, and engaging with contemporary art making practices. This course requires you to demonstrate the synthesis of concepts, technical skills, and knowledge through the creation of a portfolio of work. In addition to making artworks for this class, you will engage in contextual research and professional documentation.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have a graduate-level command of creative research with the ability to:

• Form research questions related to ideas and concepts in their artwork.
• Technically manipulate materials through their chosen medium(s).
• Create a unified portfolio of artworks resulting from these objectives.
• Engage in verbal critical dialogue related to this portfolio and portfolios of peers.
• Apply standards for formal documentation of the artist's creative practice.

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**Course Structure**

Class time will be used for production, discussions, presentations, critiques, studio visits, and group check-ins. From time to time, we will have visiting artists and critics, and optional / encouraged learning opportunities will take place outside of class time. A class day schedule is provided, and I will send out weekly updates with details.

A typical week will alternate between a structured class session (i.e., one with demos, presentations, discussions) and an open work day. On work days, you are expected to be productive in your personal studio or in one of CVAD’s shops. Ask in advance if you need to be off-campus for a professional activity. A typical project will begin with contextual presentations followed by discussions and research, technical demonstrations, open work days, and a critique. You will bring actual work to the critiques and submit digital documentation of the work on Canvas; both are due by the deadline or will be counted late.

Use class time to participate in instructional activities or work while you will have technical assistance from the instructor and support from your classmates. Complex demos usually need to be scheduled in advance. The end of every class session will be reserved for a mandatory clean-up. Students should plan about 6 hours each week outside of class time to work on their projects independently.

A poll will take place to allow anonymous feedback on the class structure and provide opportunities for change if needed.

**Grading**

Your final course grade is based on Artwork/Critiques, Creative Practice Research, Engagements, and an Exhibition. Critiques have multiple components such as finished artwork and written statements. Work must be presented in a gallery-ready, professional manner for critique; details are outlined in Canvas and will be demonstrated. The work must be ready for critique at the beginning of the class period. You are also required to submit high-quality documentation of your artwork online via Canvas. The quality of documentation is part of your grade.

Typically, the final presentation is delivered the last week of class along with a written statement plus digital images of your work. At this time you may improve previous projects (please include a brief note summarizing improvements) to raise your overall grade in the class. Details will be provided in advance of the deadline.

I strive to grade and return work one week after the deadline. If I am unable to return feedback quickly, I will update everyone so you know what to expect.

Your final course grade will be lowered by failure to attend class or final clean-up.

The Office of the Registrar provides your final grade.

See next page:
## Grading requirements and criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>70% Artwork and Critiques</strong></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Concept&lt;br&gt;What ideas does your work show? Are your ideas well-researched, original and engaging? Does the work show an awareness of context? Is it cohesive in its vision and execution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Form&lt;br&gt;Do the aesthetic qualities of your work support the concept?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Technique&lt;br&gt;Does your technical approach complement the concept and form? Does it meet any project requirements, if given?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Craft/Presentation&lt;br&gt;Does your artwork meet the presentation guidelines and standards? Do you take pride in presenting your work and care for how it is submitted?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Direction&lt;br&gt;Do you make good use of class time? Work between classes? Show progress when requested? Budget your time effectively, keep up with the assignment, and meet in-progress deadlines? How do you respond to setbacks? Does the work demonstrate growth and risk?</td>
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| | 25% | Critique<br>Do you present finished and resolved work? Is your presentation professional? Are you receptive to constructive criticism? Do you offer helpful feedback to peers proactively? Do you take notes? We will have final and in-progress critiques, which count equally as follows:<br>\(+ = A =\) work complete, student actively contributed<br>\(\checkmark = C =\) work incomplete or unfinished, student contributed; or work complete, student did not contribute<br>\(– = F =\) work missing, student attended (some points!)
\(∅ =\) work missing, student did not attend (no points) |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15% Research Practice</strong></td>
<td>Rubric on Canvas</td>
<td>Submit bibliographies, written artist's statements, and deliver oral presentations to class; submit digital images.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10% Engagement</strong></td>
<td>Rubric on Canvas</td>
<td>Choose from (or propose) an array of options intended to expand print media and your studio practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5% Exhibition</strong></td>
<td>Rubric on Canvas</td>
<td>Participate in all aspects of a group show, including developing a theme, selecting/hanging your work, appearing at a reception, and striking the show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools and Kits</strong></td>
<td>Timely return of university property in good condition</td>
<td>Do you return any tools and items checked out to you, and are they returned in good condition? Failure to return tools may result in a grade penalty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance</strong></td>
<td>See Syllabus</td>
<td>You are expected to be present and to participate in class.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The sum of your scores translates to a letter grade:<br>\(0 – 59\% = F, \) Failure<br>\(60 – 69\% = D, \) Inferior<br>\(70 – 79\% = C, \) Average<br>\(80 – 89\% = B, \) Above Average<br>\(90 – 100\% = A, \) Excellent

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*Don’t skip class to avoid a critique. Show the project and submit it by the deadline, even if it is incomplete.*
Attendance, Participation, and Late Work Policy

Regular and punctual attendance is mandatory. I call roll at every organized class. Please gather in our classroom, and do not expect me to mark you present if you are working in another part of the shop or building during roll call. If you arrive late, check in with me to ensure that I mark you as present with a tardy (instead of absent). Three tardies constitutes an absence.

Three unexcused absences are tolerated. More than three absences requires a note from a doctor or a note from the art office excusing the absence for a reason covered under UNT policy 06.039 (Student Attendance and Authorized Absences) in order to be counted as excused. Documentation must be verified by the Dean of Students to count as excused (see https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/dean-of-students/about-us/faq, write deanofstudents@unt.edu, or stop by University Union, Suite 409). More than three unexcused absences lowers your final grade by one letter grade per additional absence.

Most announcements, discussions, and demonstrations occur at the beginning of class periods and are not repeated for those who come in late. Missed demos, critiques, and other class activities cannot be made up. Get to know your fellow students in class so you can help each other when needed.

A tardy is considered to be an arrival 5 minutes after the beginning of class, when I finish taking roll, or when I begin announcements—whichever occurs first. An early departure is when you leave before class is over without being excused.

Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late work is not accepted unless an absence is excused. Turn in your work online in its unfinished state rather than missing a deadline. If you have time to revise or finish the project by the final critique of the semester, you can request that I regrade it. Submit your work online if you miss critique. If you miss an assignment deadline, turn in incomplete work, or miss critique, please get in touch with me.

Late work is accepted if an absence is excused according to UNT policy 06.039 (Student Attendance and Authorized Absences) and verified by the Dean of Students. Missed critiques missed may not be made up and grades will reflect the student’s failure to participate in the critique discussions.

Attendance policies are non-negotiable and can result in a failing final grade, regardless of the quantity or quality of work produced during the semester. Students with excessive absences should consider withdrawing from the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential grade deductions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 unexcused absence</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 unexcused absence</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 unexcused absences</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 unexcused absences</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 unexcused absences</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 unexcused absences</td>
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Digital Resources

To succeed in this class, you will need access to the following:

- Computer or device with reliable internet access (student computer lab okay)
- Digital camera for documenting artwork (smartphone okay)
- Software to edit digital images (Adobe Photoshop or Snapseed recommended)

These items are available via CVAD IT Services (https://cvad.unt.edu/cvadit).

You will need the following technical skills:

- Use Canvas
- Use email with attachments

For help with Canvas, contact the UIT Student Help Desk at http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm, helpdesk@unt.edu, or 940-565-2324.

See Engagement Guidelines for more information (https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips).

Building Hours and Studio Access

**Building Hours:**
Jan. 17–May. 12
Monday–Thursday: 8 a.m.–9 p.m.
Friday: 7:30 a.m.–5 p.m.
Saturday: Noon–5 p.m.
Sunday: Noon–10 p.m.

**Spring Break:** graduate students, staff, and faculty will retain 24-hour access. Undergraduates will not have access to the Art Building outside of normal business hours during Spring Break.
Friday, March 10, building closes at 5:00 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday, March 11–12: closed
Monday–Friday March 13–17: 7:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Saturday, March 14: closed
Sunday, March 15: Noon–10 p.m.

**After-hours/extended Building Hours:** Updated extended hours for the building are posted to the CVAD website's section on how to apply for after-hours access. Undergraduate students can apply for this access starting the first day of classes. However, swipe access requests will not be submitted to Access Control until January 31 (the day after Census day) and could take up to 24 hours to be activated.

**Print Shop Hours:** Students may use the print shop during their scheduled class times and during OPEN STUDIO times. They may use the shop during other class times if they get advance permission from the instructor. Do not disrupt the class to ask for permission to work.

If you arrive early, wait in the hallway until your class starts. Do not enter the room until the preceding class is over. Do not interrupt the class in session. Gather your belongings and clean your workspace by the end of your class so the next group can use their space. Do not disrupt the next class session.

If you want to work in the shop while another class is in session, ask the instructor for permission before class begins. Due to high enrollment, it is usually not possible to work in the shop while another class is in session. If you are given permission to work during another class, be aware of how your activities impact the learning environment. You will be asked to leave immediately if your activities detract from the learning environment of enrolled students.

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Course Safety and Emergencies

Emergency telephone numbers: 940.565.3000 and 911.

COVID-19 Hotline: 844-366-5892 and COVID@unt.edu.

Severe Weather: take shelter in the interior hallway C275. If unable to safely move to the designated shelter-in-place area, seek shelter in a windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest floor of the building to which you have access.

Bomb / Fire: evacuate the building immediately, using the nearest stairwell and exit. Once outside, proceed to church parking lot across Mulberry Street. If unable to safely move to the designated assembly area, contact one or more members of your department or unit to let them know you are safe and inform them of your whereabouts.

Emergency Preparedness: https://emergency.unt.edu
Campus Carry: https://campuscarry.unt.edu
Run, Hide, Fight when needed (see link).
Health & Safety: https://art.unt.edu/healthandsafety

Students enrolled in this class are required to use proper safety procedures and guidelines as outlined in UNT Policy 15.2.4 Safety in Instructional Activities.

Personal Safety and Course Risk Factor

Download the CVAD Health & Safety Handbook at https://art.unt.edu/healthandsafety

Students enrolled in this class are required to use proper safety procedures and guidelines as outlined in UNT Policy 06.038 Safety in Instructional Activities. While working in laboratory sessions, students are expected and required to identify and use proper safety guidelines in all activities requiring lifting, climbing, walking on slippery surfaces, using equipment and tools, handling chemical solutions and hot and cold products. Students should be aware that the UNT is not liable for injuries incurred while students are participating in class activities.

All students are encouraged to secure adequate insurance coverage in the event of accidental injury. Students who do not have insurance coverage should consider obtaining Student Health Insurance. Brochures for student insurance are available in the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medical attention at the Student Health and Wellness Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If students have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, they should be sure that the plan covers treatment at this facility. If students choose not to go to the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center, they may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. Students are responsible for expenses incurred there.

According to University Policy, this course is classified as a Category 3 course. Students are exposed to some significant hazards but are not likely to suffer serious bodily injury when properly trained on how to handle materials and tools. Students who are pregnant or who become pregnant during the course of the semester are advised to postpone this course because of certain higher risk factors (3) to an unborn baby.

Students who are pregnant or will become pregnant during the course of the semester are advised to check with their doctor immediately to determine if any additional risks are reason to postpone this course until a later semester. Upon request, your professor will provide a list of chemicals and safety issues for your doctor to review. Material Safety Data Sheets are available on all chemicals. It is up to you and your doctor to determine what course of action to take.

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American Disabilities Act (Disabilities Accommodation)

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

More information is available via UNT Policy 18.1.14, at www.unt.edu/oda, and by visiting the ODA in person or by calling 940.565.4323.

Academic Integrity, Rights, and Responsibilities

In order to provide a campus environment that is conducive to academic endeavor and growth, the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline provides regulations and guidelines governing student behavior. The Code provides penalties for misconduct, including academic dishonesty, which includes all forms of cheating and plagiarism, including attempts to circumvent attendance procedures.

The term cheating includes, but is not limited to (a) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (b) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (c) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; (d) dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or (e) any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.

The term plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: (f) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and (g) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials (Source: UNT Undergraduate Catalogue).

Students who become aware of suspicious activities should notify the professor promptly.

Academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. For more information, see UNT Policy 18.1.16, Student Academic Integrity.

Additionally, each student is entitled to certain rights associated with higher education institutions. See http://www.unt.edu/csrr for more information.

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Academic Integrity, Rights, and Responsibilities, continued

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student’s conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. Expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT’s Code of Student Conduct (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) to learn more.

Intellectual Property

Any distribution of course materials from this class is in violation of the following:

*Intellectual property violations include the use or distribution of copyrighted or trademarked works of another without the expressed consent of the owner of the copyright or trademark. A student who receives written notification from a faculty member that the information provided in his or her course is the faculty member's intellectual property shall not distribute, use for commercial purposes, or create derivative works of the intellectual property without obtaining the express written permission of the faculty member. Students shall not assume permission absent written notification from the faculty member (Source: UNT Undergraduate Catalogue).*

In sum, you are authorized to take notes in class for your own personal use and no other use without permission from the instructor. You are not authorized to record class sessions, to provide your notes to anyone else, or to make any commercial or non-profit use of these notes without prior, written permission from the course instructor.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources. UNT’s Student Advocate she can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648.

Student Evaluation

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. Students will receive an email from “UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification” (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please see the spot website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.
Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

Every student in this class should have the right to learn and engage within an environment of respect and courtesy from others. I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please let me know. We are all learning together.

Content in the arts can sometimes include works, situations, actions, and language that can be personally challenging or offensive to some students on the grounds, for example, of sexual explicitness, violence, or blasphemy. As CVAD is devoted to the principle of freedom of expression, artistic and otherwise, and it is not the college’s practice to censor these works or ideas on any of these grounds. Students who might feel unduly distressed or made uncomfortable by such expressions should withdraw at the start of the term and seek another course.

General Problems and Concerns

Direct all problems or concerns to Professor Gibbons, preferably during office hours. Follow the Chain of Command: talk to your professor before you bring the matter to a departmental chairperson or dean.

Grades may not be discussed on the telephone or via email. All grade inquiries must be made in person.

Syllabus Contract

Your continued enrollment in this class after the add/drop period and 12th class day signifies your understanding and acceptance of this syllabus, including course structure, grading and attendance policies as well as the risk factor rating.

This syllabus, supply list, and schedule is subject to change.
PERMISSION TO USE STUDENT ARTWORK

We would like to use your work to spread the news about the amazing art made at CVAD! Please help us put your talent on display by allowing us to photograph and exhibit your art on CVAD’s social media, websites and paper advertising. Thank you!

I hereby grant permission to UNT and CVAD to use, copy, reproduce, publish, distribute or display any and all works created in my classes while at UNT. Additionally, I consent to the use of my name to coincide with images of my artwork.

1. Scope of Permission. This permission extends to the use of the described work and images of such work: (1) for academic purposes in order to demonstrate examples of student work to current and future UNT students; (2) for public display in the galleries or on the campus of the UNT or on the UNT website; (3) for promotional materials created by UNT in all forms of media now known or later developed, including but not limited to exhibition catalogues, direct mail, websites, advertising, social media, and classroom presentations. My permission is on-going, but can be revoked by giving the professor of record for this course written notice of my wish to revoke permission and use of any images of my artwork. UNT will have three months from the date of my notice to stop all use agreed with this permission.

2. Certificate of Ownership. I am the owner of all work submitted and the work is not subject to any restriction that would prevent its use consistent with this permission. All aspects of the work are original to me and have not been copied. I understand that as owner of the work I have the right to control all reproduction, copying and use of the work in accordance with U.S. copyright laws.

3. Privacy Release. I hereby authorize and consent to the release, maintenance and display of my name if necessary and any other personally identifiable information that I have provided in connection with the work and its use described in this Agreement.

4. Signature. By signing below I hereby grant the permissions indicated above. I understand that this grant of permission relates only to the use of the described work. This is not an exclusive right and I may sell, give or otherwise transfer the rights to such work to others on a non-exclusive or exclusive basis. However, in the event that I do sell, give or otherwise transfer ownership or the exclusive right to use my work to another party, I will notify UNT immediately in writing through the professor of record for this course. UNT will have three months from the date of my notice to stop all use in accordance with this permission.

Printed name: __________________________________________________________
Signature: ______________________________________________________________
Date: ___________________________________________________________________
Name of Course: ________________________________________________________

You will sign this in an online “quiz”