Course Description
This course will be a laboratory for the exploration of the intersection of Cybernetic theory and artists’ praxis. We will learn about the history and development of Cybernetic ideas in parallel to how those ideas have influenced and inspired Artists and their work. Our work in this class will unfold along several, simultaneous trajectories of inquiry, which will involve readings, in-class exercises, group discussions, writing assignments, and individual and group projects.

Course Objectives
My aim for this course is not to necessarily transform you into a Cybernetician, rather it is my hope that you gain a deep and meaningful understanding of how cybernetic thought and its ontological program can be employed to extend your notion of the world, further your critical thinking skills, and contribute to your studio practice as an artist.

Required Materials
External hard drive, journal, mental and creative gymnastics

Grading
Students will be graded upon completed projects (50%), attendance and participation (30%), and presentations (20%). Projects will be evaluated by their originality and conceptual clarity, evidence of technical development, adherence to deadline, and attention paid to detail and execution. Each project has a point value of 12.5. (I.E. 12.5 x 4 = 50).

A=100-90  B=89-80  C=79-70  D=69-60  F= <60

Projects and assignments will not be accepted after the due date. If the student is going to be absent on a due date she should make arrangements to turn in the assignment early. Lectures will not be repeated, therefore it is the student's responsibility to make up any work or retrieve class notes due to an absence.

Attendance Policy
It is your responsibility to attend class on time. Lateness by more than 10 minutes will result in an absence. You are allowed no more than FOUR absences. More than four absences will result in a WF or an F for the class. Any necessary absences known of in advance should be approved by the Professor within the first 3 weeks of class. These absences will, however, count against the Four absence limit. An excused absence will only be granted in the case of an illness with a written doctor's note (presented to me as a physical copy) or a family emergency with provided documentation.

PLAGIARISM
Plagiarism is the unauthorized use or close imitation of someone else’s original work and will not be tolerated. Effort should be made to change images made by others so that they will not be construed as “borrowed” or “stolen.” Work that is plagiarized will not be accepted and may result in a failing course grade and/or expulsion from the University.

AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT
“The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate
equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course. If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes for students registered with the ODA as of the beginning of the current semester. If you register with the ODA after the first week of classes, your accommodation requests will be considered after this deadline. Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at www.unt.edu/oda, and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You also may call the ODA at 940.565.4323.

Blackboard
Make sure that you can access Blackboard Learn System and that you are enrolled correctly in your course! Email your instructor immediately if you are not correctly enrolled. Your UNT email address will be the ONLY ONE used for communication with the instructor. Make sure that is working fine and check it often for announcements.

Rules of the Classroom and Expected Behavior
1. Absolutely no phone use during class.
2. Do not turn your computers on until I ask you to do so.
3. Shut down computers after class.
4. Participate in class discussions.
5. Respect your fellow students.

*I reserve the right to change the syllabus and modify the schedule at any time.

Schedule
Jan 20, Tuesday
-Review of Syllabus
-Introductions
-Keywords: Ontology, Ontological Theater, Black Boxes, Feedback, Circularity, Self-Organizing Systems
-Screening: Heinz Von Foerster on High Tech Heroes (youtube.com)

Jan. 22 Thursday
-Discussion of Reading
-Group Exercise: Self Sustaining System
-Discussion of Group Exercise
-Reading: Pages 1-6 in Ashby, An Introduction to Cybernetics

Jan. 27 Tuesday
-Discussion of Reading
-Experiment in classroom organization: Forming a self-regulating governing body
-Proposal for a Group Project
-Reading: Second Order Cybernetics, An Historical Introduction, Bernard Scott, 2004
-Assignment 1: Create a Simple System for a Self-Regulating Performance
Jan. 29 Thursday
- Assignment 1 Due
- Discussion of Reading
- Experiment in Classroom organization continued
- Finalization of Group Project
- Reading: *Cybernetics, Art and Ideas*, Jaisa Rechhardt,

Feb. 3 Tuesday
- Screenings: Cybernetic Serendipity
- Group Project: Assign tasks and roles

Feb. 5 Thursday
- Cybernetics and Sound/Music
- Listening: Forbidden Planet
- Screening: Bebe Baron
- Assignment 2: Revise Simple System for Self-Regulating Performance
- Reading: *Brian Eno, Peter Schmidt, and Cybernetics*, Geeta Dayan, 2009
  Pages 309-320 in *The Cybernetic Brain*

Feb. 10 Tuesday
- Discussion of Readings
- Assignment 2 Due: Performance of Simple Systems as a group
- Brian Eno in Conversation (youtube.com)
- Listening: Discreet Music

Feb. 12 Thursday
- Group Project: Establish timeline, schedule, technical needs
- 'Discreet Music' software assignment
- Reading: *Cybernetics and Art, Cultural Convergence in the 1960’s*, Edward A. Shanken, 2002

Feb. 17 Tuesday
- 'Discreet Music' software assignment
- Group Project meetings and reporting to the class

Feb. 19 Thursday
- 'Discreet Music' software assignment due
- Experiment in Classroom organization: Self-Regulation via Conversation: When is Cybernetics?
  When is this class?
- Reading: *Embodying Robotic Art: Cybernetic Cinematics*, Gretchen Skogerson, 2000
- Reading: Part Four of *Expanded Cinema, Cybernetic Cinema and Computer Films*, Youngblood, 1970

Feb. 24 Tuesday
- Group Project meeting
- Screening: John Whitney and Early Computer Graphics and Films
- Discussion of Readings

Feb. 26 Thursday
Research Day
- Assignment 3: Choose a work of art from the following artists:
  - Laszlo Moholy-Nagy
  - Brian Eno
  - Nam June Paik
  - Guto Nobrega
Talk about and analyze this work in terms of its cybernetics. For example, is it a system? Is it part of a larger system? Does its aesthetic reception require the commitment for a new manner of dialogue/interpretation, with regards to ontology, from the audience? Is it generative? How is it generative? Is it autopoietic? Etc. Use the readings as one of your references. You are encouraged to use sources outside of those assigned in this class. The paper should be no more than 5 pages, 1.5 spacing, 11 pt. font.

Paper and Presentation Due March 24 Tuesday

March 3 Tuesday
- Discussion of research projects
- Group project meeting
- Laboratory and/or research time

March 5 Thursday
Research Day

March 10 Tuesday
- Mid-Term Journal Review
- Group Project Meeting
- Group project work

March 12 Thursday
Research Day

March 16 and 18: Spring Break, No Class

March 24 Tuesday
- Research papers and presentations due

March 26 Thursday
- Experiment in Classroom organization: Where do we go from here?
- Considerations: Individual final projects and group project.
- Readings What is Generative Art?, Margaret A. Boden, Ernest A. Edmonds,

March 31 Tuesday
- Discussion of reading
- Where do we go from here, cont.

April 2 Thursday
- Discussion of Reading
- Implementing our plans for the remainder of our class sessions

April 7 Tuesday
- Group Project Updates

* The remainder of our class meetings will be spent focused on topics and matters established in our self-organizing Where do we go from here? And working to complete our group project. The last day of class is May 7. Our group project should be completed on that day or before.