

Art 236 – Life Drawing

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Office Hours:
T/Th 11:30-12:30
or by appointment

"It is only by drawing often, drawing everything, drawing incessantly, that one day you discover to your surprise that you have rendered something in its true character."

• Camille Pissarro

The world revolves around the figure. Everything created by humankind is done so with the figure in mind, from your iPod's ear buds to the chair that you're sitting in. The figure in art is understood at some base level by every human being who encounters it, whether a cave painting documenting a buffalo hunt to Francis Bacon's depictions of self-torment. The figure in art has the power to transcend languages and cultures, providing a powerful means of expression. This is a rare commodity in art-making: a subject that everyone can relate to in some way, shape or form. Learning to draw the figure, even in a rudimentary fashion, is vital to your art-making. Without that skill, you cut out an important piece of your visual language as an artist, resigning yourself to either borrowing someone else's work, or simply avoiding the figure altogether.

The figure is a complicated piece of machinery. Think about the structure of your body and the movements necessary to simply walk. Yes, one leg goes in front of another, but what happens to the foot when it strikes the ground? How does the foot accommodate the transference of weight as you shift from your heel to the pad of your foot and your toes, then from one leg to the other? What are the muscles doing as you experience that shift? Now think about sitting on the ground cross-legged. What do the muscles have to do in order to lift you to your feet? Being aware of such small details is a great aid when drawing the figure. That awareness allows for a deeper understanding of the structure of the body, and ultimately, how to draw it better.

You have the rare opportunity to spend an entire semester studying one type of object. Because of the singular nature of our subject matter, the course will allow you to study the figure in a variety of ways. We will approach the figure in an academic way, studying proportions, measurements and the weight of the figure. We will also approach the figure in expressionistic and "abstracted" manners, building up and breaking down the form. Though the approaches will differ over the course of the semester, the importance of composition will remain a constant.

It is my assumption that everyone here enters this class with at least a basic knowledge of drawing. We will be building upon that drawing foundation in this class as we explore and experiment with a variety of materials and concepts. My main goal for this class is that you achieve a level of competency with the figure that will allow you to embrace it, rather than avoid it.

Research: As student-artists, looking at the work of other artists should not be a hardship or a chore. It should be like eating candy, except healthier and better for your artistic soul. You should be going to museums, galleries, the library, and internet, checking out the work of artists both past and present. Search for artists and genres both familiar and unfamiliar to you. Find out what makes you tick and why. Question, explore, seek and delve, even if you do not discover any hard and fast answers.

Assignments: Most days in this class will be a drawing workday, but there will be one outside assignment that you should be aware of. Please refer to the semester schedule for the due date.

- **Adjectival Figure Drawing:** Working from a previously executed figure drawing, having someone pose for you, or using a found photo, create a drawing which is based on one of the following adjectives: confused, garrulous, jocular, selfish, silent, or turbulent. Please do not use any known symbols or facial expressions to convey the adjective. Think about color, space, mark-making, tension, and composition. 18"x24" minimum. Open media.
- **Sketchbook** – You are not required to maintain an outside figure drawing sketchbook, but please consider doing so. Quick figural studies can go a long way in helping you understand more about human locomotion. Anyone who does maintain a sketchbook for this class can submit it for extra credit at the end of the semester. You will need a sketchbook for notes, etc.

Grading: You will have two occasions to hand in portfolios of your work. There will be a mid-term portfolio, at which time you will be given an indication of your in-progress grade. The mid-term grade will not be weighed toward your final grade at all. It will give you an indication of where you stand in the class at mid-term. Your final portfolio grade will count as 80% of your final grade. The other 20% will come from your homework assignment, which will be graded separately. Given the late due date of the homework assignment, there will be no opportunity for resubmission this semester. Additionally, any late homework or portfolio submissions will be subject to grade penalty equally a half grade for each day that the work is late. Regarding grades, please note that my definition of a "C" is average. That means that you come to class, work only during class time, do just enough to get by, take no or little risks in your work and barely participate in discussions/critiques. I strongly encourage risk taking in this class. The greatest

successes that you'll find in making art will occur because of your risk taking. Your risk taking will cause you to experience failures as well, but taking risks is the most important factor in becoming an artist. It's the driving force that keeps you working. In terms of the artwork that you produce, I consider grades with the follow criteria:

- A = Excellent work that displays thoughtfulness, risk-taking, daring, craft, and challenge.
- B = Good work that displays some of the elements above, but to a lesser extent. Less challenging work in general.
- C = Average work, with little or no extra effort put in outside of class. Work that is okay, but does not venture into uncharted territory; always plays it safe.
- D = Weak work that displays little drive, effort and motivation.
- F = Work does not meet the criteria of the class. Poor attempts at quality and effort.

Other elements that factor into your final grade are:

- Critique and discussion participation
- Improvement in your work/risk taking
- Quality of research
- Attendance

Plagiarism is covered in the UWSP University Handbook, Chapter 5, Section 2, 14.03, and is considered academic misconduct subject to disciplinary action.

Attendance: You are expected to attend class. This is true of any class, but especially so in a class which relies so heavily on observational drawing. After two unexcused absences, your final grade will be lowered by one full letter for each unexcused absence thereafter. Please be prepared when you come to class. The course schedule gives you most of the information regarding what you'll need for the following class. If you cannot draw because you're unprepared, you'll be marked as absent. Two late arrivals (of more than 15 minutes) will equal one absence. I find that arriving late to critiques is especially discourteous and disruptive. I plan on using the first few minutes of each class for announcements, readings and demonstrations. If you can't make it on time for this part of the class on a regular basis, you should think about dropping the course. If necessary, I will discuss that option with you.

If you have extenuating circumstances (a death in the family, serious illness or other physical/emotional trauma) that may impact your performance negatively, or if you simply need to talk about things that are going on, please contact me as soon as possible. Arrangements may be made for your specific situation.

Figure Drawing Class Guidelines

- Be respectful and professional
- Do not comment on the model's body or make personal remarks of any kind
- Do not touch the models
- Never photograph the model without her or his permission
- Do not take pictures of your artwork unless the model is clothed or robed

Your **Lab Fees** are hard at work for you. The majority of your fees are used to pay the modeling fees, but you will also be receiving a good amount of supplies: compressed charcoal, sumi-e ink sticks, a set of gouache, charcoal paper, watercolor paper, and RiverPoint printmaking paper.

iPods and MP3 players remove you from the community and are not allowed in here during class time. Sorry. If anyone would like to bring in an MP3 player, I'll consider playing your music on my iPod speaker dock. Most any type of non-plant killing music is allowed, though I maintain dictatorial powers when it comes to music in the classroom.

Cell Phones are not allowed. Period. This includes phone calls and text messaging. If I see anyone texting during class, you'll be asked to leave and will be marked as absent. If you have an emergency situation, let me know and accommodations may be made. Please, leave your phones out of sight during class.

Contacting Rob: I have scheduled office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 to 12:30, but am usually there for a longer period during the day. I'm around all day on Mondays and Wednesdays, so you can try and catch me before or after classes, but if I'm prepping for class, I cannot guarantee that I'll have time for you immediately. Scheduling appointments also works well. Email (rstolzer@uwsp.edu) me for an appointment and we'll set something up. When emailing, please include a salutation, write in complete sentences, and include a closing. I would greatly appreciate it.

Facebook: While I appreciate friend requests on Facebook, I don't accept them from current students. Nothing personal, but it allows me to keep my private and professional lives separate. Once you've graduated, feel to fire off those friend requests if you so desire.

Final Exam: Our final exam is #9, which takes place on Tuesday December 20th, from 8:00 to 10:00 am.

Supplies for Art 236

You will need the supplies marked with an asterisk* for the next classx

Drawing Materials

Litho crayons (med. & hard)
*Conte crayons (black & brown, 2B)
*Black compressed charcoal
*Vine charcoal
Color pastels
*White Nu-pastels (or generic white pastels)
Carpenter's pencil (can be purchased from a hardware store)
Sumi ink stick
Watercolor pencils
*Black India ink (waterproof)
3 small jars for ink washes
Sponge
Container for water
*Pen nibs (crow quill & bowl or globe pointed)
*Pen holders for above (the crow quill nib a different holder than the other two)
*Bamboo brushes (1 large and 1 medium)
Workable spray fixative
*Portfolio (22"x26"ish. A cheap store-bought or homemade portfolio is fine, but it must be easy to access)
Sticks

Paper & Miscellany

*18"x24" newsprint pad (100 sheets). You will need more than one of these
*18"x24" Strathmore 400 (or equivalent). Basically, you need a good supply of decent stock drawing paper. Either purchase a pad of paper or at least 25 sheets of loose drawing paper. White or off-white.
Color Charcoal/Pastel paper (18"x24" minimum)
Watercolor paper
Printmaking papers (assortment)
Experimental papers for collage
*11"x14" Sketchbook – While I'm environmentalist, I find that the recycled paper sketchbooks/pads can leave a lot to be desired. Please pick up a sketchbook/pad that does not use recycled paper. 50 to 100 pages.
*Masking tape (we simply cannot keep a supply of tape in this room)

Art 236-1 Life Drawing - Semester Schedule

Fall 2016

Week 1	Wed. 9/7	Class intro. Syllabus and presentation.
Week 2	Mon. 9/12 Wed. 9/14	Contour line and composition. Compressed, vine charcoals, contes, carpenter's pencil. Contour line, composition, and tone. Same supplies as above.
Week 3	Mon. 9/19 Wed. 9/21	Negative space. Various charcoals and color pastels. Contour ink line. Pens, nibs, bamboo brushes, and India ink.
Week 4	Mon. 9/26 Wed. 9/28	Contour ink line and tone. Sumi-e ink stick, bamboo brush, India ink, and three small jars. Mass: cross-contour and scribbling. All materials.
Week 5	Mon. 10/3 Wed. 10/5	Open Media/Open Drawing - Some focus on mass. Critique: Bring your favorite three drawings, including one gesture drawing
Week 6	Mon. 10/10 Wed. 10/12	Mass: hatching and cross-hatching. All materials. Mass: Charcoals and white pastel. Bring gray tone paper to class.
Week 7	Mon. 10/17 Wed. 10/19	Open Media/Open Drawing. Compositional studies: Edward Weston-type "abstractions". Midterm portfolios are due. The portfolio must consist of 10 in-class drawings showing a variety of media and approaches.
Week 8	Mon. 10/24 Wed. 10/26	Midterm Meetings. Open Media/Open Drawing session. Midterm Meetings. Open Media/Open Drawing session.
Week 9	Mon. 10/31 Wed. 11/2	Full session drawing. Charcoals. Color: Complementary and analogous. Color pastels.
Week 10	Mon. 11/7 Wed. 11/9	Color: Complementary and analogous. Color pastels. Full session drawing: Color
Week 11	Mon. 11/14 Wed. 11/16	Color. Adjectival drawings. Open media. Cut Paper Collage Drawings: Bring various papers (different textures, colors, tones, patterns), glue stick, scissors, basic drawing materials.
Week 12	Mon. 11/21 Wed. 11/23	Open Media/Open Drawing. No Class
Week 13	Mon. 11/28 Wed. 11/30	Watercolors. Critique: Adjectival Figural Drawing + two class drawings, including one gesture
Week 14	Mon. 12/5 Wed. 12/7	Watercolor Open Media/Open Drawing.
Week 15	Mon. 12/12 Wed. 12/14	Open Media/Open Drawing. Open Media/Open Drawing. Final portfolios due.
Final Exam	Tues. 12/20	Final Exam #9. 8:00-10:00. Studio clean-up and return of portfolios