

# Art 334/434 - Int/Adv Painting

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Office Hours:  
T/Th 11:00-12:00  
or by appointment

Art 334 and Art 434 are the intermediate and advanced level painting classes. These are upper level courses, which I structure in a less assignment driven way, with the expectation that your work be self-generated in thoughtful, meaningful, and *challenging* ways. The lack of formal assignments means that you will have to assign yourself the work that you *need* to execute, to tackle your own serious motivations and concepts. This is not a class for hobbyists, and this is not an opportunity to generate artwork as holiday gifts. This class will help you foster the means to explore, examine and develop your own ideas, bringing them to life (or sometimes death) in paint.

I expect accountability from you in this class, that your work here does not get pushed aside by classes with more structured assignments and deadlines. That means you are not pushing yourself to create work specifically for critiques, but are challenging yourself to create work consistently throughout the semester. I expect that you will be pushing your work to its limits, rather than playing it safe. I also expect that you will be delving into areas of unfamiliarity, rather than painting about what you already know. In the end, it's about constantly challenging yourself and your process of art-making. Knowing what comes next may help you remain on comfortable ground. That knowledge may allow you to feel safe and sound in the work you create, but comfort rarely leads to new discoveries or new directions in your work or life. Learn how to make yourself uncomfortable in your work. Allow your work to fail, and then challenge yourself to make it better. Let your passion be your fuel.

“A ship in harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for.” – John A. Shedd, from *Salt from My Attic*

- **Statement:** Write a one-page statement about your specific goals for the class, related to your *concepts, techniques* and *work schedule*. This statement needs to be succinct, and should be broken down into the three elements mentioned above. One paragraph per element is sufficient. When it comes to concepts, broad statements such as, “I want to try abstract painting”, or “I want to paint still-lives” are not concepts at all. They are declarations of subject matter you may want to touch on in the class, but they do not address the issue of concept. Concepts are ideas based upon things that are meaningful to you. As you develop your concepts, I want you to delve into the “why” behind your motivations and explorations.

Please email these statements to me no later than Friday, September 8, by 2:00 pm.

- **Semester Schedule:** You’ll find a semester schedule at the end of the syllabus. The schedule is not set in stone, but gives you a good idea of the timeline for this semester. Please keep track of any pertinent dates and deadlines, and be prepared for class.
- **Conversations:** We will have three different occasions to discuss different issues, notably: Concept, Post-Undergraduate Life, and Careers. There may be readings to jumpstart a discussion, or we may just start to talk and see where the conversations lead us. I will try to arrange for an alum to come in for one of the discussions.
- **Critiques:** Your involvement in critiques is important to the person whose work you're critiquing, as well as to yourself. The critique process allows others to see their work through different and objective eyes. It also allows the one critiquing to objectively formulate thoughts and ideas about the work of others, which may lead to more objectivity when thinking about one's own work.

Given that we have so many folks in this class, large-scale critiques can be long, and at times, counter-productive. While I believe it’s important for everyone to see the work generated in the class, I would like to try a different approach to critiques this semester. We will still have at least one full-class critique, but will have a number of small group critiques, which I hope will generate more in-depth and meaningful discussion.

Since the studio workdays involve discussion about in-progress work, only completed work will be critiqued during the scheduled critiques.

- **Demonstrations:** A valuable part of working in a classroom community is the ability to learn from each other. This isn't a competition. As you watch someone paint, try and learn from them, just as others may learn from you. If you would like to learn more about a particular technique and/or medium, ask. At a minimum, I'll point you in the right direction, or will arrange for a demo.
- **Grades:** When determining grades, I look at the final artwork produced, but there are other factors that come into play. Your work ethic and risk-taking are vital elements in your work and will be evident in the breadth of the paintings you produce. Elements that I take into grade consideration are:
  - **Quality and amount** of work produced
  - Critique and discussion participation
  - Improvement in your work and risk-taking
  - Attendance

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.

The formula for a strong grade is fairly simple: excellent worth ethic + strong motivation + a desire to challenge yourself and your work. If you find that you're not able to give yourself to your work outside of class, and do what you believe is just enough to get by, please be prepared for a grade of "C". If you are unprepared for readings/discussions, critiques, or presentations, please be prepared for a lower final grade.

I will meet with you individually at mid-term, and again at the end of the semester, to discuss your half-semester grades. Those two grades will be averaged out, to give you an indication of your final grade. Any grade demotion due to absences or lack of preparation will be applied after your final individual meeting. For example, if your averaged grade from your two meetings is a "B", but you had two unexcused absences over the course of the semester, your final grade will be a "C+". If you would like to talk with me about your in-progress grade at any time during the semester, just ask. I'll be glad to talk with you at any time.

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend class. After two unexcused absences, your final grade will be lowered by half a letter grade for each unexcused absence thereafter. If you are not ready for any of the scheduled events, you will be marked absent for that day. *If you have extenuating circumstances (death in the family, serious illness or other physical/emotional trauma) that may impact your performance negatively, please contact me as soon as possible. Arrangements may be made for your specific situation.* Two late arrivals (of more than 15 minutes) will equal one absence. Please be on time.

**Material Handling, Storage and Disposal:** There are many changes in how we look at the materials being used in the classroom/studio. You'll note that we now have Right-to-Know stations in the studios, which contain the *Safety Data Sheets* (SDS) for the materials that we use in the classroom. These sheets communicate the "...hazards of hazardous chemical products." **All** of the chemical products that we use must have an SDS in the Right-to-Know book. This includes any paints or mediums that you bring into the classroom. You can find the SDSs via Google searches, on the manufacturers' websites, or often on the website from which you purchased the materials. Feel free to email PDFs of the SDSs for me to print off.

There is a change in how materials will be handled and stored from now on. We can no longer use food containers to store painting materials. Any materials stored in non-food containers must be clearly labeled with safety information from the manufacturer's website. We are now purchasing materials in smaller quantities, which means that the smaller containers may need to be shared. For oil painters, please use the small metal cans to store your Neutral Thin solvent.

The small size will mean needing to get clean solvent more often, but you can always purchase a larger can. **Do not pour solvents or other mediums down the sink.** They are to be disposed of in the containers within the smaller yellow safety cabinet. Paints do not go into the sink either. If you are cleaning off your palette, use the red garbage can to dispose of the old paint, as well as your solvent/medium soaked rags. Used Neutral Thin goes into one of the carboys in the smaller yellow safety cabinet. Please keep the lids on all of your solvents and mediums when not in active use. Lastly, whenever you work in this studio, you **MUST** have the exhaust system turned on.

**This Studio** is a shared space. Please be mindful of other students' paintings and property while you're using the studio. But please know that you are ultimately responsible for your own work. Leave work out and about at your own risk.

**The Wood Shop** remains one of the busiest spaces in the department. When another class is actively using the shop, please do not intrude upon them. Ask Keith, or the teacher of the particular class, if it would be okay for you to use certain pieces of equipment. There will be open hours scheduled for the shop, so please make use of them. As always, I'll be more than glad to help anyone with stretcher building. If you would like a stretcher building demo, just ask.

Your **Lab Fees** are hard at work for you. You'll be receiving: Liquin glaze medium, canvas, Neutral Thin paint thinner/cleaner, linseed oil, stand oil, drying mediums (Japan dryer, Copal dryer), gesso, acrylic mediums (matte and gloss), Gamblin painting mediums, watercolor paper, cold wax medium, and wood. Neutral Thin has proven itself to be an excellent thinner. It's produced by Eco-House and while it is a petrol product, it's much safer than traditional solvents. It's even safer than the popular citrus solvents, without the strong orange odor. You'll notice that we're moving towards the smaller, personal-size containers of material. While not as cost-effective, these are recommended by the health and safety expert who visited the departed last year.

**IPods** and MP3 players will be allowed this semester, unless I find them distracting.

**Cell Phones** will be allowed for reference and music, but not for texting or phone calls.

**Ask:** If you are in need of anything, please ask. If you need a demo on something, or you're not sure where to go for research, ask. Heard about encaustic, but don't have a clue as to what it is? Ask away. Be proactive. Don't always wait for me to suggest things to try, but check out what others are doing and take a chance.

**Contacting Rob:** I have scheduled office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 to 12:00. 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 me for an appointment and we'll set something up. When emailing, please include a salutation, write in complete sentences, and include a closing. It would be much appreciated.

**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 takes place on Thursday, December 21, from 2:45 to 4:45.

Come, come along  
Come with sorrows and songs  
Come however you are  
Just come, come along  
Come, let yourself be wrong  
Come however you are  
Just come

--Damien Rice, partial lyrics from *Trusty and True*

# Art 334/434 Int/Adv Painting - Semester Schedule

Fall 2017

<b>Week 1</b>	Wed. 9/6	Course introduction; syllabus. Statements are due to me on Friday 9/8 by 2:00 pm.
<b>Week 2</b>	Mon. 9/11	Studio Workday
	Wed. 9/13	Studio Workday.
<b>Week 3</b>	Mon. 9/18	Studio Workday
	Wed. 9/20	Studio Workday
<b>Week 4</b>	Mon. 9/25	Small Group Critique – Dokken, Lee, Nelson, Sweeney, Heindl, Larsen, Johnson
	Wed. 9/27	Small Group Critique – Jablonski, Lenius, Newman, Rodriguez, Eiden, Moberg
<b>Week 5</b>	Mon. 10/2	Small Group Critique – Knutson, Madison, Niksa, Plonsky, Somers, Fields-Johnson, Schroeder
	Wed. 10/4	Studio Workday – <b>Ask Polly</b> reading handed out
<b>Week 6</b>	Mon. 10/9	Studio Conversation: Concepts. Discuss <b>Ask Polly</b> reading
	Wed. 10/11	Studio Workday – Choose work for NASAD exhibition
<b>Week 7</b>	Mon. 10/16	Studio Workday
	Wed. 10/18	Studio Workday
<b>Week 8</b>	Mon. 10/23	<b>Mid-semester Individual Meetings</b>
	Wed. 10/25	<b>Mid-semester Individual Meetings</b>
<b>Week 9</b>	Mon. 10/30	<b>Mid-semester Individual Meetings</b>
	Wed. 11/1	Studio Workday
<b>Week 10</b>	Mon. 11/6	Studio Conversation: Post-Undergraduate Life
	Wed. 11/8	Group Critique
<b>Week 11</b>	Mon. 11/13	Group Critique
	Wed. 11/15	Studio Conversation: Careers
<b>Week 12</b>	Mon. 11/20	Studio Workday
	Wed. 11/22	<b>No Class</b>
<b>Week 13</b>	Mon. 11/27	Small Group Critique – Dokken, Nelson, Lee, Eiden, Fields-Johnson, Moberg, Plonsky
	Wed. 11/29	Small Group Critique – Jablonski, Niksa, Rodriguez, Somers, Johnson, Larsen, Schroeder
<b>Week 14</b>	Mon. 12/4	Small Group Critique – Knutson, Sweeney, Lenius, Madison, Newman, Heindl
	Wed. 12/6	Studio Workday
<b>Week 15</b>	Mon. 12/11	<b>Final Individual Meetings.</b>
	Wed. 12/13	<b>Final Individual Meetings.</b> Extra meetings may be arranged after this date.
<b>Final Exam</b>	Thur. 12/21	Final Exam 2:45-4:45 – <b>Student Evaluations &amp; Mandatory Studio Clean-up.</b>