

# VIS 208 - Thesis Exhibition

Visual Arts Department Spring 2023

University of California, San Diego

Lecture: Tuesdays 9:30-12:20pm, VAF 366

Instructor: Dr. Ceci Moss

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Course Website: <https://canvas.ucsd.edu/courses/45801>

Office hours: Tuesdays after class or by appointment

## CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This in the general course description for the course that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ucsd.edu/courses/VIS.html>

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide each student with a broad range of strategies for publicly presenting their work beyond the studio. Organized into weekly themes such as “Audience & Assembly,” “Community,” “Circulation & Networks,” and “Institutions,” students will receive a practical and well-rounded foundation in curatorial studies and exhibition practice. The required readings will drawn on recent publications in the field, emphasizing conversations that connect exhibition-making with broader issues such as structural inequity, technology, and the environment.

The course will lead to the required thesis solo exhibition for MFA candidates in Visual Arts as well as an (optional) MFA Preview Exhibition in late Fall 2023 organized at the Mandeville Art Gallery. A detailed proposal of the MFA solo thesis exhibition is required to complete this course.

## CLASS EXPECTATIONS

### *Attendance and Tardy Policy*

In order to receive credit for weekly attendance, students must show up to weekly sessions on Tuesdays from 9:30-12:20pm PST.

Regular attendance in all classes is required. Students are expected to arrive on time and remain in class for the entire period scheduled. The responsibility for work missed due to any type of absence rests with the student. Attendance is mandatory. Three unexcused absences will result in a student

failing the class. Three late arrivals are equivalent to one unexcused absence. Any exceptions are up to the instructor.

### *Technology in the classroom etiquette*

Turn off all devices before class. Laptops may be used to make notes only: you may be asked to close your computer if it is distracting you or your classmates. Students who surf, check email or similar will be asked to leave and marked absent for that day. If the behavior persists or becomes endemic to the class, then all student computers will be barred from the room.

### *Discussion etiquette*

This is a graduate seminar requiring significant student input in the form of facilitation and involvement in discussion. To this end, reading assignments are to be completed BEFORE each seminar class and notes prepared to ensure class participation.

Participation in all class discussions is mandatory. Everyone is expected to come to class with specific topics or questions they would like to address in the readings.

## **WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

*For all Writing Assignments, you must use consistent and properly formatted footnotes or endnotes, preferably using the Chicago Manual of Style format that is the standard in the field. If you have any questions about proper formatting, please see the Chicago Manual of Style or its website (<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org>). You will be marked down for inconsistent and/or improperly formatted footnotes. All writing should be in Times New Roman, 12pt, double spaced.*

### **Writing Assignment 1: Grant Proposal for Solo Presentation**

After an in-class workshop on grant proposal writing, you will use this format to draft a narrative for a solo presentation. This assignment is a lead-up to the final MFA solo thesis exhibition proposal.

### **Writing Assignment 2: Proposal for MFA Preview Group Exhibition**

Working with your classmates and under guidance from the instructor, as a group you will develop a proposal for a MFA Preview Group Exhibition. In preparation for this assignment, we will look at past MFA group exhibitions at the Mandeville Art Gallery, and engage in ample discussion regarding the structure of a group exhibition. This proposal will include:

Exhibition Title

Thematic Narrative

Checklist that includes at least one representative work per student

Floorplan

## **Final Project: MFA Thesis Solo Exhibition Proposal**

Building off Writing Assignment 1, you will put together a detailed MFA Thesis Solo Exhibition Proposal. This proposal includes:

Exhibition Title

Exhibition Narrative

Checklist

Floorplan

Please consult the MFA Handbook for more details about the MFA Final Solo Thesis:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/14oJot7RPpQgCuDFits1If1vuno4mihk3tTQ9-CgudcY/edit?usp=sharing> ⇒ [Links to an external site.](#)

## **PRESENTATIONS**

Final Presentation: In the spirit of a [Pecha Kucha](#) ⇒ [Links to an external site.](#), each student will do a **10 minute presentation with 3 slides** on their MFA Thesis Solo Exhibition Proposal.

## **STUDENT FACILITATION**

You will facilitate one **icebreaker activity** at the beginning of class once during the quarter. During this same session, you will **close-out the class with an example artwork (from another artist) or an exhibition** that considers the week's topic.

The aim of the icebreaker activity is to encourage you to think about how one's actions (and ultimately, one's artwork) can facilitate gathering and determine public space. You are welcome to source this icebreaker activity from someone else - such as re-staging an artist's score or adapting a dance warm-up or realizing a strategy from community organizing - but please be sure to credit the origin of this method.

The close-out example will invite a formal end to the class session and an opportunity for students to reflect on what has transpired.

## **GRADING**

Attendance/Participation (25%)

Writing Assignment 1: Grant Proposal for Solo Presentation (20%), Week 5

Writing Assignment 2: Group MFA Preview Exhibition Proposal (20%), Week 8

Student Facilitation (10%)

Final Presentation/ Pecha Kucha (5%)

Final Project: MFA Thesis Solo Exhibition Proposal (20%)

## **GRADE SCALE**

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%

D 60-69%

F 0-59%

Grading Scale: A indicates work of excellent quality; B of good quality; C of average quality; D of below average quality; and F indicates inadequate work.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS will be deducted 10% of allowed points for each class day that it is late.

## **Assignment Submission Policy**

All assignments must be submitted via the course website by the due date. Assignments not presented or turned in by due dates are considered late and will be penalized as described above.

## **Grading Timeline**

Grades will be posted two weeks following submission of work.

## **Wellness and Health Statement**

I believe a healthy work/life balance and the prioritization of overall well-being is a central component to one's success both within this class and beyond. Towards this end, I model well-being as a value in my classes. Please be kind and generous to yourself, and to others. If you are unable to attend class because of a personal or family emergency, please communicate that to me over email.

## **Braver Space Statement**

As your professor, I strive to create an open and inclusive environment in which participants feel empowered to take risks and engage in challenging discussions. I want my classes to be joyful, democratic, inspiring, imaginative, and safe spaces for all. In order for us to collectively commit to this practice within our class sessions, please consult the principles below, which originated from Common Field's Community Agreement.

– Hold ourselves accountable first, and enter each space with a humble heart and loving criticality.

Center care in our interactions with others and in representing our own needs.

- In order to create a classroom environment that is truly intersectional and inclusive, we need to recognize that inequity is systemic. Before entering each session, take a moment to acknowledge our differences and be honest about our own privileges and power. Make a conscious effort to resist ableism, racism, classism, ageism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia in our language, imagery, and examples.
- Prioritize listening is essential in creating inclusive space. When we listen, center the voices of people with disability, trans & queer, black & brown, low-income, non-English speaking or other non-white folks. Silence can be helpful especially when it means we are actively listening and processing.
- Rather than reacting to one's immediate need to manage disagreement or achieve perfection, give space for discomfort, mistakes, vulnerability and non-closure. It is often through mistakes and discomfort that we grow.
- Respect each other's privacy and personal boundaries, including confidentiality. Understand that safety, accessibility and personal boundaries mean different things for different people. The way to create a safer and more accessible space for everyone is to ask respectfully and learn from one another interpersonally.
- Have fun. Take breaks. Allow space for yourself and others to enter and leave according to their needs.

I welcome any suggestions and feedback that will help us take better care of each other intentionally throughout these sessions and beyond. If you have additional accessibility needs or encounter any difficulties during the events, feel free to contact me.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Integrity of scholarship is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of University intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>

Effective 9/25/2017, UC San Diego will use new Administrative Sanctioning Guidelines to respond to academic integrity violations: <http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/process/consequences/sanctioning-guidelines.html>.

Associated Students Office of Student Advocacy: a free and private resource providing one on one Zoom advising to students accused of violating Student Conduct or Academic Integrity policies.

Contact or make an appointment at <https://asadvocacy.ucsd.edu/>

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter (paper or electronic) issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (link to OSD website). Students are required to discuss accommodation arrangements with instructors and OSD liaisons in the department IN ADVANCE of any exams or assignments.

For additional information, contact the Office for Students with Disabilities:

858.534.4382 (V)

858.534.9709 (TTY) - Reserved for people who are deaf or hard of hearing

[osd@ucsd.edu](mailto:osd@ucsd.edu)

<http://disabilities.ucsd.edu>

## REQUIRED TEXTS

All readings are available as a PDF through the course website.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### ***Week 1 - April 4***

#### ***Introduction & Welcome***

Introductions, Syllabus Overview

In-Class Activity:

Group Reading: *The Hundreds* by Lauren Berlant and Kathleen Stewart (Excerpts)

In-Class Writing Prompt: Write about your recent Second Year Exhibition in 100 words, crafted in the style of *The Hundreds*.

Close-out Activity: Extended Bodies by Whitney Stark, from *Training for the Not Yet*

### ***Week 2 - April 11***

#### ***Affect, Sensation, Feeling***

Reading:

James Voorhies, "Prelude" and "Exact Imagination" in *Postsensual Aesthetics: On the Logic of the Curatorial* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2023)

N. Katherine Hayles, *Unthought: The Power of the Cognitive Unconscious* (Chicago: University of

Chicago Press, 2017) [Excerpts]

Student Facilitator: Deanna Barahona

Grant Proposal Workshop

### ***Week 3 - April 18***

#### ***Audience & Assembly***

Reading/Watching:

Dan Fox "Audience Appreciation"

Judith Butler "Introduction" in *Notes Towards a Performative Theory of Assembly* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018)

Elena Fililpovic "What is an exhibition?" in *Ten Fundamental Questions of Curating* (Mousse Publishing, 2013)

Student Facilitator: Jaz Bryant

### ***Week 4 - April 25***

#### ***Context***

Reading:

Hito Steyerl "If You Don't Have Bread, Eat Art! Contemporary Art and Derivative Fascisms" (*e-flux journal*, Issue #76, October 2016)

Legacy Russell, "Introduction" and "Glitch is Error" in *Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto* (New York: Verso, 2020)

McKenzie Wark "Introduction" in *Capital is Dead: Is This Something Worse?* (New York: Verso, 2019)

Student Facilitator: Nathan Freeman

### ***DUE: Writing Assignment 1: Grant Proposal for Solo Presentation***

### ***Week 5 - May 2***

#### ***Institutions***

Reading & Listening:

Shimrit Lee "Decolonize Museums" (e-flux podcast)

Nizan Shaked "Introduction" in *Museums and Wealth: The Politics of Contemporary Art Collections*

(New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022)

Laura Raicovich "Liberation Serif" in *Culture Strike: Art and Museums in an Age of Protest* (New York: Verso, 2021)

Student Facilitator: Emily Greenberg

### **Week 6 - Week of May 9 - ONLINE/Zoom**

CLASS DOODLE: <https://doodle.com/meeting/participate/id/ermm4QLd> → [Links to an external site.](#)

### **Circulation & Networks**

Reading:

Seth Price "Dispersion" (2012-Ongoing)

*Artforum*, Summer 2017, "Cultural Appropriation: A Roundtable," by Salome Asega, Homi K. Bhabha, Gregg Bordowitz, Joan Kee, Michelle Kuo, Ajay Kurian, and Jacolby Satterwhite

Ceci Moss, "Introduction" in *Expanded Internet Art: Twenty-First-Century Artistic Practice and the Informational Milieu* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2019) <https://bloomsburycp3.codemantra.com/viewer/5d79062dfa4f8c0001d35d4d> → [Links to an external site.](#)

Student Facilitator: Gustavo Martinez

### **Week 7 - May 16**

### **Community**

Reading:

Shaun Leonardo "Love" *DVDL*

Yesomi Umolu "On the Limits of Care and Knowledge: 15 Points Museums Must Understand to Dismantle Structural Injustice" in *Artnet News* (June 25, 2020)

ruangrupa *Documenta Fifteen: Handbook* (Hatje Cantz, 2022) [Excerpts]

Student Facilitator: Junyi Min

### **Week 8 – May 23**

### **The Present**

Reading:

Shumon Basar, Douglas Copeland, and Hans Ulrich Obrist, *The Age of Earthquakes: A Guide to the*



*Extreme Present* (New York: Penguin Books, 2015)

Student Facilitator: Naomi Nadreau

**DUE: Writing Assignment 2: *Proposal for MFA Preview Group Exhibition***

***Week 9 - May 30***

***Sustainability and Long-Term Futures***

Guest Speaker: TBD

***Week 10 - June 6***

***Pecha Kucha Presentations & Group Potluck Brunch***

Due: Pecha Kucha Presentation for MFA Solo Thesis Exhibition Proposal

**FINAL - TUESDAY JUNE 13 BY 6PM**

**Due: Final Project: MFA Solo Thesis Exhibition Proposal**