

# VIS 108 - Advanced Projects in Art

Visual Arts Department Winter 2024

University of California, San Diego

Lecture: Thursdays 9:30am-12:20am, Mandeville 212

Instructor: Dr. Ceci Moss

E-mail: [cmoss@ucsd.edu](mailto:cmoss@ucsd.edu)

Office hours: Thursdays before or after class, by appointment

## VIS108: Advanced Projects in Art

---

### CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This is the general course description for the course that can be found at:  
<https://catalog.ucsd.edu/courses/VIS.html>

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a studio art course for the advanced visual arts major interested in preparing for a career as a professional artist.

Graduating from college and entering into the next phase of your trajectory can be an intimidating prospect, and this course is aimed to empower you as much as possible. The class begins with exercises to ground students in their personal values, with the goal of building a career and art practice based on those guiding principles. Readings and assignments will be geared towards demystifying various aspects of the art world - from exhibition production to conservation to art criticism to funding - while also touching on the many professional pathways within the industry. The required readings will draw on recent publications in the field, emphasizing contemporary debates and conversations regarding structural inequity, technology, and institutional reform. The writing assignments will provide students with an essential toolkit of items - including an artist statement, sample portfolio, C.V., an exhibition proposal and a short grant narrative - that students can re-use to foster future opportunities. Throughout, students will be encouraged to imagine the kind of art community - and more broadly, world - they want to build through their practice.

**Prerequisites:** senior standing. Open to media, studio, ICAM, and speculative design majors.

## CLASS EXPECTATIONS

### *Attendance and Tardy Policy*

In order to receive credit for weekly attendance, students must show up to weekly sessions on Thursdays from 9:30am-12:20am 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 an advanced undergraduate seminar requiring significant student input in the form of presentations 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 and to take part in the in-class activities.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

All readings are available through the course website.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

- [Writing Assignment 1: Artist Statement & Portfolio Assignment](#)
- [Writing Assignment 2: Exhibition Proposal & Grant Narrative](#)
- [Final Project: C.V. and Letter to Your Future Self](#)

## PRESENTATION

- [Artist Quotation Presentation](#)

## **GRADING**

Attendance/Participation (20%)

Writing Assignment 1 (25%), Week 5

Writing Assignment 2 (25%), Week 8

Artist Quotation Presentation (10%)

Final Project (20%), Week 10

## **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>
- 

**WEEK 1:** Introduction & Welcome

**WEEK 2:** Defining Your Values & Designing Your Life

In Class: *Designing Your Life* Exercises: “Build a Compass: Workview and Lifeview Reflections” and “Odyssey Planning 101”

Required Reading:

Burnett, Bill, and Dave Evans. 2016. “Introduction”, “Building a Compass” and “Designing Your Life” in *Designing Your Life : How to Build a Well-Lived, Joyful Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Note: We will be completing the exercises in Chapters 2 and 5 in class as a group

**WEEK 3:** Values in Action: Building the World You Want to See & Creating Your Community

Homework Assignment: Come to class with an idea for an exhibition, event, or project you’d like to realize.

In Class: *Making & Being* Workshop & Exercises

Required Reading:

Ceci Moss, “Ingredients for a Braver Art Scene” in CARLA (Summer 2019)

Mark Allen, *Machine Project Guide to Curating and Planning Events* (Common Field)

**WEEK 4:** After the BFA

In Class: Artist Statement Workshop & Developing a Portfolio

Required Reading:

Beth Pickens “Introduction”, “Work”, “Money” and “Education” in *Make Your Art No Matter What* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2020)

Recommended Events:

Thursday, February 1, 2024, 6-8pm: Artist-led tour of the MFA exhibition NOT NOW BUT NOW: <https://mandevilleartgallery.ucsd.edu/exhibitions/not-now-but-now.html>

Saturday, February 3, 2024, 2pm-3pm: Closing performance of "a practice for a home without a ceiling" by Jun!yi Min, organized as part of NOT NOW BUT NOW

**WEEK 5:** Behind the Scenes: Exhibition Design & Ideation | Writing Assignment 1 Due

Guest Speaker: [Salmah Beydoun](#)  [Links to an external site.](#)

In Class Workshop: Exhibition Proposal

Required Reading:

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

Dan Fox, “Being curated,” *Frieze* (April 2013)

**WEEK 6:** Behind the Scenes: Art Handling, Art Production & Contracts for Artists 101

Guest Speaker: [Art Handxlr\\*](#)  [Links to an external site.](#) (to be confirmed)

In Class: Artist Contracts Close-Reading Exercises

Required Reading:

Sarah Cowan, “Can Artists Organize? The Story of WAGE” in *The New Yorker* (December 14, 2018)

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/can-artists-organize-the-story-of-wage> → [Links to an external site.](#)

## **WEEK 7:** Art Writing

Homework Assignment: Go to the library and check out an exhibition catalog. Be prepared to bring this catalog to class and discuss it.

In Class: Exhibition Catalog Share / Roundtable

In Class Workshop: Writing a Grant Narrative

Required Reading: Dayal, Mira, and Josephine Heston, eds. 2023. *Track Changes : A Handbook for Art Criticism*. Brooklyn, New York: Paper Monument. [Selections]

## **WEEK 8:** Behind the Scenes: Art Conservation | Writing Assignment 2 Due

Class Visit to Balboa Art Conservation Center. Meet at BACC at 9:45am, tour starts at 10am:

<https://www.bacc.org/> → [Links to an external site.](#)

Homework Assignment:

Review at least two of the “Documentation Templates” drafted by the Whitney Museum’s Department of Art Conservation:

<https://whitney.org/conservation/mpi/documentation-templates> → [Links to an external site.](#)

Required Reading:

Ben Lerner, “The Custodians” in *New Yorker* (January 11, 2016)

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/01/11/the-custodians-onward-and-upward-with-the-arts-ben-lerner> → [Links to an external site.](#)

Recommended:

Review short documentaries by the Whitney Museum’s Art Conservation department regarding the preservation process:

<https://whitney.org/conservation/highlights> → [Links to an external site.](#)

## **WEEK 9:** Supporting Your Practice: Money & the Art World

In Class: C.V. Workshop

Required Reading: Shaked, Nizan. 2022. "Introduction" *Museums and Wealth : The Politics of Contemporary Art Collections*. London, UK ; Bloomsbury Academic.

Recommended Reading: INCITE!, "Introduction" in *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded : Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*. 2017. Durham: Duke University Press.

**WEEK 10:** Visit to [Two Rooms](#) ⇒ [Links to an external site.](#), Studio Visit with Founder [Lizzie Zelter](#) ⇒ [Links to an external site.](#) | Final Project Due: C.V. and Letter to Your Future Self




# Topic: Artist Quotation Presentation

This is a graded discussion: 10 points possible

## Weeks 2-6 and 8-9

During one class during the quarter, you will select and discuss a quote by an artist that you find illuminating and inspiring at the beginning of class. You can be creative with how you decide to present the quote. Think of this quote as something so potent and meaningful that you would print it out and pin it up on the wall of your studio for years to come.

You will add your quote to [this running google document shared with the class](#)  [Links to an external site.](#), so that we can compile everyone's contributions in the same place.

The point of this exercise is to bring artists' experiences, perspectives and voices into the room with each class session, and for the selection of quotes the class creates together to become an continual source of motivation for all after graduation.

For ease, I've placed several print anthologies of artist interviews in Course Reserves at Geisel Library. All of these books are not available digitally, and I encourage you to visit the library in person and take the time to review them.

### Accessing Course Reserves

Course Reserves are available for students to access in the Service Hub of the Geisel Library building. To ensure that all students have access to the materials they need for their classes and eliminate late fees, Course Reserves are limited to in-person use in the Library.

Students can search for items on reserve for their classes using the [course reserves system](#). Items available in the Service Hub of the Geisel Library building and on Electronic Reserves will be listed on [course reserves system](#).

For students that need to access titles related to their classes for a longer period of time, students can search [UC Library Search](#) for additional items available in the general UC San Diego Library collection or from other UC campuses.

---

## GRADING EXPECTATIONS: ARTIST QUOTATION PRESENTATION

Follows the instructions

Keeps the group engaged and focused, expert facilitation

Conscientious of the “Braver Space Agreement”

# Writing Assignment 1: Artist Statement & Portfolio Assignment

## Artist Statement (less than 300 words)

Make sure the artist statement is:

- Concise
- Clear/Absent of jargon
- Explains what you make/do
- Details your medium

## Portfolio Assignment

Select 5 of the strongest projects that you've completed thus far. Make sure that these artworks align with your artist statement, and illustrate the key ideas at play in your practice. Provide highly quality documentation of each work, identifying information such as title/year/medium, as well as a short description.

---

## 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.

# Writing Assignment 2: Exhibition Proposal & Grant Narrative

## Exhibition Proposal

Imagine you are pitching a solo exhibition to a curator. You can use this assignment to build out a more elaborate version of a prior artwork or to create a pitch for an upcoming project. This proposal will include:

- Exhibition Title
- Thematic Narrative
- Technical Needs (projector, media player, lighting, etc)
- Sketch of floorplan
- Production Timeline and Proposed Budget

## Grant Narrative

### Organized into 3 sections - Who/What/How

***Who (Provides more depth and context regarding your practice beyond the artist's statement - operates as a pitch for your artistic practice) (less than 500 Words)***

- How is your work original?
- What community do you serve? Who is your public?
- How does your work make a social, cultural or political impact?

***What (Explains the project you'd like to receive funds for) (less than 500 Words)***

- What is your idea for your solo thesis presentation, in detail?
- How does this idea further your artistic practice and vision?

***How (No Page or Word Limit)***

- How will you realize this idea? Demonstrate to a potential funder that you understand the resources and logistical requirements needed to make your project a reality.

Items that might be useful under the "How" section:

- Examples of past work that might set the stage for this project (documentation, statement, etc)

# Final Project: C.V. and Letter to Your Future Self

## C.V.

Create a two page C.V. customized to suite a potential job or internship in the arts sector after your BFA. This should include:

- Professional Summary
- Work History
- Education
- Relevant Coursework
- Exhibition History
- Volunteering/Residencies/Other Experiences

## Letter to Your Future Self

Write a letter to your future self in 2029. I will not read this letter, as it's private and for you. This assignment is meant to provide future you with encouragement down the road, a time capsule of your life as a senior at UC San Diego, and as a means for you to express your aspirations and dreams after the BFA. For more on this type of writing, please see:

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/how-do-you-write-letter-to-future-self> → Links to an external site.

If you wish, you can also use this website to file the letter:

<https://www.futureme.org/> → Links to an external site.

---

## 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