

**Western University • Faculty of Arts and Humanities • Department of Visual Arts****VAS 2105B - EXPLORATIONS 3: MAKING ART WITH ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGY**

**Course time:** Tuesday 2:30pm - 5:30pm

**Location:** 139/134/135

**Instructor:** Gabriella Solti ([gsolti@uwo.ca](mailto:gsolti@uwo.ca))

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 5:30pm - 6:30pm

**Office:** VAC 213

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

An introductory studio course exploring the use of readily available technology, tools and materials in the making of visual art. Students will produce creative 2D, 3D and time-based projects exploring the possibilities of various accessible media technologies including digital photography, compact video cameras, smart phone cameras, animation, freeware and creative construction techniques with lectures and readings addressing the historical/contemporary contexts of media art production. Students are expected to work independently outside of class time to produce their projects.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

**Students who come to classes well prepared, actively participate in discussions, critiques and in-class technical exercises and complete all assignments successfully will be able to:**

- Apply the visual language of documentary and/or experimental short films in digital video production and to develop technical skills to create digital short stories using ubiquitous digital devices and free editing software.
- Produce creative works that demonstrate the ability to problem solve, translate and communicate ideas through digital technology and creative construction, identifying and utilizing the appropriate tools and methods required for each task in the process.
- Apply rapid prototyping techniques in creative technology projects.
- Integrate a conceptual and/or theoretical framework with technical skills acquired throughout the course, to produce imaginative, self-directed works that exemplify personal initiative, critical analysis and introspection.
- Articulate individual research investigations, orally and through self-reflective online sketchbook.
- Participate constructively in group activities, discussions and critiques, using language acquired and developed in class, to evaluate and express the effectiveness of creative works produced by themselves and others.

**CLASS FORMAT:**

Each class will meet in room 135 in the Visual Arts Building prior to working in other production and/or seminar spaces. Classes will normally begin with group screening responses, followed by technical lectures, workshops, reading/viewing responses and discussions, as well as project consultation/development sessions. Although a certain amount of time will be allotted for in-class project work, students will also be required to spend a *minimum of 10 hours/week* developing techniques and strategies introduced in the course, conducting independent research, completing assigned projects, and preparing for discussions and presentations.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Attendance in all classes is mandatory. Students taking this course will be expected to arrive on-time at the start of each class, and be sufficiently prepared to work on projects and participate in class activities. Each unexcused absence without proper medical documentation will result in the participation/attendance component of the semester grade being penalized by 10%. Requests for accommodation must be processed through the Academic Counselling office of the student's home Faculty. Students arriving more than 20 minutes late for class will be marked as absent.

Work will not be accepted from students who are absent 15%, or more class time (i.e. four classes per term) without documented medical or bereavement reason and may be debarred from participating in final studio evaluations. **Class contact hours will be crucial for this course. Be on time! Technical workshops, presentations, critiques, lectures and discussions will happen during class time and will not be repeated.**

**Students may not submit a project completed for another course unless special permission is obtained from both of the course instructors involved, and arrangements have been made to ensure that a sufficient quantity of new production has occurred for both courses.**

Students are required to observe all specified mandatory safety protocols governing media lab use. Students consistently failing to meet these requirements will have their media lab privileges suspended.

Students are expected to demonstrate an attitude of respectful criticality and active engagement at all times, and contribute to the creation of a collegial and productive learning environment.

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no fee adjustment. These decisions cannot be appealed.

***The use of cellphones, text messaging, and/or social media sites during class time will not be tolerated if they are not directly related to class assignments/work.***

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & MATERIALS:**

- Access to and knowledge of OWL. Students are responsible to take the necessary training to use OWL effectively. OWL Sakai training and documentation: <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/owldocs>
- Active UWO e-mail address (communications outside of class will be done via e-mails)
- Active Western ID Card for access to the labs
- Access to a video recording device; it can be cell phone camera, digital camera, video recorder, etc. A few camcorders and digital DSLR cameras are available in the Visual Arts sign-out office, though they are often in high demand, especially during mid term and at the end of term, thus their reservation well in advance is highly recommended. Equipments can be reserved at: <http://uwo.ca/visarts/resources/signout.html> ***A video camera (it can be your cell phone camera) should be acquired, and brought to the first class*** Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the particulars of their video camera's interface, as individualized instruction in this area is not provided.
- A binder for consolidating course materials and a USB flash drive or portable external hard drive (recommended minimum: 16GB).
- Recordable DVD's for final outputs (you can purchase these when needed).
- Students are expected to produce their own digital files, and buy the material for 3D printing from the department. The use of 3D printer in the Cohen Media Lab is \$1/hour and it includes the material. A 3D project for this course, depending on size and complexity, can be completed with 6-10 hours use of the printer.

**EQUIPMENT BOOKING AND PRINTING:**

Please make sure that you book the necessary equipment for feedback sessions and presentations as well as for completing assignments on time. Class time will not be used for set-up, and students will be expected to have any necessary technology installed, tested and running smoothly beforehand. Students are responsible for the costs of producing their work for project feedback sessions, and research materials, scripts, storyboards, design sketches etc. must be in a hard-copy form in order to be considered complete.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

Assignments are designed to incorporate ideas and approaches learned both in class and through independent research, practice and experimentation. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves to explore, personalize, and expand on the creative potential of these skill sets.

Project descriptions will be posted on OWL, and in each course module, students will be expected to present project work at several key points: (1) Proposal Due dates; (2) In-Progress Critique dates; and (3) Project Due dates. These dates are outlined on the Course Schedule, and information as to what is required at each stage will be explained in class and can be accessed on OWL

Student performance will be evaluated in terms of technical proficiency, conceptual focus, synthesis/presentation, as well as work ethic/development. Emphasis will be placed on the serious engagement with relevant and challenging ideas.

Furthermore, students will be expected to think critically and respond to the historical and contemporary issues presented in class. Successful projects will clearly demonstrate effort in

three key areas: research/planning, experimentation/development, and refinement/resolution. For more information on the assessment of project work, see the departmental rubric included with this syllabus. A more course-specific outline of instructor expectations will be posted on OWL.

**A one-time, late penalty of 10% shall be applied to all late submissions or those not presented in the required format.** Studio projects, presentations, and written work will be considered incomplete and late if items on the Due Date Checklist included with each assignment description are missing from the submission package. It is the student's responsibility to remain informed as to submission details and requirements. Assignments submitted more than 10 days late without official documentation (see UNDERGRADUATE POLICIES section for details) will not be accepted, and will receive a grade of zero.

### **COURSE EVALUATION:**

Students will be evaluated according to the following criteria: Understanding of assignment concepts, level of ambition, resourcefulness and creativity, technical facility, conceptual development and complexity of ideas, completion and quality of assignments as well as attendance and participation.

### **GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

Module 1 Digital Storytelling	15%
Module 2 Short Film	20%
Module 3 3D Printing Project	25%
Module 4 Independent Project	25%
Quality of class participation; viewing/reflection assignments; attendance: 15%	

### **MEDICAL POLICY:**

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed assignments, presentations or participation components worth **10% or more** of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

A student who cannot complete coursework totalling **less than 10%** of their final grade, due to medical reasons, may speak with the instructor and arrange an extension of no more than one week to complete the assignments without presenting medical documentation.

For more information on accommodations for medical reasons, refer to [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

The Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

### **MENTAL HEALTH:**

"Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental\\_health/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help."