

The University of Western Ontario
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Department of Visual Arts

Course: VAS2252A *Introduction to Contemporary Media I*

Term: Fall 2016

Time: Tuesday and Thursday 11:30-2:30

Locations: Visual Arts Building room 134/135

Prerequisite: None

Professor: Daniela Snepkova

Office: North Campus Building rm 216

Office hours: Tuesday 2:30-3:30 or by appointment

Ext: 88509 **Email:** dsnepkov@uwo.ca

Teaching assistant: **Email:**

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to and exploration of media based arts. The objective is to provide students with hands-on production experience while also familiarizing them with the critical, theoretical and historical debates surrounding “new” technologies. Students will develop the basic technical and conceptual skills for production and critical engagement in areas of electronic arts, computer applications and media culture. Using both analogue and digital technologies, students will produce works in the areas of digital imaging, media installation, public art, and time-based production: animation, video and audio.

No prior experience with computer arts is required as this course is intended to prepare students for further study and exploration with digital media. Students with a great deal of computer experience should have patience and offer assistance to those who are in need of it. This term the computer applications we will be exploring are Photoshop, Premiere, and Audacity.

CLASS FORMAT:

Bi-weekly classes will meet in VAC 135 for lectures, discussions, screenings, guest lectures and presentations and for technical workshops and lab time we will be in the media lab in the adjoining computer lab, VAC rm 134. Check the schedule on OWL for weekly details. Students will also have access to other spaces for their installation works and special project needs. Attendance at critiques is mandatory. We will also be engaged in on-going discussions of student work in progress.

While students will have a limited amount in-class time to experiment and complete assignments, they will also be required to work outside of class time for a minimum of 6 hours/week. This may involve booking equipment and space ahead of time.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completing the course, students should be able to:

- Understand and use various software applications for image and sound manipulation
- Have a working knowledge of the equipment involved with digital photography, video, and audio production
- Develop skills in the production processes of digital imaging, videography, sound creation and recording, and animation production
- Understand the historical development of various digital and time-based media in order to apply their conceptual potentials to their own contemporary art production

- Articulate one's artwork in a mature manner; visually, verbally and in written form
- Critique others' art work critically and analytically
- Develop appropriate vocabulary for media-based art

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & MATERIALS:

- Sketchbook, a selection of pencils, drawing pens
- External storage device: external HD (mac compatible) or USB 3 flash drive (min. 8 GB)
- You will be required to print a minimum of 2 larger format high quality digital prints (minimum size 11"x14")
- If you plan to borrow cameras from VAC, an SD card of your own is highly recommended
- A pair of headphones (on-ear dj style but without extra base correction that would distort the playback of your audio files)
- A camera lens cleaning kit with a blower, brush, paper
- Active Western U e-mail address (communications outside of class will be done via uwo e-mail and web-ct/OWL)
- Active UWO card (Western One HID Card) for access to the labs
- An active imagination, an insatiable curiosity and a propensity to "make stuff"

Required readings: Course readings are available on OWL. Check the weekly schedule for details.

Grading and Evaluation:

4 studio assignments- details will be handed out in class and be available on-line:

1. Light of Memory – digital print(s)	20%
Due date: September 27	
2. Digital Alchemy: Reconstruction - digital print(s)	20%
Due date: October 18	
3. Super Natural - animation (in pairs)	20%
Due date: November 6	
4. Final audio/video assignment	20%
Due date: December 1	
5. Attendance, participation and in class exercises-ongoing	15%
6. On-line presence-posting images and ideas on class site - ongoing	5%

Studio assignments are graded on the following criteria:

technical requirements
 technical integration with the idea
 degree of inventiveness and ambition of assignments
 understanding of the theoretical implications of the work
 the progress of conceptual development and skills over the semester

Written work will be graded for grammar, style, research and conceptual development.

***Plagiarism** is a serious academic offence. Be certain to give citations for all of the sources you utilize in your written work. Students may be asked to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking. (for more information regarding plagiarism see the U.W.O. Calendar.) You may not hand in a written or studio project that was created for another class, doing so will result in a failing grade. You may not hand in a work created by someone else.

****Attendance and participation grade includes engagement in reading discussions, participation in critiques and in-class studio exercises. Attendance at critiques is mandatory. Arriving more than 20 minutes late for class will be marked as an absence and arriving consecutively late for class will impact negatively on your final grade. Late assignments will lose 5 percent per day, and will not be accepted after 7 days from the due date without official (medical) documentation.**

Turn off your phone ringers and refrain from texting and emailing during class time.

Access:

You have access to the computer lab in VAC 135 and the VAC sound recording studio. Access to the computer lab needs to be activated by our lab technician. Lab hours vary each day and schedules will be posted outside of the lab. You are allowed to use them if there are no classes in session.

Equipment may be signed out in the VAC sign out area on the second floor. Policies will be handed out in class.

Midterm Assessments:

Please set up an appointment with the instructor to review your progress in the class.

BASED ON THE STUDENT'S SUCCESS IN MEETING THE ABOVE CRITERIA GRADES WILL BE ASSESSED ON THE FOLLOWING:

90-100 (Outstanding, A+) The **studio work** shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated analysis and synthesis involving complex theoretical and conceptual thinking are demonstrated. Mastery of complex ideas is immediately evident. The studio work has originality, clarity, and ambition. The project is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A) The **studio work** shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. The work is clearly focused and intelligently presented. Mastery of complex ideas is demonstrated. The studio work has clarity and ambition. The quality of the studio production immediately engages the viewer. The studio work has been sufficiently developed and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are compelling. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is impressive.

75-79 (Very Good, B+) The **studio work** shows above average analysis, critical thinking, and independent thought. It demonstrates a clear awareness of the parameters of the assignment and a very good attempt to respond creatively to them. The work demonstrates reasonable depth and/or breadth and engages in a production that is appropriate to the level of the course. The quality of work engages the viewer and demonstrates above-average mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is very good.

70-74 (Good, B) The **studio work** shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. It shows a good attempt to respond to assignment parameters. The work demonstrates some depth and/or breadth, making references to appropriate course material/art context. The studio production engages the viewer and demonstrates a sufficient mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is satisfactory.

60-69 (Competent, C) The **studio work** demonstrates adequate engagement with the project. It shows an attempt to respond to assignment parameters but does so at a very basic level that lacks creativity. Engagement with studio production demonstrates basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is competent.

50-59 (Marginal, D) The **studio work** shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The studio work waivers in its attempt to respond to assignment parameters and tends to be simplistic. Engagement with studio production demonstrates less than a basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is less than satisfactory.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F) The **studio work** demonstrates a failure to comprehend/engage the topic. The studio work is incomplete and lacks redeeming creative merit. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is unacceptable.