

Art 4399 Section 01

M 5:30 – 8:30

Office: Room 109 Arts Building; Tel: 880-8949(worst)

Office hours: M/W 10:30-10:55 & 4:45-5:20; or By Appointment

SENIOR THESIS & EXHIBITION

Professor Prince V. Thomas

email: pthomaslamar@gmail.com (best)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Student-selected problem encompassing an area of emphasis with suitable research, production, written support and oral presentation to a faculty committee. This course is a degree completion requirement for those seeking a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.

PREREQUISITES AND PREREQUISITE GRADE REQUIREMENT

Must be eligible for graduation. The letter grade “C” will be the minimum grade for completing this course.

COURSE CONTENT

This is an intensive, upper-level art course to assist students with the development of their Thesis Writing Component. This should be the last course leading to a bachelor’s degree in Art (BFA) and should be taken the semester that you graduate. Assignments are designed to facilitate the completion of the written Thesis.

All Art Majors receiving a BFA degree in Graphic Design or Studio Art will be required to produce a body of work (a thesis) consisting of at least 8 finished pieces. Your thesis, the quality of the concept and the development of the problem leading to a solution of that thesis, should indicate the strength of your educational foundation and your qualification for graduation. The result will be a professional body of work exhibited in the Dishman Art Museum with a written document interpreting and defining your thesis, an Oral Defense of your thesis, and an invitation designed by the class. This body of work will NOT be exhibited at any other location prior to your exhibit in the Dishman Art Museum Thesis Exhibition.

The experience of developing your own concept and bringing it to a successful conclusion will strengthen your skills as you seek professional careers in various art-related fields. Upon successful completion you will be prepared for post-baccalaureate studies or the professional marketplace and you will be able to exhibit artwork in a professional manner.

THINGS THAT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

1) Ask the Department Administrative Assistant to pull your file and give it to the Department Chair to review for graduation. (She usually does this but just make sure that it was done.)

2) Write a One-Page ONLY **Letter of Intent** and give to your proposed Committee members for approval. It must be at least a 250 word, typed, double-spaced letter of intent. This Letter of Intent may begin... “In completion of the BFA degree in (Studio Art or Graphic Design), I intend to...” This One-Page statement should include: a paragraph that clearly states the description of the Problem and clearly defines what the reasoning/significance/concepts are for the problem, a paragraph about your methodology for how you will go about solving the problem, a paragraph about what and how you intend to make the pieces including medium/media, & lastly what you hope to achieve in the end and how you envision the end-product to look.

Remember that your Thesis may, and in fact will, evolve throughout the semester, because it is anticipated that your concepts will develop and mature as you progress. This letter acts as a starting point for this journey. Within the letter include your name, phone number, and email address as shown in the example that I will email you. The committee members and you must be in agreement on your thesis problem before you can continue forward.

3) Create your Thesis Committee (Two Faculty Members: One of which **MUST** be in your area of Concentration.) It is your responsibility to select a Thesis Committee from the Full-Time Art Faculty. Other faculty may be selected to serve on the committee but you must have two Full-Time Art Faculty. **It is strongly recommended that your thesis committee include at least one Tenured Faculty member.** Other members on the committee may serve as advisors but will not make decisions regarding the student’s fulfilling the thesis requirements or their grade. After reading your letter of intent, a faculty may choose not to serve on your committee, in which case, you are required to find another suitable member for the committee.

You must request one faculty member to serve as the Chair of your committee. The Chair must be a faculty member that you have taken courses with in the past and ideally be in your area of concentration. If the chair of your committee's area of concentration is in another area, you must still select a member that is in your concentration. Your decision should be based on compatibility with your aesthetic concepts. Remember: You are still students and they are your professors. Their recommendations should always be seriously considered prior to making any decisions about your work.

4) Contact Dishman Museum for **MANDATORY 5 hours** of volunteer service to the museum that must be finished by the end of the semester for course completion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The class meetings will be spent reviewing written assignments and discussions related to the clarification and execution of your Thesis concepts.

Upon completion of the written component of your Thesis and all other requirements for the course, the Committee and Chair must sign the Signature Page for this component to be complete.

Upon completion of the Artwork for your Thesis, you will be required to participate in a formal Oral Defense of your work in the Dishman Museum in front of your Committee, Peers, other faculty, and friends/family that may be in attendance. We will discuss this later in the semester.

You are required to meet with your FULL committee at least THREE times throughout the semester prior to having your Oral Defense. Once your Oral Defense is scheduled with your committee, you are required to immediately notify me, the Dishman Museum, and the administrative assistant in the Art Office so that it can be written down in the museum and department calendars. Two Orals may NOT be scheduled for the same time.

In summation, you are required to develop a coherent body of work, a written thesis, an exhibition, an exhibition announcement, three FULL committee meetings, submit documentation of your Thesis project, volunteer 5 hours to the Dishman Museum, and conduct an Oral Defense all within ONE semester.

Please be advised that this is a self-directed class... Its success and your success in it are directly related to the effort and time you put into the class and your work. You will be expected to execute your work in and outside of class... Warning: This means long hours in writing and making work. The class time will usually be taken to discuss your writing assignments.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Your thesis will be written in Chicago Style, so you are required to purchase the Chicago Style Handbook.

TEXT:

The Chicago Manual of Style: The Essential Guide for Writers, Editors, and Publishers (14th Edition or Newer) May be purchased on Amazon.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance plays a key role in the successful completion of this course. Students are expected to attend all class meetings. However, students are allowed ONE excused absence either in the case of a university-sponsored activity or by seeking the prior approval of the instructor. The latter excused absence is given at the discretion of the Professor ONLY in cases of personal emergency. As per university policy, approved absences call for the privilege to make up examinations and assignments without penalty; this privilege does not extend to unapproved absences. Therefore, a student's unapproved absences may interfere seriously with classroom performance.

After the first Excused or Unexcused absence, the course grade will be lowered a letter grade for each additional absence. Finally, FOUR absences will result in Failing the Thesis course and not graduating.

Students will be marked present if present at the time of attendance taking, marked tardy if attending the class late but within the first 15 minutes of the class, and absent if arrival is after the first 15 min. or student is not present. **Two** tardies are the equivalent of an absence. Students are responsible for notifying the Professor at the end of class that they are late, otherwise they will have been marked absent. Students are also responsible for finding out about and making up any assignments missed due to absence or tardiness.

EVALUATION/GRADING SCALE

Your first assignment is to get an email address and email me with your full name, course name and number, and meeting time. This information should be written in the body of the email not in the subject line. Failure to send me ALL of the information requested will result in an "F". You are required to email me with this information no later than **9:00am Tomorrow**. This will be either an "A" or "F" in the grade book. So get it done now!

You must be self-motivated and self-directed to succeed this Semester. Your grade will be determined primarily by a combination of your performance in this course along with your performance with your committee. The percentage breakdown for your final grade will be:

34% Thesis Course &
66% Committee Evaluation

Students are expected to complete all assignments due on the specified days. Assignments turned in late will be dropped TWO letter grades. Late work will not be accepted after one week. NO EXCEPTIONS.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

You will be required to make FOUR copies for EVERY writing assignment that is due each week. You MUST have these copies made prior to coming to class. We will spend the time reviewing and evaluating as a group all your assignments to assist in helping you develop a coherent and sound written thesis. Everyone will be expected to participate. CONSIDER. EVALUATE. SUGGEST. If you finish your writing earlier, please email me your assignment as an MS Word doc and I will read and send you my corrections electronically. But still make copies for the class to review.

COURSE OUTLINE (A schedule of class meetings will be provided with more specific information.)

Weeks 1-2

Introduction to Thesis; Various Writing Assignments. Assignment & Critique.

Weeks 3-4

Various Writing Assignments. Assignment & Critique.

Weeks 5-6

Various Writing Assignments. Assignment & Critique.

Weeks 7-8

Compilation of First Half of Written Thesis. Assignment & Critique.

Weeks 9-10

Various Writing Assignments. Assignment & Critique.

Weeks 11-12

Various Writing Assignments. Assignment & Critique.

Weeks 13-14

Various Writing Assignments. Assignment & Critique.

Weeks 15-16

Various Writing Assignments and Preparations for Exhibition & Oral Defense.

POLICY FOR INCOMPLETES

You will have ONLY one semester to complete the thesis problem. The decision to grant an Incomplete is the exclusive right of the Thesis Committee; no incomplete will be granted unless the student has the FULL consent of the Thesis Committee. An incomplete will be granted ONLY when it is warranted and only if the student has shown reasonable progress toward the completion of their thesis. Failure to work on the thesis does not justify receiving an Incomplete. In no instance will an Incomplete be granted if the student has failed to comply with the requirements of this course, including meeting with the Thesis Committee.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with all university policies pertaining to academic performance and conduct. As stated in the Lamar Student Handbook, all students should maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic experiences.

In this course, disciplinary action will be brought against any student found guilty of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. Cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials are defined on page 82 of the Student Handbook. In addition, by University policy, a student cannot avoid any penalty for cheating set forth by the instructor in a course syllabus by dropping the course. Procedures for disciplinary action due to academic dishonesty shall be the same as in other violations of the Student Code of Conduct (see Student Handbook) except that all academic dishonesty cases shall first be considered and reviewed by the faculty member. The process of appeal is located in the Student Handbook available online.

The course instructor will complete a thorough and impartial investigation of any instance of academic dishonesty. A student found guilty of academic dishonesty will be notified in writing by the instructor of the violation, the penalty, and the student's right to appeal the determination of dishonesty and/or the sanction imposed. Penalties for academic dishonesty in this course will result in either a lowered letter grade or failure of the course as determined by the instructor.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Many types of emergencies can occur on campus; instructions for severe weather or violence/active shooter, fire, or chemical release can be found at: <http://www.lamar.edu/about-lu/administration/risk-management/index.html>.

Following are procedures for the first two:

SEVERE WEATHER

- Follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel.
- Seek shelter in an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, putting as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- If you are in a multi-story building, and you cannot get to the lowest floor, pick a hallway in the center of the building.
- Stay in the center of the room, away from exterior walls, windows, and doors.

VIOLENCE/ACTIVE SHOOTER (CADD)

- **CALL** - 8-3-1-1 from a campus phone (880-8311 from a cell phone). Note: Calling 9-1-1 from either a campus phone or cell phone will contact Beaumont City Police Dispatch rather than University Police.
- **AVOID** - If possible, self-evacuate to a safe area outside the building. Follow directions of police officers.
- **DENY** - Barricade the door with desks, chairs, bookcases or any other items. Move to a place inside the room where you are not visible. Turn off the lights and remain quiet. Remain there until told by police it is safe.
- **DEFEND** - Use chairs, desks, cell phones or whatever is immediately available to distract and/or defend yourself and others from attack.

ACADEMIC CONTINUITY PLAN

In the event of an announced campus closure in excess of four days due to a hurricane or other disaster, students are expected to login to Lamar University's website's homepage (www.Lamar.edu) for instructions about continuing courses remotely.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Disabilities Resources Center (DRC) offers a variety of services designed to provide students with disabilities equal access to academic services. Some of the services include academic adjustments, physical access, assistive technology, priority registration, sign language interpreters, and note-takers. Documentation of disability is required to receive accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or services. Persons with disabilities should notify the coordinator of the DRC prior to registration in any university program. A meeting with the person and Coordinator will be arranged in order to assign appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments or services. The DRC office is located in the Communication Building, Rm. 105. Students also may write to P.O. Box 10087, Beaumont, Texas 77710, e-mail DRC@lamar.edu or call 409-880-8347.