

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

*Spring '13*

ART 495, Life and Career in Art  
MWF 1:00 – 1:50, DM141

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**ACU Mission Statement:** The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

**College of Arts and Sciences Mission Statement:** The mission of the College of Arts and Sciences is to educate students for worldwide Christian service and leadership through programs of study and other learning experiences that blend a liberal arts education with professional and career education.

**Course Audience:** This capstone course is designed to serve the needs of senior art majors pursuing the BFA degree with a 2D or 3D emphasis.

**Prerequisite:** Senior standing and one of the following courses: ART 318, 433, 443, 455, 463, 473, or ART 490 in drawing.

**Course Goal:** At the conclusion of this class students will possess a general knowledge of the diverse and segmented market for art products and services and have a firm understanding of the professional practices and expectations within the field. They will possess artistic, communication, and self-assessment skills, demonstrable through professional products developed and presented and professional activities engaged in during the course to enable them to enter and succeed in the art market.

**Course Description:** A study of the culture of the art world, the marketplace for art and art services, and the professional practices required for a career in fine or applied arts. Special emphasis is given to developing skills, practices, and values for an artistic life of leadership and influence.

**Capstone Course for Art Majors:** This senior-level course shifts the focus in the study of art from technique, media, theory, and the production of art to the competencies, professional practices, and spiritual perspectives required for a successful career and life in the visual arts. We will address issues relevant to the life of the Christian artist, the character of the marketplace for art products and services as well as the professional practices required therein, and many of the pragmatic demands of the workplace and of self-employment. The intent of the course is to help students round out and integrate the whole college educational experience by employing the skills and insights gained in previous coursework and extracurricular, religious, and volunteer activities, unifying these into a creative career consistent with Christian principles.

**Goals for Student Competency:** At the conclusion of the course, students that have genuinely participated will be able to:

1. Describe the style and character of their work, its sources and heritage.
2. List, describe, examine, and prioritize the quality and character of their experiences and skills in art.
3. Characterize the relationship between faith and art and assess its role in their life.
4. Characterize and differentiate the marketplaces for art products and art services.
5. Communicate suitability and competence for a specific job or task by citing evidence.
6. Assess the performance of peers/competitors and provide advice and recommend actions.

Students will be able to identify the segment of the market for art and art services to which they belong, will have a portfolio and supporting material that are geared to that market segment and its unique practices, and will have demonstrated the ability to formally present themselves and their work in a professional manner, answering questions as to their training, skills, aptitudes, and commitment to the discipline or career. Students will be more confident in their ability to enter and succeed in that market.

**Course Products:** Students who successfully complete the course will possess:

1. A refined, professional portfolio, resume, and other supportive materials (e.g. cover letter, artist's statement, leave-behind, tear sheet).
2. A rehearsed and presented interview, with feedback, for a specific job, task, placement, or representation.
3. Documentation of artworks produced.
4. A resource and reference notebook assembled from class materials (including sample résumés, contracts, business and tax forms, etc).
5. A statement of principles regarding art and faith.

**Format of Class Sessions:** This course requires student participation and interaction. Mere attendance **does not** qualify as a contribution to these components of the course. While homework will be infrequent, when it is assigned it will be of the utmost importance. Each class member will be expected to complete homework and reading assignments prior to the class period and to come prepared to present and/or discuss the material. Sharing relevant current events, literature, examples, or applications is considered a standard means of contributing to class dynamics and learning.

This course will be relatively unstructured—not to be interpreted as lacking seriousness—in order to foster an atmosphere that encourages creativity, participation, and useful results and to serve the individual needs of students. We will pursue a general topical curriculum that can shift to address the interests and aspirations of students. We will have times when individual or group work is conducted during class, have guest speakers, and there may be occasions when class does not officially meet in order to facilitate activities that cannot be accomplished within the 50-minute time frame. As a result, it is imperative that you diligently keep track of all class activities and plans, especially after an absence. A blog is maintained to facilitate effective communication and to provide you with access to resources. The blog will help keep you apprised of assignments and due dates.

**Course Outline:** Given the student-centered focus, the following is a general outline of the course content

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1 and 2<br>Jan. 14-25     | <b>Identity</b><br>Self-assessment<br>Situation Analysis: Self (Strengths and Weaknesses)<br>Faith, Occupation, Identity                                                                        |
|                                | Monday, Jan. 18      Self-Evaluations due<br>Wednesday, Jan. 23      Reflection on Self-Evaluation due                                                                                          |
| Week 3 and 4<br>Jan. 28-Feb. 8 | <b>Environment: Reality, Myth, and the Foreseeable Future</b><br>Cultural Myths of the Artist<br>The Marketplace for Art and Art Services<br>Products and Services<br>Opportunities and Threats |
|                                | Monday, Feb. 4      Art and Faith Essays due                                                                                                                                                    |
| Week 5 and 6<br>Feb. 11-22     | <b>Marketing Concepts and Approaches</b>                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                | Monday, Feb. 20      Situation Analysis due (SWOT)<br>Friday, Feb. 22      Exam 1/Case Studies                                                                                                  |
| Week 7<br>Feb. 25-Mar. 1       | <b>Commitment and Capacity</b><br>Mission Statement<br>Goal Setting                                                                                                                             |
| Week 8, 9, and 10<br>Mar. 4-29 | <b>Identity into Presentation</b><br>Résumé<br>Portfolio and Documentation<br>Representation: Presentation Packet<br>Biographies, Artist Statements, Cover Letters                              |

|                              |                                                                                                                     |                                            |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
|                              | Monday, Mar. 18                                                                                                     | Résumé due                                 |
|                              | Monday, Mar. 25                                                                                                     | Cover Letters, Artist Statements, Etc. due |
| Week 11 and 12<br>Apr. 1-12  | <b>Business and Ethical Practices</b><br>Pricing<br>Responsibilities<br>Legal Issues<br>Taxes<br>Contracts          |                                            |
|                              | Friday, Apr. 5                                                                                                      | Portfolios/Presentation Packets due        |
| Week 13 and 14<br>Apr. 15-26 | <b>Resources/Sustainability</b><br>Networking<br>Monitoring the Changing Environment<br>Nurturing the Artist within |                                            |
|                              | Monday, Apr. 22                                                                                                     | Exam 2/Case Studies                        |
| Week 15<br>Apr. 29-May 3     | <b>Identity Into Practice</b><br>Presentation/Portfolio Review<br>Interviewing                                      |                                            |
| Week of Finals<br>May 6-10   | Presentations/Interviews held                                                                                       |                                            |

**Primary Sources:**

Abbot, Robert J. *Art and Reality*. Santa Ana, CA: Seven Locks Press, 1997.  
Dyrness, William A. *Visual Faith: Art, Theology, and Worship in Dialogue*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.  
Elkins, James. *On the Strange Place of Religion in Contemporary Art*. New York: Routledge, 2004.  
Lang, Cay. *Taking the Leap*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998.  
Van Laar, Timothy and Leonard Diepeveen. *Active Sights: Art as Social Interaction*. McGraw Hill, 1998.  
Veith, Gene Edward. *The Gift of Art: The Place of the Arts in Scripture*. Downer's Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1983.

**Grading System:**

| <u>Items</u>                   | <u>Weight</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Self-Evaluation Survey         | 5%            |
| Art and Faith Essay            | 10%           |
| Exams/Case Studies             | 10%           |
| Situation Analysis             | 20%           |
| Portfolio/Presentation Packet  | 20%           |
| Written Elements of the Packet | 5%            |
| Formal Presentation            | 20%           |
| Involvement                    | 10%           |
| Total                          | 100%          |

A = 100-90  
B = 89-80  
C = 79-70  
D = 69-60  
F = 59-0

No "extra credit" work is available.

**Course Policies:** Policies for this course are tied to professional standards within the discipline.

Homework: Homework is due at the beginning of the period for which it is assigned. No mechanism is provided for accepting late work. Extraordinary circumstances may warrant an exception, but only if prior arrangements are made with the express permission of the instructor.

Attendance: Understand that whether one misses class for another university activity, health reasons, unavoidable conflicts, or due to personal preference, he or she is still missing exposure that can never be recovered or captured in any other way. The instructor accepts no responsibility for re-presenting class content or assignments for individual students not in attendance; hence the student is responsible for finding out what was missed, completing missed work, and adhering to deadlines. This should be accomplished well in advance of the next class meeting. All formal assignments can be found on the course blog.

Students are allotted three absences for MWF classes for cases of illness, family crisis, or official university business. Absent students are immediately responsible for work missed. Each absence beyond the above limit imperils the student's standing in the course and necessitates a reduction in the final grade for the course. Certainly, no credit for completion can be expected from a student missing more than six class meetings.

Academic Dishonesty: Any occasion of cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty will result in an F in the course. See the ACU Academic Integrity Policy at [http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices.campuslife/acad\\_integrity.html](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices.campuslife/acad_integrity.html)

Other: As the focus of this course is to prepare students to enter the professional world, it is appropriate to adhere to business or corporate standards of behavior; therefore, behavior is anticipated which demonstrates professionalism, courtesy, and respect for others. Minimum expectations for an aspiring professional include:

- Regular attendance
- Punctuality
- Remaining present, awake, alert, and cognitively involved for the duration of each class session
- Completion of reading and homework assignments prior to class
- Scheduling of snacks, restroom breaks, and preparation for other courses outside of class
- Treating all class participants with courtesy

Coming in late, leaving early, or departing while the class is in session and any other behavior which is distracting and/or disturbing to classroom proceedings are all actions which are deemed discourteous and detrimental to the process of the class and to the individual's grade.

**Statement of Cooperation for Students with Disabilities:** Abilene Christian University and the College of Arts and Sciences comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability. If you have an established disability as defined in the ADA and you would like to request an accommodation, please see me as soon as possible.

*Every art major is required to attend a minimum of six art-related events (show openings/receptions, guest lectures, exhibitions, museum trips, art chapels, etc.) per semester. They are also required to enter an art competition other than the Department's Annual Student Competition. Failure to do so will affect your status as an art major. See the art department bulletin board or handbook for details.*

Perhaps the reason for this departmental requirement will now come into full focus: these events represent arenas in which artists conduct business. They are the cultural meeting places of the market and business environment of art.

## **Art and Faith Essay**

Now that we have taken a look at the practice of art from a theological perspective, noted some of the tensions which exist between faith and artistic practices, and observed various models of an art/faith synthesis, I would like for you to spend some time reflecting on your own art/faith interface.

I'm interested in having you address two questions:

1. What is the current relationship of art and faith in your own life and practices as an artist? How does being a Christian impact or shape your art or processes?
2. Given the things we have discussed, can you describe deficiencies that need to be addressed? In other words, please reflect critically on your current practices and cite specific areas that require development or recalibration. Specific references to the texts we have read and the material we have discussed in class are expected.

What are your hopes or dreams for the intersection between art and faith in your life?

This essay should be typed, double-spaced, in 11-point type. The paper should be approximately three pages in length, but can be longer if needed. Provide citations and a bibliography as appropriate. Submit this essay via email as a pdf document.

**Due: Monday, February 4**

## ARTIST EVALUATION SURVEY

(Electronic copy from *Art and Reality*, by Robert J Abbott)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Artist Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FAX:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Internet:** \_\_\_\_\_

### ART

1. Describe your work.

2. Describe the style of your work.

3. How long have you worked in this style?

4. Has your style changed?    Yes \_\_\_\_\_    No \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you change your style frequently? Infrequently? Explain.

6. Describe the materials, media and general dimensions of your art.

7. Briefly, what is your artistic philosophy?

8. Where do you get your inspiration to work?

9. Do you feel you have a good understanding of your philosophy?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Why?

10. Do you feel others understand your philosophy?

11. What other artists do you admire?

12. What inspires you about their work?

13. Compare your art to other artists' in terms of style, quality, technique and price.

14. Write a one-paragraph biography of yourself as an artist.

## MARKET SURVEY

Understanding the possible markets for your work is an important aspect of developing a successful career plan. Avenues through which you have had prior achievements may only be the tip of the iceberg. With good planning and an open mind, you will discover other possible venues for your work.

15. Where do you feel your work best fits?

Galleries \_\_\_\_\_

Museums \_\_\_\_\_

Art Fairs \_\_\_\_\_

Retail Stores \_\_\_\_\_

Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

16. Does your art have a geographical influence, i.e., seascapes, etc.?

17. In what geographical areas do most of the people who collect your art live?

18. Does your art appeal to the general public or to a more “art educated” sector?  
Please elaborate.

19. What types of galleries have shown your work?

20. What types of museums have shown your work?

21. What types of other places have shown your work?

22. What price range has your art sold in?

Through galleries \_\_\_\_\_

Through your studio \_\_\_\_\_

Through art fairs \_\_\_\_\_

Through other venues \_\_\_\_\_

23. Has your art ever been published? (i.e., limited edition prints, etc.)

Self published \_\_\_\_\_ Publishing Company \_\_\_\_\_ Never Published \_\_\_\_\_

24. What price range were the published works sold for? \_\_\_\_\_

25. How many pieces were published to each edition? \_\_\_\_\_

26. What method of printing was used to publish your work?

27. Were you satisfied with the results. Explain your answer.

28. If you have not been published, would you be interested in publishing your work?  
Explain your answer.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

## **SHOWS AND EXIBITIONS**

List any and all shows and exhibitions in which you have participated to date. Include information on location, dates, group or solo, works on display, coordinator of the event, and the like. If you have a current biography sheet, simply attach it to this section. If you are a new artist or have not shown your work extensively, do not be discouraged. You have wisely chosen to carefully plan your introduction to the art world.

29. Galleries/Commercial Spaces

30. Museums/Institutions

31. Alternative Spaces

32. School Exhibitions

33. Competitions

34. Public Spaces

35. Private Collections

36. Art Fairs/Festivals

37. Other(s)

38. Are you an active member of an arts organization? A museum? Describe.

39. Are you involved in any community work relating to the arts? Describe.

## **EDUCATION**

Education can be an important facet in the development of your career as a professional artist. It helps you be aware of the evolution of art throughout the history of humankind, of art's influence on social values and perceptions of the times, and of the power that individual artists have had on society. Education, either formal or informal, broadens you as an artist and contributes to your understanding of the realms and responsibilities of an artist. Although formal education is not a requirement for becoming an artist, keeping informed will help expand your opportunities.

40. What art education have you received? Include the dates and locations of high school, college, and continuing education as appropriate.

41. Have you studied art history or other art-related courses? Please elaborate.

42. Have you interned with another artist or institution? Attended artist workshops?

43. Do you visit the shows and exhibitions of other artists on a fairly regular basis?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

44. What types of education are you involved in at this time or planning to be involved in the near future?

## **GOALS**

45. What are your short-term (six months) goals for your art career?

46. What are your two-year goals?

47. What are your five-year goals?

48. What would be your ultimate achievement – the goal of all goals for you as an artist?

49. Is selling your work a major factor in your art career?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

50. Are you willing and able to financially support the expenses of developing your career, such as presentation materials, travel, and other activities?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

## **PRODUCTIVITY**

51. How much time do you devote to your work?

In a day? \_\_\_\_\_

In a week? \_\_\_\_\_

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52. How long, on an average, does it take to complete a piece?

53. What percentage of your work product would you consider strong enough for exhibition in your chosen market?

54. How prolific are you? How many pieces to you complete?

In a week? \_\_\_\_\_

In a month? \_\_\_\_\_

In a year? \_\_\_\_\_

55. Are you able to support yourself through the sales of your works?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

56. Are you employed at another job?

Full Time \_\_\_\_\_ Part Time \_\_\_\_\_ None \_\_\_\_\_

57. How many times a year do you present your work?

To galleries? \_\_\_\_\_

To museums? \_\_\_\_\_

58. Do you call on galleries where you do not know anyone ("cold call")?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

59. Do you call on museums where you do not know anyone ("cold call")?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

60. How many quality pieces do you presently have available for exhibitions?

61. How do you handle rejection?

## EVALUATING YOUR SURVEY

Now that you have completed the survey, it is time for you to evaluate your answers and learn where you are and where you want to go. Start the evaluation by reviewing your answers and then respond to the questions below. After you have completed your evaluation, a direction will be defined for you. And when you move in that direction, you will be one your way to success.

(Check the answers that apply to you.)

### Questions 1-6

Develop a description of your work. If you change your work continually and don't have a focus, you need to establish a direction. Do not show work that is all over the board. It is important to have a cohesive body of work – or to be building one – to present.

*Do you feel you have a good understanding of your work and your style and does your work have a definite focus?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### Questions 7-10

If you have a philosophy, it's important that you communicate it to the viewer and continue expanding upon your philosophy. If you don't have any particular philosophy, that's fine. What is important is that you know who you are as an artist and have a specific focus.

*Do you understand what inspires you to produce work and do you have a philosophical communication with your viewers?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### Questions 11-14

*Have you studied the works of other artists--historic or contemporary? Do you feel you have a knowledge of art, art movements, and art history?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

If you answered no, you may wish to explore this area. Such study can help to expand your artistic possibilities.

### Questions 15-18

Whether you have collectors or not, are you addressing questions that need to be answered in order to plan your career? If you are not sure, you may seek the opinion of someone you respect.

*Do you feel you have a relatively good understanding of these questions?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### **Questions 19-21**

These questions asked about venues where you have shown your work. If you've exhibited in academic venues but wish to pursue a more commercial direction or if you are a commercially-oriented artist, you need to draw the line and focus on those venues that are not in your chosen area.

*Can you make a decision on the direction to pursue representation in the future?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### **Question 22**

Establish prices for your work that are comparable to those of artists of similar stature. Keep in mind it is important to maintain current knowledge of market prices.

*Do you feel you have a good idea what your work should sell for?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### **Questions 23-28**

In developing a publishing business the key is to thoroughly understand the market you wish to enter. Do not be misled by printers who claim you will make a fortune. Keep in mind printers are interested in selling printing, not prints.

*If you answered yes to Question 28, read thoroughly "Publishing Your Work," on pages 143-150.*

### **Questions 29-39**

This part of the survey encouraged you to keep in mind the many venues where you can present work on a continual basis. Frequent exposure increases the likelihood that you will receive representation. When possible, try to involve yourself in local art-related functions.

*Do you feel you are ready and have the knowledge to approach possible venues with your work?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### **Questions 40-44**

Education is important. It need not be formal or institutional learning, but if you wish to advance your career financially, intellectually, and emotionally, you must be knowledgeable and current.

*Are you willing to invest time seeking information that can further your career?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### **Questions 45-50**

Your goals are most important because they enable you to plan a course of action to reach your objectives. Set short- and long-term goals, but be realistic. If you pursue your goals in a planned

fashion, you will likely succeed. You may have to adjust your goals along the way, but that's part of the trip. Always pursue and be persistent.

Like any business venture, art requires expense. After all, if you start a new business, you have to buy some equipment. If you are careful and conservative, the cost will not be excessive. I tell artists to think of art as a business because it is.

*Are you willing to purchase the necessary materials and pay for other expenses necessary to begin a career as an artist? Keep in mind that costs can vary widely.*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### **Questions 51-56**

It is important to produce enough work to show to venues. If your output is limited to a few works a year, you may not be able to support yourself with your art. Even so, you can still show your work. Many artists I work with are more interested in institutional exhibitions than in sales. What is important is that you are producing and continuing to develop and present your work.

*Are you producing a cohesive body of work in sufficient quantity for exhibition or presentation?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### **Questions 57-60**

From the many evaluations I've done with both experienced, full-time artists and newcomers, I'm amazed to discover most of them present their works only a few times a year. In business you don't stop building your business after you make the first sale. You continue to build.

*Are you willing to present your work on a continual basis until you succeed?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

### **Question 61**

If you can't handle rejections, you're in the wrong business. A fine artist, just like artists in music, drama, theater, or film, will encounter many obstacles along the way. But the rewards are great for those who persevere. One artist responded to how he handled rejection: "Just another opportunity to present my work."

*Can you handle rejection?*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: If you answered "no" or "not sure" to five or more of the survey evaluation questions, then you need to refocus your direction.*

## **Situation Analysis**

Now that we have taken a brief look at marketing plans and SWOT Analyses, I would like for you to engage in the internal assessment portion of a SWOT analysis. I would like for you to analyze yourself, looking to identify your strengths and weaknesses. Basically, I'm asking you to consider arenas outside of art-making that may help or hurt your chances of being successful.

Please address the following areas:

- General creativity as it regards problem solving or entrepreneurship
- Communication skills (Oral and Written)
- Leadership skills
- Financial abilities and/or needs
- Organization
- Time management
- Social skills
- Contacts (create a list of professionals you already know in your field)

You may address other areas if you think them relevant.

This essay should be typed in 11-point type. The length should be a maximum of two to three pages. Submit this essay via email (to [greenr@acu.edu](mailto:greenr@acu.edu)) as a PDF document.

**Due: Friday, March 22, at 1:00 p.m.**