

Tasha Dobbin-Bennett
Art History and Studio Art, Oxford College of Emory University
Introductory level art studio course

Piedmont Project Course Redesign Statement

This introductory studio began as course on the historical production of paper as well as an opportunity to teach students about the development of the art form, (please see Course Description below). As my personal art practice began to reflect a shift towards the use of naturally sourced pigments and dyes, I began to notice that my students were also very interested in learning more about the production of these same pigments and dyes. In addition, I also began closely watching the studios' water consumption footprint. With these two elements in mind, I participated in the 2017 Piedmont Project.

To say that the Piedmont Project was eye-opening would be an understatement. The benefits of participating in the Project were three-fold: I have a much better understanding of the wider scope of sustainability practices; I developed key networks with other participants and presenters who offered wonderful insights into how I could adapt my courses; and I had space to focus on the granular changes I wanted to make in all my syllabi.

As a result of my participation I have made two major modifications to my syllabus for this course. First, I have included four field trips to bring my students out into the local environment. Studio classes are, by definition, experiential learning but I had not realized the importance of allowing students to experience the environment when we begin our natural dyeing unit. Field trips we took during the Piedmont Project, led by Eloise Carter and Peggy Barlett, were influential to my revisions. I have scheduled three field trips around campus over several weeks, which will introduce students to the trees and plants on campus, both native and invasive. We will discuss possible uses of invasive plants as pulp, as well as investigate the dyeing properties of trees and plants. A trip to the Oxford Organic Farm is also scheduled so that students can experience a dye garden, and identify cultivated dye sources such as safflower and indigo. By the time students reach their natural dyeing project in week five, they have already been on four field trips, and have had the opportunity to consider and collect dyeing materials for their project. The second major change came with the inclusion of invasive species of plants as raw material for paper pulp. Following the Piedmont Project, I enrolled in a studio workshop that specifically teaches how to process invasive species as potential pulp.

Dr. Tasha Dobbin-Bennett
Office: Humanities Hall, Room 109A
Fall 2017, Wednesday 1.15pm – 5.15pm
Tarbutton Studio

ART 110 (HAP) Introduction to Papermaking Studio Course

Course Description: This course will explore the historical production of paper as well as a material from which to make art. The format of the course underscores the complicated relationship between the physicality of creation and scholarly research. Students will have the opportunity to experience how the two practices inform each other.

Students will explore different avenues in the creation of paper, and follow the historical development of paper from a skilled craft to an elevated art form. Historically, fine, high-quality, long-lasting paper was notoriously difficult to make and required years of training and laborious attention to detail. This course will introduce students not only to the social, historical, and religious context of paper and the purposes to which it was put, but also allow them to create paper and ornamentation in that style. More recently, artists have considered the characteristics of paper, often evaluating and experimenting with weight, texture, and tone. In addition, the tremendous versatility of paper pulp led to artists such as Robert Rauschenberg and David Hockney to push the traditional boundaries of the material as a medium in itself.

In our studio class we will use the materials to consider the formal and creative processes of two- and three-dimensional forms. Engaging with our own environments, we will make extensive use of recycled materials collected by students, as well as commercially available pulp. Discussion, readings, and studying artists and their art in context will accompany hands-on studio practice.

Several paper artists will join us for workshops, over the semester, on their chosen art form.

Course Goals and Performance Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Produce two and three-dimensional paper that demonstrate an understanding of the various methods of paper production, composition, and replication.

2. Discuss the processes and practices employed by historical papermakers and contemporary paper artists.
3. Develop ideas from concept to object using problem solving techniques.
4. Demonstrate proficiency in the following techniques: pulling, laminating, embedding, watermarking, and casting.
5. Analyze and critically discuss their work in relation to the development of personal iconography and individual style.

Student Evaluation and Grading:

20% Class Participation, Attendance, and Critique

20% Ideas and Research (Sketchbook)

60% Execution of finished portfolio, comprised of six (6) projects

Grades are defined as follows.

A = outstanding work, extra time spent, vigorous explorations, unity of concept and handling of materials to create an original visual statement;

B = above average work, clearly defined concept with skillful handling of materials, exploration pushed beyond average;

C = average work, competent execution of ideas and craftsmanship with no outstanding qualities and no measurable risk-taking;

D = below average work, underdevelopment of concept and poor execution of ideas with little attention to craftsmanship;

F = serious problems in work involving total disregard for intent of work and sloppy craftsmanship.

Sketchbook

You are required to keep a sketchbook of ideas, notes, thoughts and drawings, thoughts on the readings, etc. This is an incredibly important art practice not only in the project planning stage, but also as a way to keep track of your thoughts, changes and revelations throughout the creative process. Sketch books should be on hand each class as I will consistently check for updates, correction and completion of ideas.

SAFETY WHEN WORKING IN THE STUDIO.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAFETY AS WELL AS THE SAFETY OF THE PEOPLE WORKING AROUND YOU. You will be instructed in the safe use of any tool, art supplies, process, equipment, etc. that you choose to employ in producing your work, and expected to maintain safe work practices throughout your time at Oxford. Do not use any tools or equipment that you have not been trained on. ALWAYS, ALWAYS ASK for assistance if you have any concerns about the proper and safe use of any tool.

Class Policies:

1. Attendance is required / Every absence in excess of one (1) will result in lowering your final average by five (5) points. You are responsible for all work missed during that absence.
2. You must be present at all critiques and present portfolios during midterm and finals week.
3. No late projects will be accepted without penalty. (Dropped one letter grade per day late). Projects submitted for Midterm and Final Critique cannot be turned in late.
4. Academic integrity is essential. Violations of the Oxford College Honor Code will not be tolerated. Any violation may result in the failure of this class and suspension or dismissal from the college.
5. Student work, as submitted as part of this course, may be reviewed by Oxford and Emory faculty and administration for the purpose of improving instruction and the enhancing of the colleges' educational goals.

Week One

Introduction to papermaking

- The craft of papermaking
- Discussion of terms and historical review of the development of paper
- Paper as fine craft
- Artists exploring papermaking as an art form:
 - Robert Rauschenberg
 - David Hockney
- Construction of moulds and deckles.

****First field trip around campus****

- Introduction to pulp sources
- Identification of possible sources of pulp from invasive species

Reading:

Sansom, Ian, (Friday 9 November 2012) Can Paper Survive the Digital Age, The Guardian <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/nov/09/can-paper-survive-digital-age>

Week Two

Pulling Paper 1

Preparation of mordants

- The chemistry of paper
- Basic technique and process
 - Pulp preparation, sheet formation, couching, pressing, and drying.

****Second field trip around campus****

- Introduction to natural dye materials
- Identification of possible sources of natural dyes based on season and availability

Readings:

Mattison, Elizabeth, "The Book Under Pressure", in Pamela Franks et al., *Odd Volumes: Book Art from the Allan Chasanoff Collection* (available on Canvas).

Weber, T. (2007). "The Invention of Paper in China" in *The Language of Paper: A History of 2000 years*, pp. 26-28.

Weber, T. (2007). "The Long Road from the Orient to the Occident" in *The Language of Paper: A History of 2000 years*, pp. 40-45.

Week Three

Pulling Paper 2

- Embedding
- Laminating
- Sizing
- Discussion of techniques and considerations with regard to paper usage.

****First field trip to Oxford Organic Farm****

- Identification of possible sources of cultivated natural dyes based on season and availability.

Week Four

Watermarks

- Introduction, discussion of techniques, examples.
- Pulling paper with watermarks.

Project 1

- Using watermark sheet create a unique watermark.
- Create an edition of ten (10) sheets demonstrating the watermark technique.
 - Consistency, craft, and repeatability are critical elements.
- Your best edition of ten identical sheets is to be included in your final portfolio.

****Third field trip around campus****

- Identification and collection of natural dye materials from local environment

Week Five

Pigment and dyes.

- Discussion of techniques
- Natural versus commercial pigments

Project 2

- Create two editions of five (5) sheets apiece.
- The first edition will use a natural pigment of your choice
- The second edition will use a second natural pigment of your choice
 - Consistency, craft, and repeatability are critical elements.
- All notes, experimentation, and recipes must be recorded in your sketchbook.
- Include both editions in your final portfolio.

Week Six

- Continuation of color work and watermark work.
- Pull paper for frottage work next week.

Reading:

Levine, Mark 17 Feb 2012, Can a Papermaker Help to Save Civilization?

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/19/magazine/timothy-barrett-papermaker.html?_r=0

Week Seven

Paper and pressure

- Exploration of the transferring of images in techniques such as embossing, relief, and frottage.
- Principles of mono printing and relief printing.

Project 3

- Using your own pulled paper, you will make rubbings from the immediate environment.

Reading:

Weber, T. (2007) "The Block Printing Process and the Spread of Buddhist Sutras" in *The Language Of Paper, A history of 2000 years*, pp. 71-75.

Artists for review:

Sari Dienes

Judy Pfaff

Week Eight

Just Add Water - casting - non geometric and hybrid forms

- Discussion of casting techniques
- Use of existing moulds to form three dimensional paper forms.

Project 4

- Create one (1) three-dimensional cast for inclusion in your final portfolio
 - Creativity, craft, and attention to detail are critical elements

Artists for review

Peter Gentenaar – paper sculptor

<http://www.gentenaar-torley.nl/index.php/peter-gentenaar>

Week Nine

Continuation of technique practice and work on portfolio.

Week Ten

Ink production and Pigment application

- Discussion and experimentation with carbon black and iron gall ink recipes
- Application of Verdigris to paper.
- Application of studio made inks to handmade paper using quills.

Project 5

- Create one (1) example of fine Capital work.
 - Ink and pigment application will consist of work with the quill and brush, as well as the creation of a Capital.

Week Eleven

Trip to Institute of Paper at Georgia Tech

- Printing Press
 - Design and print.

Week Twelve

Paper Cutting

- Using handmade paper, students will explore the precise field of paper cutting.

Artists for Review

Annie Vought – Cut paper artist – interview <http://inthemake.com/annie-vought/>

Rowan Brown – Cut paper artist <http://roganbrown.com/home.html>

Myriam Dion – Cut paper artist <http://www.myriamdion.com/#!journaux/aboutPage>

Week Thirteen

"Take an object. Do something to it.

Do something else to it. Do something else to that"

Jasper Johns

Project 6

- Using at least two of the techniques learned over the semester, this last project is an opportunity for you to design and execute your own paper art.

Week Fourteen

Portfolio time – Student Presentations of Portfolios.

Critiques and reflections and goodbyes!

ART 299 CLASS MATERIALS AND STUDIO SUPPLIES

Art supplies and studio materials will be covered by a lab fee of \$120. This fee must be paid by September 9, 2016. This fee may be paid in cash or it can be charged to your Opus Account.

4 prejointed stretcher bars measuring 10" x 3/4" x 3/4"

4 prejointed stretcher bars measuring 12 1/2" x 3/4" x 3/4"

1/2" brass screws

Small paintbrush

Rustproof wire screen (window screen or finer), cut to 9 1/2" x 12" (24 x 30 cm)

Hardware cloth (a heavy wire mesh with 1/4" mesh squares) cut to 9 1/2" x 12" (24 x 30 cm)

1/4" or 1/2" foam insulating strips (aka weather stripping)

Waterproof apron

Cotton Linters, 2nd cut sheets (~4 pounds)

Denim Cotton, bleached sheet (~1 pound)

Abaca, unbleached sheet (~1 pound)

8" x 12" watermark sheet (1)

Standard Quill Pen, Narrow Nib

X-Acto Knife and 40 Blades