

DRAWING II/Human Figure

ARTS 230/00

Professor Read Baldwin/office hours: TR 11-12, 4-5, or by appointment

pbx 5068, home # 427-3525, 2263-0340 (before 10 pm!)

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Figure Drawing

This particular course should serve three functions in your development as an artist. On the one hand, there is **drawing**: that form of expression that I think of as being absolutely *essential*, or primal. It reflects the movement of the hand, and the need or desire to record an image as a fundamental form of communication. And it is not a day-to-day communication, but a conveyance of an understanding of the world, or a vision, that elevates and enriches us all. That is the form of communication that we call Art. The ingredients that make up good drawing are as straightforward as mark making and line creation, and as complex as multiple pattern use and the depiction of forms in space. The second component of the class involves elements of **visual structure**. Visual Structure is not limited to drawing: its principles are found in all forms of creative endeavors. The principles of design that you will learn this semester should help enable you to decipher the structural encoding of many forms of visual art. The third component of the course is **the human figure**. The figure has been central to the art of drawing throughout history. People like to look at people. Perhaps on some level we even need to look at images of “ourselves”. Certainly for conveying ideas about the emotional and psychological aspects of being human, a human figure might be the best and most obvious way of doing that. The human form also has the ability to be a powerful metaphor for various aspects of the human condition. And the environments that surround the figure are critical to their artistic depiction, and to the potential for narrative within an image. Therefore this semester we will begin by starting with parts of a figure, looking closely for accurate detail. We will then expand our imagery to include the environment of the figure, with its metaphorical, social, and political implications. And then we will consider the potential for narrative within any figural image. Elements of all of these will be woven into the large final self-portrait.

Materials: You will need a pad of moderate quality drawing paper approximately 18x24”. The five major projects will require high quality paper. Compressed charcoal, pencils of varying “darkness”, kneaded eraser, ink and brush will be our primary tools. Various collage materials will also be incorporated. You will need a three-ring binder to keep handouts and assignment sheets.

Grading: A sample assignment grade sheet is included with this syllabus. Your final grade will be comprised of the five large assignment grades (which will be weighted more heavily toward the end of the semester), one presentation grade, and a double grade for your portfolios as well as involvement in critiques and discussion.

Attendance: In accordance with my colleagues in the department I have a fairly rigorous attendance policy. Regular attendance in art classes is vital to the integrity of the class as

well as to the individual learning process. You will benefit immeasurably from what your colleagues are creating, as well as the discussion that surrounds the art-making process. **Therefore, if you have more than two unexcused absences your final grade will be docked a third of a grade. Each late arrival to class counts as one half of an absence. It is mandatory that you be present for critiques, and that your work be completed on time.** If you cannot attend a critique for some reason, you must discuss this with me ahead of time. You also need to communicate with me regarding any missed classes.

Disabilities: If you have any disabilities that may affect your performance in this class, be sure to communicate this to me so that I can make any adjustments possible that will enable you to succeed at your highest level.

Schedule of events:

*Week 1—Jan 13, 15: introduction to drawing the figure: bone, muscle and skin: **project #1 due Jan 27.***

Week 2—Jan 20, 22: one leg at a time: many parts and the mysterious whole

Week 3—Jan 27, 29: giving the figure a context: interior figure studies, **project #2 due Feb 10.***

Week 4—Feb 3, 5: the personal space of figures: the psychological and emotional:

Week 5—Feb 10, 12: charcoal: dramatic light and patterning: the figure and the world, **project #3 due Feb 26.***

Week 6—Feb 17, 19: the political figure

Week 7—Feb 24, 26: in-class work and critique*

*Week 8—Mar 17, 19: creating the complex human narrative, **project #4 due Apr 2.***

Week 9—Mar 24, 26: narrative continued, in-class work

Week 10—Mar 31, April 2: narrative continued, more in-class work*

*Week 11—April 7, 9: introduce the large self-portrait, **project #5 due April 30.***

Week 12—April 14, 16: large self-portrait: the personal and the universal

Week 13—April 21, 23: in-class self-portrait work

Week 14—April 28, 30: complete self-portraits, **final critique.***