

COURSE SYLLABUS

Concept: Pursuing an Idea in the Art Process

Course code ART 304

Semester and year Spring 2017

Day and time Tue 11:30 – 14:15

Lecturer: Alena Foustkova, M.F.A.

Lecturer contact: alena.foustkova@aauni.edu

Office hours: half an hour before the class upon prior notification

Semester Credits	3	Language of Instruction	English
ECTS	6	Level	Intermediate
Length	15 weeks	Pre-requisites	None
Contact hours	42 hours	Course type	VA Required/Optional, HSC Elective

1. Course Description

Where do ideas come from? How can we express them? CONCEPT is a class based on creating hands on projects from an idea to a finished visual piece of communication. Students will try to express their ideas and contextualize them to reflect social issues, politics, media, gender or cultural context. An important part of the class will be learning how to talk about ideas and concepts. Through the format of a discussion students will learn how to stimulate original and surprising ways to express their feelings, attitudes, opinions or judgements. They will discover ways, how to convert their ideas into original, strong and meaningful art pieces. The course will include a mutual interaction by passing messages to others and allowing students to apply research, as well as an intuitive sensitivity.

Find out how intermedia, various techniques, and crossing boundaries of styles and techniques can be used meaningfully to support your ideas and find ways to look at the reality and issues which move you. Find out how to apply various visual techniques to enhance your conceptual ideas. Learn to tell your story well. Develop a visual culture through individual short and long term projects.

Part of the class will include visiting contemporary art galleries to discuss and observe how other artists develop their ideas.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Comprehend and have a clear understanding of what concept in art means
- Understand and analyze pieces of art which are conceptual in nature
- Place in context and lend perspective to the world around us
- Practice through hands-on projects their ideas from the idea to a final visual communication

3. Reading Material

No textbook reading
Selected excerpts from DADA, Phaidon Press Limited, 2006
Web links to conceptual artists
Pdf files from the teacher

4. Teaching methodology

The course will require an active participation in discussions, analysis of pieces of art, presentations of ideas, at home preparation of visual projects, as well as in class practical work on conceptual projects. Students will be asked to observe and reflect the world around them in an artistic process.

5. Course Schedule

Class 1 – Tuesday, February 14

Class Information, Discussion on Class Expectations, Introduction to the conceptual way of thinking

Lecture 1: Introduction, DADA, meet 3 Czech contemporary conceptual artists

Observe together selected conceptual pieces of art

Reading: DADA – An introduction to conceptual thinking
Study the links of the artists (pdf files provided by teacher)

Class 2 – Tuesday, February 21

Short student introductions and self-presentations

Analysis of the reading from week 1 – class discussion, examples provided

Bring your own laptops! – research will be needed

Project 1 – part 1 start

Lecture 2: Mind mapping, meet 3 international conceptual artists

Part 1: Learn how to make a mind map

1. What if the world was a more communal place? (Learning about the social issues)
2. What if I created a way how to involve people more in the arts? (Learning about cultural issues)

Introduction of the project, discussion, developing insights

Reading: Study the links of the artists, creating mind maps (links provided)

Class 3 – Tuesday, February 28

Project 1 – part 1 continued

Analysis of the reading from week 2 – class discussion, examples provided

Practical research for the **Mind map – in class**

Bring your own laptops! – research will be needed

Learn these skills:

- Empathy
- Deep understanding
- What is a mind map
- Insights

Class 4 – Tuesday, March 7

Project 1 – part 1 finalized

Material, paper provided

Lecture 3: final mind map - visualization

Practical visualization of the selected theme – **Create a Final Mind map – graded 15%**

Learn these skills:

- Selection of ideas
- Critical thinking
- Implementation

Class 5 – Tuesday, March 14

Lecture 4: Conceptual art – 1960 - 70s, Joseph Beuys

Homework: Independent Gallery visit 1 – learn to understand conceptual messages, project description

Select to visit: Visit Gallery Futura or Meat factory or Hunt Kastner gallery for your essay.

Homework essay, due March 21 – **10% written evaluation of a gallery visit**

For class 6: Ideate for conceptual ideas based on your final mind map – come to class 6 with a number of ideas and sketches!

Class 6 – Tuesday, March 21

Project 1: Part 2 – Create a visual idea from your Mind map - practical project in class – graded 15%

Lecture 5: Conceptualization of visual ideas

Develop visual ideas which will be presented in class 7 (+ finalize the project as a homework)

Class 7 – Tuesday, March 28

Mid-term class presentations of the **Project 1, part 2 – visual ideas**

Show of the final visual ideas in class (part of the 15%)

Class 8 – Tuesday, April 4

Lecture 6: Project 2 introduction, Jiri Kovanda

30% in total

Develop an in-depth systematic process of thinking and an original application of your ideas.

Bring your own laptops! – research will be needed

Topics:

1. What if people smiled at each other more? (Learning about myself and understanding others)
2. Develop your own concept based on your attitudes, opinions and issues which you would like to express.

Introduction of the project, discussion, developing insights

Class 9 – Tuesday, April 11

Class gallery visit 2 - TBD

Homework: Written essay – **10% written evaluation of the gallery visit**

Good Friday state holiday, April 14

Midterm break: Monday April 17 – Friday 21

Class 10 – Tuesday, April 25

Lecture 7: Project 2 – continued, FLUXUS group

Apply the steps of research, analyzing, divergent and convergent thinking, applying critical thinking – make a mind map to branch your research and visual ideas

First visual ideas

Class 11 – Tuesday, May 2

Project 2 – finalized

Final visual ideas - Visual ideation and practical, hands-on process of working on visualization of your ideas (+ finalize your ideas at home)

Class 12 – Tuesday, May 9

Class gallery visit 3 - TBD

Homework – 10% written evaluation of the gallery visit

Class 13 – Tuesday, May 16

Visit a conceptual artist studio – TBD, discussion

Class 14 – Tuesday, May 23

Final presentation of your Project 2

Graded as 30% of the final grade

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Project 1: part 1 + 2

Graded 30%

3 gallery visits + written essay evaluation

Graded 10% each / Total of 30%

Project 2

Graded 30%

Participation + class activity

Graded as 10%

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Student Learning Outcomes
Project 1 from start to finish	40	30%	Project understanding, originality of ideas, practical visual skills, critical thinking, presentation skills
Homework 1 – written evaluation	10	10%	Analytical skills, observation, writing skills, application of research
Homework 2 – written evaluation	10	10%	Analytical skills, observation, writing skills, application of research
Homework 3 – written evaluation	10	10%	Analytical skills, observation, writing skills, application of research
Project 2 from start	40	30%	Project understanding, originality of

to finish			ideas, practical visual skills, critical thinking, presentation skills + ability to use and apply various artistic techniques
Participation + class activity	40	10%	Active and engaged participation in class
TOTAL	150 hours	100%	

7. Detailed description of the assignments

Assessed area	Percentage
Project 1	30
3x short, written assignments from the gallery visits	3 x 10% = 30%
Project 2	30
Participation + Class activity	10

Project 1 – practical, hands-on visual project which will include all the steps from the research, mind mapping to an idea and a finished visual outcome

Project description:

Practical visualization of ideas

Learn these skills:

- Empathy
- Deep understanding
- What is a mind map
- Ideating
- Selection of ideas
- Critical thinking
- Implementation

Gallery visits + written homework evaluation

Students will be required to express their critical thinking, evaluate and comment the art exhibitions, use research to compare and place the selected pieces of art into a broader context.

Project 2 – This project allows you to focus on acquiring critical thinking skills by discussing, reflecting, deepening understanding, concentrating, observing, allowing yourself to fail and try again, exploring, losing fear of doing something new, dreaming, trying a variety of art techniques and enjoying the hands-on experience of creating and finalizing ideas.

Project description:

Develop an in-depth systematic process of thinking and an original application of your ideas.

1. What if people smiled at each other more? (Learning about myself and understanding others)
2. Develop your own concept based on your attitudes, opinions and issues which you would like to express.

Introduction of the project, discussion, developing insights.

Apply the steps of research, analyzing, divergent and convergent thinking, critical thinking.

Visual ideation and practical, hands-on process of working on visualization of your ideas.

Presentation skills.

Participation + class activity

This grade includes an active class participation in the discussions, thoughtful and reflective way of thinking and an open mind to trying new things.

Every missed class above the allowed missed classes will affect your participation in the course. Each additional missed lecture will result in a reduction of 5% of the final grade. Students are allowed to miss 2 classes without a penalty. Any additional class needs to be excused ahead of time. Over 4 classes missed would result in automatically failing the course.

8. General Requirements and School Policies

- All coursework is governed by AAU academic rules, and students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work. All students are expected to be familiar with the AAU academic rules available in the Student Handbook.
- **Communication:** The university and lecturers will use only the student's university email address for communication. Students are responsible for checking their university email accounts regularly.
- **Attendance** is required. Students are allowed two unexcused absences. Absences above this number may result in failure of the course.
- **Mobile phones** must be turned off during classes.
- **Computers/iPads:**
 1. May be used only for course-related work.
If students do not comply with this rule, with the second warning, the student loses participation points for the day.
- **Late work:**
Late work will not be accepted, unless excused ahead of time and approved by the teacher.
- **Missed exams:**
Missed exams can be only rescheduled due to a serious reason and approved ahead of time by the teacher.
- **Cheating and plagiarism:** AAU strictly enforces its policy against cheating and plagiarism. Full policy is available in the Student Handbook.

Briefly: Cheating and plagiarism results in the failing grade from the assignment at minimum, it may lead to suspension from the university.

To prevent any misunderstanding, plagiarism is defined:

PLAGIARISM – “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work.”

- Taken from the Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities are asked to contact their lecturer as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodation.

9. Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A	95 – 100	Excellent performance. The student has shown originality and

A-	90 – 94	displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytic understanding of the subject.
B+	87 – 89	Good performance. The student has mastered the material understands the subject well and has shown some originality thought and/or considerable effort.
B	83 – 86	
B-	80 – 82	
C+	77 – 79	Fair performance. The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.
C	73 – 76	
C-	70 – 72	
D+	65 – 70	Poor. The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student's work however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does not qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.
D	60 – 64	
F	0 - 59	Fail. The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.

Approved by: School of Humanities and Social Sciences