

# **Art 4399.004: Independent Study**

Spring 2026 (this course has no scheduled meeting time)

Dr. Joanna Matuszak, Assistant Professor of Art History

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Office Hours: (please make an appointment)

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## **Purpose/Objectives**

The Independent Study studio course is not a regularly scheduled university course, but is arranged, planned and managed by a supervising professor in conjunction with the goals that are proposed by the student, and then refined and approved by the supervising professor. A maximum of six credit hours for independent study courses may be applied toward an undergraduate/graduate degree.

## **BFA Student Learning Outcomes**

**Technical Proficiency:** Students will be able to create technically proficient works of art.

**Conceptual Proficiency:** Students will be able to create conceptually proficient works of art.

**Interpretation of Artworks:** Students will be able to explain how formal or conceptual elements function in works of art.

**Historical Context:** The student will be able to contextualize works of art in relation to art history or contemporary practices.

**Document Works:** Students will be able to document works of art for the purpose of archiving, application, and presentation.

**Disseminate Research:** Students will be able to disseminate research through exhibition participation.

## **Professional Communication**

When referring to any faculty member, please remember that they all have earned a high degree of respect, and should be referred to, or addressed as "Professor", or "Dr.". In any academic situation, sticking with "Professor" is the safest path, until you have been invited to address your professors otherwise, even then, I would be circumspect as to the propriety of doing otherwise. Likewise, engagements with university/departmental staff members should be equally respectful. Please understand that the staff members are critical partners in the department. Please refer to them as Mr./Mrs./Ms.

## **Office Hours & Email Etiquette**

I am here to help you and I want each of you to do well in this course! I am always available to meet with you. It is always best for you to make an appointment with me during my office hours or, if this does not fit your schedule, we can arrange an alternate meeting time. The best way to contact me is through email. I will check and respond to emails during the workweek, Monday through Friday, 8 am - 5 pm. I will do my best to answer promptly, please allow 24 hours for a response. If you contact me through email, please use formal email etiquette and use your UT Tyler student email address if you wish to get a response.

## **Required Text**

This course has no required text.

## **Attendance**

This course has no set schedule or mandatory meeting times; however, you are responsible for meeting all requirements for course assignments and critiques, as scheduled. Failure to be present for scheduled meetings and/or missed weekly studio practice documentation will result in a zero for the assignment and/or critique. No late work will be accepted. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to religious observance should inform the instructor in writing by the end of the second week of class. Faculty should initial the request to indicate approval.

## Canvas

This course utilized Canvas. You will find all course materials on the Canvas page for the course, including the syllabus, course calendar, and all assignments. All course announcements will be communicated through Canvas, so please check the site frequently.

## Final Grade

Your final grade for the course will be based upon completion of the following:

### 5% Description of Study (**Must be submitted and approved through Canvas by September 2**)

Like the course description in a college catalog, the student will provide a description of study, which should describe the general theme and scope of the independent study. The description may address the following:

- Material choices
- Process
- Formal and aesthetic explorations
- Conceptual concerns
- Historic and contemporary influences (art or otherwise)
- How do you see the work progressing?

The description might indicate where the student is starting out and where the student would like to get in terms of answering a question, or exploring a formal or conceptual concern, or some other goal. It should articulate the theme and strategy of the study as clearly as possible within 500 words, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font.

### 90% Body of Work, Weekly Studio Practice & Critiques

Body of Work: Each student is expected to create an ambitious body of work over the course the semester through a directed study approach. The assessment of the body of work will give consideration to:

- Completion of an ambitious body of work
- Technical skills
- Design skills
- Quality of the finished work
- Quantity of work produced during the semester
- Effort -Craftsmanship
- Overall growth and development (improvement in skill)
- Experimentation/innovation
- In class participation

Weekly Studio Practice: Students are expected to spend 10-15 hours per week working in the studio on a body of work for this course.

The majority of work created for this course will take place outside of class time. Be prepared to spend a minimum of 10 and up to 15 hours per week in the studio, outside of class time, in order to meet the course requirements.

In order to receive credit for the weekly studio practice requirement, students must take a photo at the beginning (before) of the work session and at the end (after). When you review your pics in your camera roll, a time stamp should be visible. Each student will submit photo documentation (with timestamps) and notes about what you worked on or accomplished each

time you work in the studio outside of class time via the Weekly Studio Practice discussion board in Canvas. Each student has been assigned an individual discussion group to submit the weekly studio practice documentation and writing that is only visible to you and the instructor. Up to five points towards the body of work and weekly studio practice will be deducted each week that the weekly studio practice minimum requirement is not met and/or documentation is not submitted.

**Critiques & Presentation of Work:** Critiques are a time when completed work is presented by all students for the purpose of receiving formal criticism, as well as a time to develop a vocabulary to effectively communicate your ideas to others. There will be several formal group and individual critiques scheduled throughout the semester at which each student will present an ambitious amount of work in progress. Actual work and work in progress must be presented at each critique. You may augment work in progress with sketches, proposals for new work, etc., but these materials alone will not suffice or count as new work. Your final grade will be lowered 20% for not having new work present at a scheduled critique or for not being present or failing to schedule a critique. Students are expected to actively participate in the critique process and are graded not only on work presented but also on participation.

The presentation of work promotes the serious and significant nature of your efforts. It is not enough to simply produce work; students are required to present work in the most advantageous manner possible. Consideration of presentation should begin at the inception of the work so that any challenges that arise can be addressed and improved, as the work progresses. Each student has access to pedestals, wall space etc. Professional presentation of work at critiques is required, no exceptions.

**Students concurrently enrolled in ART 4380:** Students enrolled in ART 4380 concurrently will have their work critiqued during that class time. The student is responsible for scheduling at least three check-ins over the course of the semester to assess the amount and quality of work being produced for ART 4399, within a week of September 15, October 15, and November 15.

**Students not enrolled in ART 4380:** Critiques will be arranged via email. The student is responsible for scheduling at least the critiques over the course of the semester, within a week of September 15, October 15, and November 15.

## 5% Course Documentation Materials & Final Assessment

**Course Documentation Materials:** Each student will submit course documentation materials through Canvas at the end of the semester. The documentation required includes:

- 1) Portfolio of Images with Image Information
  - Professional digital images, saved as a single .pdf file
  - All images should be labeled with title, date, material, and dimensions.
- 2) Statement of Assessment
  - Review the Description of Study you submitted at the beginning of the term.
  - Provide a critical assessment and response of the body of work created, and of your progress towards the goals and intentions provided earlier in the semester.

The course documentation materials should be a compilation of your semester research and should be organized and cohesive. Course documentation materials are due **December 10 at noon.**

Remember, *Teachers do not give grades; students earn them!*

\*Poor attendance/participation and non-adherence to deadlines will result in a lowered grade. Remember, you will be working two to three times as much outside of class as in class.

### **Classroom Etiquette**

It is important to keep the studio clean and to maintain a healthy working environment. Maintenance of the studio is a daily responsibility. It includes cleaning up your workspace, and all of the equipment used. Additional clean up will be required at the end of each class period. Please take care in moving other student work, and be respectful to the work of other students and their spaces. Leave everything in better shape than when found! **Keep all cell phones and headphones turned off during class time!**

Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and in extreme cases will result in the expulsion of the student from class. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, habitually arriving late or leaving early from class, talking during instruction and failure to listen to directions.

### **Artificial Intelligence**

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy. AI is not permitted in this course at all. All work students submit for this course should be their own. All assignments and class activities are carefully designed to support your learning. Doing your own work, without human or artificial intelligence assistance, is best for your efforts in mastering course learning objectives. For this course, ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process, including brainstorming, may not be used. Deviations from these guidelines will be considered a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code and academic honesty values.

### **Studio Safety & Maintenance**

Students are required to use appropriate safety equipment and practice safe operation procedures when using any hazardous equipment or materials. The student should only use these materials and equipment after the instructor has given instruction in the safe use of such equipment and materials. The instructor has the right and responsibility to suspend any art student from operating a piece of equipment if the instructor believes the student is incapable of operating the equipment in a safe manner. This is done so not to jeopardize the health and safety of the student or other members of the class.

- Students in studio classes are required to clean up and put away supplies that have been used during the class session.
- Children and non-registered students are not allowed in the studio at any time.
- Food and drink are not allowed in the studio at any time.
- Radio use in the studio is restricted to the use of personal headphones (not during class).
- A first aid kit is located in the studio.

### **Facility Access & Studio Lab Safety and Mechanical Safety Training**

Studio facility access is for enrolled students only. Students are required to use appropriate safety equipment (PPE) and practice safe operation procedures when using any hazardous equipment or materials. All students must successfully complete the lab safety training and mechanical safety training and quizzes on Canvas and complete an Art Safety

Agreement before after hours access to the complex is granted. Failure to adhere to the terms of the Art Safety Agreement will result in the loss studio facility access.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

For your safety, you must follow all safety requirements established by the department and university. It is required that you provide your own Personal Protective Equipment for use in studio areas. This equipment includes: dust mask with at least a N95 rating and attached filter, safety glasses, ear protection, gloves, close-toed shoes, and appropriate clothing. Failure to use this equipment while working may result in the loss of studio privileges.

### **Materials and Chemicals**

Any additional materials or chemicals not included on the course material list must be approved by the faculty member in charge of the area where the chemical (material) will be used prior to the material/chemical being brought into the studio. Students are responsible for notifying the studio technician of any new materials/chemicals the day they are brought to the studio in order to insure that the appropriate Safety Data Sheet is on file and in the SDS binder.

Labels for any new, approved chemicals brought into the art studios must include the following information when they are transferred to a new container or if the original chemical label is damaged: Name of Chemical, Date chemical was opened, and any basic hazards associated with the chemical. Labels are located in each studio and must be filled out and adhered to the container immediately.

### **Storage/Lockers**

Each student will be assigned a locker with a partner. Due to space limitations clay and tools may not be stored in the classroom unless being used at the time. Any clay or tools found will be removed. You should store your materials in your locker or elsewhere, bringing to class only what you need to work with.

### **Student Resources and University Policies**

Please see the Getting Started & UTT Syllabus module in Canvas for a full list of student resources and university policies.

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\* This syllabus is subject to change

\*\*Please see UT Tyler's academic calendar for all important academic deadlines and dates. Important dates for critiques and assignments will be posted on Canvas, announced in class, and stated on handouts. There are no required fieldtrips for this course.

\*\*\* A separate list of all required materials and supplies will be provided.