

# ART 4390 (001) Selected Topics in Art

## Watercolor: The Garden

*Subject to change as necessary*

**Summer Session I, June 1<sup>st</sup> - July 1<sup>st</sup> (class ends July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026)**

**Class meets on MTW 9am-11:50am**

**Professor Alexis Serio**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** [aserio@uttyler.edu](mailto:aserio@uttyler.edu) Phone: 903-566-7248 Office: 107/108

Office Hours: MTW by appointment (some appointments may be conducted via phone, email or zoom)

*Additional contact info: cell numbers will be provided during first day of class*

### ***UTT Student Resources and University Policies and Information***

*Please see the Syllabus Module in Canvas for the UTT Student Resources and University Policies and Procedures*

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES**

**There are no prerequisites for this course**

Students will expand on the fundamentals of watercolor media and techniques to support an advanced artistic exploration which is consistent with an upper-level course. The pace of the class will be moderate to high with daily assignments and exercises due to the time constraints of a summer session.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

-Students will begin the class by reviewing diverse watercolor aesthetics and imagery via PowerPoint presentation. They will complete technical exercises listed from the (required) book to learn the material and application versatility. Students will learn paper stretching techniques and additional application techniques.

-The required subject matter will be "The Garden" -insects, flowers, plants, rocks, etc. The general scale for the artwork created will be life size (so relatively small).

-Students must source their own subject imagery for which to work from observation. Students may bring in plants, succulents, rocks, flowers, insects (dead), or some images for which to use as references. Students may not work 100% with a photograph, however some photo resources will be permitted.

-We may take some "nature walks" on campus to collect imagery, however I suggest you also visit garden centers and botanical parks for more options. You may also track down your own insects to document. Please don't kill things just so they can be your subject matter.

-Creative content generated by websites such as Pinterest, Instagram or by applications using A.I. software will not be allowed as resource material.

-Students who are discovered using A.I. generated content will have *at minimum* one letter grade reduction for their overall GPA for this course.

-All resource image material must be in hard copy form. Either the physical object or a printed photograph. Imagery on iPad, laptops and phones will not be permitted in the workspace while you are painting.

**For Final Grade Assessment:** students must turn in a digital compilation of the following: 1) Portfolio of images of agreed upon minimum or more of FINISHED artworks created during the semester and any additional UNFINISHED works (if applicable) which exceed the agreed upon minimum 2) Inventory list and 3) Artist/ thesis statement and/or studio notes. 4) All in progress documentation 5) Self-assessment based on syllabus expectations. More details regarding format are TBA.

### **SUPPLIES**

**Some supplies will be provided to you, and all additionally required supplies and materials are listed separately. There is one book for this class:**

**-Book:** ISBN-13: 978-1-64567-354-5

The Beginner's Guide to Watercolor, Master Essential Skills and Techniques through Guided Exercises and Projects. By Jovy Merryl

[https://www.amazon.com/Beginners-Guide-Watercolor-Essential-Techniques/dp/1645673545/ref=asc\\_df\\_1645673545/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMIuujH1NLHhQMV5VN\\_AB16NQTjEAQYAiABEgl\\_DfD\\_BwE&hvadid=509032862638&hvdev=c&hvdvcmidl&hvlocint&hvlocphy=9027086&hvnetw=g&hvpone&hvpos&hvptwo&hvqmt&hvrnd=6491967387446519042&hvtargid=pla-1291221377241&linkCode=df0&mcid=3d1821d032823a42b27ed7022d7792a0&psc=1&tag=hyprod-20](https://www.amazon.com/Beginners-Guide-Watercolor-Essential-Techniques/dp/1645673545/ref=asc_df_1645673545/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMIuujH1NLHhQMV5VN_AB16NQTjEAQYAiABEgl_DfD_BwE&hvadid=509032862638&hvdev=c&hvdvcmidl&hvlocint&hvlocphy=9027086&hvnetw=g&hvpone&hvpos&hvptwo&hvqmt&hvrnd=6491967387446519042&hvtargid=pla-1291221377241&linkCode=df0&mcid=3d1821d032823a42b27ed7022d7792a0&psc=1&tag=hyprod-20)

**This course does not have a final exam.**

### **BFA STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. **Technical Proficiency:** Students will be able to create technically proficient works of art.
2. **Conceptual Proficiency:** Students will be able to create conceptually proficient works of art.
3. **Interpretation of Artworks:** Students will be able to explain how formal or conceptual elements function in works of art.
4. **Historical Context:** The student will be able to contextualize works of art in relation to art history or contemporary practices.
5. **Document Works:** Students will be able to document works of art for the purpose of archiving, application, and presentation.
6. **Disseminate Research:** Students will be able to disseminate research through exhibition participation.

### **ATTENDANCE AND MISSED WORK POLICY**

Attendance is mandatory and taken promptly. Attendance is recorded in CANVAS. **After 2 absences you may be dropped a full letter grade from your semester GPA, at 4 absences students may fail the course!** Continual tardiness or leaving early will influence the overall grade. If you are unprepared for class, you will be marked absent. *Being late is walking into class after start time. If you are absent on our critique or review day, you may fail that*

**assignment, if you are absent on midterm critique you may be dropped a letter grade from your GPA or if you are absent final critique day, you may fail the class.**

#### **NOTE ON SICKNESS**

*If you have a fever, **do not** attend class until you are fever free without medication for 24 hours- you will be excused if you have a Dr. note.*

#### **NOTE ON EXCESSIVE / EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Excessive absences, even those which are due to illness or emergencies out of your control, may still result in a lower grade or failure of the course. If you are not able to be present for all, or most class meeting times, it is in your best interest to drop the course and retake during another semester instead of receiving an F. Please speak to Professor Serio regarding concerns and options. Incompletes are given for medical or other type emergencies and are typically discussed as an option for students in strong academic standing in the class, when the semester is nearly over, when the drop period has long passed, and extra time may be needed to complete a *small amount* of coursework.

**ABSENCES ARE NOT JUST ABOUT MISSING CLASS:** Students who are present must be actively engaged in the classwork to get credit for attending. **Students who show up to the class may still be marked absent if they are:** 1) sleeping 2) watching TV or movies on their phones/ iPad 3) repeated texting or using phone when not during break times 4) doing work for other classes 5) taking excessive breaks 6) staring into space and doing nothing for more than a normal “break” period (i.e. 5-10 minutes). 7) eating long lunches (breaks over 10 min)

#### **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE**

TURN OFF CELL PHONES!! Class time may consist of critiques, writing assignments, reading assignments, gallery visits, and open studio work time. Things that will not be tolerated during class time: texting, emailing, chit chatting, constant breaks, loud music (headphones are ok or quiet music if people close to your space approve), studying for other classes. **Students who do not use studio time wisely will be marked absent and have additional paintings added to their required load. Students who exhibit disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the class and will be marked absent. Escalating negative behavior will result in a formal meeting with the Professor and Department Chair. Some (but not all) examples of disruptive behavior include negative attitudes in class (bullying, negative gossip, name calling, creating an overall sense of discomfort for students), negative attitudes during critiques (looking at your phone, eye rolling, sighing, etc.), habitually lateness or leaving early, eating a meal in the classroom (safety violation), having an extensively sloppy studio space, interrupting or talking during class instruction or discussion when not in turn and failure to maintain proper classroom safety and etiquette.** Students must understand that while their assigned studio space is allocated based on seniority, the usage of this space is constantly being monitored, therefore studio spaces may shift and change during the semester. Regardless of your seniority, if you are not utilizing your entire studio space adequately or wisely, (be it for scale choices or lack of productivity), you may be asked to swap with another student.

#### **STUDIO DRESS AND SAFETY WEAR CODE**

- 1) Appropriate work clothing is required for the *entire* Department of Art and Art History, however individual classes may have different requirements depending on the materials and equipment being used.
- 2) Water media does not need the same PPE as oils or acrylic unless a student exhibits symptoms of allergic reaction such as rash on hands or cold like symptoms.

### **MATERIALS AND CHEMICALS**

Any solvent or brush cleaner with a harmful vapor that requires ventilation will not be permitted inside the classroom. We should not need solvents in this course as our materials are water-based media. If you have a solvent that you are interested in using, please discuss with Professor Serio before opening any container that is not on the approved list. Save all receipts in case you need to return items to the store.

### **GRADING PROCESS**

The student is graded on his or her dedication and output in completing the course objectives. **Attendance, class time work ethic, outside class time ethic, completion of required quantity, quality of artwork, discovery/ visible maturation of painting technique and aesthetic over the course of the semester, thesis investigation, concept maturation and sophistication of ideas, participation and presentations during critiques, and any additional writing assignments and artist statements are all part of the overall grade.** Students are encouraged to ask questions and are expected to commit outside time. Expect to spend a minimum of 7-14 hours per week outside of class. It is not possible to pass by working during class time only.

### **NOTE ON WORKING AT HOME**

Artwork created outside of the studio classroom will not be considered for credit unless student brings the artwork to class for in-person review, each week throughout the entire semester so that visible progress is witnessed by Serio. Special arrangements or appeals to this expectation must be agreed upon between Serio and student at beginning of semester. Specialized commissions or projects outside of the thesis body of work do not count as credit for this course.

### **PLEASE REVIEW THE ATTACHED SEMESTER CHECKPOINT SCHEDULE**

To assist students with work ethic in the course as well as encourage/ require a true comprehension of the discipline needed to be a productive painter, a “checkpoint” system will be implemented. I will highlight certain dates throughout the semester where tasks MUST be completed (on said date). Students who complete these tasks on the correct date will receive a PASS check (translating into an A for that task) Students who do not complete 100% of said task by assigned date will receive an F for that task. You must complete 100% of task to receive a check, all incomplete tasks receive an F. Checkpoint grades will contribute to your overall grade.

### **NOTE ON GRADING**

*By simply completing the above listed requirements, you may earn the average letter grade of C. You must go above and beyond the basic requirements of the course to earn yourself a grade that is above and beyond average.*

Numeric to Letter Grade Translation: 100 - 90% =A, 89 - 80% =B, 79 - 70% =C, 69 - 60% =D, 59 - 0% =F

### **HOW FINAL GRADE IS DETERMINED**

10% CHECKPOINT GRADE

90% BODY OF WORK

**HOW TO RECEIVE AN A:** Go above and beyond in all that you do for this course. There must be **visible outstanding level** of skill, aesthetic maturity, and dedication to the course. **Outstanding development, discovery, and growth over the duration of the semester** (from whatever point of skill level you entered the class) must be apparent. Complete all the requirements. Do not miss more than 2 class periods. Do not come late or leave early. Work outside of class 7-14 hours each week. Be prepared every day. Participate in critiques in a thoughtful and intelligent manner.

**HOW TO RECEIVE A B:** Go above and beyond the class requirements. There must be a **visible elevated level** of skill, aesthetic maturity, and dedication to the course. **Elevated development, discovery, and growth over the duration of the semester** (from whatever point of skill level you entered the class) must be apparent. Complete all the requirements. Do not miss more than 2 class periods. Do not come late or leave early. Work outside of class 7-14 hours each week. Be prepared every day. Participate in critiques in a thoughtful and intelligent manner.

**HOW TO RECEIVE A C:** Complete all the requirements. An average level of skill, aesthetic maturity, development, discovery, and growth over the duration of the semester must be apparent. Do not miss more than 2 class periods. Do not come late or leave early. Work outside of class 7-14 hours each week. Be prepared every day. Participate in critiques in a thoughtful and intelligent manner.

#### **NOTE ON STUDIO ACCESS**

***Students will have 24-hour access every day of the week once any online safety trainings are completed/approved and Art Student Safety Agreements have been signed and completed/approved. Students working after hours must always have their UT Tyler student ID on them. Friends and family members who are not enrolled in studio courses are not allowed in studio spaces after hours. Please note that any abuse of access privileges will result in the loss of after-hour studio access. Please report any suspicious behavior immediately to campus police!***

#### **NOTE ON CLEANUP**

***Clean-up is an imperative part of this class. You are expected to do your part in keeping the classroom organized, safe, and flowing smoothly! Policy of cleanup will be discussed with the class on a case-by-case basis.***

### **2026 STUDIO SAFETY AND ACCESS INFORMATION**

#### **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 through Canvas 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 to ensure 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 in each studio and must be filled out and adhered to the container immediately.