SENIOR PROJECT Syllabus
ART 458/468 SENIOR CAPSTONE

Bulletin Description

+458. Ceramics Project. 3 hrs. Prerequisite: ART 453. Independent project in ceramics culminating with an exhibition. A written proposal, faculty committee and * is required
+468. Sculpture Project. 3 hrs. Prerequisite: ART 463. Independent project in sculpture culminating with an exhibition. A written proposal, faculty committee and * is required

Basic Course description-
Your senior project IS THE MOST IMPORTANT COURSE OF YOUR ACADEMIC CAREER. During this course you will be presenting an exhibition of the best work you have ever made. This will showcase all the techniques and experience you have gained while here at USM. Included in this course is a formal project proposal, portfolio and GEC requirements for written and oral communication which include a research paper and two oral presentations.

Senior Capstone Experience is a writing and speaking intensive course

For capstone courses, the GEC student learning outcomes are:
1a. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop and focus on one topic in writing assignments and present ideas in an organized, logical and coherent form.
1b. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop and focus on one topic in speaking assignments and present ideas in an organized, logical and coherent form.
1c. Students will demonstrate the ability to use Standard English grammar, punctuation, spelling and usage.

Writing-Intensive Courses: In writing-intensive courses, students write a minimum of 5,000 computer-generated words (approximately 20 pages of double-spaced text). For the BFA emphasis in Sculpture you are required to do
1) a multiparagraph research paper, (see description below)
2) a one- two page artist statement,
3) a one- two page resume,
4) two drafts of the multi-page Senior project proposal (first draft and final proposal).

It is important for the student to show that they can write and think critically and creatively, clearly outline a subject or theme and be able demonstrate the ability to use standard English grammar, punctuation, spelling and usage.

Oral Communication Requirement
The General Education Curriculum requires that students develop mature speaking skills, students speak in course discussions and, more importantly, in formal oral presentations delivered in the Senior Capstone Experience. In the oral communication component of this course the student will give two speeches that will be graded. The committee will be looking at rhetorical reasoning, audience adaptation, professionalism and presentation skills including clarity of expression, ideas and voice. The first presentation will be done at the second committee meeting where the student will present their senior project proposal. The second graded speech will be at the end when the student will present a speech, or gallery talk, to the

Committee Members
Jennifer Torres
Laura Prange
James Davis
committee in the Museum of Art. This speech will be centered on discussing the work at hand and the updated version of the Senior Project proposal that will later be presented in the formal portfolio.

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**Research Paper**

In accordance with the Writing Intensive requirement you will write a 12 to 15 page research paper to be included with your final portfolio at the end of the semester. An outline must be presented at the mid-term committee meeting. This paper is on any subject you wish and should include concerns related to your work. Research is an important part of the visual arts and being able to relate real information and facts to those connected with your sculptural work is critical for grant writing, project proposals, future job performance, and publication. Proper MLA style is required.

**The Senior Project Proposal**

Your senior project proposal is your opportunity to define the problem you wish to solve for your senior project. It must be definitive and concise and portray a clear path towards your final exhibition in the Museum of Art. Not only does the proposal describe in detail the work you plan on doing it is also the opportunity for you to show your committee your superior ability to write about your work in a formal, professional and objective manner. A sample senior project proposal is included. A draft of your proposal needs to be in the hands of your committee members before the end of the first week of school. It is up to you to organize and set a date before the second week of school that all committee members can be present at. The proposal should be typed and a minimum of two pages, double-spaced with a one inch margin.

Your proposal needs include these parts

- A thorough description of your current body of work
- A clear definition of the problem you plan on solving
- How the work you intend on doing will solve the problem
- An overview of artists and/or works that have influenced you
- Specific description of works to be completed and other relevant information, including but not limited to, size of works, number of works, materials, finishes, installation notes, special lighting requirements, and site information for installations and outdoor works.
- Closing statement
- Contact information- name, phone number(s), email address

**Grading**

Your senior project is made up of several parts not the least of which is the proposal and the actual work that is the outcome of the proposal. However it must not be forgotten that the project is essentially a culmination of many years of hard work and it must be understood that your growth and accomplishments in many areas need to be evident in the final project in order for it to be considered successful. Your committee will be assessing your growth and accomplishments in several areas from before the first day we meet with you.

When grading a senior project the committee will consider a number of issues, including but not limited to

- Quality, clarity, and thoroughness of proposal and research paper
- Quality and quantity of sculptural work
- Quality and professional presentation of final portfolio
- General professionalism shown by student, this includes; scheduling of meetings, timeliness handing in proposal revisions, attitude towards committee and colleagues, and studio work habits and time management
- Mastery of materials
• Problem solving abilities
• Ability to work independently
• Quality of museum installation including; lighting, labeling, installation of work, artist statement.
• Your ability talk about your work
• Your growth from the beginning of the semester to the final oral presentation to the committee
• Your ability to focus on the tasks at hand

Final Portfolio Requirements
Required by the Department for all graduating seniors:

- Professional quality, printed, color images of the work in your senior project exhibition. Images need to be minimum of 4” x 6” to a maximum of 8” x 10”
- Résumé, with contact information included
- Original and final revision of Senior Project proposal
- Research Paper
- Artist statement
- A CD that contains
  - All .jpg image files of your works
  - An image key document file that corresponds to each image with information on, date, medium, and dimensions
  - Resume document
  - Artists statement document
  - Research Paper
  - And final revision of Senior Project Proposal

Optional:

- Your personal letter head, logo or business card
- Copies of awards or letters of recommendation or any other special commendations
- Copies of show announcements
- Other support materials

ALL materials listed above MUST be in a black or white, hard sided, three ring binder of standard size. All material MUST be typed. On the cover and spine of the binder label with your name, semester and year of completion of senior project and your degree area with emphasis. For example- Joan Smith, Spring 2007, BFA Sculpture.

Time-line
Before school starts- be working on proposal

By Friday of the first week of school- have draft of proposal to committee members and have first meeting set up for the second week of school, all members must be present, start working on art pieces

By the end of the second week- second draft of proposal to committee members

Mid-semester- student responsible for arranging meeting, all committee members present, have work arrange for critique. Make appointment with Museum Director to talk about senior show

One week before show installation- arrange for committee meeting for one last progress check

Last week of classes- arrange for final committee meeting, in museum during finals week.

Finals week before graduation- hand in final portfolio during final committee meeting, there are no other alternatives.
Committee members reserve the right to request additional meetings at any time.

Senior Project Proposal
Painting

Over the last two semesters at Southern, I have focused on multiple figures in interior spaces. Tension exists in my work between whether my paintings identify more with figure/ground or field problems. Though the figures have human qualities, they are sometimes only recognized as organic shapes or linear forms. Shapes are abstracted from drawings of human forms but are not literal representations. The figures are suffocated and invaded by their environment. The size, position, and shape of the figures in the format will contribute to this effect. I will experiment with relatively large figures and smaller figures in relation to the format to find which is most effective. The position of the figures will directly correspond with the overall organization of the composition, which will be dense to sparse. This organization will enhance the feeling of the figures being overwhelmed by their environment.(see ex:1) Shape will be used for contrast. The organic shapes of the figures will be contrasted against geometric shapes that exist in their environments. Though contrast exists between the figures and their environment there are areas where the figures are camouflaged.(see ex:2) I use pattern to create contrast and unity in this way. My problem specifically deals with the relationship of organic figures to their more geometric environments and the struggle between concepts of figure/ground and field.

Visual unity will be created through the color structure, linear structure, texture, and limited depth. Pattern will be used to integrate unlike shapes by flowing over edges and/or acting as a pushing agent; causing dissimilar areas to become similar in relation to the pattern. The color structure will be limited in range to help unify the composition. The paintings will be kept in a middle value key using warm and mid-low chroma colors. Deviations from the color structure will create visual dynamics.

Lines will be used in a gestural way and retained through the layers of the paintings. The gestural marks will cross through the figures and the environment freely. Contour edges will be used to offset areas of the environment that need more contrast against the figures. The paintings will be built up, revealing some of the changes that occurred in the linear structure during the process of painting.(see ex:3) Texture will result from the process and mixed media that I use, but will not detract
from the main source of contrast. Though shape is the main contrast, pattern is the next most essential element in my paintings. I use pattern to create unity by allowing it to flow over edges of both figure and ground and use it to push contrasting elements together. I will also use mechanically produced shapes and lines to push the overall handmade marks together. (see ex:4) I will retain shallow depth of space in order to allow the pattern and shapes to be prevalent.

I feel that my problems in painting most closely relate to deKooning, Gorky, and Diebenkorn because of their experiments with figures in abstraction. I will study deKooning’s “Pink Angels” c.1945, which I feel is an excellent example of a painting that is struggling between the realms of figurations and field. The overlapping transparent forms interest me greatly. I will refer to “Pink Angels” and other deKooning paintings to learn more about contrasting dense areas against areas stability and sparsity. I admire Gorky’s painting “The Betrothal II” for the same reasons as deKooning’s “Pink Angels”, but feel that I can learn different things about shape from it. I am interested in Gorky’s autonomous lines he uses for composition. Though Gorky’s painting are purely autonomous, I will pull from both autonomous marks and abstractions of the human figure. I will study the paintings Diebenkorn made while at Berkley and others from 1948-1955. The paintings that most interest me during this time are the Sausalito and Albuquerque paintings. The integrations between organic and geometric shapes as well as the contrasts between dense and sparse areas are prevalent in these works.

I will have a minimum of eight to ten 3’x4.2’ paintings on stretched canvas completed. Out of this number, five will be properly prepared for exhibition. I will make several smaller studies on canvas paper, primed paper, and mat board of approximately the same proportion. A few will be selected and prepared for exhibition, if there is enough space in the Museum.

My paintings are representative of our constantly changing environments in the modern world and the changes enforced upon us to continuously adapt. The position that we take in the environment is updated on a daily basis due to progress in technology. We are affected by forces beyond our control and have no choice but to be absorbed by them.