

ATCM 6377.001 (SP 2024)

Creativity as Social Practice

Course Information

Name: ATCM 6377.001.24S – Creativity as Social Practice, Spring 2024
Time: Tuesday 10:00 am - 12:45 pm
Location: ATC 2.914

Professor: Name: Dr. Kevin Sweet
Office: ATC 1.915
Contact: kevin.sweet@utdallas.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays (12:00pm-4:00pm, 30 minute meetings by appointment)

“Office Hours” are times that I set aside each week to meet with course participants one-on-one. During this time, I look forward to working with you to address individualized questions, identify creative and professional resources, brainstorm projects, provide in-depth feedback on your creative practice, and more. You are welcome to schedule an in-person meeting or via Microsoft Teams via this Calendly link: <https://calendly.com/dr-sweet-utdallas/30min>

If you are unavailable during this time, please contact me via email and I will do my best to find an alternative time to meet via MS Teams.

Course Description: This course explores creative production as a form of social practice. Students develop multimodal projects that use a range of rhetorical and visual tactics to engage audiences in social and collaborative exchanges.

We will be discussing socially engaged art (SEA), the limitations and ethics of practicing SEA, and other participatory practices. This course will include discussions of texts (written materials,

artworks, performances), student reflective writing, and the creation of your own project inspired by art history and theories of participation and SEA.

Learning outcomes:

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

- Think critically, analytically and creatively about the history, development and use of creative projects for social change.
- Know the ethical and social dimensions of art practice, and be able to apply that knowledge in the creation and analysis of a digital media project.
- Demonstrate the ability to produce critical creative work in digital media that explores social practice.
- Work independently and collaboratively with other students on artistic projects.

Course Prerequisites:

There are no prerequisites for this class.

Required Materials:

All reading materials & screening materials will either be provided within the course or accessible through the McDermott Library. These materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct

Texts include:

- *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook* by Pablo Helguera.
- *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the politics of spectatorship* by Claire Bishop
- *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* by Suzanne Lacy.
- *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* by Grant H. Kester.
- *The Lure of the Local: Senses of place in a multi society* by Lucy Lippard

- *What We Want is Free: Generosity and exchange in recent art* by Ted Purves.
- *Participation: Documents of contemporary art* edited by Claire Bishop.
- *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011* Edited by Nato Thompson
- *Art as Experience* by John Dewey
- *Relational Aesthetics* by Nicolas Bourriaud.

The media production software used within this course to complete independent projects is chosen at the discretion of the student. If you are unable to access or afford media production software such as [Adobe Creative Cloud](#), please see this resource for [Open-source, Low-cost, and Free Production Software](#).

Assignments & Calendar

Please note that the exact content and sequence of the course may be subject to change due to University-wide closures, cancellations, and the changing needs of course participants. While we will do our best to modify course structure to meet the needs of our participants' practices and learning goals, the assignment breakdown in respect to % of overall grades will remain the same. You may find the most current material and schedule on eLearning.

Grading:

You will be evaluated on how effectively your submitted projects demonstrate your ability to integrate technology and theory with your own thoughts, ideas, and creativity. **Projects are iterative, and consist of a number of individually graded components.** All projects must be submitted to eLearning. Grading rubrics are on eLearning. Note that project grading rubrics include points for providing feedback to others.

Grading Overview:

Project/Category	Value
Community Caretaking (2 exercises)	10%
Student-led course material presentations	05%
Free! Hand-out for your peers exercise	05%
Group Project – Abstract	05%
Group Project – Preproduction	10%
Group Project – Post Production	10%
Group Project – Presentation & Documentation	05%
Individual Project – Abstract	05%

Individual Project – Documentation	10%
Individual Project – Process Paper	15%
Individual Project – Presentation	05%
Journals (cumulative)	05%
Attendance & Participation	10%

Week 1 **Tues. (01/16) Session:** Course Introduction
content, materials, expectations & goals

****Canceled due to University Closing****

Week 2 **Tues. (01/23) Session:** (1) Course Introduction – content, materials,
Expectations & Goals, (2) What is Social Practice and
Collaboration?

Read for this week: Helguera Chapter 1 & 2

Discuss: Pablo Helguera, Chapter 1 “Definitions”

Works Discussed: Paul Ramirez Jonas [Public Trust](#)
(2016) and [Key to the City](#) (2022), Joseph DeLappe
[#ThisIsNotAMask](#) (2020), Minerva Cuevas [Mejor Vida
Corporation](#) (1998-on)

Workshop: Identifying Common Goals, Concepts,
Themes, and Technologies.

Assigned: Community Care-taking #1 (due 02/01),
Journal #1 (due Wk 3)

Week 3 **Tues. (01/30) Session:** (1) Participatory Structures in Socially Engaged
Art, (2) Tools & Techniques

Read for this week: Pablo Helguera Chapter 2 (review)

View for this week: (1) Can Art Be A Force For Social
Change [\[website & video\]](#), (2) Dear Stranger ([website](#),
[audio story via NPR](#)), (3) Slave Rebellion Reenactment
([website](#), [documentary via the Guardian](#)), (4) Miranda July
& Harrell Fletcher ([website](#), [short doc via SFMOMA](#))

Assigned: Journal #2 (due Wk 4)

Week 4

Tues. (02/06) Session: (1) 'Situations' via Helguera & Kaprow (2)
Discuss Tools & Techniques

Read for this week: (1) Helguera Chapter 3. 'Situations'.
(2) Introduction by Natalie Loveless in *Art as Social Practice: Technologies for Change*

View for this week: (1) Suzanne Lacy: Questions and Answers (video [via Frieze](#)), (2) Morten Riis and Marie Hojlund *Nephew vs. The Overheard* ([website & video](#)), (3) Paul Chan *Waiting for Godot in New Orleans* (audio story [via npr](#)).

Assigned: Journal #3 (due Wk 5)

Week 5

Tues. (02/13) Session: Claire Bishop & Ted Purves
(1) Student #1 presents & leads discussion on Bishop
(2) Student #2 presents & leads discussion on Purves

Read for this week: (1) Claire Bishop "The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents" in *Artificial Hells*. (2) Ted Purves "Blows Against the Empire" in *what we want is free*.

View for this week: (1) Works curated by Student 1 & 2,
(2) Creative Time Summit 2012 | Keynote Address - Tom Finkelpearl (video via [Creative Time](#))

Workshop: Group Project Ideation

Assigned: (1) Journal #4 (due Wk 6), (2) Group Project Pitch (Due Wk 6)

Week 6

Tues. (02/20) Session:
(1) Student #3 presents & leads discussion on Lippard
(2) Student #4 presents & leads discussion on Balsamo

Read for this Week: (1) Lucy Lippard, *The Lure of the Local*; Chapter 7: On and Off the Map. (2) *ASP: Technologies for Change*, Magical Machines Introduction

by Anne Balsamo, Chapter from this section determined by student who signs up this week.

View for this Week: (1) Hargreaves and Levin 'Food Maps' series (via hargreavesandlevin.com), (2) Teri Rueb *Core Sample* ([video](#) and [site](#)) and *Grimpant* ([video](#) and [site](#)), (3) Paula Scher, Great Design is Serious, Not Solemn (via [TED](#), optional to start at 16:30)

Workshop: Group Project Pitch

Assigned: (1) Journal #5 (due Wk 7), (2) Community Care-taking #2 (due Wk 7), Group Project (due Wk 12)

Week 7

Tues. (02/27) Session:

- (1) Student #5 & 6 presents & leads discussion on Bourriaud
- (2) Student #6 & 7 presents & leads discussion on Fowl & Larson

Read for this Week: (1) Nicolaus Bourriaud, "Relational form" in *Relational Aesthetics...*, p. 11-24 (Ch.1). (2) Kate Fowl and Lars Bang Larsen, "Lunch Hour: Art, Community, Administered Space, and Unproductive Activity" in *what we want is free*, p. 39-48 (Section 1, Ch. 3)

View for this Week: Artist selections from Student #5 & #6's presentations.

Assigned: (1) Journal #6 (due Wk 9), (2) Independent Project Proposal (Due Week 9)

Week 8

Tues. (03/05) Session:

- (1) Student #8 & 9 presents & leads discussion on Dewey & Thompson
- (2) Student #10 & 11 presents & leads discussion on chapters from *Art as Social Action* (Bass, Scholette, et al.)

Read for this week: (1) John Dewey, "Art as Experience: Having an Experience" in *Art as Experience*, p. 205-208

and Nato Thompson, "Living as Form" p. 16-33. (2) "Fail Better: Interview with the Center for Artistic Activism," Alix Camacho Interviews Steve Duncombe and Steve Lambert, p. 2-6 (in the PDF) and "Activating the Archive," Ryan Lee Wong, p. 22-26 (PDF), both readings are from Art as Social Action by Chloe Bass, Gregory Scholette, and Social Practice Queens.

View for this Week: Artist selections from Student #7 & #8's presentations.

Workshop: Independent Project Proposals (scope, process, intention)

Assigned: (1) Journal #7 (due Wk 10), (2) Independent Project (Due Wk 15).

Week 9 **NO CLASS (Spring Break March 11-17)**

Please note: Readings will be much lighter for the remainder of the semester to allow you to focus on your creative research!

Week 10 **Tues. (03/19) Session:** Making progress on your Independent Project & Discussing Viewings.

View for this Week: (1) Listen to the BBC's Sounds program, [Mapping the Future](#), with Jerry Brotton (28 minutes), (2) Listen to Culture Wars and [The Untold Story of Lyndie B. Hawkins](#) on NPR's The Hidden Brain with Shankar Vedantam. Transcript available.

Workshop: Independent Project

Assigned: (1) Journal #8 (due Wk 11)

Week 11 **Tues. (03/26) Session:** Ongoing discussion and workshop for your Group and Independent Projects.

View: (1) Edward Platt “Telling stories with a life of their Own, Francis Alÿs” (via [TATE](#)), (2) *Foxfire*, (3) Platform’s *Water Chorus*

Week 12 **Tues. (04/02) Session:** Presentation Group Project and discussion regarding Process Papers

View: (1) [That’s So NY episode Museum of the City of NY: Who We Are](#) (2) Ekene Ijeoma, [A Counting](#), (part of [the exhibit](#) at the Museum of the City of New York)

View for today: View the 4 minute 24 second animation and read the article that accompanies it: [Arena: A Short Film That Weaves Together Images of Man-Made Shapes Collected Through Google Maps](#) by Páraic McGloughlin

Presentations: Group Project

Week 13 **Tues. (04/09) Session:** Workshopping Process Papers & Documentation for Individual Project.

Workshop: Process Papers & Documentation

Reminder: Process Paper & Documentation for Individual Research is Due on Week 15.

Week 14 **Tues. (04/16) Workshop:** Process Papers & Documentation for Individual Project.

Week 15 **Tues. (04/23) Session:** Presentations of Final Projects (part 1)

Week 16 **Tues. (04/30) Session:** Presentations of Final Projects (part 2)

CLASS MATERIALS

The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved AccessAbility Resource Center accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

CLASS ATTENDANCE

The University's attendance policy requirement is that individual faculty set their course attendance requirements. Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Students who fail to attend class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. In some courses, instructors may have special attendance requirements; these should be made known to students during the first week of classes. *Please see the attendance policies for this course above.*

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Regular class participation is expected. Students who fail to participate in class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. A portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class. It also includes engaging in group or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on homework assignments, readings, or materials covered in the lectures (and/or labs). Class participation is documented by faculty. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to University requirements, as presented in this syllabus. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

CLASS RECORDINGS

Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the AccessAbility Resource Center has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved AccessAbility Resource Center accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

The instructor may record meetings of this course. These recordings will be made available to all students registered for this class if the intent is to supplement the classroom experience. If the instructor or a UTD school/department/office plans any other uses for the recordings, consent of the students identifiable in the recordings is required prior to such use unless an exception is allowed by law.

CLASSROOM CITIZENSHIP

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy.

COMET CREED

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

ACADEMIC SUPPORT RESOURCES

The information contained in the following link lists the University’s academic support resources for all students.

Please see <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

UT DALLAS SYLLABUS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University’s policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the catalog sections regarding the [credit/no credit](#) or [pass/fail](#) grading option and withdrawal from class.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

Acknowledgement from Prof. Sweet: I want to thank Professor Xtine Burrough as this course was originally developed and implemented by her at UT Dallas. This adapted syllabus is deeply indebted to and built upon Professor Burrough’s original syllabus from FA 2023. For access to

the original syllabus, please see UTDallas's Coursebook. For more information on Professor Burrough's research, please see <http://www.misconceptions.net>
