

## Collaboration Syllabus, Special Topics 491

Prepared by Lisa Corine von Koch, November 4, 2013

3 Credit Hours

Prerequisites:

### Course description:

This course will focus on the processes, techniques and applications of collaboration, and allow students to experience the joy of creating co-authored artwork. Even a group of only two can generate ideas which can lead each person to new thoughts, unexpected solutions, and resulting artwork that could never have been achieved individually. In this course, we will explore a range of different disciplines and techniques to that end. Emphasis will be placed on the creation of experimental, performative, and process-based works bringing together disparate media. The role of collaboration in contemporary art will be discussed, including examples of important collaborative groups and different models for collaboration. Huge emphasis in the course will be directed towards documentation and presentation. Due to the transitory nature of many of these projects, good documentation, either through photography, video, or some other means, is critical. Furthermore, consideration must be given to the presentation methodology for the documentation.

### Course objectives:

- Expand idea generation using group dynamics, exploring communicative creative strategies
- Implementation of these ideas/strategies into compelling works of art
- Create artwork at a more ambitious scale
- Develop familiarity with contemporary artists and art practices that utilize collaboration

### Course outline:

Drawing: Exquisite Corpse: Group of Three. (*research component: Surrealism, André Breton*)

Illustrated books: Group of Four. (in class project: idea generation/evaluation)

Recipes: Each student will create "recipes" for drawings, to be completed first with the class and then, the best drawing recipes will be adapted for public installation and implementation (*research component: Sol LeWitt, Yoko Ono and the Fluxus movement*)

Sculpture: Group of Three. Multiple/modules using found objects. Theme: sustainability, context of installation (*research component: eco arts, arts and ecology, sustainability. E.g. Tara Donovan, Brian Jungen*)

Site-Specific Installation: Group of Five. Transformation of an environment. (*research component: building a model, site-specific installation, e.g. Christo and Jeanne Claude*)

Performance: Group of Two-Six. Theme: Ritual (*research component: Rituals practiced around the world by cultures past and present, contemporary rituals of performance artists: e.g. Marina Abramović and Ulay*)

Flash Mob: Full Class +!!! (*research component: Flash Mob, Happenings, artistic license: permission and liability, what are you allowed to do, and where?*)

### Methods:

Studio sessions (twice per week, 3 hours each) include lecture, group brainstorming and organization, studio work time, peer review, group critique, and performance. Each unit will have a research component, students are expected to do their own individual research and contribute to the knowledge pool of the group. Students are expected to work a minimum of 4-5 hours each week outside of class. Groups will be required to meet outside of class, to be actively communicating with each other, and also to delegate work that can be done by individuals at their convenience. Members of the group are expected to contribute equally to the project, and to delegate work amongst themselves based on the strengths/abilities of each member. Groups must determine the proper means of documentation and presentation of the artwork. At the end of each project, members of the group will anonymously evaluate the functionality of the group, the level of involvement (both of themselves and others), and offer their thoughts on the outcome of the work.

**Supporting Materials and References:**

Each unit will have a research component; all members of the group must contribute to the collective knowledge bank with individual research. Readings will be assigned in class, and will be posted to Blackboard.

**Suggested Reading:**

Claire Bishop *Participation (Documents of Contemporary Art)*. Cambridge, MIT Press, 2006. Available from Amazon.

**RamCT Blackboard:**

I use Blackboard to post all assignments, handouts, slide lectures from class and important information. Additionally, I will use your school email address through Blackboard. It is the student's responsibility to look over the material on Blackboard and check their email.

**Critique:**

Upon the completion of each project, we will take a full class period to hold a formal critique. There will also be in-progress critiques during the studio hours. The students moderate discussion in a structured way. Participation grades are determined during critique. Absence or non-involvement during the critique will negatively impact final grades. Attendance with your completed projects is required to receive full credit for the semester. **DO NOT BE LATE!!!!!!**

**Grading:**

Documentation: if an ephemeral or transitory work is not well-documented, IT DIDN'T EXIST!!! Groups will be expected to figure out the best way to document the work, using photography, video, or other means appropriate to the work and its content. Consideration must be given to the presentation of the documentation. Presentation is paramount; it can make or break a work. Students must decide how and where the photos/videos/etc. will be presented. This could be a physical object, digital files, projections, or utilize web-based media. Grades will be shared by the whole group.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**The success of this seminar depends upon responsible attendance to the class and full participation with collaborative teams. Attendance is required for the entire class period. Roll will be taken each session at the beginning of the period. Departures from full attendance such as arriving late, leaving early, and returning late from breaks will also be recorded throughout the class period.**

**Important points about Attendance Policy:**

- **More than three absences will result in your final semester grade being lowered by a 1/2 of a letter grade. Your grade will be lowered for every absence thereafter. A partial absence of 1/3 will be given if you arrive late to class or leave class early; three of these will equal a whole absence.**
- **If you come to class unprepared to work on the assignment, you will receive an absence for that session.**
- **This course demands your full participation, otherwise the group CANNOT FUNCTION; therefore consistent effort during class is critical to your grade. In the event of an absence, you must communicate promptly with your group and make necessary arrangements.**

**Extra Credit:** Can be obtained by:

1. Entering your work into exhibitions, whether accepted or not. Please submit documentation to prove what you submitted to.
2. Hosting/curating/participating in an exhibition or art-related event. Submit documentation, tell me what you did.
3. Going to art exhibitions or artist lectures and writing a review. Please see guidelines on how to write a review on Blackboard, under the heading General Information. Submit writing through Dropbox, in the section Extra Credit.