

Books & Images - ART 441

Fall 2008 TTh 9-12AM 128 Gatewood

Prof. Seth Ellis 230 Gatewood 334-5753 ssellis@uncg.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Books & Images is an advanced undergraduate course in the nature, design and creation of artist's books and prints. We will look at the book as both a mechanically reproducible object, and a unique sculptural object; we will address both digital and physical techniques in the creation of book projects. Students will design, print and bind their own projects.

Prerequisites: Design I, II, and III.

The classroom and course schedule

The course is divided into four equal parts; each part will culminate in a final project and critique. Each section of the course will begin with looking at other work, reading and discussing ideas related to the history and theory of bookmaking, and discussing concepts and design strategies. Software demos will not make up a large part of class, but we will think about the technical capabilities of the software we're using as we go along.

A maquette will be required for each project, in the process critique the week before final critique. At this time, a one-page statement of intent will also be due, detailing the ideas and strategies to be used in the project. With the final critique, a one-page artist statement about the final product will be due.

This is a print-intensive studio course. Students will be required to consider not just the digital design of their books, but their physical structure, including paper choice and printing strategies. Misprints need to be corrected or used; the final project will be critiqued and graded as it appears, not as it was meant to be.

Collaboration, discussion and the exchange of ideas are crucial to the process of the course.

The course

1. the book in multiple

An introduction to the book as a mechanically (or digitally) reproducible object. What is the specific nature of a book; what does it allow you to do that other media do not? Also, what does it mean to create a reproducible work—one that can exist in potentially infinite copies?

intro exercise due Sept. 2: 8-page chapbook on a given text

*Final project: **chapbook.***

Critique: September 23

You will be given one of a series of topics; make a project expanding upon or reacting to one of these topics. The final result will be a multipage chapbook, of any length or dimensions. You

must use either only text, or no text in your design.

2. the unique book

The book as a irreproducible art object; a form of sculpture. We will look at some examples of unique books throughout history and in theory.

*Final project: **a singular book.***

Critique: October 16

You will again be given a series of related topics; you will also be required to find an existing book (for instance, from Edward McKay or another bookstore). Using this book as your source material, create a book that cannot be reproduced—a single unique object. You can scan the original book, cut it up for collage material, alter the book itself, or make a new book using the same contents as the original book.

3. the book as object

Treating the book as a material object, a physical structure.

*Final project: **object translation.***

Critique: November 13

Choose an object or event, and make a book that translates the experience of that thing. This means not just a documentation of the thing, but a representation of its nature. How to get across the feel, the mood, the structure of the object/event?

4. the nature of the book

*Final project: **book, with something missing***

Critique: December 11 (final exam slot)

Take one of the elements of a book—paper, ink, pages, binding, etc.—and make a book that doesn't include that thing. The subject of the book is up to the student, but it must contain a narrative.

Software

Adobe Photoshop CS3

Adobe Illustrator CS3

Adobe InDesign CS3

Readings

There are no required books for this course, but readings will be distributed to students throughout the year. We will read excerpts from Douglas Holleley, Walter Benjamin, Jorge Luis Borges, Frank Lloyd Wright, and others. These readings are required; since they will be the subject of student projects, students must fully engage with the ideas presented.

Technical resources

If you are not comfortable with Photoshop and Illustrator, the Visual QuickStart books for those applications are strongly recommended. They are available from Amazon.com.

Other materials

Students will need some kind of digital storage medium (ie, disks), if they do not have one already. It is strongly recommended that students buy an external hard drive.

This is the first year that UNCG is recommending the purchase of a laptop to all students. If you are interested in buying a laptop, visit UNCG's page at <http://its.uncg.edu/Laptop>. The Digital Studio recommends the 15" MacBook Pro.

Pay for Print

Starting this year, students will need to pay for each print made on the large-format Epson printers in the Digital Studio. Your UNCG FirstCard will be charged per foot of print; make sure to keep some money on your FirstCard. **Do not** use the laser printer instead of paying for a higher-quality print; the difference is obvious, and it will hurt your grade.

Grading

Final projects: 20% each (80% total)
Participation in class and critiques: 20%

Work that meets the absolute technical minimum gets a D; work in which the artist moves beyond the assignment and finds ways to challenge themselves, technically and conceptually, gets an A.

Other requirements

This is an advanced course; students are expected to be self-motivating, to explore and do research on their own as well as in the allotted class time.

Attendance is mandatory; so is being on time, with all materials, ready to work. Two unexcused absences are permitted; more absences will result in the loss of half a grade per absence. Complete participation in the work, in discussions, and in critique of each others' work is also required.

Exercises are part of the process of each section of the course. Exercises and projects must be completed on time, and students must be ready to present their final project to the studio for

formal critique. Projects **MUST** be printed and on the walls, or ready to display, by the beginning of final critique; projects still printing or being assembled during critique have missed the deadline. Missed deadlines result in a loss of one grade per class period. Students are required to present their projects formally to the class.

No cell phones in class; no web surfing, emailing, IM-ing or otherwise multitasking while the instructor or anybody else is addressing the class.