

Art 499: BFA Thesis Project

Instructor Name:

Instructor Office:

Instructor Office Hours:

Instructor Contact Info (phone and email):

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This mentored independent study course represents the culmination of advanced studies in studio art and is for the development and production of the BFA student Thesis Exhibition and Thesis Paper.

PREREQUISITES:

Junior or senior standing and have completed all General Education courses that build Core Objectives 1-3 and satisfy Core Objectives 4-8. Must be accepted to, and in the second year, of the BFA program with three credits of ART 498 Seminar, three credits of ART 442 Intermedia, minimum of 12 credits in Studio Art, and 12 credits in Art History. Students must have and maintain a minimum 3.0 grade-point average in all art courses. This course will be taken in both the fall and spring semester of the final year in the BFA program.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course allows the advanced student the ability to do research and study towards the development of the BFA Thesis Exhibition and Thesis Paper, making students competitive for either further academic study or a career in the arts. Students learn how to develop language and writing skills to discuss, strengthen, and promote their work. This course also entails gallery training, including exhibition installation and de-installation, handling of work, and documentation of work. Students work closely with the Chair of their BFA Thesis Committee and are encouraged to consult with their other committee members regularly.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (students will be able to):

- Articulate an original artistic research question and apply cumulative theoretical and practical knowledge to pursue in the form of an art exhibition and thesis paper.
- Discuss their work in connection with other artists and art movements, both historical and contemporary.
- Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate and defend research findings in written and oral form.
- Produce professional-quality artwork and exhibition.
- Create high-quality documentation for graduate and/or professional opportunities.
- Design and develop marketing and promotion materials for exhibition.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

Directed readings will be suggested by the student's committee. Specialized art-making materials will need to be purchased by the student to produce artwork for the Thesis Exhibition.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:

Promotional materials, such as postcards and vinyl wall text are recommended to publicize and promote the event. Purchase of food and beverage for the Thesis Exhibition is also recommended.

MATERIALS PROVIDED TO YOU:

The Art Department provides limited assistance of University Gallery staff to schedule exhibitions and assist with press releases. For more information, please refer to the Student Galleries South handbook and the BFA program handbook.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Must attend all scheduled meetings with the committee members. This schedule must be arranged within the first week of class, initiated by the student.

Students are required to attend gallery training once per semester with University Galleries. Students are required to participate in the Annual Student Exhibition. Students are required to hold gallery hours during the duration of their BFA Thesis Exhibition.

Part of being a professional artist in the field includes attending art events. Therefore, students are expected to attend as many Visiting Artist/ Scholar Lectures as possible and sign up for studio critiques with visiting artists/scholars when available. Students not attending these events may receive a lower grade.

In addition, students are expected to spend a significant amount of time outside of class in order to produce enough work for their Thesis Exhibition. Depending on the amount of BFA students, the Thesis Exhibition can range anywhere from a two-person to a six-person show.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/GRADING, FIRST SEMESTER:

- 40% Preparation for Thesis Exhibition (making significant progress)
- 40% Preparation for Thesis Paper (making significant progress)
- 20% Class Participation

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/GRADING, SECOND SEMESTER:

- 40% Thesis Exhibition
- 40% Thesis Paper & Oral defense of work
- 20% Class Participation

Letter Grade	Percent Grade	4.0 Scale
A	93-100	4
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2
C-	70-72	1.7

D+	67-69	1.3
D	63-66	1
F	Below 63	0

GRADING CRITERIA:

BFA Thesis Project 1st semester:

- The quality and quantity of exploratory work towards the Thesis Exhibition
- The quality and quantity of preparatory research towards the Thesis Paper

BFA Thesis Project 2nd semester:

- The quality of the artwork produced for the Thesis Exhibition
- The quality of the installation of the Thesis Exhibition (installation choices/ craftsmanship if installation)
- The quality of the Thesis Paper
- The ability to communicate effectively for the comprehensive Oral Examination

Class Participation

- Attendance and punctuality for BFA Committee meetings
- The ability to meet deadlines (due dates for thesis paper, installing work on time, de-installing work on time, turning in required paperwork, etc.)
- Attendance at visiting artist/scholar lectures
- Participation in visiting artist/scholar studio visits when available
- Attendance at art exhibition receptions at UNR
- Participation in the Annual Juried Exhibition, including assisting installation and de-installation
- Professional conduct. This includes: the ability to get along with your peers and faculty, turning in all paperwork on time, scheduling your Oral Examination with all committee members well in advance, making sure the gallery is left in as good, if not better, condition in which you gained the space, etc.
- Meeting with all committee members on a regular basis
- Being on-time for gallery hours while your BFA Thesis Exhibition is on display. Making arrangements to cover your hours if you cannot be present.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

Students are expected to coordinate a schedule of meeting times with all their committee members. They are expected to meet with all members of their committee at least once a semester. It is recommended students schedule weekly or every-other-week meetings with the Chair of their committee.

BFA candidates are responsible for all aspects of the BFA Thesis Exhibition. Some assistance with publication will be provided by University Galleries. University Galleries will also assist with scheduling this exhibition. Student responsibilities include: publicity, installation, reception, takedown, documentation, and clean up. Students are also responsible for cleaning up after the reception of their opening as well. Failure to clean, patch and paint walls to their original condition within a day of taking down the show will cause the forfeiture of deposit and the elimination of candidate from future BFA exhibitions.

Students must decide and schedule, in consultation with University Galleries, which senior BFA students they are exhibiting with and resolve how to display the work together within the

gallery. If you elect to exhibit your work outside of JTB Gallery South, you must gain approval from your committee members.

Please schedule your committee meeting well in advance for your Oral Examination of the exhibition, which must be held at the time of your exhibition. All committee members must be present. Bring your Notice of Completion form and your Faculty Ranking Form with you.

THESIS EXHIBITION:

Artwork for the Thesis Exhibition will begin during the first semester of ART 499. The work for the Thesis Exhibition will be completed and exhibited during the second semester of ART 499.

It takes a significant amount of time to produce enough artwork for an exhibition of this magnitude and scope. In addition, it takes prolonged time for conceptual development to produce a cohesive and fully theorized body of work.

BFA THESIS PAPER:

The BFA Thesis Paper will begin during the first semester of this course and be completed the second semester of this course, two weeks prior to the opening of the Thesis Exhibition.

The BFA Thesis Paper goes hand-in-hand with the Thesis Exhibition. To bring a body of work to its full potential the student must be able to articulate the work's meaning and cultural relevance. The Thesis Paper verbalizes the relationship between artist and artwork and it provides a way for the audience to contextualize the work within its larger cultural context. It also helps the artist better understand and advance their own work and hone their voice as they continue to produce and promote their art work.

As it takes a significant amount of time, thought, and energy to produce artwork for the exhibition, it is also a commitment to prepare the Thesis Paper. Students must strive to understand and synthesize how their work fits into contemporary art practice and theory.

The Thesis Paper must be a minimum of 2000 words in length, double spaced, excluding bibliography, and the title page. This will *approximately* be 8.5 pages in length utilizing Times New Roman, font size 12, margins at 1" (this does not include footnotes or pictures). You must follow standard academic paper guidelines (MLA or Chicago Manual Style).

The Thesis Paper should place the candidate's work within contemporary art practice and theory, addressing antecedents and related current practitioners. It should also express a thorough analysis and understanding of the candidate's creative endeavors.

The format and content of the Thesis Paper should derive from close consultation with the student's BFA committee. ART 498 Seminar in Visual Arts is designed to assist with the Thesis Paper as it lays the foundation for contemporary theory and practice through course readings and writings.

DUE DATES FOR THESIS PAPER:

1) A draft of the BFA Thesis Paper must be delivered to the entire BFA committee at least 4 weeks prior to the first day of the Thesis Exhibition.

- 2) The final, revised BFA Thesis Paper must be delivered to the entire BFA committee at least 2 weeks prior to the first day of the Thesis Exhibition
- 3) Failure to complete the BFA Thesis Paper by these deadlines will result in the exclusion of the candidate from the BFA Thesis Exhibition.

ORAL EXAMINATION:

The Thesis Paper is designed to prepare students for their oral exams. The Oral Examination will be held during the Thesis Exhibition, in the second semester ART 499.

The Oral Examination, scheduled by the student, must have all committee members present to conduct this final step.

The Oral Examination is a dialogue among professors and student. Students will be asked a variety of questions on topics such as: the artwork itself, it's meaning/intent, historical and theoretical context, the presentation choices, the overall installation choices, identify significant influential artists in relationship to your work, etc. The Oral Examination is comprehensive and used to assess knowledge of everything learned throughout the program. Students are expected to answer questions intelligently, relying on all readings and writings done throughout the course of study. The Oral Examination is intended to prepare students for presenting themselves professionally to art critics, gallerists, curators, etc.

SAMPLE CALENDAR, FALL SESSION:

Week 1	Meet with Chair of Committee, establish meeting times with chair & committee
Week 2	Establish premise for exhibition, determine preliminary literature for Thesis Paper
Week 3	Finish Artwork 1
Week 4	Establish dates for your exhibition and who you will be exhibiting with
Week 5	Create goals for each piece that needs to be created for Thesis Exhibition
Week 6	Finish Artwork 2
Week 7	Finish Reading 1
Week 8	Break Thesis Paper into several sections
Week 9	Finish Reading 2
Week 10	Finish Artwork 3
Week 11	Establish rough outline for Thesis Exhibition
Week 12	Finish Reading 3
Week 13	Finish Artwork 4
Week 14	Finish Reading 4
Week 15	Rough Draft of Thesis Paper to Committee Chair
Week 16	Finish Artwork 5, Review Draft of Thesis Paper with Committee Chair

SAMPLE CALENDAR, SPRING SESSION:

Week 1	Meet with Chair of Committee, establish meeting times with Chair & committee
Week 2	Finish Artwork 6
Week 3	Professionally document/photograph artwork for publication/postcard
Week 4	Rough Draft of Thesis Paper to Committee Chair
Week 5	Finish Artwork 7
Week 6	Create exhibition postcards, submit to committee for review
Week 7	Edit, finalize, and have postcards printed

Week 8	Revise Thesis Paper
Week 9	Thesis Paper due to the entire committee
Week 10	Prepare press/publication language to send out to newspapers, etc.
Week 11	Send out postcards/promotional material
Week 12	Install Thesis Exhibition, professionally photograph exhibition
Week 13	Oral Examination, BFA paperwork, gallery sit while work is on exhibition
Week 14	De-install Thesis Exhibition
Week 15	Professionally document/photograph artwork for portfolio
Week 16	Meet with committee Chair, establish future goals and complete exit interview

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

"The University Academic Standards Policy defines academic dishonesty, and mandates specific sanctions for violations. See the University Academic Standards policy: [UAM 6,502](#)."

ACADEMIC SUCCESS SERVICES:

Your student fees cover usage of the Math Center (775) 784-4433, Tutoring Center (775) 784-6801, and University Writing Center (775) 784-6030. These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

DISABILITY SERVICES:

Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with the Disability Resource Center (Pennington Student Achievement Center, Suite 230) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING STATEMENT:

Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may be given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.

TITLE IX DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment for all. If you believe you have experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, whether on or off campus, or need information related to immigration concerns, please contact the University's Equal Opportunity & Title IX office at 775-784-1547. Resources and interim measures are available to assist you. For more information, please visit: <https://www.unr.edu/equal-opportunity-title-ix>.