

## Kenyon Academic Partnership (KAP) Digital Imaging Syllabus

2014/2015

Mount Vernon High School-Mrs. Badger

**Digital Imaging** is a broad term for using digital tools to engage in aesthetic and conceptual practices in contemporary art. In this course you will create studio projects that investigate a variety of subjects such as: the role of digital media in the history of artistic practice, the relationship of the arts to popular culture, the aesthetics of abstraction, the development of metaphor, new versions of magic-realism and the effects of social issues on the creation and interpretation of art work. Students will understand and apply the fundamentals of composition and develop technical skills with still-image and video-production tools. Through theory and practice effective art criticism skills are developed which allow for creative group interaction and defining personal aesthetic vision. Each exercise, assignment, and project will be submitted by the established deadline in order to be critiqued by peers and the instructor and will challenge students to develop and meet both technical and conceptual goals. A majority of the still and moving images will be student created (captured by the student via digital camera, cell phone, or camcorder). Presentations and demonstrations by the professor are supplemented by student readings about contemporary artists and issues.

**Class Structure:** This class will include demonstrations and presentations by the instructor. There will be a selection of online and print materials to be read and evaluated at various times throughout the semester. Each student will conduct research as a means to write an artist's statement, complete written papers, prepare oral presentations, and develop a video documentary. Approximately half of the course will be spent investigating *still imaging* with assignments that lead to understanding of the techniques and concepts of digital printmaking. A computer scanner and Adobe Photoshop software will be utilized for this segment of the course. The second half of this course will be centered on *moving images*, utilizing video techniques and concepts to express ideas that integrate movement and sound. Adobe Premiere Pro software will be used to for editing in this course.

### **Project exercises, assignments, and project summaries for this course:**

**Formalism Project:** Composition and aesthetics of abstraction. Students will find interesting materials and develop flat abstracted images that explore the elements and principles of composition. Students will use a computer scanner bed as a place to compose an image that investigates some of the elements and principles of design. Students will collect items that are visually compelling searching for unusual textures and shapes. Objects will be arranged on the scanner in a way that indicates an understanding of symmetrical and asymmetrical compositions, with unity, focal points, rhythms, etc. This is harder than it sounds. The most successful images start with good choices of materials and are often obsessively detailed and take a long time to arrange before scanning. You will use Photoshop to make minor global adjustments to the raw scans.

**Composited Scan Project:** Manipulated composition and aesthetics of abstraction. Students will scan and manipulate objects through Photoshop to create compositions that indicate an understanding of the principles of design. Students will utilize non-destructive editing techniques such as layer masks, etc. Students will exhibit control over the techniques being taught in class and will identify the types of compositions

**Appropriation Exercise:** Using cultural context or historical context to imply content, developing metaphors. Artists have long used popular culture as a source for their work. This assignment challenges students to subvert the intent of their subject matter. Students will find a well known cultural image or image from art history and subvert its intention with their own interpretation. Students should leave the image itself still recognizable or the purpose will be defeated. In order to decide what image to use students should first think about issues that are of concern in our culture like commercialization, portrayal of gender, or race. Find an image and find a way to subvert it without making it a surreal transformation as these tend to be contrived and clichéd.

**Magic (Semi) Realism Project:** Develop an image that integrates a vista with magic realism. Imagining the world in a way that it cannot physically exist has inspired artists throughout history. In this tradition, common or mundane forms are changed but they maintain a degree of believability. They often hold meaning that is personal/ political in nature and have a poetic/ multi-layered interpretation. You may deepen your project by also relating it to something you are studying in another class. The result should be compelling, almost believable and either strange or humorous but not clichéd. The combined images should explore your personal fears, dreams or desires, but could also relate to social or political issues, challenge common narratives or question the nature of physics. You don't have to tell a whole story with this image, just provoke a response in your audience by being compelling, sustaining and surprising.

**Multiple Me Exercise:** Use camera skills and Photoshop skills to develop a portrait within a context. Students will use a digital camera to capture 10 -12 pictures of themselves in a scene. Students will use Photoshop layers, layer masks, and other non-destructive editing techniques to create a self-portrait that contains multiples of oneself in a scene. What motivates an artist? Most artists are motivated to create for a specific purpose. Some artists create artwork to promote their beliefs. Some create artwork to evoke an emotional response from the viewer. Some create art as a way to comment on culture and society. Your goal is to create a finished piece in which emotions, moods, or feelings are communicated to the audience.

**Soundscape Project:** Use sound as a medium to define space. Students will collect, layer, and manipulate original sound in order to create a soundscape. Sound which is shaped by acoustics and environmental space (natural and architectural). Students will edit multiple layers in order to create a soundscape. All images will be removed. Due to the fact that there will be no visual image the audience will begin to make associations based on depth of sound.

**Animated Film Logo Production Exercise:** Advanced keyframing and masking in Premiere Pro to create an animation that contains image and sound.

### **Fictitious Advertising**

Many artists today use the methods of popular culture to create their work. By inventing machines, corporations, news, events, soap operas, websites, etc. these artists use the tropes of “facts” to explore ideas that are “fiction”. In this assignment we will use the popular culture vocabulary of advertising to promote a fictitious invention.

Taking our clues from the popular Japanese activity of Chindogu (the creation of useless inventions) we will imagine an invention that could help sort out a typical human problem, need, or desire. Rather than actually making the invention physically, we will create it with the magic of Photoshop from various parts that we photograph or composite. We will develop text to support, explain, and sell this invention. Then we will design a promotional piece (poster or magazine page) using good design skills and type manipulation in Photoshop.

### **Stop Motion Animation**

The primary goal of this assignment is to create a short stop motion sequence that tells a story. Students will create a storyboard. (The storyboard is a graphic organizer that illustrates or displays images for the purpose of pre-visualizing a sequence for the stop motion project.) The story should be quirky or unusual. The sequence should have a strong beginning, middle, and end. Use metaphors and symbols to create your story. The biggest danger with this assignment is that it is easier to be unsophisticated and

**Aesthetics of the Ordinary Project:** Aesthetics of Abstraction. Videotape and edit a series of ordinary images/objects in a way that makes them more visually compelling, elegant, and mysterious. Start out by considering unusual points of view, locations, or homemade filters put in front of the camera. Use some of the principles of composition/organization of time and space. Create a challenging sequence of images that imply a simple structure that has a beginning, middle, and end.

**Artist Documentary Exercise:** Students will create a documentary about a contemporary artist. The documentary will contain factual information about an artist’s identity and his artwork’s function, symbolism, and cultural context. The students must include possible motivated functions of the artist’s work: communication, emotional expression, entertainment, political or social inquiry or propaganda/anarchy. Students will collect and edit together still images, moving images, narration, and music. Students will properly cite their sources.

**Aesthetics Narrative Project:** This project will be prompted by text, but will evolve between text, image and sound. Record images that resonate with and amplify the sound and text but do not literally illustrate it. Find interesting locations, objects and images and significant actions. The images should be metaphors for the elements in the text. Your artwork should show an awareness of the appropriate audience/assignment/social context of your work as relating to other artists and non-artists, those of your generation and beyond, what era you are

working within, what cultural knowledge you can refer to and what will be lost on the viewer. The piece should be appropriate for experimental galleries.

**Artists:** There are many visual artists that will be investigated that include but are not limited to: Eadweard Muybridge, Etienne-Jules Marey, Andy Goldsworthy, William Wegman, Vitto Acconci, Bruce Nauman, Joan Jonas, Richard Serra, Tony Oursler, Nam June Paik, John Sanborn, Woody and Steina Vasulka, Cindy Sherman, Timothy Hawkinson, Ann Hamilton, Maggie Taylor, Doug and Mike Stern, Betty Saer, Barbara Kruger, Katrin Eismann, Sandy Skoglund, Kehinde Wiley, Yinka Shonibare, Robert and Shana ParkeHarrison, Erik Johansson, Magritte, Janaina Tschape, Nancy Burson, Yasumasa Morimura, Holly Roberts, Stephen Vitiello, Kristen Oppenheim, and Laurie Anderson.

### **Class Presentations**

Various artists and their work will be investigated. Students will be required to work in collaborative groups and will prepare presentations for the class.

### **Quizzes and Tests**

Students earn grades based upon their demonstration of knowledge and skills.

### **Exams**

There will be a midterm exam project and a final exam project in this class. Failure to turn in the final exam project will result in an F.

**Project Grading:** Grading will be based on rubrics and the degree of success in which a student solves each assignment. There will be a deduction of one letter grade per day for a late assignment/project. Please do not compare your grades with your classmates. There are many reasons for variations in grades. What is taking a risk for one person might be comfortable and predictable for someone else with more experience. I am knowledgeable of previous Mount Vernon High School KAP Digital Imaging student's accomplishments. I am also knowledgeable of Kenyon College Digital Imaging student accomplishments. KAP instructors are required to attend a Digital Imaging Workshop each summer. (One workshop requirement is examination of Kenyon College Digital Imaging student work.)

To do the best in this class you should start work right after the assignment is given so that you can rework projects as needed. Projects are due at the beginning of the class period on the date of the class critique. *Note- video projects must be rendered before a critique.* You must render a video project the day before the critique in order to meet the established deadline.

### **Digital Imaging Project Evaluation Criteria:**

Your artwork should be a creative response to the guidelines/criteria of the assignment. It should show an awareness of the appropriate audience/ assignment/ social context of your work as relating to other artists and non-artists, those of your generation and beyond, what era

you are working within, what cultural knowledge you can refer to and what will be lost on the viewer. The piece should be appropriate for experimental galleries.

**Artistic Integrity:** Does the artwork show originality/creativity/innovation/ of an idea or composition? The artwork should not be a copy or near copy of another work.

**Visual Attraction:** Is there something that initially draws the viewer in to want to see more? Did the artist use an approach that is visually, intellectually and emotionally compelling?

**Complexity:** Does the artwork show conceptual depth, sophistication or complexity that allows a sustaining interest on the part of the viewer?

**Surprise/Cleverness:** Does the work avoid clichés and pat expectations?

**Mechanics:** Does the artwork show an understanding of dynamic composition and the proper use of the elements of art and principles of design to achieve a unified resolution that makes sense for the project?

**Technical Growth:** Does the artwork show growth in technical skills, attention to detail and a willingness to take risks...to step away from your comfort zone?

**Participation:** Does the artist show a willingness to speak up, give valuable and thoughtful comments, share personal insight and react to others' point of view in a constructive way?

**Attitude:** Does the artist show a commitment to the work that involves a willingness to learn from others, including faculty and students? Does the artist keep a positive attitude throughout the assignment?

**Ability to meet Deadlines:** Was the artwork submitted by the assigned deadline?  
(All projects must be turned in prior to the start of a class critique.)

**Reworking Projects:** Students are encouraged to rework Digital Imaging projects during the course. You may rework each art project once. The new grade will be averaged with your initial grade. You must re-submit the new version within one week of receiving your artwork back with a grading sheet. Students can rework a project during a study hall or can arrange time after school. There are two projects that students can **not** rework. The mid-term exam project and the final exam project **cannot** be reworked.

#### **Class Goals:**

Be curious, playful, dedicated, innovative and unafraid of risk.

Develop metaphors, irony and mystery in your work while avoiding clichés.

Structure your time well and pay attention to detail.

Develop an understanding of visual forms as vocabulary for your explorations.

Learn techniques and processes in still and moving digital image making and use them for your work.

Learn how to control and care for digital imaging equipment.

Make art in relationship to others: your class, your community and beyond.

Anchor your work in its appropriate context: historically, culturally, socially, and aesthetically.

**Collaboration:** Each student has different aptitudes and life experiences. Your classmates are an important asset. Your classmate's knowledge, insight, and advice should be valued. I encourage you to listen and be willing to learn from your peers. Your participation in class discussions and class critiques is an important requirement of this course. Students will be required to work in collaborative groups at various times during this course.

**Academic Honesty:** Being honest academically in an art class is more difficult to define than in other classes. Sometimes using another image is intended as a cultural reference. It even has a name: "appropriation". Whenever this is intended, the image is well known enough in the culture for most people to know where it came from, and therefore it evokes some ideas or feelings tied to the original. This is fine for an artist to do. Occasionally students find compositions or images that they want to use in their work. Drawing from a photograph in a magazine is a common example. This should not be done just to make things easier, rather than drawing from life or gathering one's own photos. By using such an image it often looks contrived or commercial. Utilizing this type of image can be done if it is part of the concept of your piece. Taking another artist's image, composition or idea directly and passing it off as your own is a case for dishonesty. I suggest that if you have a question, you talk to me before you start work on a piece.

**Equipment policy:** *Each student must have a Digital Imaging Equipment Form signed by a parent or guardian. This form will be kept on file for the current school year in the MVHS Art Department. Students must have a form on file before borrowing or using any equipment. You are expected to care for all equipment both on the premises and off. If something breaks or is lost while in your possession, you are responsible for it financially. See Attached Form.*

Make sure you clean up after yourself. Don't bring food or beverages into the digital art lab. Water bottles are allowed as long as they are placed on the floor next to your work station. Mount Vernon High School has several computer based art classes. There will be class periods outside of the assigned KAP class time in which the computers or video lab are utilized by these other courses. If you need to work on an assignment in order to catch up or rework a project please talk to Mrs. Badger in advance so that she may assist in trying to coordinate an appropriate time and the equipment you will need.

**Class Etiquette:**

Critiques/Discussions/Presentations: Make sure to speak loud enough for everyone to hear and give everyone a turn. Refrain from talking when a member of the class is talking. Remember that you are expected to critique the artwork, not the person responsible for the artwork.

Please do not continue to work on your project or other homework when there is a class critique, discussion, or presentation.

Internet/ Computer work: In a class where you are sitting in front of a powerful computer all the time, it is very tempting to use that computer to work on other assignments, browse the internet, etc. Please stay on task. The art lab is to be used for computer based art assignments.

**Headphones:** Headphones will be provided to each student. You are **required** to use headphones for the “moving images” portion of the course. You will be editing sound. This common courtesy allows the classroom environment to remain somewhat peaceful.

**Flash Drive:** You must purchase a flash drive that is a minimum of 64 GB USB 3.0

## Technology Equipment Usage Form

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This form must be signed in order for your son or daughter to use or borrow any technology equipment on school grounds or overnight. Once signed, the form will be valid for the 2014/2015 school year or until they are no longer enrolled in the KAP Digital Imaging Class.

Students must be in good standing (class average, behavior etc.) in order to sign out equipment. If you have any questions prior to signing this form, please contact Mrs. Badger at 393-5900 Ext. 5632. The equipment that may be borrowed includes:

<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Approximate Replacement Cost</u>
Portable Flip or Kodak Video Camera	\$130.00
Sony Handycam- Video Camera	\$330.00
Digital Camera	\$300.00
Camera Bag	\$25.00
Tripod	\$75.00
Flip Video Batteries	\$4.00
Sony Handycam Batteries	\$60.00
Wacom Bamboo Tablet and Pen	\$100.00

The above prices are approximate. If in the event equipment is not returned in the same condition as when borrowed, you will be charged the replacement cost.

Student Information (**to be filled out by student**):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ The year you will graduate: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ promise to return the above-mentioned video equipment in working condition and accept full financial responsibility for any damages to the equipment or loss thereof.

Parent Information (to be filled out by parent/guardian)

Parent or Guardian's Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

All equipment must be returned in person **to Mrs. Badger** by the next school day **prior to first period** unless the student is taking College Credit Plus courses that are off campus. Do not leave equipment in the office, on my desk, or on one of the other art teachers' desks. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to return the borrowed equipment to school. There are three classes using this equipment during each semester. Failure to return equipment directly impacts other students taking digital art courses.

**Do not leave any equipment in a car. It may be damaged due to heat, cold, or moisture. It is the student's responsibility to pick up the video camera on their assigned day after school.**



**We will try to work with various student athletic schedules/work schedules so that there is less chance of equipment being left in a car, stolen, or damaged.**