

ARTS-6080-01

Electronic Arts Practice

Course Syllabus: Fall 2009

<http://www.arts.rpi.edu/rolnick/classes/eartpractice>

Wednesdays 4-6:50pm, West Hall 413

PROFESSOR

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays by appt.

OVERVIEW & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course creates a forum for MFA students to dedicate their attention to individual creative projects, preparation for thesis research and production, and the continued development of their artistic identity.

The learning objectives for the course are 1) continued definition of your understanding of who you are as an artist, and 2) development of your ability to present and frame discussion of your work to your own best advantage, in part, as preparation for your thesis paper in your final semester in the MFA program.

As a professional artist, your primary time commitment must be to producing your artwork. Therefore, your central focus in this course should be to create your own work. I expect everyone to spend part of every day focused on their creative work, whatever that may mean to each of you individually.

Intellectually, you need to be able to frame your work in an historical and theoretical context in order to talk about it and promote it. To this end, there are two theoretical assignments for this class. The first is to make a presentation to the class in which you describe the work of another artist – or of another thinker of any discipline – who has influenced your work either positively or negatively. The second of these assignments is to make a presentation about how you see your own work fitting into a greater artistic environment. As an addendum to this second theoretical assignment, we will also look at how you represent yourself in your portfolio.

Hopefully, this class will give you the opportunity to clarify on a deeper level where you want to go with your thesis work.

CLASS MEETINGS

Class meetings will focus on student presentations and discussion, in a seminar format. Students will be assigned dates for their presentations in a rotating schedule, and it is expected that readings, listening, or viewing assignments will be assigned as background materials for some presentations.

Attendance at weekly Electronic Arts Practice class meetings is mandatory.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Each student will develop a personal contract and schedule for work to be done and goals to be accomplished during the semester. This should be formalized through individual meetings with the instructor within the first two weeks of classes. The contract will include the central creative work to be done during the semester, as

well as topics and dates for class presentations as described below, and planning for your portfolio.

- Each class meeting will include a presentation of work in progress by two students. Presentation dates will be assigned on a rotating basis, beginning with the second class meeting on September 9. The schedule of presentations will be posted on the class website.
- Each student will be expected to lead two discussions on theoretical issues relating to their work, with one student presenting each week. As described above, one of these discussions will focus on an individual who has influenced your work, and the other will describe how you place your own work in a larger context. These presentations are meant as a forum for ideas and concepts you will be expected to articulate in your thesis paper and in the oral defense of your thesis. You should provide the class with a brief list of related readings, viewing or listening materials at least one week before your presentation. The schedule of presentations will be posted on the class website, and reference materials should be sent via email.
- One week after each student's discussions of their influences and of the context for their work, they will be expected to hand in a written paper on the same topic, reflecting their own research and input gleaned from class discussion. These papers should be 3–5 pages long. Hopefully, these presentations and papers will lead you to the kind of the material which you will later use in your thesis paper

GRADING & ATTENDANCE

Grading for this course will be based on the individual contracts drawn up for each student. However, at least 50% of the grade will be determined by your progress on your creative work. Your two presentations on historical or theoretical contexts for your work will each count for approximately 15% of the grade. The remaining 20% will be based upon your participation in class, in the MFA show or other external showings of your work, and in the final crits. You will be given an evaluation of your progress in the class approximately half way through the semester.

More than two unexcused absences may lower your grade by a full letter grade.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Student-teacher relationships are built on trust. For example, students must trust that their teachers have made appropriate decisions about the structure and content of the courses they teach, and teachers must trust that the assignments the students turn in are their own. Acts which violate this trust undermine the educational process.