

**GRADUATE SCULPTURE SEMINAR AND CRITIQUE**  
**HYPOTHETICAL STRUCTURES**  
**ART 6933, (3 credits)**  
**SPRING 2016**

SEAN MILLER, PROFESSOR [swarp@ufl.edu](mailto:swarp@ufl.edu)

Wednesday E-1, E-3 (7:20-10:10 PM)

FAC B-1

University of Florida

Office Hours: W Noon-1PM

P: (352) 215-8580

E: [swarp@ufl.edu](mailto:swarp@ufl.edu)

*"My objects are seen as stimulants for the transformation of the idea of sculpture, or of art in general. They should provoke thoughts about what sculpture can be and how the concept of sculpting can be extended to the invisible materials used by everyone:*

*Thinking Forms: how we mould out thoughts, Spoken Forms: how we shape our thoughts into words, Social Sculpture: how we mould and shape the world in which we live."*

-Joseph Beuys

*"Really there is nothing here. It is like a place where you live. The only useful thing about the studio is that after some time you can imagine something. A forest, for example. I walk in it. Today it is nothing for me, but perhaps in two weeks it will become something"*

-Christian Boltanski

*"The conceptual reality, as it were becomes a concrete "matter" only when one destroys its conceptuality by asking others to enact it, as, otherwise, it cannot escape from staying "imaginary."*

-Yoko Ono

*"I am enthusiastic over humanity's extraordinary and sometimes very timely ingenuity. If you are in a shipwreck and all the boats are gone, a piano top buoyant enough to keep you afloat that comes along makes a fortuitous life preserver. But this is not to say that the best way to design a life preserver is in the form of a piano top. I think that we are clinging to a great many piano tops in accepting yesterday's fortuitous contrivings as constituting the only means for solving a given problem."*

-Buckminster Fuller

*"There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we don't know we don't know."*

- Donald Rumsfeld

*"Here unfortunately Rumsfeld stopped because I think he should have gone on. Making the next step toward a fourth variation... things we don't know we know... we know them, they are part of our identity, they determine our activity, but we don't know we know them. This is what in psychoanalysis is called the unconscious... What you don't know you know controls you, you don't control it."*

- Slavoj Žižek

**CONCEPT:**

Close your eyes and imagine this course. The diagram, blueprint, instruction manual, script, forecast, pattern, manifesto, demo, vision, fortune, score, daydream, time capsule are all things that may significantly impact the way(s) we respond to the material world and the space that we occupy. This graduate sculpture seminar course will address the hypothetical and the speculative as components to the art making process and also as strategies for engaging with audience, considering site-specificity, questioning hierarchical structures, refining studio practice, generating publicity, and developing a pedagogical strategies. The course is designed assist graduate students in growing their abilities to envision and act on the possibilities and circumstances that inform their lives and their practice. We will investigate hypothetical approaches in relation to

sculpture but also design, literature, science, conceptual art, materials, ecology, activism, and politics. The course will be informed by provocative readings, lectures, screenings, guest artists, group discussions, interactive exercises, studio visits, and much more. We will conclude the semester with a group exhibition.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To critically engage with ideas related to hypothetical thinking and speculative strategies in the artistic process and to explore ways artists, designers, and thinkers work in this manner.
2. To build personal methods in your own studio practice and professional practice that benefit from speculative thinking.
3. To contribute to the dialogue and community in the course by identifying/sharing significant and insightful examples of hypothetical approaches in art and other creative disciplines.
4. Learn to better articulate your ideas, creative efforts, and your artistic practice.

## **TEXTS AND READINGS:**

THERE IS NO TEXT YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PURCHASE. Texts for the course will be provide. Texts will come from many sources including:

The Studio (Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art), 2012, edited by Jens Hoffmann.  
100 Artists' Manifestos: From The Futurists To The Stuckists, Penguin Modern Classics), 2011, edited by Alex Danchev.  
Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming, 2013, by Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby.  
The Open Studio: Essays on Art and Aesthetics, by Susan Stewart.  
Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology, edited by Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson.  
Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings, 2011, edited by Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson.

## **OTHER RELATED READINGS:**

Open Studio, Susan Stewart, Duke University Press, 1993.  
Grapefruit, Yoko Ono, Simon & Shuster, 1964.  
Participation, Edited by Claire Bishop, Whitechapel Gallery and MIT Press, 2006.  
The Art of Participation 1950 - Now, Rudolf Frieling, Boris Groys, Robert Atkins, Len Manovich, Thames and Hudson, 2008.  
Hans Ulrich Obrist Interviews, Edited by Thomas Boutoux, Fondazione Petti Imagine Discovery, 2003.

## **STUDIO PRACTICE**

You will present work for critique in an articulate written and verbal manner. Your statements will describe the overall content of your work as well as the specific motivations and attributes associated with the piece(s) you are presenting. In addition, twice during the semester you will be responsible for a written verbal introduction of another artist in the seminar as well as providing a critical response to another artist in the seminar. During your statements you must relate your studio practice to theories and histories of contemporary art. There will be two group critiques for each student over the course of the semester. In addition, I will make studio visits throughout the semester (to be scheduled individually).

## **COURSE STRUCTURE**

·The course structure/schedule includes two-hours of weekly discussion, activities, or group projects. Discussion of the assigned reading will occur during this time. Two individual critiques will follow (approx. 45 minutes each).

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

Readings and Research: This course is highly research based. You will be expected to read excerpts from the writings of artists, critics, historians, literary figures, architects, and philosophers. The purpose of these readings is to immerse you in different ways of looking at a

particular problem. In addition to the readings assigned you will be expected to find additional sources of particular relevance to your studio practices.

**Critique and Discussion:** The purpose of critique is to share ideas about new work being produced. It is the responsibility of the seminar participants to offer new work and supply a context, history, and ideas related to the production of the work. The work presented by seminar participants should be well researched and well crafted in relation to the concepts and aesthetics they utilize.

### **COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

**ATTENDANCE** is required at all classes, critiques, assigned lectures, films, videos, or performances, and field trips. Unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to keep up with the readings and contacting the professor for further information about missed topics.

**PROJECTS** must be completed by the due dates of the critiques.

**CRITIQUES** are an essential part of the practice of art and require a strong commitment on the part of all students and the professor. Critique display and presentation of work should be equivalent to the quality of exhibition. Active and thoughtful participation is required.

**READINGS** must be completed as scheduled for discussion.

### **GRADING:**

Individual letter-grades will be recorded for responses related to assigned readings, participation in a rigorous studio, research and critical practice, and for a collaborative research/writing for seminar presentations.

### **PROJECT EVALUATIONS:**

Your work will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Quality of discussion of the readings
- Conceptual rigor and inventiveness in your studio practices
- Quality of research, methodology, and documentation of the process.

### **Evaluation:**

- A Extremely well-presented, thoughtfully executed, superior work, all criteria of assignment have been surpassed in a distinguished manner. In addition, student is engaged in exceptional studio and research practice, which includes active independent research, looking up artists recommended by faculty and peers, asking relevant questions about other artists' works or ideas, and being thoroughly engaged in reading assignments and individual studio work. Resulting work completed during the semester demonstrates a high level of understanding of the assignments presented, and the complex questions raised in seminar topics and discussions as well as by one's own studio work. Student demonstrates a high level of critical thinking, craftsmanship, conceptual experimentation, and a desire to learn and grow as an artist is evidenced through exemplary attendance, hard work, curiosity, openness to criticism and willingness to make improvements and share learning and insights with peers.
- B 3.0 Very good work overall. Most criteria of assignments were surpassed with some improvements to be made. Studio and research practice was commendable and there is an obvious effort made to adhere to and address the criteria and purposes of assignments and to relate responses/insights to course topics. Good attendance (maximum of 3 absences), participation in critique, and general conscientious work submitted is characteristic and student generally operates as a thoughtful, engaged citizen of the community. Most of the criteria of A apply, but to a lesser degree.

- C 2.0 Adequate, average, work meeting most of the assignment criteria with areas needing significant improvement. Work demonstrates a fairly good attempt at responding to the problems or topics presented, but the work lacks the engagement, effort and comprehensive understanding characteristic of a B. Poor studio and research practice are exhibited overall.
- D 1.0 Barely meets the criteria of assignments, extremely poor or unfinished work, highlighting unacceptable studio and research practice. Barely contributing to the seminar environment.
- E 0.0 Failure to meet all criteria of assignment accompanied by unacceptable studio/research practice.  
Not contributing to the seminar environment.

More information on UF grading policies can be found at:  
<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/hubstudents.html>

**FINAL SEMESTER GRADES** will be averaged as follows:

- Minimum of two projects presented in critique 1/3 of total grade each.
- Overall participation through readings, writings, research, and discussions 1/3 of total grade.

**Grading Scale:**

**A** 94-100 **4.0/ A-** 90-93 **3.67/ B+** 87-89 **3.33/ B** 83-86 **3.0/ B-** 80-82 **2.67/ C+** 77-79 **2.33/ C** 73-76 **2.0/ C-** 70-72 **1.67/D+** 67-69 **1.33/ D** 63-66 **1.0/ D-** 60-62 **.67/ E** 0-59

For more information: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Students must earn a grade higher than C- to earn credit toward their major.

**FINAL SEMESTER GRADES** will be averaged as follows:

- Minimum of two projects presented in critique 1/3 of total grade each.
- Overall participation through readings, writings, research, and discussions 1/3 of total grade.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY/COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

1. Attendance is mandatory and students should participate the duration of the scheduled class period.  
A seminar course requires a vibrant community of active, reflective, productive and collaborative citizens and all are expected to be prepared, on time and ready share opinions and insights for the success of the learning environment. If an absence occurs it is the student's responsibility to follow-up and to make up all work they missed.
2. All artwork for group critique must be complete and installed before the start of the course period. A critique should not be missed, and cannot be made-up for purposes of grading.
3. Full engagement in discussions on readings, timely completion of assignments fulfilling course criteria, cohesive verbal presentation of studio artwork and constructive criticism of peer work is expected.
4. On-going rigorous studio practice should be maintained outside of regularly scheduled class.
5. **SPECIAL NOTE:** Required to attend sculpture lectures by Ian McMahon, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, Dave Herman February 18<sup>th</sup>, Brandon Ballengee March 16<sup>th</sup>. Please clear your calendars.

Evaluation of the course online at the end of semester is required.

\* UF attendance policy:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx#absences>

Attendance: Please be here for class time. Late arrival and leaving early will be considered absence. Over 3 absences will drop your grade average by one half-letter grade. This will continue for every additional 3 absences.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO VISIT <http://www.arts.ufl.edu/art/healthandsafety> FOR RULES REGARDING SA+AH HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES AND THE HANDBOOK. PLEASE DOWNLOAD THE WAIVER FORM FROM THE SITE.

Each student must complete a waiver form and these forms must be turned in to your professor who will turn them in to the Director of Operations by the second week of class.

### **UNIVERSITY AND SAAH RESOURCES AND POLICIES**

General University Policies and Services - <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Disability Office — <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

University Counseling Services

352-392-1575 <http://www.counsel.ufl.edu/> The UF Counseling Center offers counseling and therapy to help students confront personal, academic, and career concerns.

Student Healthcare Center <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>

For medical emergencies call 911.

352-392-1161 for urgent after-hours care.

352-392-1171 for after-hours mental health assistance.

Safety and Security

In an emergency call 911.

University Police Department — <http://police.ufl.edu/> 352-392-1111.

### **GUIDELINES FOR USE OF CAMPUS FACILITIES AND GROUNDS**

Please make every effort to maintain the facilities and grounds of the School of Art and Art History, the College of Fine Arts and The University of Florida. Specifically we ask that you follow these guidelines:

1. Do not mark, paint on or deface any interior or exterior of the school or college facilities. Take care to always use protective tarps, drop cloths or masking material when working with paint media or similar materials to protect the floors in public spaces such as hallways and classrooms. That applies also to the sidewalks walls, and grounds.
2. If a special project requires temporary modification to a wall surface or to the grounds you must obtain specific permission from your instructor prior to undertaking the project. The site must be returned to its original condition immediately following the project unless prior written permission has been obtained from the School of Art and Art History.
3. No Art project may interfere with or impede access to, classrooms, hallways or other public spaces.
4. All site-specific art projects must be installed and engineered with the safety of the general public in mind.
5. Grades will not be issued for the project, or the class, until the project has been completely removed, and the site has been restored to its original condition. Failure to comply with these rules will result in disciplinary action, withholding of grades, the possible lowering of a grade, or failure of the course.

**DRUG-FREE SCHOOL & WORKPLACE AND CLEAN INDOOR AIR ACT**

The Sculpture Program is committed to upholding the policies set forth by the University of Florida in regards to drug and alcohol use and smoking in educational facilities. Possession and use of drugs or alcoholic beverages is not allowed in the classroom or outdoor areas. In addition, The Florida Clean Indoor Air Act of 1992 prohibits smoking in educational facilities. Violation of university policies and applicable laws is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and does not preclude the possibility of criminal charges.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

The course will follow the University's honesty policy found on-line at:  
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/>.