

**PGY2442C Figure/Ground**

**3 Credits- Spring 2019**

**Meeting Hours: T/R periods 2-4 (8:30am - 11:30am)**

**Location: FAD 329**

**Instructor: Kashif Dennis**

**Office Hours: R 12:00pm to 1:00pm FAD 329**

**Email: kashifsdennis@ufl.edu**

**FIGURE/GROUND OBJECTIVE:**

This course provides a critical understanding of the formal and conceptual aspects of the photographic image. Utilizing traditional, non traditional and experimental photographic processes, this course will provide students with an introductory understanding of contemporary art and serves to stimulate critical thinking when engaging with image making. Students are expected to engage in a wide range of themes relevant to the current social, political and art historical moment, and students will also look at various artists, curators and critics.

**FIGURE/GROUND METHODS:**

The goal of this course is for students to think critically about artistic production and to develop skills to speak about their own work and the work of other practicing artists. Students will have readings and group discussions on the reading material. Students will also be expected to do independent research on artists, artistic movements and current social events. Students will also be assigned three core projects over the course of the semester, when they are expected to explore and discover new ways of working that is critically informed from research/readings. The three projects will be assessed in group critiques where students are expected to exhibit their work professionally. Individual meetings will be conducted throughout the semester, where students will propose ideas and show in progress work.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Liz Wells, Photography Reader. Routledge, 2003.

**FIGURE/GROUND PROJECTS:**

**Project 1:**

Create a series of 5 portraits that represent, critique or subvert an identity. Use performance, costuming, makeup as well as a diligent investigation of the role that portraiture has played historically and contemporarily in identity politics.

### **Project 2:**

Create an artwork that links contemporary and non traditional image producing devices with a current social movement. Work can be installation, projection or digital, and students are asked to connect formal decisions to what is represented in the image and a current social issue.

### **Project 3:**

Produce a cohesive portfolio on a topic or theme of your choice. Research for this portfolio must be submitted as part of the project as well as a one page artist statement. Project ideas must be approved by the instructor.

## **FIGURE/GROUND COURSE UNITS:**

### **-RECOMMENDED MATERIALS**

Students may work with digital and/or analog photographic techniques. Suggested materials for this course include:

- Portable external hard drive
- Roll of inkjet paper
- DSLR camera (several available for overnight and over the weekend checkout)
- Folder/ binder specifically for this course to store all research materials, readings, artwork references. This folder will also have all notes taken in class.

### **-GOOGLE DRIVE**

Google Drive will be used for this course to access all required readings. Please print a copy of the required reading for the day that we will be going over it in class. Laptops are not encouraged. Google Drive is also the location that students will store final and in progress work, as well as written work within a personally identified folder. Students can also share references that are relevant to work shown in critique.

### **-UFL EMAIL**

Student's UF email will be used for communicating updates or revisions to the calendar as well as announcements and questions about assignments. Students are responsible for checking their email regularly to keep abreast of possible announcements.

## -GROUP CHAT

Students will create a group chat where they are encouraged to get to know each other, but also share important information about the class, discuss concerns and generally exchange information quickly and informally. All students must be a member of this chat, and one student will have the instructors number and serve as a direct contact between the students and the instructor. This is in the case of emergencies or urgent questions or concerns.

## **FIGURE/GROUND STUDIO EVALUATION AND GRADING:**

### -20% Participation

- Students are expected to attend all classes. An 'A' grade is awarded to students who among producing excellent work, has attended all classes and has participated enthusiastically in class. Students are required to participate and work for the duration of the class period. Participation includes having completed work during all scheduled classes and active participation through shared ideas and commentary. Excellent attendance and punctuality are expected for this class and will impact your grade. Roll will be taken at every class and students will be considered late if they arrive after roll has been taken. Three tardies will equal one unexcused absence. Three unexcused absences are accepted, however four unexcused absences or more will result in 10 points off the participation grade for each subsequent absence. Excused absences require appropriate documentation and it is expected that the student communicate with the instructor if they are going to be absent.

### -30% Reading assignments and written work

- On seminar days, students are expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned material. They are also required to have three questions or observations from the reading typed and turned in at the beginning of the class with their name on it. Failure to bring in written work on the day it is assigned will result in a lower assignment grade.

### -50% Critiques/projects

- There will be three projects for this course, each resulting with a critique where students are expected to exhibit their work professionally and purposefully. Students are also expected to provide constructive and critical feedback to their peers. Work is to be hung or installed by 8:45am and there will be penalties for work that is not ready.

Specific criteria for grading will be listed on each assignment sheet but will equally consider: adherence to the assignment parameters, research/studio practice, concept development, formal resolution and presentation and display.

UF Grading policy can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

\*A grade of a C- or below does not count toward major requirements.\*

**FIGURE/GROUND CLASS DEMEANOR POLICY:**

Students are expected to maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distracting behaviour. Cell phones must be on silent per UF's emergency notification system, however, cell phones are not to be used in class. Laptops are also not to be open on reading seminar days.

Students are also expected to maintain a respectful social environment in the classroom. When entering the classroom, students are expected to greet each other with 'good morning' or any other such greeting as a show of respect when entering a room. Students are also required to use the preferred pronouns of other students and should always ask when addressing a peer. The same applies for preferred names. In this class, students are expected to maintain respectful communication with each other and the instructor. This course encourages 'brave spaces' where we openly discuss charged topics while minimizing conflict through respect.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Pledge <https://archive.catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617//advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx> specifies a number of behaviours that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

**LATE WORK:**

All projects, reading responses etc. must be completed on time for full credit. Specific due dates are stated on each project sheet and are announced in class. Reading responses may not be made up, and will result in a penalty. Critiques may be rescheduled for a drop in letter grade for the project.

**CLASS COMMUNICATIONS:**

Students must check their school email accounts and group chat regularly. Students are responsible for any information, deadlines, and updates that are emailed to the webmail or sent through the group chat.

**SA+AH HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

Please familiarize yourself with the school of Art and Art History's health and safety policies by reviewing the handbook here:

<https://arts.ufl.edu/site/assets/files/37319/saahhealthandsafetyhandbook.pdf>

### **CAMPUS RESOURCES:**

-Health and Wellness:

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392 1575 so that a team member can provide assistance.

-Counselling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/worried-about-a-student/>, 352 392 1575, and the University Police Department: 392 1111 or 911 for emergencies. <https://police.ufl.edu/>

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392 1161

### **ACADEMIC RESOURCES:**

E-learning technical support, 352 392 4357 (select option 2) or email to [Learningsupport@ufl.edu](mailto:Learningsupport@ufl.edu) <https://elearning.ufl.edu/supported-services/>

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392 1601. Career assistance and counselling. <https://career.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask> Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries and finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392 2010 or 392 6420. General study skills and Tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846 1138. Help brainstorming, formatting and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>