

USC Gayle Garner Roski School of Art and Design  
**ART 140: Sculpture I**  
**Spring 2018**  
**MW 11:00 AM – 1:50 PM**

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Office Hours: By Appointment Only  
Office location: Watt Hall 104

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Beginning sculpture courses often focus on sculpture materials, shape, placement and scale. Students are encouraged to focus on form, and break the urge to tell a story. This class will begin with such formal lessons, but we will also consider basic sculptural forms as the foundation for every good story. Moving through an array of artists such as Eva Hesse, Louise Bourgeois, Adrian Piper and Robert Gober, we will take a closer look at numerous basic formal decisions and the larger content, or stories, to which they lead.

Although the theme of this course lends itself to lectures and class discussions, our main focus will be the production of sculpture. The class is composed of a project sketchbook and four sculpture assignments, which are designed to introduce students to contemporary sculpture ideas of form and content. This course will also present students with a variety of sculpting methods such as carpentry and mold making.

### **ART SUPPLIES**

You should bring a lock and claim a locker in the hallway, as soon as possible. We'll also assign you an in-class cupboard to store your work and supplies.

Students will need to purchase the following art supplies:

- Standard 100-page spiral sketchbook (blank white sheets of drawing paper—around 8.5x11” to 8x12” in size)
- If you do not already have a variety of markers, charcoal, pastels and watercolors you'll need to buy them for use with your sketchbook.
- Elmer's glue
- 36” metal ruler (preferably with raised edge and foam back)
- retractable utility knife with extra blades
- Blue Painters tape, 1” thick

All supplies must be purchased and brought to class by our third class meeting. You need to have these supplies with you every time you attend class.

### **GRADING**

Each project grade is based on the following:

Project Completion – Students must be able to set their own criteria and envision a project that is realistic within each project's allotted time frame and material restrictions.

Participation In Critiques and Class Discussions – Like every other university course, you are expected to approach your work, and that of your peers, in an intelligent and critical way. You should be prepared to discuss the decisions you made in regards to your work.

Willingness To Take Risks and Challenge Yourself – Each student should be committed to learning new techniques and ideas, and apply them in creative and experimental ways.

#### Semester Grading Breakdown

20% Critiques/Participation  
15% Sketch/Proposal Book  
15% Project One  
15% Project Two  
15% Project Three  
20% Final Project

#### Attendance Policy

Students must attend all classes and work on assigned projects during class hours. Excessive (more than three) unexcused absences will result in a final grade lowered by one level – example, “B” to “C”. It is required that students be present at every critique. Work turned in after its critique date will be lowered one grade level.

*A* If you are an *A* student, you are working above and beyond the requirements of the assignment and producing work that is rich, fully realized and raises many questions. You are clear and attentive to your own developing artistic practice and are challenging your skills and your thinking. You are an important and thoughtful voice in discussions and generous with your peers. You are in class on time with no unexcused absences. If you have to be absent or late to a class you have notified me well in advance.

*B* If you are a *B* student you are working hard and producing work that is rich and raises questions although it may not yet be fully realized in it's intensions. You are challenging your thinking and your skills and are a thoughtful presence in critiques. You arrive on time to class and have no more than 2 unexcused absences.

*C* If you are a *C* student you are doing what is required with a good attitude. You don't have more than 2 unexcused absences and you aren't late all of the time.

*D* If you are a *D* student you are not doing what is required or not doing it satisfactorily which could include turning things in late not being prepared for critiques, studio visits or workshops. Your attitude is indifferent and you have more than 2 unexcused absences.

*F* If you are an *F* student you are not doing what is required of the class and are not adhering the department's policies. You have multiple absences or late attendance. You are indifferent and non-participatory.

#### Sculpture Room Access

**Students are also expected to work on projects outside of class for a minimum of six hours per week.**

The sculpture room is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You may work in the room during other classes, with permission from that class' instructor, which is typically granted. Additionally, the classroom is available after hours (10 pm to 8 am) and weekends. There are also several class periods when the sculpture room is not being used by a class, check class schedule posted on the sculpture room hallway entrance.

Access to Watt Hall can be gained by using your student ID and the card reader, at the front and back of the building. If you have any problems getting into the building, you should contact public safety at 213-740-6000. The key to the lab will be available in hallway locker #54, the current locker combination is 3-5-27, but it might change mid semester – I'll let you know if this happens. I'll point out the locker when I give you all a tour of the sculpture area.

## CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

### Proposal/Sketch Book

Over the course of the semester each student must keep a proposal/sketch book. The book will be the place where students brainstorm and work out sculpture forms and concepts, but it will also be a place where students make specific sculpture proposals and 2D works. Every week each student must create three distinct "2D works", separate from the sketches that are made to figure out a sculpture project.

**Students are required to use at least three different mediums to make each 2D work / sketch. You can use: water color, pencil, charcoal, marker, pastels, gouache, etc. Each 2D work / sketch must take up a full page of your sketchbook – do not draw two or three separate proposals on one page.**

The book can also include magazine clippings, photos, writing, etc. Proposal/sketch books will be collected and graded periodically. At the end of the semester the book must contain at least 48 completed, distinct 2D works. In class, I'll go into more detail on what I expect from the proposal/sketch book. **The books will be collected for grading on the same days your sculptures are due for critique.**

Please purchase a Standard 100-page spiral sketchbook (blank white sheets of drawing paper—around 8.5x11" to 8x12" in size) **to be used solely as a proposal book for the class, and this class only.**

### Sculpture Projects

In order to fully understand each project assignment, it is imperative that students attend and participate in the class lectures/class discussions.

### **Project One: Cardboard and Basic Forms**

**Due January 29<sup>th</sup>**

Students will work with cardboard, a utility knife, metal ruler, blue painters tape, Elmer's glue, and one color: house paint, water colors, pastels, markers, colored pencils gouache etc.— any form of color application is allowed, with one exception: NO SPRAY PAINT.

Each student will be assigned three distinct prepositions and make a sculpture that plays with and clarifies these three words. A preposition is any word that fits into the sentence, "The airplane flew \_\_\_\_ the clouds." For example, if one were to given the words "underneath", "between" and "without", the cardboard sculpture should be constructed to specify these three prepositions. If a stranger were asked to describe your sculpture they would name your three prepositions in their first few sentences.

Your color must be used to emphasize one of the prepositions. For example, if blue watercolor is chosen to work with the word "between" the addition of the paint should emphasize the sculptures aspect of "betweenness". In other words, the color should function, not decorate.

Sculptures must be a minimum of four feet, in one direction. I encourage you to find a scale that seems appropriate for your sculpture. Four feet is the minimum, but it can be as large as you like ... make your sculpture somewhere between four and 100 feet.

When making your sculpture, consider these five points:

- Intention of cuts, adhesions, intersections and joints (attention to detail)
- Voluminousness
- Creative communication of prepositions
- Use of color to emphasize a preposition

- Willingness and ability to push oneself (energy spent on the sculpture)

FINAL SCULPTURES SHOULD BE PLACED ON FLOOR, but if you would like your sculpture on a table or pedestal this is allowed, if you construct the table/pedestal from cardboard. Please take into consideration how your final sculpture will be presented as you construct it. The sculpture's installation is key to how people will see and understand the piece.

Beyond the prepositions, and the material of cardboard, students are asked to work with shape, space, gravity, scale, etc. The challenge of this assignment is to create a dynamic whole that does not turn the materials used into anything beyond their actuality. Within the limits of the assignment, all materials can be arranged in an infinite array of pleasing and/or horrifying possibilities, but no material, or the sculpture as a whole, can be ordered to represent any thing or symbol (i.e. flower, face, animal, peace sign, question mark, etc.)

An important aspect of contemporary sculpture is the idea that the materials used, and their arrangement, are the heart of a sculpture's ability to communicate. In this project we will fester on this idea, and see what form alone can convey.

### **Project Two: Wood and the Body** **Due February 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>**

Students will be supplied with wood (feel free to buy more wood or use scrap wood) and given an introduction to the wood shop. Students will also be supplied with wood glue, nails and screws. Anything can be done to the wood, but in the making of this project students must demonstrate the use and understanding of the following five tools:

- a.) Stationary disk sander
- b.) Chop saw
- c.) Drill press
- d.) Band saw
- e.) Hand drill

Along with wood, you will be asked to choose three "raw" materials to use as a structural part of your sculpture. Here are some examples of my definition of raw material: snow, honey, dirt, cement, wax, paper, sand, water, hair, bananas, steel, rocks, glass, tar, gum, chocolate, etc. These are just examples, please choose and find your own original materials. Whatever material you choose, it must work as a verb, in relation to the sculpture. For example, the material could run, hold, creep, wrap, push, burn, eat, crush, drip, warp, tear, etc. Choose materials and explore what they can do.

Students are asked to make a sculpture that has some sort of spatial relation to the human body. However the project is conceived and executed it must consider its form in relation to the movement, scale, and tendencies of the human body. Just as contemporary sculpture is often considered through the materials used, it's also pondered in relation to a viewer's body.

**The final piece must be at least your height in one direction.** For example, if you're five-feet-tall you need to make a sculpture that is at least five-feet in length, height or width.

NO PEDISTALS OR TABLES ARE ALLOWED. Whatever you make must touch the floor and take into consideration it's relationship to the viewers that will inevitably navigate their way to and/or around your sculpture. Consider what the viewer will need or want to do in order to view your piece: stand, kneel, crawl, bend over, get on tippy toes, stand far away, get close, look under, etc.

No material, or the sculpture as a whole, can be ordered to represent any thing or symbol (i.e. flower, face, animal, peace symbol, question mark, etc.)

Remember to consider what we spoke about in the first project as you construct this sculpture. This project is meant to consider two main points in sculpture:

- The medium is the message (lesson from project one)
- Sculpture in relation to the viewer's body

### **Project Three: Casting the Already Made** **March 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>**

Through a casting workshop students will sculpt an object out of clay and make an alginate mold, with a plaster cast. I will introduce various casting techniques using plaster, alginate, silicone, wax and latex.

**While this project requires students cast an object, you are not required to use that object in the final project.** If you decide to work with mold making for your final project, I am here to assist you with any casting technique you choose, but you will be responsible for purchasing any materials needed beyond the plaster and alginate tutorial. Reynolds Advanced Materials is the best place to purchase and learn about mold making. They are located in North Hollywood: <http://www.reynoldsam.com/la/>

**You must include at least three ready-made objects into your project.** These objects can be new, used or found. Students are welcome to use any materials they like and are encouraged to visit thrift stores, dollar stores, grocery stores, malls, trash bins, etc., in order to find supplies. You are also welcome to use as many raw materials as you like.

**This piece can be any scale you feel is appropriate, but please remember lessons learned from project one and two.**

The first two projects focused on form, and fit nicely with the sculpture slogan "The material is the message". This project will be the first to diverge from that track, and might best be understood through the phrase, "The message is the medium". Students are asked to assemble their cast and/or readymade materials into a larger sculpture, and consider their construction as integration of materials and symbols. Considering what we've discussed with the first two projects, how would one go about using a ready-made object? What "gravity" does such an object have? How does a sculpture function when it's built out of symbols or objects that have already been made? We will explore examples of this concept and enter the "storytelling" or "concept" aspect of the class.

### **Project Four: Final Project** **Due April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>**

Students are asked to make a sculpture or installation using any material they like. **The final sculpture must be your height in at least one direction.** Everything we've discussed through the first three projects should be integrated into this final project. We will discuss the final project in detail, but basically this is your chance to take what you've learned and design your own project. This final sculpture is 20% of your grade and I expect a lot of energy to go into its conception and execution.

#### **Project Four – Ten-Minute Presentation** **April 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>**

Before you begin your final project you need to propose the concept your sculpture will play out, in a five-minute presentation, presented in class. Each student will be given an additional five minutes for the class to discuss the proposal, giving each student ten-minutes total. A computer, video

projector and speakers will be supplied. However you decide to organize your presentation you need to give us an idea of what you're going to make and how you're thinking about it. Also, you must show at least one form of inspiration for your project that typically is considered outside of a fine art context. For example: music, film, your own life, news article, meme, literature, found photo, person, cult, product, natural phenomenon, etc.

## **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

### Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions>.

Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/departement-public-safety>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

### Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.