

# CREATIVE ACTION STUDIO

An applied study of design theory and the way that design projects impact community. Students will research, plan and propose projects to better communities based on discussions of the social, cultural, environmental and communal impact of design. *Additional course fee is required.*

## INSTRUCTOR

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## Office Hours

**Tu** 12:00–1:00pm

**W** 1:00–2:00pm

**Th** 12:00–1:00pm

Always available by appointment

## OVERVIEW

What role should artists and designers play in society? Do they affect change? Impact and shape communities? This course invites you to identify your opportunities and responsibilities as an artist beyond your skill as a technician or your potential for commercial success. As a class, we will draw on the resources of fellow students, faculty, and community members to address the needs of our community. Relying on texts, example projects, and reflection on our experiences, we will develop and critique methodologies for socially-driven practices. Along the way, we will collaborate on community projects, construct zines that articulate the role of the artist in community, and propose future socially-driven projects.

This semester, we are partnering with the **North Valley Friends Church** as well as working to ideate around a future project with the **Chehalem Cultural Center**. Beyond this, we will also be exploring the general landscape of Newberg, determining resources and identifying key figures and decision makers as well as funding sources for any projects we might undertake.

In short, this course is a combination of two tasks—1. Of learning about the ways that artist and designers have engaged communities and 2. To directly navigate the challenges of community-engaged practice as a class. Through this course, you will reflect on the challenges and benefits of socially engaged practice and the critical role that art & design play within community.

## OBJECTIVES

During this course, students will:

1. Investigate, critique, practice, and cultivate methodologies that allow them to execute socially engaged proposals as well as works of art & design.
2. Describe and evaluate work based on its communal context.
3. Research related works as well as practitioners and ideate around challenges related to making within the context of a community
4. Draw connections between their studio practices and other academic studies, including general humanities, social science, communication, and history.
5. Envision what communal action as artists and designers might look like in specific contexts and identify the different roles insiders and outsiders within a community might play in the creation of art and design objects, moments, and happenings.
6. Employ group skills and communication strategies while demonstrating the humility and clarity needed for interaction and collaboration on work at the community level (department outcome #2).

**COURSE GRADES****A** 93–100    **A-** 90–92

Exceptional work. All work completed. Demonstrates daring thought as well as strong technique. Student positively influenced their peers, engaged the professor through questions or appropriate challenges, and was happy to assist others in their progress.

**B+** 88–89    **B** 83–87    **B-** 80–82

Strong work. Invested time and effort into their work. Work was completed and met the demands of the assignment with clarity. Student participated in critique and received it well.

**C+** 78–79    **C** 73–77    **C-** 70–72

Standard. May be playing it safe when it comes to ideas. Most work was completed but may not always have met the full requirements. Further experimentation and engagement with professor and classmates would likely improve the outcome.

**D+** 68–69    **D** 63–67    **D-** 60–62

Needs Attention. May not have managed time well. Did not always demonstrate effort or attention. Work was often created, but did not meet all the requirements of the projects. The ideas that drove the work seemed timid. Execution of projects needs further development.

**F** 0–59

Please don't. An F generally means that assignments were not turned in, work was incomplete or plagiarized, attendance was poor, etc. If you are struggling, please see me before digging yourself in a ditch.

**A. PROJECTS**

Three major projects will be completed during the semester. Each project will be accompanied by a project sheet and rubric. Most projects will also contain smaller steps within them that lead to the end result. The internal steps are considered assignments and will be graded for completion:

- 1. Community Engagement Guidelines (10% of Grade):** For the first few weeks of class, you will consider the challenges of community engagement and create a set of guidelines for healthy ways to engage community. You will draw on these guidelines, return to them, and reflect on them throughout the semester.
- 2. Community Project (30% of Grade):** You will work in small teams to address specific challenges and develop projects related to current community needs. The community project will be done in coordination with organizations in Newberg. This year, we have two partners: North Valley Friends Church and the Chehalem Cultural Center. Potential projects include branding and planning tiny home village, illustrations and artwork for interior spaces, room design and planning, basic document layout, creation of plans for a walking path meant to showcase cultural history and connect the north and south of Newberg. To help ensure involvement, you will be asked to review your peers twice during the course of the project.
- 3. Solo Project (20% of Grade):** After considering the experience of the community project and your guidelines, you will “Go Solo”. Researching and developing a project meant to engage and serve the community. Depending on the scale of your project, you may complete this project within the course or you may develop a project plan and proposal for a project that would require a greater amount of time/resources (you would be expected to investigate and explore processes of acquiring funding to do this work as part of that proposal).

**B. TEXTBOOK AND READINGS (15% of Grade)**

Readings for this class will be from the following book:

*Education For Socially Engaged Art*, Pablo Helguera. Jorge Pinto Books Inc. Bethesda, MD (2011)

Readings will be accompanied by shortform writings (200–500 words) that respond to the core ideas and challenges in the book. Writing may highlight particular ideas, revelations or may critically question the viewpoint of the author. These writings should be submitted online and/or also brought to class for discussion. A rubric for writing will be provided.

**C. ASSIGNMENTS AND DISCUSSIONS (15% OF GRADE)**

Throughout the semester, smaller assignments will be given out. These assignments will be graded more loosely than full projects—looking more for investment, thought, creativity, and care than for a highly polished result (though a little polish would never hurt). Some exercises are noted in the schedule but other assignments will be given out that are specified to the particulars of the community and solo projects. Incomplete assignments will garner a 0. Similarly, participation and engagement in discussion will be graded pass fail, gaining 2 pts or 0. Discussions will be graded at random throughout the semester.

**D. PROFESSIONALISM AND ETIQUETTE (10% OF GRADE)**

Everyone starts the year well. Should your engagement with the class prove problematic or exceptional, this grade may fluctuate.

**Everyone in this class is expected to:**

Be in attendance and treat one another with respect by listening and contributing. Support one another and challenge one another to be their best selves. Challenge themselves to ask questions and pursue resources individually. Keep the facilities and spaces in good working order and generally clean.

**CANVAS**

We have the privilege of using Canvas, a new Learning Management System, this semester.

Visit **canvas.instructure.com** to download instructions, handouts, engage your classmates and upload assignments. Weekly due dates and announcements about the class will be posted to Canvas.

You should have received an email at your George Fox email address asking you to join Canvas. If you did not, please contact the professor and he will resend the request.

Canvas gives you a great deal of control over fine-tuning notifications that you receive from the course. Take advantage of this, but please do not turn off notifications from the instructor.

**CANVAS APP**

Canvas has a mobile app. You must first add yourself to the class online before you can login or use the app. After enrolling, search the app store for Canvas by Instructure. Once downloaded, open the app. To find your class, tap into the box that says "find your school or district". Do not search for George Fox here. Type "Free Canvas Accounts" in. It will take you to a login screen where you can use the email and password you used to login to the canvas site. Once logged in, you will have access to any courses you are enrolled in.

**TOOLS**

For every class you will need:

The Textbook

A pencil and pen.

A sketchbook

A way to store digital files (drive, usb, dropbox are acceptable).

You may also find that a reliable camera is useful along the way.

Any other tools you deem pertinent to your work in class.

**ATTENDANCE**

You may miss 3 classes in the semester without an immediate effect on your grade. Any additional unexcused absences will result in a total grade reduction of 10% per absence. Three tardies or early dismissals will be considered a full absence. It is the student's responsibility to make up any missed work from class. They should first consult with their peers on what was missed and then follow up with the professor for clarification. Should you have an emergency of some kind or health issue that warrants an excused absence, please do not hesitate to contact the professor.

**LATE WORK**

Unless otherwise noted, all course assignments are due at the start of class on the date they are assigned. If an assignment or project is not yet complete at that time, it will be considered late. Work that is turned in late but on the day it is assigned will receive a reduced grade of 10%. Work turned in after the date it is assigned will receive a reduced grade of 50%. Work that is turned in more than five days from the assigned due date will not be graded. Should an emergency occur that makes it impossible to complete an assignment on time, please contact your professor ahead of time.

**REVISION**

If you submitted an individual project on time, you are able to resubmit any major project work for regrading at any point before finals week. Once finals week begins, regrading is not allowed. Because of the complexity and collaboration involved in your community project, you will not be able to resubmit that particular one. Your new grade will be averaged with your old one, though resubmissions can only move your grade to a 90% at the highest. New grades on projects will never lower your score.

**INCLUSIVITY**

This class and professor is supportive of any and all students. If you are struggling for some reason within class or in general, do not hesitate to be in touch.

If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please contact the Disability Services Office as early as possible so that your learning needs can be appropriately met. For more information, go to [ds.georgefox.edu](http://ds.georgefox.edu) or contact Rick Muthiah, Director of Learning Support Services (503-554-2314 or [rmuthiah@georgefox.edu](mailto:rmuthiah@georgefox.edu)).

# SCHEDULE

The schedule in this syllabus is an estimate and is subject to change during the semester. Due to the flexible and community-based nature of this particular course, expect some changes.

MONDAY	FRIDAY
<b>AUG 27 // WHAT IS PUBLIC SPACE?</b>	<b>AUG 31 // WHAT IS THE POINT OF ART &amp; DESIGN?</b>
<b>SEP 3 // ARCHITECTURE OF PARTICIPATION AND SITE SPECIFICITY</b> Read Ch. 2 / Socially Engaged Art Newberg Visit	<b>SEP 7 // FIRST VISIT</b> NVF Meeting Due: Touch Someone's Heart Exercise
<b>SEP 10 // GROUPING AND PRIORITIZING</b> Read Ch. 3 / Socially Engaged Art	<b>SEP 14 // MANIFESTOS</b> Due: Manifesto
<b>SEP 17 // IDENTIFY AND RECRUIT PARTNERS</b> Read Ch. 4 / Socially Engaged Art	<b>SEP 21 // PLANNING ENGAGEMENT</b> Due: Touch a Community Publication
<b>SEP 24 // MAPPING VALUES, STRENGTHS, ASSETS</b> Read Ch. 5 / Socially Engaged Art	<b>SEP 28 // MEETING</b> Due: Community Engagement Guidelines
<b>OCT 1 // VISION, IDENTITY, CORE STRATEGY</b> Read Ch. 6 / Socially Engaged Art	<b>OCT 5 // PRACTICALITIES</b> NVF Meeting Due: Concepts for Community Engagement
<b>OCT 8 // FINALIZE PLAN</b> Due: Revised Community Project Plans	<b>OCT 12 // NO CLASS</b> Mid-Semester Holiday
<b>OCT 15 // FUNDING, SUPPORT, COVERAGE</b> Read Ch. 7 / Socially Engaged Art	<b>OCT 19 // PRODUCTION</b> Prof. in Birmingham
<b>OCT 22 // SCALING AND PRODUCTION</b> Read Ch. 8 / Socially Engaged Art	<b>OCT 26 // EXECUTION</b> NVF Meeting
<b>OCT 29 // ENGAGEMENT AND DOCUMENTATION</b>	<b>NOV 2 // ENGAGEMENT AND DOCUMENTATION</b>

# SCHEDULE CONTINUED

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## MONDAY

**NOV 5 // CLEANUP, REFLECTION**

Read Ch. 9 / Socially Engaged Art

**NOV 12 // PROPOSAL PROJECT**

Reflection Due

**NOV 19 // RESEARCH AND PLANNING**

Going Solo Project Check-In

**NOV 26 // DEVELOPING PLANS****DEC 3 // REVISION AND DEVELOPMENT****FINALS**

Solo Project/ Proposal

Pecha Kucha Presentations

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## FRIDAY

**NOV 9 // PRESENTATION**

Present Collaborative Projects

**NOV 16 // ASSESSING YOUR SITUATION AND GOALS****NOV 23 // THANKSGIVING**

No Class

**NOV 30 // EARLY TESTS**

Going Solo Project Critique

**DEC 7 // DOCUMENTS DUE**

Proposal Documentation Due

# RESOURCES

## BOOKS

*Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* by Claire Bishop

*Citizen Designer* Edited by Steven Heller

*Design Activist's Handbook* by Noah Scalin

## PEOPLE

Candy Chang

Karen Gergely

The Machine Project

Guerrilla Girls

Suzanne Lacy

Pablo Helguera

Rirkrit Tiravanija

Tania Bruguera

Michael Rakowitz

Rick Lowe

Leonard Knight

Tyree Guyton

Assemble (artist group)