**Special Topics – Interdisciplinary Research Studio**  
Fall 2016 – Course number: ASTU 5000, Section 754-33878

Instructor: Ruth West  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1P  
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**Description**  
**Special Topics – Interdisciplinary Research Studio** This course enables students to explore individualized topics for interdisciplinary research within a cross-disciplinary and collaborative context. It provides students with a foundation in innovative practices that bring together the arts and sciences irrespective of medium or modality. This exploration will be conducted in relation to students’ current research focus or creative interests. Students will engage in independent and directed research and/or creative work centered on a specific topic, and identify how this relates to their evolving academic and professional career and existing body of work. Students conceive project concepts independently or collaboratively, execute, complete and document the project by semester’s end. Prerequisite(s): None. This course may be repeated for credit. This course does not meet at a regularly scheduled time. Individual meetings are scheduled for students to facilitate their learning and research projects.

**Note:** The instructor retains the right to change this syllabus with or without notice during the duration of the course. Additionally, the syllabus will be updated to reflect student projects and as guest presenters and/or professional opportunities arise.

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<tr>
<th>Week 1: Introduction</th>
<th>Define research/project scope and objectives, and course overview.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week of: 8/29/16</td>
<td>Course Assignments include:</td>
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<td>1. <strong>Meet with Prof. West</strong> to define your research or creative project.</td>
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<td>2. <strong>Requirements</strong>: Conceptualize and complete a quality project by the end of the semester. This can involve research to create new knowledge, write a paper for publication or a new creative project.</td>
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<td>3. <strong>Meetings</strong>: Scheduled with Prof. West throughout the semester.</td>
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**MATERIALS and READINGS**  
Materials and readings will be tailored to each student’s research or creative project and are subject to change as needed to accomplish the student’s research / project objectives.

**ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:** There are 4 due dates throughout the semester. There is no final exam. Final projects are due the last day of class. Due dates are listed below:

1 – **Due Week 3:** No later than 5PM Friday, 9/16/16  
**Approved project concept/proposal**
Meet with Prof. West to review/get approval for your project concept/proposal no later than end of week 3. (You may complete this earlier, and it is suggested that you do so to give you as much time as possible to accomplish your research/project during the semester).

**2 - Due Week 4: No later than 5PM Friday 9/23/16**

**Detailed project description**

Project description (concept statement, research abstract, or research plan/method etc.) is due at end of Week 4.

**3 - Due Week 9: No later than 5 PM Friday 10/28/16**

**Progress update**

Detailed progress update is due by end of week 8.

**4 – DUE: 12/8/16 COMPLETED PROJECT & DOCUMENTATION**

Completed project/research is due 5PM on 12/8/16 (Last class day)

### Week 2

**Week of 9/5/16**

- CAMPUS CLOSED 9/5/16 – LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
- Meet with Prof. West to discuss your individual research or creative project.
- Begin conceptualizing and researching your project idea in depth.
- Begin to conduct a literature review as needed for your topic. Document sources in Zotero folder shared with Prof. West.

### Week 3

**Week of 9/12/16**

- Prepare a project concept/proposal appropriate to your objectives, it may be in written form, pseudocode, or as visual, auditory, or interactive media or code.
- Continue literature review as appropriate for your topic/project.
- Continue work in progress on your research/project.
- DUE: Meet with Prof. West to review your project concept/proposal no later than 5PM on Friday 9/16/16.

### Week 4

**Week of 9/19/16**

**Detailed Project Description: Due no later than 5PM Friday 9/23/16**

- Prepare a detailed project description including the following:
  - Project or Research Concept
  - Research questions/aims
  - How will you go about creating or researching your idea/project? Depending on your project this will include information about your process and medium, or it will include a research plan, experimental method, and literature review.
  - What outcomes will you produce by the last Friday of the semester? Depending on your project this might include outcomes such as a finished artwork, or a research plan, a completed draft of an article for publication etc.
- Continue literature review as appropriate for your topic/project.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Week of: 9/26/16</th>
<th>Research in progress</th>
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<td>• Continue work in progress on your research/project.</td>
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<td>Weeks 6 &amp; 7</td>
<td>Weeks of: 10/3/16 and 10/10/16</td>
<td>Research in progress</td>
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<td>• Work on your project including creation, research and documentation.</td>
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<td>• Obtain any necessary materials for your project.</td>
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<td>• Continue literature review as appropriate for your topic/project.</td>
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<td>• Discuss your research with Prof. West at weekly meeting.</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Weeks of: 10/17/16</td>
<td>Research in progress</td>
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<td>• Work on your project including creation, research and documentation.</td>
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<td>Weeks 9, 10</td>
<td>Weeks of: 10/24/16 and 10/31/16</td>
<td>Detailed Progress Update: Due no later than 5PM Friday 10/28/16</td>
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<td>• Prepare a detailed update about your progress on your project, documenting your creative/research/learning process.</td>
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<td>o Topics to include are:</td>
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<td>▪ <em>What have you accomplished and learned so far?</em> Clearly articulate where in the project you are as far as overall process and timeline.</td>
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<td>▪ <em>Does the project need to be changed?</em> Most likely you’ll have new ideas that came up as you were working on the project and you will want to change it, and maybe even change your project title. Write about these. Do you need to adjust the research plan, methods or questions/aims?</td>
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<td>▪ <em>Include information on what you have been researching/working on</em> and the different paths that you have been taking in terms of developing the concept, and the methods for realizing your project. Make sure all of your research sources/literature review is in the shared folder on Zotero.</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Week of: 11/7/16</td>
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Weeks 12

Week of: 11/14/16
- Work on your project including creation, research and documentation.
- The project should be well advanced by now and you should be able to demonstrate significant progress towards its completion by the end of week 13.
- Continue literature review as appropriate for your topic/project.
- Discuss your research with Prof. West at weekly meetings.

Week 14, 15

Weeks of: 11/21/16 and 11/28/16
- CAMPUS CLOSED: 11/24/16 – 11/27/16 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
- Work on your project including creation, research and documentation.
- Continue literature review as appropriate for your topic/project.
- Discuss your research with Prof. West at weekly meetings.

Week 16

Week of: 12/5/16
Completed project and documentation due 5PM Friday 12/8/16
Prepare a final version of your completed research / creative project.
- If it is a creative project, submit the final project including project documentation as appropriate for the project.
- If it is a research project, submit a report on the status of the research, summarize the research questions/aims, methods, results, and discuss outcomes to date, including their significance. Include next steps, for research that is not completed and ready for publication.
- If it is an article/text for publication, submit the final version of the text to Prof. West as an editable MS Word document.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This is an interdisciplinary research course that includes individual meetings and may include group meetings, presentations, and independent research/working time based upon the needs of individual student research or creative projects. This is an interdisciplinary course. It requires students to synthesize existing concepts, technical skills, and knowledge acquired through previous coursework and professional experiences with new concepts, knowledge and skills, and to demonstrate that through creating, critically writing about, and documenting new research and/or creative work(s).

REQUIRED TEXTS AND STUDY MATERIALS

There are no required texts or study materials. The course materials and readings are tailored to each individual student according to their research/creative project and learning objectives.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Completion of all assigned work. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Assignments and meetings must be completed on time as stipulated in the attendance policy.
- Participation in independent project/research activities, individual and group meetings and discussions.

STUDENT EVALUATION (GRADING)

1. [50%] Project: completed research/creative project
   - Final project that achieves objectives set forth in project concept/description.
2. [25%] Progress Update
   - Detailed project progress update.

3. [25%] Final Project Documentation/ Presentation
   - In addition to the finished project, this includes the documentation of rationale, research method, literature review, sources, and other process and outcomes documentation as appropriate per the project concept and scope.

**Evaluation:** you will be evaluated on the originality/quality of your project and research, the quality of content/writing, the completeness of the project and the thoroughness of the documentation, including the documentation multimedia (e.g. video, audio, photos) of your process and final outcome of the project.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**
- The professor expects that students make every effort to attend each meeting as scheduled.
- You are allowed two absences total during the duration of the course. Each subsequent absence will lower your grade by one third of a letter grade. A student with a total of five absences will receive an automatic F in the course.
- **If you are late to course meetings it will impact your grade.** Three times tardy will equal one absence. However, if you are more than 15 minutes late to course meetings, you will be counted absent. Also, if you come to class without the proper materials needed to work on a given project, you may be counted absent on that day at the discretion of your instructor.
- Absences on the day of a presentation or meetings are discouraged. If a final project or assignment is turned in late, your instructor will lower your grade by one letter grade for each period that it is not turned in.

**INCOMPLETE POLICY**
Incompletes will only be given in extreme circumstance (e.g. medical necessity etc.).

**AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT**
“The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course.

If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes for students registered with the ODA as of the beginning of the current semester. If you register with the ODA after the first week of classes, your accommodation requests will be considered after this deadline.

Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at www.unt.edu/oda, and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You also may call the ODA at 940.565.4323.
COURSE RISK FACTOR
According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category two course. Students enrolled in this course will be exposed to some significant hazards but are not likely to suffer serious bodily injury. In this class those risks are related to working with computers in a studio/computer lab environment. Students are requested to be informed and aware of the safe use of computers, individually and in relation to those working with and around them at all times. Students will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves or others.

FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS - GRADUATES
A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Students cannot exceed maximum timeframes established based on the published length of the graduate program. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. Please visit http://financialaid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course being doing so.

BUILDING EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: In case of emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather related threat, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your instructors and act accordingly.

CENTER FOR STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITES: The following statement reminds students of their rights and responsibilities within the academic community – “Each University of North Texas student is entitled to certain rights associated with higher education institutions. See www.unt.edu/csrr for further information.”