



## Description

Structured as a collaborative, creative research group, Art & Ecology explores artistic responses to environmental sustainability and related social issues. In the first half of the semester, the course examines select themes in environmental discourse, paying particular attention to how artists have engaged them. In the second half of the semester, students develop collaborative or individual projects that may take the form of social/relational art practice, video, installation, performance, writing, sound, 2- or 3D forms, and/or electronic media. In-class activities are supplemented with field trips, screenings, and guest presentations, and special effort is made to connect students to university and community resources. Emphasis is placed on critical approaches rooted in the humanities, but students are welcome from all disciplines. Students from disciplines outside the arts are encouraged to contact the instructor prior to the first day of class.

## Goals and Objectives

1. Understand key themes in contemporary environmental art practice through research, viewing, and discussion
2. Develop a formal and critical vocabulary through discussion and critique of artworks dealing with environmental themes.
3. Enhance research and writing skills for critical and creative inquiry in the arts.
4. Understand different conceptual, aesthetic, and ethical issues raised by individual creative inquiry and community-based practice by creating both a (post)-studio project and a collaboration with the Miller-Orchard Community Garden.
5. Engage in an interdisciplinary learning environment through presentation, discussion, and collaboration.
6. Prepare and present work in a group exhibition with other course participants.

## Course and Faculty Information

01J:108:001

Studio Arts 1703

Wednesday, 1:30-5:30 PM

Instructor: Sarah Kanouse

Studio Arts 1642

Wednesdays, 9:30-12:30 AM and by appointment  
319-384-0992 | sarah-kanouse@uiowa.edu

DEO: John Scott  
School of Art & Art History  
Seashore Hall, 6th Floor

The administrative home of this course is the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

## Expectations

This upper-division course is structured to be responsive to students' backgrounds, interests, and existing creative practices while encouraging them to explore or further develop original work exploring ecological forms and themes. In contrast to the "expert" model typically found in higher education - in which a professor determines everything that will be presented and discussed in class - this course is structured as a collaborative, creative laboratory. Beyond several weeks of conceptual introduction, the detailed resource list appended to this syllabus, and some pre-planning involving the collaborative project with the Miller-Orchard Community Garden, the specific content of the course will be student driven, with the instructor acting as a resource person, respondent, and creative facilitator for student work. This structure demands that everyone - students and instructor alike - be exceptionally cooperative, respectful, good-humored, and well-prepared while also willing to take intellectual and creative risks. Students are expected to make a serious, sustained commitment to individual and group research, which includes making regular journal entries, contributing to discussion, and developing your project over the course of the entire semester. As per CLAS guidelines, students should expect to spend at least eight hours per week on this course outside class meeting times.

As course instructor, I expect to be consistently challenged to expand my knowledge and deepen my understanding of art and ecology over the course of the semester. I pledge to personalize each student's experience of the course by forwarding information, articles, and announcements, returning email within 24 hours (excepting weekends), and meeting with students outside of class and office hours when necessary for discussion and technical assistance.

## Service Learning

Because much work on art and ecology has been done by artists working in community settings, this course is a natural fit for a service learning project. Service learning is a method of education that emphasizes the integration of community service with learning and reflection. The project for this semester is being undertaken in collaboration with the Miller-Orchard Community Garden. We began this collaboration in Spring 2011, and we are responsible for some follow-up involving the projects undertaken by last semester's class. However, students in this course will propose and execute new collaborative projects for the garden, with the cooperation and consent of our contacts there.

Our contact person is Katherine Parker Bryden, who received her MFA from Intermedia in 2006. We will meet her in the garden on August 27, the first Saturday after the start of the semester. She will give us a tour of the garden, introduce us to some of the gardeners, and discuss the garden's history,

challenges, and future. During the first half of the semester, we may meet as a class in the garden to work on our project as needed, and students should plan to spend some time in the garden as they develop their proposals. All students are also asked to participate in one of two additional Saturday workdays in order to help the garden and thank the gardeners for the opportunity they are extending to us.

The primary form of documentation and evaluation for individuals' contributions to this project will take the form of a project journal. There are several journal prompts outlined in the syllabus that should be responded to the weeks they are assigned. Beyond these, use the journals to respond to any 'critical incidents' in the project - times when a decision was made, a conflict was discovered or addressed, or when you had a realization. Throughout the semester, I may make additional formal prompts at obvious critical incidents, but you may find turning points in your own process of which I am unaware. Also use this space to record notes about class and small group discussions and to do sketchbook activities - jotting down ideas, making thumbnails, writing to do's, noting artists or images that particularly strike you. I will collect and respond to these journals formally near midterm, but we will also periodically share from them during the semester. The journal will be due as part of the final portfolio described below.

### **Texts**

There is no required text for this course; all instructor-assigned texts will be distributed as pdfs and web links via the Intermedia server: users2>skanouse>public>artecology\_fa11. Students are also responsible for assigning one reading of 10-15 pages to support their research presentations. These readings must be distributed to the class at least two weeks prior to the scheduled presentation.

In addition, the University of Iowa offers all students access to online instruction on a wide range of software platforms through Lynda.com. If you would like to learn more technology or software skills in order to complete your project, you are encouraged to use this service. To access these exercises, go to [lynda.uiowa.edu](http://lynda.uiowa.edu) and login with your HawkID and password.

### **Equipment**

Intermedia makes every effort to provide equipment for its students. There is a lab fee of \$61 to cover the cost of equipment and software maintenance. Each student will receive 100GB of free storage on the Intermedia XSAN, an account for the computer lab, and access to our equipment pool. Students are expected to acquire any additional supplies their work requires.

To help insure equipment is available and in working order for everyone, please test equipment condition upon check-out and report problems, damage or loss as soon as possible. All equipment must be returned on time. Equipment loans are subject to late fees of one dollar per hour, and up to five dollars daily. Habitual late returns will result in loss of checkout privileges. Students will be charged the cost of repair or replacement of equipment if damaged or lost.

### **Facilities**

Enrollment in this course provides you access to Intermedia's computer lab and sound editing suite.

Access to the sound suite requires you to get training; please contact Intermedia Lab Specialist Steve Strait ([steven-strait@uiowa.edu](mailto:steven-strait@uiowa.edu)) to arrange for training.

Intermedia's facilities are open 24 hours per day with exceptions for cleaning on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10-10:30 PM. A keybox is available outside each room for access after hours; the combinations will be announced the first week of class and should not be shared with anyone. Please note that the Studio Arts Building is locked after 10 PM; those who have not been granted 24 hour access must enter the building prior to 10 PM and remain inside until they plan to leave for the night. There are limited lab monitor hours weekday evenings and weekend afternoons.

Experimentation with different materials is encouraged, but students must exercise judgement. Due to the communal space of the Studio Arts Building, the use of solvents, spray paint or any fume producing chemical is prohibited outside of designated areas. Guns, blood, bodily fluids, live animals, smoke, fire, alcohol, and broken television tubes (which contain lead) are absolutely prohibited. Be aware of the toxicity of your materials and consult with the instructor if you are uncertain about the safety of a material.

## Coursework

Graded coursework falls into four areas with equal weighting. In keeping with the oral tradition of studio arts practice, there are relatively few opportunities to get a letter grade on individual projects but ample opportunity for verbal feedback, and evaluations are more qualitative than quantitative. However, you must document your work and submit it in your final digital portfolio by **Monday, December 12, 5:00 PM** in order for a grade to be assigned in the course. Failure to submit the portfolio will automatically result in a failing grade, since the only components of the course that can be graded prior to the are the service-learning journal and research presentation.

Student Research Presentations: 25%

Each student will prepare an 30-45 minute presentation, followed by discussion, on their selected area of research for the semester out of which they expect to produce their final creative project. Some themes and starting points are included on the attached bibliography, but this is not exhaustive. Presentations should include a slideshow with relevant visuals and/or media, must be accompanied by a contextualizing reading of 10-15 pages, and a narrative summary of the theme. Readings are due to other students (electronically) two weeks before your scheduled presentation.

Service Learning Project: 25%

All students are expected to contribute conceptually and materially to the Miller-Orchard Community Garden project and to document their engagement in the project journal. Journal should go beyond the assigned prompts and include documentation of process and product, as described in the previous section. Journals will be collected for a grade following completion of the garden project.

Participation, Reading Responses, and Reflection Paper: 25%

Given the structure of the class, active participation in discussion, critique, and group projects is vital. Studio arts practice has a tradition of oral critique, and students must also verbally share their thoughts generously, respectfully, and frequently throughout the semester in order to earn a top grade in the course. Recognizing that people have varying levels of comfort with verbal participation, I am also asking all students to complete 500-word reading responses for the readings I assign and a 500-750 word reflection paper to turn in with your portfolio that responds to key course themes and discusses how your thinking about them has been shaped by your experience in the course.

Final Creative Project: 25%

Students will develop final creative projects employing ecological forms and themes using the media of their choosing. It is expected that the project will directly relate to the research topic for the semester. Projects may be collaborative or individual but must be presented to the broader university and city community in a public exhibition to be coordinated by the instructor and students that will coincide with Intermedia Open House on December 2 and our final critiques. You will meet with me individually to discuss your final project ideas on October 26.

## Grading

Grading will be on a A to F scale, with plus and minus grades awarded. While I do not notify students of grades on individual course components, students are also welcome to contact me at any time to learn how they are doing in the course. Successful students demonstrate their engagement in the material through verbal discussion; ask challenging questions of themselves and others; take creative risks; follow through on (but not necessarily adopt) suggestions posed by others in class; make connections between ideas; develop the skills and acquire the materials needed to realize their ideas in form; and clearly spend the time needed to work through the interlocking conceptual, aesthetic and material considerations of their work. I interpret letter grades to mean the following:

A+ / A / A-	Superior accomplishment
B+ / B / B-	Above average achievement
C+ / C / C-	Average work
D+ / D / D-	Below average achievement
F	Failure to meet basic course requirements

## Course Policies

Because class meets only once per week, attendance is imperative. Students may be absent for any reason or no reason ONCE during the semester. Any absences beyond the first will result in a grade reduction, excepting extreme and documented circumstances to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. An unexplained habit of late arrival or early departure will also result in a grade reduction.

Late creative projects and written work will not be accepted under any circumstances. Because this course is student-driven, failure to give a presentation on the expected date will not merely inconvenience the instructor but rather undermine the entire class. Only in extreme and documented circumstance, to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, may presentations be rearranged with the consent of other course participants.

Student work completed in this course will be archived by the Intermedia program and the instructor and may be used for documentation, demonstration, and promotional purposes.

## Schedule of Class Meetings (subject to change)

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>August 24</b> | <p><b>Course Introduction</b><br/>Keywords exercise<br/>Survey of Environmental Art</p> <p><b>Assignment:</b> Prepare 7-minute slideshow presentation on one garden-related art project. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of your chosen project. Due August 31.</p> <p><b>Assignment:</b> Read the Miller-Orchard Neighborhood Plan prior to our visit to the garden this Saturday</p>  |
| <b>August 27</b> | <p><b>Meet at 10 AM at the Miller-Orchard Community Garden (just south of Benton on Orchard, behind Paul's) for introduction to the garden.</b><br/><i>Attendance is strongly encouraged. If you must miss, please make arrangements with another student to discuss what was presented.</i></p> <p><i>Journal Prompt (on site):</i> Take notes on the site. For example, you may want to sketch the garden; take an inventory of the plants or objects or sounds or smells you find there; note who is there, what they are doing, and how they are doing it; observe the spatial orientation of different activities; or observe the relationship of the garden and its activities to the surrounding area.</p> <p><i>Journal Prompt:</i> Respond to Katherine Parker Bryden's introduction to the garden. What do you think of the challenges and possibilities she described? How do you feel about the class's involvement in this site?</p> |
| <b>August 31</b> | <p><b>Art/Gardening</b><br/>Reading responses and discussion: Cronon, Berry, Hogan, Lawson<br/>7-minute presentations on gardens in art<br/>Screening: <i>The Garden</i> (Scott Hamilton Kennedy, 2008)</p> <p><i>Journal Prompt:</i> The South-Central Farm was passionately defended by the community that gardened there, while the Miller-Orchard Community Garden has described difficulty attracting sustained interest from people in the neighborhood. Placing this space in relation both to the film in and the readings for next week, how is the 'community' of the MOCG constituted? What are its fractures? Where is its 'outside'?</p>   |

*Journal Prompt (on site):* Return to the garden at a non 'peak' time (e.g not a weekend) and take notes similar to what you did during the class visit. Walk around the neighborhood and respond to what you see. Based on these two visits, can you make any tentative observations of the relationship between the garden and neighborhood?

**September 3**

**Miller-Orchard Community Garden Saturday Workday (TBC)**

*Journal Prompt:* After participating in one of the two workdays, how does the experience affect what you think of the collaborative project? What did you learn from being there and working with others? What do you think it means to the gardeners and the neighbors that we are doing this work?

**September 7**

**Art/Community - Meet at MOCG (weather permitting)**

Reading responses and discussion: Kester, Kwon, HaHa  
Brainstorming on Miller-Orchard Community Garden

*Assignment:* Based on the brainstorming exercise, work with a small group (1-3 other people) to develop one of the ideas generated today into a more formal proposal. Take notes on this process in our project journal. Create sketches to supplement a verbal description and explain how your process and materials relate to your concepts. In addition, outline a the budget and timeline for the project, as well as how it might get others in the neighborhood involved. Due September 14 as a pdf for in-class presentation and to send to Katherine.

**September 10**

**Miller-Orchard Community Garden Saturday Workday (TBC)**

*Journal Prompt:* After participating in one of the two workdays, how does the experience affect what you think of the collaborative project? What did you learn from being there and working with others? What do you think it means to the gardeners and the neighbors that we are doing this work?

**September 14**

**Art/Ecology**

Presentation/discussion of project proposals; group decision  
Reading responses and discussion: Morton, Labofii, Wallis  
Sign up for research presentations

*Assignment:* Come to class with a one-paragraph description (an "abstract") of your research topic for the remainder of the semester. Due September 21.

*Journal Prompt:* The kinds of critical and deconstructive projects about 'nature' as a conceptual category engaged by Morton are often considered counterproductive to activist campaigns for environmental protection. After spending some time discussing this 'social nature' approach, what do you think about its political and aesthetic implications? Thinking back to

Cronon's argument in "The Trouble with Wilderness," is there a way to connect Morton's philosophical project to the more applied work we are doing with the community garden?

I expect to send Katherine the proposal for the project we decide as a group for approval this week and will let you know over email as soon as I have approval.

<b>September 21</b>	Miller-Orchard Community Garden Project Intensive Discussion of student research topics
<b>September 28</b>	Miller-Orchard Community Garden Project Intensive Readings assigned for student research presentations  <i>Assignment:</i> Familiarize yourself with Gina Badger's work at <a href="http://ginabadger.com">http://ginabadger.com</a> AND attend her lecture, Tuesday, October 4, 8 PM (if at all possible).
<b>October 1</b>	<b><i>MOCG Project due for presentation at the MOCG Harvest Party (TBC)</i></b>
<b>October 5</b>	Workshop/presentation with visiting artist Gina Badger Debrief on MOCG Harvest Party
<b>October 12</b>	Student Research Presentations: _____, _____, _____
<b>October 19</b>	Student Research Presentations: _____, _____, _____
<b>October 26</b>	Screening/Discussion: <i>Lessons of Darkness</i> (Werner Herzog, 1992) and <i>California CompanyTown</i> (Lee Ann Schmidt, 2008) Individual meetings to discuss final projects
<b>November 2</b>	Project Workday
<b>November 9</b>	Project Workday
<b>November 16</b>	Work-in-progress critiques
<b>November 23</b>	<b><i>Fall Break - No Class</i></b>
<b>November 30</b>	<b>Final Critique:</b> _____, _____, _____, _____ All work must be installed in and around the Porch Gallery by 1:30 PM for Art & Ecology's final show
<b>December 2</b>	<b><i>Intermedia Open House/Art &amp; Ecology Final Show Opening</i></b>
<b>December 7</b>	<b>Final Critique:</b> _____, _____, _____, _____
<b>December 12</b>	<b><i>Art &amp; Ecology Portfolios and Reflection Papers Due, 5 PM</i></b>



**Core Readings**

Cronon, William. "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." In William Cronon, ed. *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1995, pp.69-90.

Haha (Wendy Jacob, Laurie Palmer, and John Ploof), eds. *With Love from HaHa*. Chicago: Whitewalls, 2008, pp. 6-8, 57-69.

Hogan, Linda. *Dwellings*. New York: WW Norton, 2007, pp. 314-318.

Kester, Grant. "Dialogical Aesthetics." *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*. Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2004, pp. 83-123.

Kwon, Miwon. "The (Un)Sittings of Community." *One Place After Another: Site Specific Art and Locational Identity*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2002, pp. 138-155.

Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination (Labofii) "Users Guide to Demanding the Impossible," The Long Weekend, Goldsmiths, London, December 2010.

Lawson, Laura. *City Bountiful: A Century of Community Gardening in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005, pp. 287-302.

Morton, Timothy. *The Ecological Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010, pp. 1-20, 98-135.

Wallis, Brian. "Survey." *Land and Environmental Art*. Jeffrey Kastner, ed. London: Phaidon, 1998, pp. 18-43.

**FALL 2011**  
**School of Art and Art History Syllabus Information - STUDIO**  
**The University of Iowa**  
**Course policies are governed by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences**

**Electronic Communication**

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences.

**Homework Expectation**

For each semester hour of credit that an Art and Art History course carries, students should expect to spend approximately two hours per week outside of class preparing for class sessions. That is, in a three-credit-hour course, instructors design course assignments on the assumption that students will spend six hours per week in out-of-class preparation.

**Your Responsibilities**

Your responsibilities to this class -- and to your education as a whole -- include attendance and participation. This syllabus details specific expectations the instructor may have about attendance and participation. You have a responsibility to help create a classroom environment where all may learn. At the most basic level, this means you will respect the other members of the class and the instructor and treat them with the courtesy you hope to receive in return.

**Student Classroom Behavior**

The ability to learn is lessened when students engage in inappropriate classroom behavior, distracting others; such behaviors are a violation of the [Code of Student Life](#). When disruptive activity occurs, a University instructor has the authority to determine classroom seating patterns and to request that a student exit the classroom, laboratory, or other area used for instruction immediately for the remainder of the period. One-day suspensions are reported to appropriate departmental, collegiate, and Student Services personnel (Office of the Vice President for [Student Services](#) and Dean of Students).

**Academic Fraud**

Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and is reported to the departmental DEO and to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum. Instructors and DEOs decide on appropriate consequences at the departmental level while the Associate Dean enforces additional consequences at the collegiate level. See the CLAS Academic Fraud section of the [Student Academic Handbook](#). [www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/x/#2](http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/x/#2)

**Making a Suggestion or a Complaint**

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS [Student Academic Handbook](#).

**Accommodations for Disabilities**

A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. For more information see [Student Disability Services](#) at [www.uiowa.edu/~sds/](http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/)

**Understanding Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI [Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment](#) for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy at <http://www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/sexual-harassment-guide/index.html>.

**Reacting Safely to Severe Weather**

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Public Safety [web site](#).

**Resources for Students**

- [Writing Center](#) 110 English-Philosophy Building, 335-0188, [www.uiowa.edu/~writingc](http://www.uiowa.edu/~writingc)
- [Speaking Center](#) 12 English-Philosophy Building, 335-0205, [www.uiowa.edu/~rhetoric/centers/speaking](http://www.uiowa.edu/~rhetoric/centers/speaking)
- [Mathematics Tutorial Laboratory](#) 314 MacLean Hall, 335-0810, [www.uiowa.edu/mathlabTutor](http://www.uiowa.edu/mathlabTutor)
- [Referral Service](#) Campus Information Center, Iowa Memorial Union, 335-3055, [www.imu.uiowa.edu/cic/tutor\\_referral\\_service](http://www.imu.uiowa.edu/cic/tutor_referral_service)

**CLAS Final Examination Policies**

Final exams may be offered only during finals week. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. Students should not ask their instructor to reschedule a final exam since the College does not permit rescheduling of a final exam once the semester has begun. Questions should be addressed to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum.

**Missed exam policy**

University policy requires that students be permitted to make up examinations missed because of illness, mandatory religious obligations, certain University activities, or unavoidable circumstances. Excused absence forms are required and are available at the Registrar web site: [www.registrar.uiowa.edu/forms/absence.pdf](http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu/forms/absence.pdf)

**University Examination Policy Final Examinations**

An undergraduate student who has two final examinations scheduled for the same period or more than three examinations scheduled for the same day may file a request for a change of schedule before the [published deadline](#) at the Registrar's Service Center, **17 Calvin Hall**, 8-4:30 M-F, (384-4300).

**Plus-Minus Grading**

All the department's instructors can append plus or minus grades to the letter grades they assign for the course. If the instructor does not specifically indicate in the syllabus that he or she will not assign plusses or minuses, students should assume that this form of grading will be used.

**Woodshop Use and Fees**

The School of Art and Art History Woodshop is a common use facility for any student enrolled in a studio art class. The woodshop has a \$25 per student per semester buy-back fee. All students who use the woodshop must pay this fee, which goes towards the replacement of consumables as well as equipment repairs, replacements and other shop related expenses. Students can opt to pay a one-time use fee of \$5 to work for one day only. However if they come back in for further use they must pay the \$25 lab fee at that time. This will mean that in total they will be charged \$30. The students will be U-Billed by the lab coordinator before they begin working. Students must also complete safety training and fill out a woodshop safety release form every semester to work in the shop. To do this they must see the Woodshop Lab Specialist, Adam Krueger. Woodshop open hours and schedules are posted on the door of the woodshop.

Students enrolled in classes that require the use of woodshop as part of their class instruction will be U-billed at the time of use.

**Studio Model Policy and Guidelines**

Drawing from the live nude model will be part of some drawing courses and may include models of any gender identity. Instructors and students should demonstrate consideration for the model and behave professionally and with respect. This will include an instructor discussing the purpose of particular poses with the model, and the right of the model to choose to accept or reject a given assignment. It is not appropriate to touch the model or ask that models touch one another in a pose. All sheets used in any modeling session are to be put in the laundry box located in 1820 SA. Only the faculty member and the students enrolled in the class are allowed in the studio classroom when the model is posing. The doors to classrooms using studio models should be kept closed, and signs posted on the door for privacy.