



## 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 issues around local food economies and access to wholesome food by working on a class project with Local Foods Connection.
5. Build aesthetic and conceptual sophistication through the creation of one major project exploring ecological issues through art.
6. Engage in an interdisciplinary learning environment through presentation, discussion, and collaboration.
7. Prepare and present work in a group exhibition with other course participants.

## Course and Faculty Information

01J:108:001

Studio Arts 1703

Thursdays, 3:30-7:30 PM

<http://artandecologyiowa.blogspot.com/>

Instructor: Sarah Kanouse

Studio Arts 1642

Wednesdays, 12-3 PM 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 content 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 the conceptual introduction, the description of key themes, the detailed resource list appended to this syllabus, and some pre-planning involving the collaborative project with Local Food Connection, 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 contributions to the class blog, discussion, and production 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.

## **Texts**

There is no required text for this course; rather, students and faculty will make a reader over the course of the semester based on the materials presented in class. Accordingly, readings will be distributed as pdfs and web links. Materials in the reader will be preceded by narrative introductions, written by students, that summarize the content of their research presentations. The reader will be assembled for the class exhibition at the end of the semester.

## **Materials and Equipment**

Intermedia makes every effort to provide equipment for its students.

There is a \$70 course fee to cover the cost of some supplies, maintenance for lab software and a

limited range of equipment available for checkout from the Intermedia Equipment Pool. Students are expected to acquire any additional supplies their work requires.

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.

Please be sure to make sure that equipment checked out is in working order and that all components are included at the time of check-out. Also be sure batteries are charged before using battery-operated gear.

To help insure equipment is available and in working order for everyone, please report equipment problems, damage or loss as soon as possible. Please email the equipment pool and describe, in as specific terms as possible, any problems that you have with the equipment. This can be done upon check-in as well.

Students will be charged the cost of repair or replacement of equipment if damaged or lost.

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**

All students will complete the following coursework, with approximate grade weighting:

Key theme research and presentation: 5%

10-15 minute presentation in the second week of class providing an overview of a major contemporary theme in ecological discourse, with particular reference to the ways artists have engaged it. Presentations may be drawn from the resource list appended to this syllabus but are not limited to these topics. Presentations should include a slideshow with relevant visuals and/or media, and a narrative summary of the key theme should be given to the instructor.

Student Research Presentations: 15%

Following the initial key themes presentations, students work individually develop a 45 minute to one-hour session for the deeper exploration of some aspect of the theme. Leadership of a class session requires the assignment of readings, the facilitation of discussion, the selection and acquisition of viewing materials, and the writing of a 2-page narrative summary of the topic for inclusion in the reader. Students should discuss any special plans with me and give their classmates at least a week's notice of readings and any unusual requirements prior to their presentation.

Final creative project: 50%

Students will develop final creative projects employing ecological forms and themes using the media of their choosing. 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. Proposals for final projects will be due in written form (2-4 pages, with sketches) and for in-class presentation (15-20 minutes with slides) on April 2. Digital documentation of the final creative project MUST be submitted to me no later than May 15, 2009 in order for course credit to be awarded and a grade assigned.

Participation: 20%

Given the structure of the class, active participation in discussion, critique, and group projects is vital. Everyone must participate actively in the group project with Local Foods Connection, though students will be able to choose their area of contribution by joining a specific working group in the first few weeks of class. We will be maintaining a private blog to write progress reports and reflection exercises concerning the project. The blog will also be used to write short responses to the readings. Students must also verbally share their thoughts generously, respectfully, and frequently throughout the semester in order to earn a top grade in the course.

## 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. 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 H1N1 infection or other 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)

Unit I: Observing	January 21	Introduction, Key Words, Blog, XSAN
	January 28	Presentation by Laura Dowd, Local Foods Connection Key Themes Presentations
	February 4	Required Reading Due Survey of Environmental Art (lecture)
	February 11	Screening/Discussion "Fast, Cheap & Out of Control" (Errol Morris, 1997) Prof. Kanouse at CAA conference in Chicago
Unit II: Digging	February 18	LFC Project Intensive
	February 25	LFC Project Update: Coordination Student research presentations: _____, _____,
	March 4	LFC Project Update: Image Development/Design Student research presentations: _____, _____, _____, _____
	March 11	LFC Project Update: Research/Editorial Student research presentations: _____, _____, _____, _____
	March 18	Spring Break:
	March 25	LFC Project Update: Image Development/Design Student research presentations: _____, _____, _____, _____
Unit III: Growing	April 2	Final Project Proposals Due
	April 8	Meeting with Laura Dowd to present work-in-progress (TBC) Workday
	April 15	Workday and/or work-in-progress critique
	April 22	Work-in-progress critique
	April 29	Workday and/or work-in-progress critique
Unit IV: Harvesting	May 6	Final project and LFC project due for class exhibition
	May 14	Digital documentation of final project due

**Spring 2010**  
**School of Art and Art History Syllabus Information**  
**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.

**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.