

**Rhode Island College**  
**Art 204: 3D Synthesis**  
**Rhode Island College**  
**Instructor Doug Bosch**

*Course Description*

The aim of this course has two connected outcomes. The first is to blend the largely separate tracks of drawing (accurate observation and manual discipline) and design (visual construction strategies and visual problem solving). The second directed outcome is for students to develop a strong and individual personal direction, a visual expression that is driven from within the student, sparked by in-class exercises and lectures, utilizing both drawing and 3-D forms. The student is challenged to examine, practice and then exploit in-class material, all toward developing a personal 3D vision that is distinctive and resonate with the student's individual sensibilities. Students will be challenged to address technical and conceptual weaknesses and students will be directed on how to exploit their strengths while generating project ideas, direction and momentum.

*Course Introduction*

Students must arrive on time and be prepared to work in class as well as complete outside assignments by deadline dates. Students taking the course for credit should plan to attend all lectures, critiques and demonstrations. Unexcused absences exceeding two will affect your final grade, lowering it 1/3 of a letter grade for each unexcused absence exceeding two. Students who have accumulated more than two unexcused absences by the midterm evaluation may automatically be removed from the course at the Professor's discretion. Students who exceed a total of four unexcused absences over the course of the semester may automatically fail the course at the Professor's discretion. Students who arrive on time and remain in class for the full session and who are prepared for the day's work will be recorded as PRESENT. Students who miss any portion of the session that does not exceed 30 minutes will be marked LATE. Students who miss more than 30 minutes of any session will be marked ABSENT. Two LATEs combine to equal one ABSENCE. A petition for having an absence excused must be supported by some form of documentation (traffic ticket, doctor's note, court document, etc.).

Students should plan to keep notes at all times and perform research related to their projects and participate in all group discussions and critiques. There is a high degree of student self-direction expected in this course. There will be group and/or individual critiques every week. In order for students to remain in good standing they must be prepared with completed work for these critiques. Every student will have an individual critique around the middle of the term. Students are always encouraged to make appointments with me throughout the semester for additional individual feedback and guidance on their work. A student who maintains the required attendance, completes all projects on time and to the best of their abilities, participates in all critiques and discussions and who demonstrates an earnest attempt to learn is guaranteed a minimum of "C" in this course.

A labor-intensive and exhaustive degree of enthusiasm and ingenuity is stressed in this class. Students must strive to push beyond the “familiar.” This course is titled “Synthesis” because students are synthesizing, or combining, real/observed/measurable information with imagined visual and spatial concepts and constructions. This endeavor more closely mirrors the artist in his studio than do the separate disciplines of beginning drawing and design. There is a strong “laboratory” component to this course which acts as a segue between freshman academic exercises and advanced independent/individual research. Students will be directed to steer through literal subject matter and into invented image construction. You will explore methods of determining subject matter as well as developing that subject matter. Out-of-class research will be toilsome at times due to the complex nature of this course and also because the student will be on more of a self-directed path than they experienced in their freshman year. For the typical student the high degree of imagination and sheer work necessary to push through obvious solutions will present both obstacle and muse. Group reviews and discussions will be conducted in Socratic fashion.

Students should think of this class as an advanced 3D Design course. The primary distinction is the emphasis on exploration and experimentation. This differs from a typical college-level sculpture 1 course where students are usually directed to more literally practice in the sculptural vernacular. Students will explore the combining of various media into one work or set of 3D studies. The point will be for the student to journey toward fleshing out their ideas, not on resolving a finished sculpture. Students will visit many types of self-determined subject matter and attitudes toward their subjecting matter, while investigating the many possibilities of scale, materials, connections, form, movement/evolution/occupation of space. Both investigative (open-ended/non-directed [play]) exploration and controlled (directed/focused/choreographed) experimentation earns high value in this course.

### ***Course Structure***

This class meets twice a week for three hours each. There will be session work each class. The work will vary considerably. Each class will usually involve dialogue, discussion, slides, critique and lab time. Weekly there will be a group discussion of student work, whether it is in progress or finished. Students conduct a great deal of research outside of class. Considerable class time is dedicated to allow students to present their research to the class and present the progress of their work.

### ***Course Work***

Students will design four major projects during the semester. These projects will build off of session exercises, lectures, reference artists/writings and more. With each project there will be some parameters and criteria, designed to help students ignite an individual idea as well as filter out endless possibilities. Students should be enrolled in a 3D studio

course simultaneous with this one (level 1 sculpture, ceramics 1, jewelry or metalsmithing 1). A 3D studio I course is complimentary to this course. Students are encouraged to integrate these media and techniques into projects in various manners.

### Department Philosophy and Purpose of Course

- A. Synthesize the skills developed in the largely separate tracks of drawing (accurate observation and manual skills) and design (visual construction strategies, problem solving).
- B. Develop a personal direction using both drawing and 3-D forms by:
  - 1. presenting slides in a Socratic format that survey contemporary trends in sculpture, architecture, and the three dimensional applied arts).
  - 2. having students select the work of other artists to influence their stylistic direction, and to be able to identify the specific aspects of that artist's production that is most relevant for their own sensibilities.
  - 3. working from a wide variety of subject matter as sources for their form vocabulary
  - 4. making the students aware of how the choice of materials, scale, and the application of process influence form and content
- C. Evolve formal conceptualization skills through drawing and model building.
- D. Introduce strategies for translating form studies into full-scale works made in different materials.

### ***Woodshop Lab***

All students are required to attend the woodshop lab which is organized in conjunction with this course. It meets separately from class time. This workshop involves approximately 24 hours of instruction. A sign-up sheet will be made available sometime in the first month of the semester.

### ***Supplies List***

You are asked to be resourceful and inventive with regards to materials in this class. In particular, this class challenges you to employ unusual, dynamic and even contrary materials in your projects so as to aggressively engage an amplified design language. For model building you will find chip board, foam core, cardboard, plywood, glues, plastilina clay and other similar items very handy.

This class does involve drawing. You will need the typical drawing supplies for the first half of the semester.

***General Grading Considerations (No Portfolio)***

1. Improvement
  - A. On the individual problems: How far the concept has been developed.
  - B. From assignment to assignment:
    - a. For midterm and final grade, the overall grade curve will be considered. If there is a clear pattern either upward or downwards the grades on the final problems may be adjusted.
    - b. If there is no clear grade pattern, a numerical average will determine the final grade.
2. Quality of concept.
3. Quality of execution.
4. Participation in critiques and class discussions.

***Breakdown of End of Semester Grading by percentages***

Concepts/Idea Development/Models-----	30%
Projects-----	45%
Evidence of Research -----	10%
Involvement in Discussions-----	15%