

**Format revised 2023**  
**Syllabus revised in 2023**

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**SAS – SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

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**SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PAINTING AND DRAWING**  
**COURSE TITLE FOUNDATION PAINTING**  
**COURSE CODE FAPDFP120**  
**3 semester credits****1. DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces beginning students to the fundamental principles and techniques of painting with a focus on acrylic painting and on oil painting techniques through an in-depth exploration of the art form of still life. Students will learn how to portray a three-dimensional subject on a two-dimensional surface. Emphasis will be given to the theories of color, value, and composition. Practical demonstrations and guided practices will alternate with lectures providing students with the essential knowledge of the history of drawing and of the great masters from the past and from the present. Students will be encouraged to rethink the way they see and observe a subject, and to develop their own sense of creativity and artistic expression. During the course, students will be required to create a digital portfolio of their work.

**2. OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Employ basic techniques for acrylic painting and introductory guidelines of oil painting gained through an extensive study of still life subjects.
- Observe and transfer visual information on paper (and canvas) using painting techniques in a skillful manner.
- Display an understanding of key painting principles such as surface quality, composition, proportion, value, and color theory.
- Expand their artistic knowledge through the study of practical and theoretical information provided by the instructor and through course readings.
- Expand their own technical and aesthetic vocabulary related to painting as a form of artistic expression.
- Develop critical skills in presenting the outcome of their work in oral (critique) and written form (paper).
- Organize a structured and effective portfolio of their own achievements.

**3. REQUIREMENTS**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**4. METHOD**

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

## 5. TEXTBOOK - FURTHER READINGS - RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

Harrison, Pastel Hazel. *How to Paint and Draw: Drawing, Watercolour, Oil and Acrylic*, Annes Publishing Limited, 2004.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

## LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

### BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca\\_palagio\\_di\\_parte\\_guelfa/](http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/)

### BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it](http://www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it)

### THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: [www.britishinstitute.it/en](http://www.britishinstitute.it/en)

## 6. FIELD LEARNING

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

## 7. COURSE MATERIALS

Students must purchase the following materials for personal use (any materials that a student already has must be OK'd by the instructor).

Prices may vary according to sellers. For most competitive options, we recommend the following sellers:

**Salvini:** Via degli Alfani 111r. This store is specialized in providing materials for FUA, therefore you will automatically receive a 15% discount on your purchases. You may also want to check **Rigacci:** Via dei Servi; **Zecchi** in Via dello Studio 19r and online retailers such as Amazon.it.

When purchasing materials from recommended sellers the cost for purchasing all materials is approximately €85.

- 1 Sketchbook (Tiger offers competitive prices)
- Between 4 and 5 large (70x100) sheet of oil painting paper (suggested brand Pittura by Fabriano "Tela" 400 g)
- Watercolor pencils (suggested brands: Acquacolor by Stabilo; 12 colors sufficient)
- 2 Drawing pencils: 2B, HB
- 1 White rubber eraser
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 10 to 12 tubes of acrylic and oil paint (TBD by instructor)
- 3/4 painting brushes
- 1 Palette of choice; wooden, plastic, metal, or paper (notice price may vary considerably according to material. The cheapest option is likely to be plastic, around 3 Euros (see online retailers such

as Amazon.it))

- At least 1 canvas for final project (size to be confirmed by instructor: 35x50; 30x40; 20x30)
- 1 Masking tape
- 1 Small and 1 large glass containers with lids
- Old t-shirt or smock to protect clothing while painting

#### **ADDITIONAL MATERIALS PROVIDED BY FUA TO USE IN CLASS**

- 1 utility brush
- 2 plastic glasses for water
- 1 bar of brush soap
- 1 Willow charcoal
- 3-4 small rags or roll of paper towels
- 1 big glass jar with an airtight lid (a big jam jar would fit)
- 1 bottle of linseed oil
- 1 bottle of odorless (vegetable-based) oil as a thinner/solvent
- 1 Acrylic gesso
- Latex gloves
- Wet hand wipes

#### **8. COURSE FEES**

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

#### **9. EVALUATION - GRADING SYSTEM**

10% Attendance

15% Class Participation – Assignments

15% FINAL PORTFOLIO in PDF

15% Final Paper

20% Mid Term Exam and Critique

25% Final Project and Critique

A detailed explanation of this breakdown is found below in Section 11.

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

#### **10. ATTENDANCE - PARTICIPATION**

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

**Absences** are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic

catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

#### LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

#### TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

**Participation:** Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

### 11. EXAMS - PAPERS - PROJECTS

Participation, assignment, readings: count together for 15% of the final grade. Remember that this class requires eight preparation hours per week: activities such as reading of the assigned materials, and assignments, all contribute to your preparation for the class.

#### SCHOOL of FINE ARTS FINAL EXHIBITION

*Upon selection, student will have the option of submitting their works for inclusion in the student exhibition at the end of the academic year. Selection of works will be based on quality and correspondence to the curatorial needs. Students participating in the exhibit will be able to show their work in a public setting and will be published on the exhibition catalogue.*

*PLEASE CHECK FOR DETAILS ON HOW TO PARTECIPATE WITH YOUR COURSE INSTRUCTOR.*

Midterm exam: on lesson 7 counts for 25% of the final course grade.

For no reason, can the date and time of the scheduled exam be changed.

2 sections totaling 100 points:

1- Artwork created to date in order to evaluate the student's progress. Evaluations will also respond to improvements in technical and formal ability and the student's effort and positive approach towards self-improvement through projects work. (60 points)

2- A written exam based on the readings done till this point. (40 points)\_

Final Portfolio: on lesson 15 that counts 15% of the final course grade

The Final portfolio is the evidence of your practices, processes and achievements during the course, and it will be evaluated according to how accurate these are reported. It must comprehend your statements, goals and achievements, as well as the procedures and the issues to reach those. By the end of the course you must hand in the digital portfolio, complete with photos of your works, measurements, techniques, as well as the aforementioned short written statements.

The weekly photographic documentation of your artworks is essential (or steps towards the completion of the artworks), in order to constantly check your improvements, and to have the documentation available for the final portfolio at the end of the semester.

Please take a deep care in the shooting of your works: create a pleasant setting for the shooting, curate the lighting aspects, enlarge important details, and photoshop the image if necessary for its legibility.

A handy format to make a portfolio is Power Point, where you can simply add and/or move slides and

comments (if you are strong in other programs, such as IPhotos, you are welcome to use those). Do not use a pre-existent, ultra-decorated slide layout, which will distract the content of your portfolio. Remember that often the best portfolios are on white background, and arranged with a simple, legible layout. Check on line for example of portfolios of working artists to better understand how to present your work.

You will submit your final digital portfolio in Pdf. The first page (or slide) must have the following information:

- Name of the School, including logos.... (School of Fine Arts + FUA logo + School of Art and Science logo. Logo will be supplied by your professor). Department of.... (Department of Education, Department of Ceramics... etc...)
- Code and exact title of the course
- Name of the Professor (and head professor, as stated on the syllabus)
- Name of the Student
- Term and Academic Year

Be sure to constantly record the advancements of your work, and to update your presentation weekly, by taking pictures of your work in different phases. The Final Portfolio is the fundamental assignment for all studio art course, and for this reason it is highly graded.

Final Paper: on lesson 14 it counts 10% of the final course grade.

The paper should be 5 pages long including bibliography and sources. dealing with a short biography of the artist as well as an artist's statement containing information about the creative process regarding the project, explaining the basis of the inspiration and how this inspiration was translated into a drawing. The title for the Paper / Project will be assigned by the professor. Material for research will be available at the FUA library in corso Tintori 21.

Length requirement for paper: 5 pages typed (double spaced) including images

Please make sure that the paper includes a bibliography academically valid.

Final Exam: on lesson 15 it counts for 25% of the final course grade. The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.

Your grade will be based on:

- 1- Final project, Graphic, Stylistic, and Technical qualities 50 points,
- 2- A brief presentation of your final project you will give to the class. Students are expected to formulate their ideas verbally during their presentation, to respond to feedback in an engaged and receptive way, and to participate during the critiques of others. Evaluations will also respond to improvements in technical and formal ability and the student's effort and positive approach towards self-improvement through project work. 30 points
- 3- A questionnaire based on the readings done after mid-term till final. 20 points

The Final Exam is cumulative

Remember that the dates of the exams cannot be changed for any reason, so please organize your personal schedule accordingly.

## 12. LESSONS

Lesson 1	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Presentation of course and syllabus. Materials and tools. Painting today: What, Why, When. Techniques/Materials: graphite and colored pencils.
<b>Objectives</b>	Become familiar with painting tools and materials. Learn how to clean brushes and

	store materials properly. Learn how to create sketches and how to use your sketchbook.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Getting to know materials (brushes, colors, paper, canvas). First approach to still life: The role of sketching and sketchbook. Why copying from a Master today? Many ways of "copying" Copy a Master's still life.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Assignment: Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours. Copy the still life suggested by your professor following the instruction given in class. Read: Textbook, "Colour drawing materials," pp. 8-19; "Coloured pencils," pp. 28-31; "Paints, brushes and mediums," pp. 138-139, "Papers," pp. 202-203; "Sketching," pp. 46-47.

<b>Lesson 2</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Historical roots of still life painting. Painting today. Introduction to Composition: negative and positive space, proportions.
<b>Objectives</b>	Learn to see value and simplify it into light, medium, dark. Become familiar with the concepts of positive and negative space, and proportions as they relate to artistic composition.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Test sheet: Copy a Master's still life. Values: light, medium, dark. Technique/Materials: graphite, charcoal, and coloured pencils.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Assignment: Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours. Copy the still life suggested by your professor following the instruction given in class. Read: Textbook, "Comparative Demonstration," pp. 36-37 (section about coloured pencils); "Making Accurate Drawings," pp. 38-39; "Drawing Shapes," pp. 40-41; "Drawing Form," pp. 42-43; "Drawing with Line," pp. 44-45.

<b>Lesson 3</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Hatching and cross hatching. The role of texture in colored pencil painting.
<b>Objectives</b>	Discovering how to work all in one with color and texture.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Test sheet: copy a Master's still life. Technique/Materials: graphite, charcoal, and colored pencils.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Assignment: Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours. Copy the still life suggested by your professor following the instruction given in class. Read: Textbook, "Coloured Pencils Demonstration," pp. 58-59; "Mixed-Media Demonstration," pp. 64-67.

<b>Lesson 4</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Color Theory/1. Primary colors, secondary and tertiary colors. Warm vs Cool colors. Mixing paint. Introduction to acrylics and oil paint techniques.
<b>Objectives</b>	Understand the relationship between colors on the color wheel. Practice techniques for mixing paint. Learn how to create a sense of space and dimension using warm and cool colors.

<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Test sheet: Create a color wheel using limited palette. Test sheet: Copy a Master's still life. Technique/Materials: graphite, charcoal, colored pencils, acrylics, and oil paint
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Assignment: Learn by heart the basic names of colors, learn by heart the color wheel system. Copy the still life suggested by your professor following the instruction given in class. Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours. Read: Textbook, "About Oils and Acrylics," pp. 132-137; "Paint, Brushes & Mediums," pp. 138-139; "Palettes & Painting Surfaces," pp. 140-141; "Primary & Secondary Colors," pp. 142-143.

<b>Lesson 5</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Color Theory/2. Complementary colors and color qualities. Neutralisation of colors. Bistres.
<b>Objectives</b>	Learn to neutralise the intensity of a color. Understand the difference between neutralising with black, with complementary color, with bistre.
<b>Visit</b>	Assignment: Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours. Complete the exercises in mixing colors. Copy the still life suggested by your professor following the instruction given in class. Read: Textbook, read again last week's readings; + "Colour Relationships," pp. 146-147; "Using a Restricted Palette," pp. 144-145; "Painting White," pp. 148-149; "Working All Prima," pp. 150-151.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	

<b>Lesson 6</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Basic Perspective for still life Students learn basic geometry of simple 1-point perspective for use when painting in still life, including using sighting techniques (taking angles & transferring them to painting) with brush or graphite handles. Chromatic perspective.
<b>Objectives</b>	Creating a 3d effect on a 2D picture space. Including multiple elements in a composition. Balancing elements such as shapes, light, and color value.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Complex Composition: Copy of a Master's still life. Technique/Materials: acrylic on paper/ oil paint on canvas.
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Assignment: Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours Midterm project: Copy a Master's Still life choosing among those indicated by your professor. Read: Textbook, read again "Making Accurate Drawings," pp. 38-39; + "Focus: Buildings," pp. 60-63; "Comparative Demonstration," pp. 166-169.

<b>Lesson 7</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	MIDTERM EXAM

	a) Mid-term individual assignments critique. b) Written exam.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Sketch ideas and collect readings and materials in view of the Final Project.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Prepare one or more canvases for the Final Project.

<b>Lesson 8</b>	
<b>NA</b>	ACADEMIC BREAK

<b>Lesson 9</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	History of still life painting/1. Copying from a Master XX Century Master.
<b>Objectives</b>	Getting to know different styles of painting beneath academic painting.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Test sheet: Copy of a Master's still life. Technique/Materials: acrylic on paper/canvas.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Assignment: Copy the still life suggested by your professor following the cues given in class. Read: Textbook, "Focus: Still Life," pp. 170-173; "Still Life Demonstration," pp. 174-175.

<b>Lesson 10</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	History of still life/2. Zooming in and copying from a Master. Texture and details.
<b>Objectives</b>	Learn different perspective on the same subject. Understand the role of personal choice in painting.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Test sheet: Copy a Master's still life focusing on small details, reflections, textures, highlight and shadows, etc.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Assignment: Copy the still life suggested by your professor following the instruction given in class. Read: The Instructor will provide extra readings on the topic.

<b>Lesson 11</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	How to set up your own still life and paint it.
<b>Objectives</b>	Improve the ability to finalize the arrangement of a still life to your own artistic abilities and preferences.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Test sheet: live work: set your own still life and paint it. Technique: acrylic on paper/canvas. <b>NB Start working on the Final Exhibition concept.</b>
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Assignment: Students start to arrange photographs for the digital portfolio. Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours. Arrange a still life on your own and paint it. Read: The Instructor will provide extra readings on the topic.

<b>Lesson 12</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Still life in contemporary art.
<b>Objectives</b>	Start being aware of your own personal choices and style.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Working on the Final project and at Final Portfolio. Individual critiques for final exhibition.



	Technique: acrylic on paper/canvas.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Assignment: Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours. Read: The instructor will provide extra readings on the topic.

<b>Lesson 13</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	How to set your digital portfolio. How to write a statement for your Final Project. Review of course topics.
<b>Objectives</b>	Learn how to communicate the content and style of your own art.
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Working on the Final Project and at Final Portfolio. Technique: acrylic on paper/canvas.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Assignment: Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours. Work on your Final project and painting to be presented for the Final Exhibition submission. Read: The Instructor will provide extra readings on the topic.

<b>Lesson 14</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Presentation of individual Final Project: critique and discussion a) Presentation of your Final Project. b) Presentation of your Portfolio in pdf. Fine Arts Exhibit @ Ganzo
<b>Objectives</b>	Master the basic methods and formal dynamics involved in making and evaluating a still life painting. Demonstrate fundamental critical skills when presenting the outcomes of their work in oral (critique) and written form (paper).
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Hands-on individual review with the instructor: students will ensure that all assigned works are complete before the final exam.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Assignment: Work at least five hours on the assignment provided by the instructor during open studio hours. Work on your Final Paper. Read: The instructor will provide extra readings on the topic. Review of the course readings and textbooks in view of the Final Exam

<b>Lesson 15</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	FINAL EXAM a) Written exam in class. b) Delivery of Final Paper.