

Painting II

NMAT-S 330

In the following outline, I've summarized the changes that were to the made course each semester it was offered. The brief synopsis can be used to contextualize the supporting evidence for this class.

Fall 2019:

Since Painting II ran concurrently with Painting I, NMAT-S 230, I wanted to maintain a similar rhythm for both courses but needed to differentiate the objectives. Therefore, students in Painting II used oil paint, while students in Painting I used acrylic paint to complete the assignments.

Spring 2020:

I altered some of the content of this course to further differentiate it from Painting I. Specifically, I changed some of the still life arrangements to heighten the complexity of the subject matter, such as painting an arrangement of glass vessels of water against a low chromatic background. This arrangement forced students to identify the abstract patchwork of color and shape that comprises a seemingly difficult subject. In addition, this assignment provided students with the challenge of identifying subtle shifts in color temperature. Finally, in several of the other assignments, students were allowed to explore abstraction to fulfill the objective of the project.

Furthermore, while Painting I was investigating color theory through the creation of a color wheel, Painting II was tasked with a more difficult challenge of recreating a pixelated image and identifying each swatch of color as a combination of only three pigments plus white. At the conclusion of the project, the pixelated image was revealed after all the students placed their specific set of swatches together in a designated orientation. This reinforced the concept of working from general to specific, along with the importance of generating color strings on the palette when painting.

One assignment that I incorporated into the course this semester was for students to investigate the time-honored tradition of recreating a painting from a distinguished painter.

Covid-19:

Finally, as the semester transitioned online due to Covid-19, the assignments and the core objectives for the course did not alter. However, with this said the delivery for the content, along with the assessment of the projects had to be considerably altered for remote teaching. Primarily, students were asked to upload photographs of their paintings in progress along with a brief description of any of the challenges they were attempting to resolve. I would take those photographs of their paintings, and bring the work into Adobe Photoshop and digitally paint on top of their paintings to best illustrate

the direction they should take to resolve their work. This visualization would always be paired with a descriptive response to best explain the decisions I was taking.

Fall 2020:

First, many of the assignments were refined to include more defined grading criteria and visual examples. The assignments were also formatted directly for Canvas for student accessibility and convenience.

Due to the pandemic, the course had to be converted to a hyflex model, which caused the students to only meet on campus once a week. Therefore, a greater emphasis was placed on weekly discussion posts. These discussion posts required students to post updates on the progress of their paintings, technical studies, as well as various research objectives.

In addition, the assignments for this course changed completely from the previous Spring 2020 semester. The reason for this change was that Painting I was permitted to run as a separate course from Painting II, Painting III, and Advanced Painting. This ultimately enabled me to craft a course structure that provided intermediate technical and conceptual problems for students to investigate.

Spring 2021:

The first assignment of the semester was changed to focus on perceptual abstraction. This enabled me to briefly cover abstract painting while also focusing on an alternative process for making imagery that placed an emphasis on composition. The reason for this change was to introduce students to an important visual language sooner and to critically discuss composition since there was a need for them to know more.

In addition, I created a new assignment that required students to make a series of paint swatches using an indirect process of applying the paint using a medium. This assignment required that students investigate the various properties of their paint and explore another method for building up the color on their painting.

Fall 2021:

For the Fall 2021 semester, I decided to cut the number of sketchbook prompts in half, from four down to two. The reason for this reduced workload was to maximize the quality of the investigations as opposed to the quantity. In short, it was apparent that the students were rushing to get the assignment completed and were rarely taking advantage of the exploratory nature of the project.

Spring 2022:

After evaluating the work produced from the previous semester, I decided that several of the assignments needed to be painted exclusively from life while on campus. Not only did this limitation deepen a student's understanding of painting from direct observation, but it also

prevented over-complication. I noticed that students would often hesitate in starting a new project because they were in search of devising the perfect solution. This slight revision to the assignments reinforced that the act of painting is sometimes more important than the subject or the imagery. I also created a new project entitled, "The Boring Assignment" as a way of showcasing that meaningful painting can be made through quiet imagery and that a work doesn't need to be epic for it to be successful.

As a note, the assignments that are painted from life are always paired with other prompts that provide a different opportunity for creative exploration.

Finally, I removed both the midterm and final sketchbook assignments from the curriculum. It was apparent that the work produced for these creative investigations was underdeveloped and taking away from their main projects.

Fall 2022:

I moved the indirect painting swatches exercise toward the beginning of the term. My intention in introducing this assignment earlier is that it will prepare students for a new project entitled "Layers". This new assignment provides students with an opportunity to develop a painting over twelve weeks, using multiple passes of color to build up the surface of the painting.

In addition, I required students to generate a preliminary color study before they started their color harmony assignment. Not only did this preliminary step help students become accustomed to producing a preparatory painting for a larger work, but it also helped them solidify their color relationships.

Spring 2023:

The main change to Painting II for Spring 2023, was stacking it with Painting I, NMAT-S 230. In order to accommodate this change, I slightly shifted around some of the due dates so it wouldn't interfere with Painting I assignments and lectures. This aside, the assignments remained the same.

Fall 2023:

All of the students registered in the class either hadn't taken Painting I at all or hadn't taken the course in a year or more. Therefore, many of the students required a review of basic concepts and techniques that had been covered in Painting I. This somewhat impeded their progress in the class. In the future, if students appear to be struggling at the beginning of the term, I will ask them to sit in on some of the Painting I lectures so that they can reacquaint themselves with the discipline.

In addition, stacking Painting I and Painting II together was more difficult to juggle this term since I had a nearly equal number of students in both courses. At times, I felt that I was unable to provide as much assistance to the students who needed further guidance. If this is a persistent issue, I will restructure the content and schedule of both courses so that I will have more time during the class session to talk directly with students on the progress of their work.

Spring 2024:

The structure of the course and the assignments remained largely the same. Unfortunately, the two students who enrolled in the class had serious issues with their attendance, which obscured whether the curriculum was effective in helping students achieve the course objectives.

The only changes that I foresee to the course would be to slightly reduce the workload so that students could focus on the refinement stage of the painting process.