

COURSE SYLLABUS

Intermediate Drawing

Course code: ART 181

Term and year: Spring 2025

Day and time: Tuesday 11:15 – 14:00

Instructor: MgA. Martin Káňa

Instructor contact: mkanax@seznam.cz

Consultation hours: After class

Art fee: 2500 CZK

Art fees for this course will be used to cover: materials, art supplies, gallery visits, live model

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Introductory
Length	15 weeks	Pre-requisite	None
Contact hours	42 hours	Course type	Bachelor, Required/elective

1. Course Description

Drawing is the basic means of artistic expression and probably also the oldest visual art medium. A line is always at hand, even if drawn with our finger in the sand or on dewy glass. Through drawing we can think, search and find. Drawing is the beginning, and it can also be the end. Artistic abilities are inborn to everyone. But only those who learn to draw (paint, model) can become artists, because art is about developing one's artistic skills (innate to the term art).

Drawing is a way of gaining means of perceiving the world and its reflections in the form of visions that our consciousness creates spontaneously, unintentionally, without having to initiate such visions resulting in images (e.g. Gombrich on visions and projections of animals in the cave stone structures or on seeing images in the clouds). Drawing in fact is a two-directional process of learning. It is based on observing and acquiring the ability to imitate the seen reality yet avoiding any mechanical traps of the optical illusion of local detail. The more we describe fact, the better, does not apply here. On the contrary, discovering the truth in drawing is a process reminiscent of opening a theater curtain that hides the stage.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Students in the course will be learning to consciously organize their perceptions under the overall format of the drawing. The "two-directional" nature of drawing would be the guide in the study of drawing from the beginning to the final state of the course, and will be reflected in student's learning outcomes, that should consist at least of three main components:

- The level of effort, desire to create, energy invested in learning (primary for example with Vincent Van Gogh)
- Skillfulness (as in sports), experience, competence

- Education, knowledge, level of thinking (student's intelligence), experience.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Render objects, people and scenes with increased accuracy
2. Recognize the work of some of the best draftsmen in the history of art and
3. Express their drawing aims and strategies verbally

3. Reading Material

Required Materials

- Robert Seethaler, Drawing Lessons from The Great Masters
- Elie Faure, History of Art: The Spirit of the Forms
- George B. Bridgman, Constructive Anatomy
- Charles Barque et Jean-Leon Gerome, Drawing Course, ACC Art Books
- Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Eye and Mind:
http://www.biolingugem.com/ling_cog_cult/merleauponty_1964_eyehandmind.pdf

Recommended Materials

- Jitka Svobodová Obrazy, kresby, objekty 1965-2021
- Karel Teissig, Technika Kresby
- *History of Drawing* by Thomas Buser – <https://historyofdrawing.com/>
- *Keys to Drawing* by Bert Dodson:
https://ia803206.us.archive.org/16/items/Keys_to_Drawing/Keys_to_Drawing.pdf

4. Teaching methodology

Our goal will be to study from the most basic forms to the most complex, from a simple geometric component in a still life to such a complex subject as a portrait and the human figure. We will divide the fourteen lessons into three blocks:

1. Drawing from simple shapes: vase, bottle, drapery, object of nature, to a combination of objects in a still life. We will end with the relationship of the individual components to the possible content and "significant message" of the composition.
2. Drawing based on the plaster casts of the human body, from the skull to individual parts of the body to the entire figure.
3. Drawing from a live model, from portrait to full figure.

For the easiest grasp of drawing, we will use its most strategic advantage, which is material simplicity, in a sense where nothing distracts us and we can devote ourselves fully to understanding the forms and content of our study. As basic materials, we will use high-quality pencils of the B series (1 to 6), H series (1-6) or natural charcoal and a soft eraser. It is also recommended to use suitable paper: smoothed natural paper (preferably ecological, but also strong enough) or high-quality wrapping paper of different colors, which is especially suitable for charcoal drawing. The basic goal is to reach even complete beginners and step by step to understand the phenomenon of drawing.

5. Course Schedule

Date	Class Agenda
Session 1	<p>Topic: Drawing simple shapes to compositions and their “meanings”</p> <p>Description: Drawing of a simple object. A square object requires the observation of perspective, the drawing of a vessel mastering an ellipse, which is not geometric, but observed from reality. This already requires connecting all elements (parts) into one whole. The goal is not a description, but an organized construction, even if we are not talking about composition yet, just about placement in format and size, most often life-like.</p>
Session 2	<p>Topic: Drawing of a more complex object,</p> <p>Description: Drawing a combination of straight and rotating shapes. And a broken surface. We will focus on the combination of shapes and perspective, Main objectives: Proportion, perspective, life size and placement in the format. Technically, one works with a series of B and H pencils. The student learns to use hatching to express spatial relationships and texture.</p>
Session 3	<p>Topic: A study of a natural organic form</p> <p>Description: A study of a natural organic form (e.g. a withered branch, for more advanced draftsmen a study of plants as a scientific drawing). Even if it is an amorphous shape, the student must observe the proportions and texture of the surface of the shape. At the same time, the interconnectedness of details to form a unified whole.</p>
Session 4	<p>Topic: Shading</p> <p>Description: Drapery drawing. or crumpled paper. Working with hatch shading. Although it is an amorphous shape, the accuracy of the proportions is observed. An abstract rhythmic structure emerges the more accurate and coherent the whole drawing is. The meaning of the study is in the harmonious composition of the values. Students can independently search for studies of Renaissance masters (e.g. Leonardo Da Vinci) in order to understand the meaning and purpose of these studies.</p>
Session 5	<p>Topic: More complex geometric body</p> <p>Description: A drawing of a solitary, more complex geometric body, e.g. a chair. or another piece of furniture.</p> <p>The student will focus on capturing the proportions and perspective in accordance with the format of the drawing.</p>
Session 6	<p>Topic: Still life</p> <p>Description: Drawing of a group of objects arranged into a still life. The composition is made up of simple rotated shapes (jug, bottle, plate) on a sculptural tripod. We will try to realize, to develop our innate compositional vision. Still life drawing is a classical discipline that lost its original meaning (in the Dutch still life) and later became a pretext for a more musical and lyrical image construction (eg Giorgio Morandi). The task for students is to stick to the composition and build the proportions of the drawing so that they connect to each other and form a cohesive whole.</p>
Session 7	<p>Topic: Structural composition</p>

	<p>Description: The subject assignment is a still life of chaotically piled objects. The goal is structural composition. The student learns to see the composition in an infinitely diverse reality, no matter how it is viewed from any angle. Composition must be generated by intuition. Here, too, the room must respect the proportions, as in other amorphous tasks (e.g. draperies).</p>
	<p>Midterm Break</p>
Session 8	<p>Topic: Studies of the skull.</p> <p>Description: We will study the skull as a complex, not just an anatomical shape, the skull is the carrier of many meanings and symbols as well as the character of the individuality itself in the portrait. The skull is the entry point to portraiture and figuration. Like drawing from a live model, in this task we create the composition at each point of view intuitively, without prior arrangement.</p>
Session 9	<p>Topic: Study of Greek or Renaissance sculpture</p> <p>Description: Study Based on a plaster model of the head of a Greek or Renaissance sculpture. The advantage is in the possibility of learning from the old masters of building a form as a harmonious composition of proportions and linking every detail into a whole. Everything is already solved in these sculptures. The student creates only a replica, similar to a musician playing according to a musical score.</p>
Session 10	<p>Topic: Study of a head</p> <p>Description: Study Based on a plaster model of the head in an upright position (dropped or rotating head) with expressive facial expressions. We will try to capture and understand the dynamics of movement and expression depicted in a classical sculptural work.</p>
Session 11	<p>Topic: Torso</p> <p>Description: Study based on a plaster cast of an antique torso or full figure. We will develop the study according to the classical model, We will try to understand the dynamics of movement and expression in the final sculptural work by experienced masters</p>
Session 12	<p>Topic: Live Model</p> <p>Description: Portrait based on a live model. Now we will proceed to the realization of our own drawing concept of the portrait. Drawing a portrait based on a living model aims to capture a form that is not only superficial, but rather hidden in depth. It should reveal a hidden characteristic of the model's personality that is not only in the facial expression ("Who would have guessed how to darken the face using facial muscles to express the human form" quote by Paul Cezanne). ideally capture his psychology as well</p>
Session 13	<p>Topic: Seated Figure, live model</p> <p>Description: Half-figure drawing, based on a seated model. The task is focused on the relationship of head posture (tilt), in relation to the body and hands. Hands in portraiture in the history of painting (Rembrandt Van Rijn) significantly supported the characteristics of a person's personality.</p>
Session 14	<p>Topic: Standing Figure</p> <p>Description: Drawing a standing figure (or lying down) according to a</p>

	<p>model is the ultimate discipline of drawing in art from a historical perspective. The bottom line is that students must learn to see a composition piece from any point of view. Only when the draftsman has a clear vision can he get to work. Above all, the danger of prioritizing a local detail over the overall structure must be avoided. They must base the drawing on the main image planes. Drawing a figure is not putting details side by side, but on the contrary "slicing" the format into main parts, subject to the construction of the composition. A drawing is not a mechanical description of reality, but a consistent organization of fragments that are interconnected and follow each other. Anatomical verisimilitude is not the goal in figure drawing. The bearer of expression is the rhythm of shadow and light. Line is an abstract concept, it arises in transitions of lights and shadows. The figure controls the entire surface of the format, even if somewhere the paper is empty, like a dash in musical notation, which, however, is part of the whole.</p> <p>now we can start to draw and develop the whole range of possibilities offered by drawing the human body and looking at it. Also as a tool for observation, capture and artistic interpretation of the world as we perceive it. For inspiration, we have the entire artistic history of the world, in which the naked and clothed human body served as the most original and fundamental views of ourselves.</p>

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Attendance and Class Participation	42	20%	Regular attendance is crucial to your learning and to the progress in your studies	3
Studies of Objects and Compositions	30	20%	Understanding the structure and material of basic objects and elements of nature, and creating more complex units and compositions (still life)	1, 3
Classical figure compositions based on plaster casts	30	20%	Rendering the proportions and organization of the mass, capturing expression of the artistic stylization and of the composition in a format.	1, 3
Drawing of a figure from live model	30	20%	Rendering proportions, composing figure into a format, capturing individual character of a model.	1, 3
Individual Homework	18	20%	Individual independent work and development of the class topic with emphasis on an original	1, 2

			approach and engagement with the study material.	
TOTAL	150	100%		

*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective & Responsible Action

7. Detailed description of the assignments

Assignment 1: *Studies of Objects and Compositions, Still Life*

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Proportions	25%
Capturing the character of the structure and material of the rendered objects	25%
Composition	25%
Quality of creative presentation (proficiency, mastering of expression)	25%

Assignment 2: *Figure Study of Plaster Casts*

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Proportion and understanding of the composition of the matter	25%
Composition (placing into a format)	25%
Capturing artistic stylization of the artist	25%
Quality of creative presentation (proficiency, mastering of expression)	25%

Assignment 3: *Drawing of Figure from Live Model*

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Proportions	25%
Composition	25%
Capturing the individual character of the model	25%
Quality of creative presentation (proficiency, mastering of expression)	25%

Assignment 4: *Individual Homework*

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Realization of the task	50%
Originality within the given theme	25%
Quality of creative presentation (proficiency, mastering of expression)	25%

8. General Requirements and School Policies

General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to

maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work. Please see the AAU intranet for a [summary of key policies](#) regarding coursework.

Course specific requirements

There are no special requirements or deviations from AAU policies for this course.