

Alexa Wheeler, Instructor
Book Arts

Course Objectives and Goals:

This class is designed as a creative investigation of the book as an art form. The traditional and non-traditional aspects of the book format provide a practical and aesthetic challenge between form and content, and the investigation of image and text combinations and options. A number of book forms and binding options, such as the Basic Codex, Blind, Fan, Fold, and Complex forms are tested and practiced in assignments and projects.

1. Enjoy Bookmaking.
2. Learn several book forms and bookmaking techniques and their historical and contemporary uses.
3. Exercise each technique enough to feel comfortable using it as your own tool.
4. Understand form and content, image and text.
5. Express your personal experiences in your art making.
6. Feel comfortable to talk about your techniques, processes, stories & experiences in your images.

Requirements:

Attendance:

Strictly required. Absence is not looked upon favorably. Three unexcused absences will result in a drop from the class. Most classes will include demonstrations that are informative and time consuming, and difficult to repeat, so, it's best to be there on time. Consecutively coming late or leaving early will result in a lowering of your grade. Absence from shop clean up will also result in a lowered grade.

Class Participation and Involvement in your Work:

Be ready for each project spiritually and physically. Be interested and involved in your own project as well as your classmates'. Be aware of your surroundings, experiences and image making processes. Keep thinking about your work and the connections between what you make and the connection between yourself, your life, society, the nation, the world, etc....

Completion of Each Project:

Make each project meaningful to yourself. The time you spend on your work, mentally and physically, will be apparent. Spend time developing your own interests and incorporate them into your artistic expression in book form. Keep all the prints you make during the semester including proofs. There will be four scheduled critiques where books are expected to be in their finished state. You will be creating your own Final Project using the techniques learned throughout the semester. Any projects above and beyond those assigned will be taken into consideration when grading.

Classroom Etiquette, Studio Clean-Up, Lab Safety:

You are expected to work amiably with other artists in a physically tight workshop situation. This means all students are to be respectful of the shop, each other and each other's artwork and materials. Clean up of the studio and proper use of the equipment is expected. There will be a major shop clean up at the end of semester and attendance is required!

Grade Policy

Attendance, Class participation, Involvement, Development	30%
Completion & Quality of each project	30%
Achievement of class goals	20%
Participation in critiques	10%
Classroom etiquette & Cleaning up	10%

Tentative Schedule

Week 1	Introduction Accordion Book: Consider horizontal or vertical format; consider pace of images and text; consider rhythm of the book folded or extended; consider multiple folds, flaps, ties, with or without stitching, any material, paper, fabric, etc..., with or without text.
Week 2	<u>Accordion Book Critique</u> Altered Book: Use a published book and alter it. Change it's focus, it's subject, it's purpose, it's character. Change it's physical shape. Elaborate on it, add to it, subtract from it, censor, staple, fold, and manipulate: paint, cut, tear, glue, tape, burn, drive over it, wrinkle it, soak, take apart, and rebind – repackage it.
Week 3	Altered Book

- Week 4 Altered Book Critique
Anthropomorphic Book:
Reference the human body, the nature of being human (origins, culture, development, evolution, etc...). Develop ideas through images, format, shape of the book, content, opinion, choice of materials, choices for text. Consider anatomy, physical existence, disease, mortality, and perceptions of beauty.
- Week 5 Anthropomorphic Book
- Week 6 Anthropomorphic Book Critique
Contained Content:
Choose: Book-Box, Book-Vessel, Book-Bundle, Book-Container – Consider the relationship of the container form to the content of the book. Use the form to elaborate on the content; let the form make its own visual statement.
- Week 7 Contained Content
- Week 8 Contained Content Critique
Anything-But-Paper Book:
The support material for image and/or text must be usable material other than paper: fabric, plastic, vinyl, plexi, glass, leather, lead, wood, foil, wax, stone, clay, metal, foliage, bone, food, etc....Consider if material complements or contrasts content. Any scale, shape, weight.
- BREAK
- Week 9 Anything-But-Paper Book
- Week 10 Anything-But-Paper Book Critique
Book of Opposites:
Consider opposing forces, opposite characteristics, objective and subjective issues, physical, spiritual, emotional and intellectual opposites, mirror images, conflicts, inside, outside, etc....Take a complex narrative, story, idea or theory, and arrange it within a complex book structure: multiple signatures, fold-out pages, pop-ups, pockets, envelopes. Consider transparency and opacity, movement, and sequence.
- Week 11 Book of Opposites

- Week 12 Book of Opposites Critique
Primer:
Choose a subject of strong interest to you and create a primer for yourself or for an audience on the subject. Distill the relevant information in images and/or text; extract, refine (do not over simplify). This primer should be thoughtful, creative, sophisticated, focused and clear. Make it the kind of book that you will still find refreshing, intelligent, compelling and resourceful ten years from now!
- Week 13 Primer
- Week 14 Primer Critique
Final Project
- Week 15 Final Project
- Week 16 Final Critique including Final Project
Shop Clean Up

Material List –

Sketch book
Scissors
X-acto knife and blades
Triangle
T-square
Metal straight edge
Clear plastic ruler
Brushes for gluing, 2 soft, 2 stiff
Adhesive: Sobo glue, PVA, wheat paste
Bone folder
Thread: #12 or #18 upholstery or darning thread
Awl
Needle: darning or tapestry needle
Book cloth
Book board, 2 or 4 ply

Suggested Texts –

The following texts by Keith A. Smith:

- Structure of the Visual Book
- Non-Adhesive Binding
- Text in the Book Format