

# College of Fine Arts Interdisciplinary Courses

## About Course Numbers:

Each Carnegie Mellon course number begins with a two-digit prefix that designates the department offering the course (i.e., 76-xxx courses are offered by the Department of English). Although each department maintains its own course numbering practices, typically, the first digit after the prefix indicates the class level: xx-1xx courses are freshmen-level, xx-2xx courses are sophomore level, etc. Depending on the department, xx-6xx courses may be either undergraduate senior-level or graduate-level, and xx-7xx courses and higher are graduate-level. Consult the Schedule of Classes (<https://enr-apps.as.cmu.edu/open/SOC/SOCServlet/>) each semester for course offerings and for any necessary pre-requisites or co-requisites.

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## 62-002 CFA Elective

Intermittent: 9 units  
TBA

## 62-106 Architecture and the Arts

Fall: 9 units  
This interdisciplinary course explores the entangled relationship between architecture and the arts, and their struggle between autonomy and engagement. It will be structured around a series of themes, drawings, and writings that reveal architecture's constantly changing involvement with art, culture, society, and related disciplines. The course functions both an introduction to Architecture as Art for a general audience, as well as a critical introduction to architectural thinking and theory for architecture majors. The course will include slide lectures, readings, reading reports, discussions, and a series of research exercises to engage architecture and art more critically, and an exam. We'll examine the common roots, disparate characters, and inter-twined histories of architecture and the arts. We'll investigate not just buildings and art works, but ideas, drawings, images and other representations involved in the construction and reception of architecture that often relate closely to the arts. We'll look at shared terms like composition, rhythm, studio, and form. We'll define architecture in relation to categories such as fine and applied arts, high and low arts, visual and performing arts, and relate these to broad categories such as design, visual culture, and the liberal arts. We'll ask "why" we make architecture and art, rather than "how," and discuss how the human need for expression and meaning can augment the technical and constructed value of mere making or building. We'll debate how the discipline of architecture has been, and can continue to be framed as a fine art, but also act as a service profession, a political tool, a technical expertise, a research endeavor, or as a mode of cultural discourse.

## 62-113 Darkroom to Digital Photography

Intermittent: 5 units  
Formed around a series of workshops, this course will integrate digital and analog photography together to help students develop a unique image making practice. Students will use darkroom techniques and analog cameras with digitally enabled capture devices to merge long-standing photographic traditions with contemporary approaches. Basic techniques will be reviewed but the course will quickly progress. Course highlights include, but aren't limited to: film scanning, Photoshop with film in mind, using analog cameras with digital capture devices, and exploring the distinctions between analog and digital output. Knowledge of basic camera principals recommended but not required. A lab fee is charged for this course.

## 62-122 Digital Media I

Fall: 6 units  
This course will engage in an overview of foundational workflows in digital media regarding two-dimensional representation techniques for spatial design processes. The course is divided into two topics with one assignment each: Technical Drawing and 2D Graphics. Students are required to submit work at the end of each class, in addition to self-guided work outside of class times: satisfactory completions of the two assignments, specific Lynda tutorials, final project, and final portfolio are required for the successful completion of the course. Through these deliverables, the course will inquire issues of 2D representation as it pertains to the effective communication of technical and conceptual information in spatial design processes. With digital media, designers now have an arsenal of tools that can subvert and augment traditional means of representation with exponentially greater fidelity and efficiency. Students will have an opportunity to practice these values and favor hybrid approaches that strive to blur the boundaries of analog and digital media, so as to learn how to be versatile in leveraging all forms of media for the design task at hand. Students are required to bring their own laptop computers with AutoCAD, Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign installed.

## 62-138 Photographic Lighting Techniques

Fall and Spring: 5 units  
This half semester studio will introduce students to a variety of photographic lighting techniques, conceptual approaches, equipment, and technical applications. Students will work with natural and artificial lighting across a range of photographic methods, applying their learned skills to still life, portraiture, landscape, street photography, and reportage. This class will teach students to work with various types of lighting equipment and situations in the field and in the studio. Regular in class demos, lectures, and critiques will introduce equipment and concepts. A lab fee is charged for this course.

## 62-139 Photography as Meditation: A Walking Photographic Practice

Fall and Spring: 5 units  
This half semester studio course will explore the ways in which walking and photography intersect as a meditative practice to benefit creative work. Students will be introduced to these approaches through a series of readings, photographic prompts, lectures, and excursions. This class will consider walking in both literal and metaphoric forms. Students will use the contemplative act and slowed pace of a walk to create images of their surroundings. They will also work with walking as a conceptual approach for the examination of archives and as an aid for image editing and sequencing. A lab fee is charged for this course.

## 62-140 Images in Space: Photographic Objects, Materiality, and Installation

Fall and Spring: 10 units  
This course explores the relationship between photography and dimensionality. We will review different frameworks for how photographs interact in physical space, including photographic objects, installations, and materialities. Students will explore these themes through weekly presentations, discussions, assignments, writing workshops, and critiques. We'll look at artists who think critically about photography as it relates to these ideas. This class will encourage experimental methods and approaches to photography. A lab fee is charged for this course.

## 62-141 Black and White Photography I

Fall and Spring: 10 units  
This course will teach you the basic craft of photography from exposure of the negative through darkroom developing and printing to print finishing and presentation. Content includes student presentations, class discussions, shooting assignments, darkroom sessions and class critiques. We will concentrate not only on the technical aspects of photography, but also the aesthetics of seeing with a camera. The course concentrates on photography as a fine art and #8212; what is unique to it and the concerns that are shared with other visual arts, such as composition, tonal values, etc. and aims to equip students with an understanding of the formal issues and the expressive potentials of the medium. Use your own 35 mm camera, or borrow one from us for the semester. Students are responsible for the cost of photo paper and film, and a lab fee is charged for the course.

**62-142 Digital Photography I**

Fall and Spring: 10 units

This course explores digital photography and digital printing methods. By semester's end students will have knowledge of contemporary trends in photography, construction (and deconstruction) of photographic meaning, aesthetic choices, and the use of color. Students will learn how digital cameras work, proper digital workflow, RAW file handling, color management and Adobe Photoshop. Through the combination of the practical and theoretical, students will better define their individual voices as photographers. No prerequisites. A lab fee is charged for this course.

**62-150 IDEATe Portal: Introduction to Media Synthesis and Analysis**

Fall: 10 units

Technologists, artists, and designers are engaging in new, interdisciplinary modes to consume, create, and reuse media. To do this, they thoughtfully collaborate and critically reflect on media creation, distribution, participation, interaction, and how media affects the audience. In this course, students will challenge themselves to work in these new modal contexts by thinking critically in a genre of exploration. They will formulate the intent of their creative work, articulate relationships to art/design practice and theory, and respond insightfully to creative, media-rich outcomes. The class will introduce core concepts through foundational texts, in-class exercises, collaborative projects, and group critique. Through hands-on media exploration, students will ground concepts such as embodiment, emergence, composition, participatory interfaces, and mediated experiences. Section A will be an Introduction to Textile Media. Section B will be an Introduction to Mediascapes: 2D to 3D Spatial Environments. Section C will be Life in the Digital Factory: Spatial Storytelling about Computational Landscapes.

Course Website: <https://ideate.cmu.edu/courses/portal-and-section-details.html>

**62-207 IDEATe: Variational Geometry I**

Fall: 6 units

This course will introduce concepts and strategies for the modeling and development of complex computational geometry for 3D printing purposes and introduce algorithmic thinking using the Rhinoceros McNeel platform and Grasshopper plugin. This course is intended for students with no or little 3-D modeling skills to advance their abilities in modeling, digital prototyping and visual communication.

Course Website: <http://ideate.cmu.edu/about-ideate/departments/college-fine-arts/ideate-variational-geometry-i/>

**62-232 Eye Mind Hand**

Fall: 10 units

Do your eyes ever play tricks on you? Have you ever wondered if what you see is real? What if you could create artworks that alter how other people see? Come learn how artists, philosophers, and neuroscientists have all sought to understand human perception. This course will investigate a range of observational drawing techniques and consider how memory, cognition, and purpose all shape what and how we see. "Eye Mind Hand" will involve lectures, readings, and discussions, but is designed primarily as a studio course. Open to all students with previous drawing experience and a love for the unknown.

**62-241 Black and White Photography II**

Fall and Spring: 10 units

Black and White Photography II continues developing your technical skills in analog photography by introducing medium and large format cameras and prints. Large format view cameras remain the state of the art in control and quality in both film and digital photography. These cameras as well as unusual panoramic and pinhole cameras will be supplied. This course emphasizes aesthetic development and personal artistic growth through individual tutorials and group critiques, and will help to build professional level photography skills. Additional topics include digital printing and negative scanning, advanced monotone printing methods, and a focus on exhibition and folio presentation. Students are responsible for the cost of photo paper and film, and a lab fee is charged for the course.

Prerequisites: 62-141 or 60-141

**62-245 Portrait Photography**

Intermittent: 10 units

Portraiture maintains a unique standing in photography for its direct and collaborative relationship between an individual and a photographer. This course will examine this relationship and the larger contexts which provide the conceptual framework for deriving meaning and understanding from an image of another person. We will study the theoretical and practical aspects of portrait photography in both studio and environmental settings, providing students with an understanding of the genre by developing both technical and conceptual skill sets. Students will utilize analog and digital equipment, learn studio lighting techniques, develop approaches to working with natural light, and explore methods of printing and presentation. Students will gain knowledge in the development of portraiture through the work of notable figures in the medium's history and contemporary field, including August Sander, Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, Dawoud Bey, Milton Rogovin, Rineke Dijkstra, Zoe Strauss, Susan Lipper, Justine Kurland, Stefan Ruiz, Larry Sultan, Carrie Mae Weems, Roy DeCarava and Alec Soth. Class discussions, readings and critiques will provide an outline for completing both single and serial image assignments. A lab fee is charged for this course.

**62-247 Introduction to Hot Glass I**

Fall and Spring: 3 units

Learn to blow glass. In this introductory class, you'll learn to gather clear molten glass from the furnace and shape it into various forms, from paperweights to simple blown shapes, such as cups and bowls. Instruction focuses on a team approach to glassblowing, with an emphasis on safety, proper tool use, basic techniques, and materials. You'll never drink from a glass again without appreciating the energy and detail that went into making it! No experience is required. You may wish to take this class a second time in order to continue to develop and refine basic skills before moving on to Hot Glass 2. Each time you take it, your skill level, confidence, and passion for glass will grow. Hot Shop Open Studio time is purposefully included with this 8-week course to give students independent studio time to practice the skills demonstrated in class and prepare students to feel comfortable renting the hot shop if desired. 2 free (1 hour) Open Studio sessions per student are included with tuition to Hot Glass 1. Attending Open Studio session(s) contributes to final grade for CMU students. Open studio is offered on Mondays 5:00pm - 9:00pm and Fridays 10:00am - 12:00pm. Students must attend at least one open studio session (in addition to their 8 classes) to receive an A in this course. Registration for Pittsburgh Glass Center classes can only be done on or after your scheduled registration day. Spaces are limited. Registration is done on a first come, first served basis. Please email Stefanie McGowan ([stefanim@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:stefanim@andrew.cmu.edu)) for more information and to register. Course fee is \$340. Not eligible for PCHE Cross Registration. Course taught at the Pittsburgh Glass Center. Courses at the Pittsburgh Glass Center will run from September 22, 2026 to November 22, 2026.

Course Website: <https://www.pittsburghglasscenter.org/>

**62-279 Photography and the Ineffable**

Fall and Spring: 10 units

This course explores the relationship between photography and the indescribable, intangible, and hard-to-see. From the spiritual, to the sublime, to the abstract; we will review different frameworks for thinking about the ineffable and how it relates to photographic work. Students will explore these themes through weekly presentations, discussions, assignments, writing workshops, and critiques. We'll look at artists who think critically about photographic representation and investigate a heightened sensorial interpretation of the world. This class will encourage experimental methods and approaches to photography. A lab fee is charged for this course.

**62-314 The Art of Personal Finance**

Fall and Spring: 6 units

Money is an inevitable part of our everyday lives. Managing the money we earn and living within our means is essential to ensure that we have the freedom to do what we want to do with our lives. However, even if we successfully eliminate debt and save for the future, true financial freedom will not exist unless we have a plan to guide us on our way. In this course, students will create a simple one-page financial plan that they can use to guide them through their next several years as they cultivate the skills that will ensure their artistic success. Additionally, they will develop the tools needed to support the execution of the plan and create a sourcebook of information they can refer to in the future as their lives (and their financial plans) change.

**62-315 Shaping Environments: Experiments in Geometry and (Waste)Matter**

Fall

Shaping Environments is a design-research seminar that explores alternative material formations beyond our current petrochemical reality. Using digital environments and computational tools, such as photogrammetry, depth-map texture modeling, AI workflows, and 3D printing, we will experiment with shaping new hybrid material systems. Using resources, such as food and/or construction waste, our goal is to propose new material paradigms that embrace ecological thinking and environmental stewardship through physical prototyping.

**62-343 Professional Practices in Photography**

Fall and Spring: 10 units

This studio course will introduce students to the working methods of professional photographers and artists. For the first half of the course, students will develop a substantial body of visual work. They will then use that work in the second half of the semester to produce portfolios across a variety of media (digital, print, web, exhibition, etc.). Throughout the process they will develop skills in constructing and completing projects, cultivate their personal vision and aesthetic tastes, explore methods of disseminating their work to larger audiences, establish time management and planning around long form projects, and acquire an understanding of the marketing, outreach and community building necessary for working artists to build and sustain a career.

Prerequisites: 62-141 or 62-142 or 60-141 or 60-142

**62-347 Hot Glass II**

Fall and Spring: 3 units

Enroll in Hot II and build on your existing skill set and expand your creative potential. Refine and diverge from the standard cup and bowl shape in the first few weeks before moving on to more complex forms. Explore basic color application methods and learn how to troubleshoot common problems. It is recommended that all students take this class a second time in order to continue to develop and refine basic skills before moving on to Hot Glass 3. Hot I, 24 hours of hot shop experience, or instructor permission is required. 2 free (1 hour) rental sessions per student are included with tuition to Hot Glass 2. Rental time is purposefully included with this 8-week course to give students independent studio time to practice the skills demonstrated in class and prepare students to feel comfortable renting the hot shop if desired. Using rental session(s) contributes to final grade for CMU students. Students must attend at least one rental session (in addition to their 8 classes) to receive an A in this course. Studio rental is scheduled based around student schedule and studio availability. Registration for Pittsburgh Glass Center classes can only be done on or after your scheduled registration day. Spaces are limited. Registration is done on a first come, first served basis. Please email Stefanie McGowan (stefanim@andrew.cmu.edu) for more information and to register. Course fee is \$340. Not eligible for PCHE Cross Registration. Course taught at the Pittsburgh Glass Center. Courses at the Pittsburgh Glass Center will run from September 22, 2026 to November 21, 2026.

Prerequisite: 62-247

Course Website: <https://www.pittsburghglasscenter.org>**62-360 Photographers and Photography Since World War II**

Spring: 9 units

Invented in 1839, photography was a form of visual expression that immediately attracted a large public following. Starting around 1900, photography was practiced with two dominant strands. One of these firmly believed in the power of photographs to provide a window on the world, and was led by Lewis Hine, whose documentary photographs for the National Child Labor Committee helped to ameliorate living and working conditions for thousands of immigrant children. The other strand adhered to the philosophy of Alfred Stieglitz who adamantly affirmed that photographs were first and foremost reflections of the soul and were art objects, equal to painting, drawing and sculpture. These two schools of thought guided photographers throughout the twentieth century. This course explores in depth the tremendous range of photographic expression since World War II and examines in particular the contributions of significant image-makers such as Helen Levitt, W. Eugene Smith, Robert Frank, Diane Arbus, Garry Winogrand, Charles "Teenie" Harris, Cindy Sherman, Carrie Mae Weems, Nan Goldin, James Nachtwey, and many others. Classes include a slide lecture, student presentation, and video segments that introduce a focused selection of images by major photographers in an attempt to understand their intentions, styles, and influences.

**62-362 IDEATe: Electronic Logics && Creative Practice**

Intermittent: 12 units

Electronic Logics and amp; and amp; Creative Practice investigates the fundamentals of electronic computation as metaphors for art and interaction. Students explore technology through a creative lens, as conceptual and physical material to be manipulated and synthesized, by examining the basis of digital computation alongside contemporary and new media art practices. There are three main units: Gates (the logical building blocks of computers), Flow (ways in which signals "flow" through physical and electronic systems), and Arrows (the stacked layers of indirection used in modern computer systems). These major themes are addressed through lecture, readings, and the creation of individual and collaborative works. Throughout the semester students complete a series of quick thematic exercises and three larger-scale projects; these works are reviewed through meetings, group critique, and documentation. Our toolbox includes 7400-series logic chips, the Arduino electronics platform, software, wood, laser cut acrylic, found objects, props, projections, and glue. We address technical engineering subjects (e.g. Karnaugh maps) alongside art and performance theory. Students deepen conceptual skills while increasing the scale and ambition of creative output. The course culminates in an end-of-semester showcase where students publicly exhibit their work.

**62-371 Photography, The First 100 Years, 1839-1939**

Fall: 9 units

Photography was announced to the world almost simultaneously in 1839, first in France and then a few months later in England. Accurate "likenesses" of people were available to the masses, and soon reproducible images of faraway places were intriguing to all. This course will explore the earliest image-makers Daguerre and Fox Talbot, the Civil War photographs organized by Mathew Brady, the introduction in 1888 of the Kodak by George Eastman, the critically important social documentary photography of Jacob Riis and his successor, Lewis Hine, the Photo-Secession of Alfred Stieglitz, the Harlem Renaissance of James VanDerZee, the precisionist f64 photographers Ansel Adams, Imogen Cunningham, and Edward Weston, and other important photographers who came before World War II. The class will be introduced to 19th century processes, such as the daguerreotype, tintype, and ambrotype, as well as albumen prints, cyanotypes, and more.

**62-423 IDEATe Inclusive Design Studio: From Interview to Product w Physical Computing**

Fall: 10 units

This project-based IDEATe interdisciplinary course is structured around the design and fabrication of a novel piece of assistive technology for a local person living with a disability. Students will work on teams to interview their client, ideate prospective interventions, prototype iteratively with client feedback, and finally, build a fully realized functional device to be given to the client for long-term use. The course addresses intermediate/advanced technical topics in the realm of physical computing. Learning is driven in part by project needs, and may include: PCB design, how to specify electronic components, 3D computer-aided design (CAD) for digital fabrication, and how to fabricate more mechanically and electrically robust final products. Each student team is expected to open-source their final design's hardware and software so that it can be shared with an international community of assistive technology makers, and teams are invited to submit their final products to assistive technology design competitions. In addition to the technical material, the course content includes project design elements such as conducting an effective needfinding interview with a client and using prototyping as a means of answering important empirical questions about the project. Students are expected to arrive having already acquired intro-level physical computing skills: they should have experience designing and building physical computing systems that read inputs from multiple types of sensors, do some computation on a microcontroller (such as an Arduino, ESP32, Raspberry Pi Pico, etc.), and drive multiple types of output actuators concurrently.

Course Website: <https://courses.ideate.cmu.edu/62-423> (<https://courses.ideate.cmu.edu/62-423/>)

**62-450 Introduction to Flameworking**

Fall and Spring: 3 units

Learn flame shop essentials and a variety of creative techniques while working with a solid rod of glass. Using a propane/oxygen torch, students will learn to melt and manipulate glass into little treasures, such as beads, pendants, marbles, chains, and sculptures. Over the course of 8 weeks, learn color application, hand control, and annealing. The instructor will also provide one-on-one troubleshooting. Class tuition includes 2 hours of open-studio time to be used during the 8-week course period. Flame Shop Open Studio time is purposefully included with this 8-week course to give students independent studio time to practice the skills demonstrated in class and prepare students to feel comfortable renting the flame shop if desired. 1 free 2-hour session Open Studio sessions per student are included with tuition to Flame 1. Open studio is only offered on Mondays 5:00pm - 9:00pm. Registration for Pittsburgh Glass Center classes can only be done on or after your scheduled registration day. Spaces are limited. Registration is done on a first come, first served basis. Please email Stefanie McGowan (stefanim@andrew.cmu.edu) for more information and to register. Course fee is \$240. Not eligible for PCHE Cross Registration. Course taught at the Pittsburgh Glass Center. Courses at the Pittsburgh Glass Center will run from September 22, 2026 to November 21, 2026.

Course Website: <https://www.pittsburghglasscenter.org>

**62-459 Intro to Stained Glass**

Fall and Spring: 3 units

Explore the possibilities of colorful stained glass. In this introductory course, you will learn the basics for working with flat glass; cutting, grinding, foiling, and soldering. You will explore the famous Tiffany Method of construction and work with provided patterns to create a beautiful stained-glass pane ready for display! This class is designed for beginners and is a pre-requisite for Intermediate and Advanced Stained Glass. Registration for Pittsburgh Glass Center classes can only be done on or after your scheduled registration day. Spaces are limited. Registration is done on a first come, first served basis. Please email Stefanie McGowan (stefanim@andrew.cmu.edu) for more information and to register. Course fee is \$275. Not eligible for PCHE Cross Registration. Course taught at the Pittsburgh Glass Center. Intro to Stained Glass courses at the Pittsburgh Glass Center will run from September 22, 2026 to November 20, 2026.

Course Website: <https://www.pittsburghglasscenter.org>

**62-460 Advanced Studio: Open Print, Drawing, and Photo Workshop**

Intermittent: 10 units

A flexible, interdisciplinary studio, this course offers the opportunity for exploration across printmaking, drawing, and photography. Rather than building toward a single prescribed outcome, the workshop emphasizes process, experimentation, and skill-building, encouraging students to move fluidly between media or integrate them into hybrid projects. Alongside self-directed work, students will participate in regular demonstrations such as the introduction of relief, monotype, and screen print, photopolymer plates, cyanotype, and experimental drawing. The workshop fosters a collaborative and supportive atmosphere where students can push technical boundaries and expand their visual language.

**62-478 IDEATe: digiTOOL**

Fall and Spring: 9 units

This course serves as an introduction to the fundamental concepts, processes, and procedures to utilize digital and traditional equipment within the IDEATe facilities in Hunt Library. After completion, participating students should leave with a thorough understanding of 3D modeling, 3D printing, laser cutting, engraving, and basic finishing techniques. Students will learn how to operate in a safe, responsible, and efficient manner. This comprehension and experience proves useful for all creative disciplines, and participants are certified for future fabrication equipment access.