

**College of San Mateo**  
**Official Course Outline**

**1. COURSE ID:** ART 255    **TITLE:** Plein Air Painting IV

**Units:** 3.0 units    **Hours/Semester:** 32.0-36.0 Lecture hours; 48.0-54.0 Lab hours; and 64.0-72.0 Homework hours

**Method of Grading:** Grade Option (Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass)

**Prerequisite:** ART 254

**2. COURSE DESIGNATION:**

**Degree Credit**

**Transfer credit:** CSU; UC

**3. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**

**Catalog Description:**

The fourth semester of Plein Air Painting introduces students to expert landscape painting techniques, with an increasing emphasis on personal style and context.

**4. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:

1. Demonstrate expert knowledge of in-depth concepts and techniques learned in Plein Air Painting III.
2. Apply expert landscape painting techniques in paintings.
3. Focus on expert development of personal style and context in landscape painting.

**5. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate expert skill in the use and technique of the painting media.
2. Analyze the landscape before them and create an expert-level composition from that scene, applying the advanced elements of design and pictorial space.
3. Use color in a manner that is technically highly advanced, descriptive and works as part of a harmonious composition.
4. Execute an expert-level quick study in paint, (in one sitting) working outdoors in the landscape.
5. Create expert-level landscape paintings that reflect a personal style and context.

**6. COURSE CONTENT:**

**Lecture Content:**

1. Review the formal concepts of painting:
  - A. Organize the illusion of space through the use of planes (fore ground, middle ground, deep space, etc.) overlap, and both linear and atmospheric perspective.
  - B. Use grouping, value, texture, color and shape when composing the picture.
  - C. Use color and value to define form and to create light.
  - D. Use line, shape, texture and pattern to simplify representational form.
2. Review Technique and Materials:
  - A. Underpaint and use tinted grounds.
  - B. Prepare the materials of painting and other gear necessary or useful for outdoor painting.
3. Choose an appropriate location:
  - A. Determine the subject of the painting.
  - B. Choose a composition and design that is expressive.
  - C. Consider lighting and time of day, weather, etc.
4. Historical precedents:
  - A. Learn the history of plein air painting, especially plein air painting in the SF bay area and contemporary practitioners.
5. Analyze and critique one's work and the work of others in order to develop personal style:
  - A. Participate in individual critiques with the instructor.
  - B. Participate in class critiques where students critique the work of their peers and discuss their own work.
  - C. Create technically advanced plein air paintings that reflect personal style and context.

**Lab Content:**

1. Use expert-level formal concepts of painting.

2. Organize the illusion of space through the use of planes (fore ground, middle ground, deep space, etc.) overlap, and both linear and atmospheric perspective.
3. Use expert-level grouping, value, texture, color and shape when composing the picture.
4. Use expert-level concepts of color and value to define form and to create light.
5. Use expert-level knowledge of line, shape, texture and pattern to simplify representational form.
6. Underpaint and use tinted grounds.
7. Use expert alla prima painting and wet on wet techniques.
8. Show expert understanding of how to handle materials, including brushes, painting knife, portable easel, paints, mediums and their applications.
9. Prepare the materials of painting and other gear necessary or useful for outdoor painting.
10. Show expert knowledge of how to choose a location, a subject, the time of day, and lighting conditions.
11. Complete a minimum of twelve paintings, one from each location visited. These will include:
  - A. At least 1 sustained study, 16" x 20" or larger that was worked on at for two or more sittings.
  - B. At least 6 quick studies, of any size, executed in one sitting.
  - C. At least 6 finished paintings that focus on a cohesive and expert development of style and individual voice.

## 7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Lab
- C. Critique
- D. Directed Study
- E. Discussion
- F. Field Experience
- G. Field Trips
- H. Observation and Demonstration

## 8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

### Writing Assignments:

1. Write a short paper of three to five pages explaining the main points emphasized in the text. Explain how your experience in painting outdoors has helped to make sense of these ideas. Also explain which concepts and/or techniques presented by the author have helped you most in your painting.
2. Write an essay between 200 - 500 words explaining what you feel you have accomplished in the past three semesters of this class and in what areas of plein air painting you feel that you need to improve on for this semester.
3. Write a paper about your favorite style or movement in plein air painting and how your work fits into it.

### Reading Assignments:

1. Read the assigned chapters each week from the required text and take notes of those ideas that you feel you can use while painting.

### Other Outside Assignments:

1. Complete all paintings begun on location.
2. Research the works of a favorite plein air painter (historical or contemporary) and incorporate at least one idea from their work into a painting. This can be a compositional idea, the use of color, the handling of paint, etc. Write a paper and present this orally to the class at one of the weekly class critiques. Include an example of the artist's work in your presentation, whether from a book, a print, or digital form.
3. Give an oral presentation consisting of your work at the end of the semester and discuss the direction that your style and voice in painting has been in the past and where it may be headed in the future.

## 9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Class Work
- C. Field Trips
- D. Homework

- E. Lab Activities
- F. Oral Presentation
- G. Papers
- H. Portfolios
- I. Projects

10. **REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):**

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Johnson, M., C.. *Beautiful Landscape Painting Outdoors: Mastering Plein Air*, ed. Get Creative 6, 2022

**Origination Date:** October 2021

**Curriculum Committee Approval Date:** November 2021

**Effective Term:** Fall 2022

**Course Originator:** Rebecca Alex