CFA-111: Introduction to the College of Fine Arts
Fall 2026 Course Syllabus

Instructor:
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Office Location: *AR -115C*

Student Hours for Questions or Connection: Wednesdays at 4-5 pm OR by appointment. Please send me an email to schedule an appointment.

Course Description:
This course assists all students with declared majors within the College of Fine Arts (CFA) in the transition to university life and learning. Through exploration and discussion of key concepts of the creative process (idea generation, choice making, developing and disseminating), CFA 111 employs variety of learning methodologies to equip students with tools necessary to succeed as artists and students of the arts at Ball State University and beyond.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, successful students will be better able to:
- Articulate key concepts within the creative process
- Develop and utilize effective study and work habits connected to their unique ways of learning
- Adopt professional attitudes and behaviors for college and career
- Define and connect with all dimensions of wellness
- Understand personal strengths and indicate how they connect with success inside and outside of academic and artistic communities
- Identify personal values and incorporate them into decision-making in both artistic and scholarly pursuits as they pertain to time management, goal setting, and career choices
- Understand available campus resources and how to utilize them

Additionally, students who participate in the Touchstones Discussion Program will grow in the following areas:
- Active listening
- Speaking with purpose
- Civility and respect
- Cooperation
- Collaboration
- Shared leadership
- Awareness of self and others

Course Grading:
Instead of a letter grade, you will receive credit (CR) or no-credit (NC) as your final evaluation; 70% is needed to receive credit. Because this class is one where you get what you put into it, a tiered system has been established to help you determine your approach and likelihood of passing. Assignments may be subject to change.

Aspiring Artist – achieves the foundational requirements to pass the class, setting a solid starting point for further growth and learning:

- Attend 10 out of 13 lecture sessions (day one)
- Attend 10 out of 13 Touchstones Discussions (day two)
- Attend 2 out of 3 CFA events
- Complete 6 out of 9 homework assignments

Emerging Artist – demonstrates above-average engagement and effort, actively seeking to maximize learning opportunities and achieve significant progress in the class:

- Attend 11 out of 13 lecture sessions (day one)
- Attend 11 out of 13 Touchstones Discussions (day two)
- Attend 3 out of 3 CFA events
- Complete 7 out of 9 homework assignments

Professional Artist – exhibits exceptional dedication and commitment, fully embracing the class's challenges and opportunities for growth, resulting in comprehensive benefits and personal development:

- Attend 12-13 out of 13 lecture sessions (day one)
- Attend all Touchstones Discussions (day two)
- Attend all 3 CFA events
- Complete all homework assignments

Students who meet the Professional Artist level will receive a certificate at the Student Success Celebration in the spring and recognition within the College of Fine Arts.

Homework Submissions: Most weeks you will have a homework assignment connected to the material learned or in preparation for the following week. These assignments will be submitted through Canvas. Assignments are worth 35% of total grade.

CFA Events: As students of the College of Fine Arts, we want to foster a community that supports all these areas and the students within them. You must attend an event in the School of Art, the School of Music, and the Department of Theatre and Dance by the end of the semester. Proof of attendance with a photo at the event will be the submission along with a brief written response in Canvas. A list of events can be found on the University Calendar. **Events are worth 15% of total grade.**

Attendance is Important:
Class attendance is important, and each session will be full of helpful information and activities. The in-class experience is vital for your success and can ripple throughout your time as a college student and beyond.

Attendance is worth 50% of total grade.

Touchstones Discussions is part of what sets the Signature Experience apart from the other CFA-111 sections. Each week, we will participate in active discussions that actively foster student engagement, habits of lifelong learning, reflective thinking, and greater self-awareness. Touchstones teaches students through interactive practice to work cooperatively, explore what it means to grow intellectually, and chart their roles and responsibilities as individuals and leaders in a civil society. These are the cornerstones of success in school, work, and life.

Technology Policy:
Most of this course will not require the use of technology, unless indicated by the instructor for an in-class activity. In all other circumstances, laptops, phones, and earbuds/earphones should be put away unless the instructor says otherwise, or a student has paperwork from the Office of Disability Services. After 3 tech warnings, you will be counted as absent for the week.

Late Work Policy:
All assignments are due by the set due date and time in Canvas. Students who meet this deadline will be able to receive credit. Assignments submitted after the deadline will receive zero credit unless an agreement has been reached with the instructor. It is subject to the instructor, on case-by-case basis.

AI Usage Policy:
Students are expected to critically engage with course materials and to develop their own ideas and work. While AI tools can assist in the learning process, they should not replace your own thinking, analysis, or creativity. The use of AI must be done ethically and responsibly.

Any work submitted for this course must be your own original work.
All work produced and/or submitted in this course should reflect your own ideas and demonstrate your current knowledge, abilities, and skills. **Therefore, GenAI should not be used to complete any portion of the assignments for this course**. Doing so constitutes a violation of Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Ball State University – Things to Note:

University Statement
We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Freedom of Expression
In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's **Statement on Freedom of Expression**, the resources on Ball State's **Freedom of Expression webpage**, and **Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.**

Accessibility and Accommodations
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. You will need to provide me with the documentation provided by Ball State's Disability Services office and set up a meeting to discuss what this looks like for you specific to this course.

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's **Disability Services** office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or **dsd@bsu.edu**.

The Basic Needs Hub
If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the **Basic Needs Hub**. The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a **Basic Needs Assistance Form**.

The Counseling Center
The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

Course Outline (*subject to change*):

Focus	Week	Class Topic	Homework

Prologue	Week 1	Course Introduction: Why Art?	Exploring Identity and Inspiration Assignment
	Week 2	The Creative Process	CFA Event Worksheet
Idea Generation	Week 3	Strengths & Goals Inspiration	Strengths & Goals Worksheet
	Week 4	Recycling Ideas	Bad Art Assignment
Making Choices	Week 5	Bad Art!	*None*
	Week 6	Making Choices	*None*
	Week 7	Writing as a Creative	In-Class Writing Assignment
Developing and Revising	Week 8	FALL BREAK – No Class	*None*
	Week 9	First Drafts and Iteration	3-D Exercise
	Week 10	Gathering Information: Meet at Bracken Library!	*None*
	Week 11	Criticism	Critic Bio
Sharing and Dissemination	Week 12	Rejection	The Champion Letter
	Week 13	Exposure and Connection	Advising Appointment due
Epilogue	Week 14	THANKSGIVING BREAK	None
	Week 15	Living as a Creative	None