

## Watercolor Syllabus – South Plains College

**Sawyer Crane, MAE (She/Her)**

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**Office:** Fine Arts 121 – SPC Levelland Campus – Technical Arts Building – Room 122

### Office Hours – Fall 2025

- **Monday:** 9:15 – 10:15 AM
- **Tuesday:** 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM
- **Wednesday:** 9:15 – 10:15 AM
- **Thursday:** 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM
- **Friday:** 9:00 – 10:00 AM (By Appointment Only)

### How to Use Office Hours:

Office hours are dedicated time for students to ask questions, seek clarification on course material, discuss assignments, or explore topics beyond class discussions. They are an opportunity for personalized support, guidance, and mentorship.

Utilizing office hours can help you stay on track, deepen your understanding, and make the most of your learning experience. The best way to make sure I'm all yours is to set up an appointment, that way I can block out time just for you. But if inspiration strikes or you just need a quick check-in, you're always welcome to pop by during my scheduled Monday–Thursday hours. Fridays (9:00–10:00 AM) are for **appointment-only meetups**, send me a quick email if that's your best time and I'll save you a spot.

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## COURSE INFORMATION

**Department:** Fine Arts

**Course Number:** ARTS 2366

**Course Title:** Watercolor

**Course Format:** Face-to-face with online supplementation

**Campus Location:** SPC Levelland Campus – Technical Arts Building – Room 122

### Course Description:

This studio art course introduces the fundamental principles, materials, and techniques of watercolor and other water-based media. Students will explore descriptive, expressive, and conceptual approaches while learning to apply the elements of art and principles of design to watercolor. Both opaque and transparent techniques will be practiced, with an emphasis on developing technical skills, personal style, and professional presentation.

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## What is Watercolor?

Watercolor is a painting course designed for students interested in learning both the traditional and experimental techniques of water-based media. This course is open to all students, though some prior art experience will be helpful.

This class blends **project work, daily technique exercises, and critiques**. In almost every class session, we will explore a new watercolor technique through short, guided activities. These daily exercises help you build confidence and discover possibilities for your project work.

We will also engage in **critiques**, where we share and discuss each other's work. These sessions are a chance to practice professional vocabulary, give constructive feedback, and reflect on your creative process.

My goal is to help you leave this class with strong technical skills, a deeper understanding of watercolor as an art form, and the confidence to explore your own ideas.

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## MATERIALS NEEDED

**Textbook:** None required; instructor will provide readings and video links via Blackboard.

### Required Supplies:

- Canson XL Mixed Media Pad — 12" × 9", Portrait, 60 Sheets
- Watercolor Masking Fluid

### Suggested Supplies:

- Winsor & Newton Professional Watercolor — Travel Tin, Set of 12, Assorted Colors, Tubes
- Watercolor Brush Set
- Lightboard (for tracing) — cheaper on Amazon, especially helpful if you are not comfortable drawing accurately and quickly
- Kneaded Rubber Eraser

*(Paint, brushes, a reusable palette, and paper will be provided in class, but it is always nice to have your own if you can afford it.)*

*I suggest [Blick.com](https://www.blick.com) & Amazon for the best prices.*

*amazon supply list. —>*



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## OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

### Course Objectives:

- Learn and apply watercolor painting techniques, including wet-on-wet, wet-on-dry, glazing, lifting, masking, and texture creation.
- Explore both traditional and experimental approaches to watercolor.
- Understand the relationship between the elements of art and principles of design in watercolor composition.
- Develop a personal creative process through ideation, reference gathering, and sketching.
- Practice professional critique skills using discipline-specific vocabulary.

### Learning Outcomes — Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Generate works that demonstrate descriptive, expressive, and conceptual approaches.
2. Apply the elements of art and principles of design to water-based media.
3. Use varied techniques and materials, including opaque and transparent watercolors.
4. Analyze and critique works verbally and/or in writing.
5. Relate water-based media to art history and contemporary artistic production.
6. Demonstrate an appropriate level of professional practice, including safety, craftsmanship, and presentation.

### Core Curriculum Objectives addressed:

- Communication Skills (effective written, oral, and visual communication)
- Critical Thinking Skills (creative thinking, analysis, synthesis)
- Teamwork (collaborative listening, discussion, critique)
- Personal Responsibility (ethical engagement, preparation, professionalism)

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## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

### Grading Scale:

90–100 = A  
80–89 = B  
70–79 = C  
60–69 = D  
0–59 = F

## Course Evaluation:

- Projects: 35%
- Critiques & Civility: 25%
- Daily Challenges & Weekly Exercises: 25%
- Final Project: 15%

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## Critique Process and Expectations

**Critiques are an essential part of the creative process** in this class. They are not just about evaluating finished work but about learning to see, think, and speak as an artist. Missing a critique means missing a vital learning experience, and your critique grade.

### Punctuality Policy for Critique Days:

Critiques begin promptly at the scheduled start time. If you arrive **after the first 5 minutes** of critique, **1 point will be deducted from your critique grade for each additional minute you are late**. If you are absent for a critique, you will not receive credit for that critique grade.

Critiques cannot be made up, except in cases of **documented extenuating circumstances**, such as illness with a doctor's note. You will still receive a grade for the project itself, but **not** for the critique portion.

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## Presenter Responsibilities

When presenting for critique, each artist will stand beside or near their work and give a **brief but thoughtful introduction** to their piece, approximately one paragraph.

This should include:

- **Title and Concept** – What is the title of your work and what idea or emotion were you trying to communicate?
- **Process** – What steps or techniques did you use to complete this work?
- **Design Decisions** – Which design principles and elements (line, color, balance, emphasis, etc.) were most important in your piece?
- **Challenges and Solutions** – What problems did you encounter and how did you solve them?
- **Self-Reflection** – What do you feel was most successful about your work, and what might you do differently next time?
- Specific projected related information, for example, How you demonstrated line..

### Example Presenter Introduction:

"My piece is titled *Shadows in Motion*, and I wanted to explore the tension between structure and chaos by layering geometric shapes with gestural marks. I started with a graphite underdrawing to establish balance, then used gouache to create high-contrast areas of color. I focused on rhythm and repetition to lead the viewer's eye in a spiral pattern toward the focal point. The most challenging part was blending the gouache smoothly without losing the sharp edges of my geometric forms. I resolved this by masking certain areas while painting. I'm most proud of how the color palette creates depth, but if I had more time, I would experiment with adding more texture to the background for visual interest."

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### TAG Model for Peer Feedback

After the presenter speaks, peers will respond **in conversation** using the TAG method:

- **T – Tell** something you like about the work.
- **A – Ask** a question about the work.
- **G – Give** a suggestion for improvement or exploration.

### Example Critique Rubric (100 points)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Points</u>
<b>Presentation of Work</b>	Artwork is displayed neatly and professionally; materials and space are organized; presenter is ready when called.	20
<b>Presenter Introduction</b>	Presentation includes all 5 required areas (Title/Concept, Process, Design Decisions, Challenges/Solutions, Self-Reflection) in a clear, engaging, and professional manner.	25
<b>Professionalism</b>	Active listening, respectful engagement, no side conversations, stays for full critique session.	15

<u>Category</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Points</u>
<b>TAG Feedback to Each Presenter</b>	Gives meaningful T, A, and G for every classmate's work, showing thought and specific observation. Points are averaged across all interactions.	40
<b>Total</b>		100

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## COURSE SCHEDULE

**Subject to change.** Critique days will be announced in class, on Blackboard, and on the classroom board.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Lecture / Demos</b>	<b>Projects / Exercises</b>
1	Intro & syllabus review. Watercolor basics: materials, setup, brush care. Daily technique demos begin.	Color mixing exercises.
2	Color theory and watercolor application methods.	Project 1 — Color Wheel Painting.
3	Wet-on-wet, wet-on-dry, glazing techniques.	Project 1 work time; daily technique exercises.
4	Abstract composition in watercolor.	Project 2 — Abstract Watercolor; Critique Project 1.
5	Masking, lifting, and layering.	Project 2 work time; daily technique exercises.
6	Botanical illustration basics.	Project 3 — Succulent Watercolor; Critique Project 2.
7	Observational accuracy in watercolor.	Project 3 work time; daily technique exercises.

8	Botanical composition and detail.	Project 4 — Botanical Watercolor; Critique Project 3.
9	Fantasy landscape techniques: atmosphere, depth, and texture.	Project 4 work time; daily technique exercises.
10	Planning and sketching for imaginative works.	Project 5 — Fantasy Landscape; Critique Project 4.
11–13	Project 5 work time; advanced techniques and individual feedback.	Daily technique exercises; Critique Project 5.
14–15	Final project planning and execution.	Final Project work time.
16	Final critique and wrap-up.	Final Project Due.

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## POLICIES

All SPC policies apply (attendance, plagiarism, code of conduct, accessibility, Title IX, etc.). See official statements: [SPC Syllabus Statements](https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/)

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**Attendance:** Attendance is expected. Unexcused absences beyond two will lead to grade penalties.

**Participation:** Active participation in projects, daily exercises, and critiques is required.

**Class Civility:** Maintain professionalism, respect, and openness to diverse perspectives at all times.

**Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to do their own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, examinations, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant. (This includes obvious use of AI, which is up to the discretion of the professor)