

# art 488 preparation for professional practice

2012 Spring Quarter  
Friday 1.00–2.20am  
PACCAR 294

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Office hours: Mon 11.45–1.00  
Office: Art 249

Course website  
<http://courses.washington.edu/art488/>

## Course overview

This course will focus on planning for a successful transition from academic life into professional practice as a working designer. Invited speakers from professional design practice will play a key part in panel discussions in this class.

We will cover methods for effective job-hunting, portfolio presentation and related skills, and understanding your personal strengths, weaknesses and objectives as you enter the job market. In addition we will discuss the nature of the professional design industry: what are the pros and cons of working for a design firm, as a freelancer, as a consultant, or as an in-house designer? What broader roles can the designer play? What about setting ethical boundaries on the work that you do?

## Learning objectives

Through this course you should:

- Learn from design professionals about the practice of design, and what they look for in a designer
- Refine skills for effective job hunting, including portfolio presentation skills, writing and speaking
- Learn about different working models within the design world
- Develop plans and goals for entering the design profession and pursuing a career path suited to you and your work

## Final deliverables and expectations

There is not a 'final' for this class. There will be a hand-in of materials, due at **5pm Tuesday June 7** (I will leave a box on the cupboard outside of my office, Art 249). You must submit the following:

**What do you look for in a designer's portfolio? Simplicity, wit, and good typography.**

*Michael Bierut*

**Less is more. Don't put anything in your portfolio unless you believe in it. I hate unfinished work, or when people apologize for something incomplete or unresolved.**

*Jessica Helfand*

**Be nice. Most people don't want to work with talented assholes.**

*Stefan Sagmeister*

*On disk (clearly and neatly label your disk with your name and Art 488 Spring 2012):*

- PDF of your résumé. (This must include your website address. Your website must be live.)
- Sampler PDF portfolio (5- to 8-page PDF, 8.5x11", showing two to three projects, which you could email to introduce your design work).
- Sample cover letter (for a job application), on letterhead that matches your resume format. This should be addressed and targeted to a real studio or firm where you would be interested to work.

*Printed (b/w 8.5x11" is fine):*

- Top Ten Take-Aways written assignment (will be introduced later)

This course will take a seminar rather than a studio format and will involve very few critiques. The design of your portfolio materials will require independent development and will parallel the work in your other senior studio class. Active participation in class, in particular during panel discussions with outside guests, is critical to evaluating your performance.

## Course Web Site

<http://courses.washington.edu/art488/>

This site includes portfolio building references, links to the company sites of forum guests, and other useful information for job hunting and entry into the design profession.

## Course Discussion Board

<https://catalyst.uw.edu/gopost/board/km001/27516/>

The discussion board will be used for posting various assignments, and your questions for guests.

## Evaluation criteria

- Developing and refining an effective set of material to promote yourself as a designer, including understanding your weaknesses and addressing them effectively.
- Effective oral and visual presentation skills.
- Class participation and contribution, especially in forum sessions with invited guests.
- Completion of work on schedule.
- Personal development: self-motivation, researching, pushing personal and creative boundaries.

## Design Division Grading

Letter equivalents from [http://www.washington.edu/students/gencat/front/Grading\\_Sys.html](http://www.washington.edu/students/gencat/front/Grading_Sys.html)

3.9-4.0 [A] is given to a student who has exhibited the highest possible performance in all aspects of the course – the final projects, the design process and class participation are excellent. Work is prepared with care/attention to detail and presented on time for all critiques/work sessions. This student independently seeks out additional information on design topics related to the course, and is highly committed/passionate about their work.

3.5-3.8 [A-] is given to a student who exhibits superior performance in all aspects of the course – the final projects, design process, and class participation are of high quality. Work is well prepared and presented on time for all critiques/work sessions. This student has a thorough understanding of concepts being presented, and is strongly self-motivated to improve and succeed.

3.2-3.4 [B+] is given to a student who has good performance in most aspects of the course. This student follows a thorough design process, produces solid design work, and consistently participates in class. Work is prepared properly and presented on time for almost all critiques/work sessions. This student clearly understands most design concepts being presented.

2.9-3.1 [B] is given to a student who has fair performance in the course. The final work is adequate, with a design process that reflects the minimum needed to complete assignments. Work is prepared properly and presented on time for most critiques/work sessions. Participation, understanding and motivation are moderate.

2.5-2.8 [B-] is given to a student who has low performance in the course. The final work is weak in quality, with a design process that reflects inadequate exploration and development. Class participation is minimal, and reflects an incomplete understanding of concepts being presented. The student has been unprepared for critique/work sessions on several occasions (late or improper presentation).

2.0-2.4 [C+] is given to a student with poor performance in the course. Projects are of an inferior quality, and reflect a sub-standard and incomplete design process. Preparation for critique/work sessions is inadequate (late or improper presentation). This student seldom participates in class, and fails to demonstrate adequate understanding of concepts being presented. This student is not prepared for subsequent courses in design. Note that all design majors must achieve a minimum grade of 2.5 in all design studio courses. Failure to achieve this benchmark may result in required course repetition and academic probation.

0.0-2.0 [C through E] is given to a student with very low performance in the course. Projects are deficient and/or defective in quality. The design process is negligible and/or very weak. Preparation for critique and/or work sessions is inadequate (late or improper presentation). This student rarely participates in class, and demonstrates little understanding of the concepts being presented. This student is not prepared for subsequent courses in design.

## Grading breakdown

Overall process and participation,	
in particular during forums and discussions:	50%
Portfolio/materials development:	25%
Assignments:	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Student responsibilities**

If you are ill you should arrange with a classmate to find out any assignments in order to keep up with the class. If you must be absent (legitimate excuse), please email me, or if this is not possible, see me during office hours, or at the next class meeting.

An excusable absence will not affect your grade, but it is your responsibility to get assignments and to bring complete work and research on time. No incomplete will be given except in a case of incapacitation or other extraordinary circumstances.

**Learning environment**

Be respectful to your colleagues. Please don't eat during class as this can be distracting and disruptive. Clean up your space after class. Please turn off cell phones before coming to class. Laptops are for classwork only. Please no surfing, e-mailing, texting, or facebooking during class, or lectures and forums. In forums, please take notes by hand.

For written communication practice good email etiquette with formal salutations to instructors and colleagues, written in proper English without acronyms or abbreviations. Use your UW email account and include a signature block.

**Accommodations**

If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disabled Student Services, 448 Schmitz, (206) 543-8924 (V/TTY). If you have a letter from Disabled Student Services indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodation, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for the class.

**UW SafeCampus**

Preventing violence is everyone's responsibility. If you are concerned, tell someone.

- Always call 911 if you or others may be in danger.
- Call 206-685-SAFE (7233) to report non-urgent threats of violence and for referrals to UW counseling and/or safety resources. TTY or VP callers, please call through your preferred relay service.
- Don't walk alone. Campus safety guards can walk with you on campus after dark. Call Husky NightWalk 206-685-WALK (9255).
- Stay connected in an emergency with UW Alert. Register your mobile number to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text and voice messaging. Sign up online at [www.washington.edu/alert](http://www.washington.edu/alert)
- For more information visit the SafeCampus website at [www.washington.edu/safecampus](http://www.washington.edu/safecampus).

# art 488 schedule

## **Friday March 30**

Introduction, review of syllabus and objectives of class

Presentation on résumés and portfolios.

Assignment: draft résumé + PDF work sampler; 3 to 5 page PDF, showing 1 or 2 sample projects (due 4/20).

Assignment: My Dream Design Job (due 4/6).

Reading assigned (see course site): *Dear Sir or Madam: Ten common mistakes in résumés and cover letters*

## **Friday April 6**

'My Dream Design Job' selected student presentations.

Assignment: Top Ten Take-Aways (due at end of quarter)

Reading assigned.

## **Friday April 13**

### **Professional forum: Insight and Advice on Job-hunting**

Forum guest information to be posted on course website.

## **Friday April 20**

### **Building your Online Portfolio**

Guest presenter Ben Shown.

Bring in draft printed résumé, printed PDF work sampler, website in-progress work (on screen) for discussion.

Reading assigned.

## **Friday April 27**

### **Professional forum: Defining 'Good' Design**

Forum guest information to be posted on course website.

## **Friday May 4**

### **Professional forum: Ways of Working (freelance, in-house, studio, etc)**

Forum guest information to be posted on course website.

## **Friday May 11**

### **Presentation: The Art of Negotiation**

#### **Critique on development of résumé, 'sampler' PDF portfolio pages, website**

Post to discussion board by start of class: PDF of résumé, portfolio sampler, (4 to 8 page PDF), and static sample web page layout(s) or link to website. Selected student presentations.

## **Friday May 18**

### **Professional forum: Design Entrepreneurship**

Forum guest information to be posted on course website.

## **Friday May 25**

### **Professional forum**

Forum guest information to be posted on course website.

## **Friday June 1**

**Guest speaker: Sandra Jackson-Dumont, SAM Director for Education & Public Programs**

## **Tuesday June 7, 5pm: final deadline for all materials (hand-in only, in box outside of Art 249):**

- On disk: PDF of résumé (including link to live website), PDF 'sampler' portfolio
- Printed (8.5x11"): Sample cover letter, and Top Ten Take-Aways assignment