Course Descriptions

COURSE NUMBERS

The course-numbering system indicates the college level at which courses are normally taken.

NUMBERING SYSTEM GUIDE

001-009	precollege course-no credit
010-099	credit granted but not applicable to graduation
100-199	primarily for first-year students
200-299	primarily for second-year students
300-499	primarily for upper division students
500-599	graduate courses
600-799	doctorate courses

At the end of each description, course credits are listed. Courses with variable hours and credits are so indicated.

MFAI – INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS

MFAI 500 G1 Residency (0)

An eight- day on-campus intensive community experience in which interdisciplinary art students participate in professional development workshops including artistic presentations, artistic showcases, screenings and viewing, live productions and special events; lectures and discussions including artistic authenticity, context and audience development, community engagement, social responsibility, human interconnection, project development, grant writing, grass roots fundraising, marketing and branding, crafting an artistic statement and practice of product. Advisor group meeting discussions include topics for discovering the meaning of interdisciplinary, as applicable to an individual, unique and authentic artistic voice. One on One meetings with advisors enable artists to design a semester study plan to formulate a path to successfully complete semester goals including research, artistic process, artistic work and self-reflection. Four residencies are required to complete the degree requirements.

MFAI 510 G1 Artistic Process and Practice Study (4)

Student and Advisor remote learning and study occurs through long distance communication. One-on-one student creative development with the support and guidance for faculty advisor. Student follows the self- designed study plans to examine, research, uncover, and craft an interdisciplinary artistic practice. Faculty Advisor provides written and oral feedback of student work submissions throughout the semester. Faculty Advisor analysis and commentary of student progress is provided through online communication including online, email, and telephone. Students are challenged to cultivate their individual aspirations as thinking creators.

MFAI 520 G1 Reflection Report (4)

Students develop and submit self-evaluation report which reflect current understanding of research, study, curiosity interconnections, artistic authenticity, new discoveries and prospective goals. Students include writings, work samples, and artistic statement to support current understandings. Faculty advisor reviews and responds to ensure successful completion of semester intention and goals. Students work to craft a study plan for the next semester to continue a transformative interdisciplinary artistic practice.

MFAI 530 G2 Residency (0)

An eight- day on-campus intensive community experience in which interdisciplinary art students participate in professional development workshops including artistic presentations, artistic showcases, screenings and viewing, live productions and special events; lectures and discussions including artistic authenticity, context and audience development, community engagement, social responsibility, human interconnection, project development, grant writing, grass roots fundraising, marketing and branding, crafting an artistic statement and practice of product. Advisor

group meeting discussions include topics for discovering the meaning of interdisciplinary, as applicable to an individual, unique and authentic artistic voice. One on One meetings with advisors enable artists to design a semester study plan to formulate a path to successfully complete semester goals including research, artistic process, artistic work and self-reflection. Four residencies are required to complete the degree requirements. Prerequisites: MFAI 500,MFAI 510, MFAI 520.

MFAI 535 G2 Residency Presentation (2)

Second Semester students (G2) present samples of work representative to the artist current understanding of interdisciplinary; relationship, inquiry, discovery, breakthroughs, critical theory and transformational process during the on-campus residency. Student presentations may include performances, lectures, discussions, showcases, viewings, exhibits and/or creative demonstrations of development. Student presentations are opt to MFAI community and reviewed by Faculty Advisors. Prerequisites: MFAI 500,MFAI 510, MFAI 520.

MFAI 540 G2 Artistic Process and Practice Study (4)

Student and Advisor remote learning and study occurs through long distance communication. One-on-One student creative development with the support and guidance of faculty advisor. Student follows self-designed study plan to examine, research, uncover, and craft an interdisciplinary artistic practice. Faculty Advisor provides written and oral feedback of student work submissions throughout the semester. Faculty Advisor analysis and commentary of student progress is provided through online communication including online, email, and telephone. Students are challenged to cultivate their individual aspirations as thinking creators. Prerequisites: MFAI 530, MFAI 535

MFAI 550 G2 Reflection Report (4)

Students develop and submit self-evaluation report which reflects current understanding of research, study, curiosity interconnections, artistic authenticity, new discoveries and prospective goals. Students include writings, work samples and artist statement to support current understandings. Faculty advisor reviews and responds to ensure successful completion of semester transformative interdisciplinary artistic practice.

MFAI 560 G3 Residency (0)

An eight-day on-campus intensive community experience in which interdisciplinary art students participate in professional development workshops including artistic presentations, artistic showcases, screenings and viewing, live productions and special events; lectures and discussions including artistic authenticity, context and audience development, community engagement, social responsibility, human interconnection, project development, grant writing, grass roots fundraising, marketing and branding, crafting an artistic statement and practice of product. Advisor group meeting discussions include topics for discovering the meaning of interdisciplinary, as applicable to an individual, unique and authentic artistic voice. One on One meetings with advisors enable artists to design a semester study plan to formulate a path to successfully complete semester goals including research, artistic process, artistic work and self-reflection. Four residencies are required to complete the degree requirements. Prerequisites: MFAI 500,MFAI 510, MFAI 520.

MFAI 565 G3 Residency Presentation (4)

Third semester students (G3) present current creative projects to demonstrate skills in respectful, responsible and sustainable collaboration. Collaborators present samples of work representative to the artist current understanding of interdisciplinary; relationship, inquiry, discovery, breakthroughs, critical theory and transformational process in relation to social, political, spiritual, environmental, and/or cultural impact. Student presentations may include live performances or creative demonstrations of project including pre-recording documentation of the project. Student presentations are open to MFAI community and reviewed by Faculty Advisors. (G2) Faculty Advisor reviews and responds to ensure student successful completion of project intention and goals. Prerequisites: MFAI 550, MFAI 560

MFAI 570 G3 Artistic Process and Practice Study (4)

Student and Advisor remote learning and study occurs through long distance communication. One-on-One student creative development with the support and guidance of faculty advisor. Student follows the self-service-designed study plan to examine, research, uncover and craft an interdisciplinary artistic practice. Faculty Advisor provides written and oral feedback of student work submissions throughout the semester. Faculty Advisor analysis and commentary of student

progress is provided through online communication including online, email, and telephone. Students are challenged to cultivate their individual aspirations as thinking creators. Prerequisite: MFAI 560,565

MFAI 580 G3 Reflection Report (4)

Students develop and submit self-evaluation report which reflects current understanding of research, study, curiosity interconnections, artistic authenticity, new discoveries and prospective goals. Students include writings, work samples and artist statement to support current understandings. Faculty advisor reviews and responds to ensure successful completion of semester intention and goals. Students work to craft a study plan for the next semester to continue a transformative interdisciplinary artistic practice. Prerequisites: MFAI 560,565,570

MFAI 590 Professional Development Project (4)

Student develops a professional development project in collaboration with MFAI program peers under the guidance and support of the Faculty Advisor. Project is an interdisciplinary creation to advocate and activate responsible awareness for social, political, spiritual, environmental and/or cultural change. Projects are authentically produced and are presented in their home community. Collaborations are then presented during the G 3 residency to the MFAI community. The project development extends through the G3 residency and culminates with documentation of artistic work including a 20-page written essay. Faculty Advisor reviews and responds to ensure student successful completion of project intention and goals. Prerequisites: MFAI 560, 565,570,580

MFAI 600 G 4 Residency (0)

An eight-day on-campus intensive community experience in which interdisciplinary art students participate in professional development workshops including artistic presentations, artistic showcases, gallery exhibits, screenings, viewings and storytelling, live productions and special events; lectures and discussions including artistic authenticity, context and audience development, community engagement, social responsibility, human interconnection, project development, grant writing, grass-roots fundraising, marketing and branding, crafting an artistic statement and practice to product. Advisor group meeting discussions include topics for discovering the meaning of interdisciplinary, as applicable to an individual, unique, and authentic artistic voice. One-on-One meetings with Advisor enable student to design a semester study plan to formulate a path to successfully complete semester goals including research, artistic process, artistic work and self-reflection. Four residences are required to complete the degree requirements. Prerequisites: MFAI 580

MFAI 605 G4 Residency Presentation (2)

Fourth semester students present professional development projects to demonstrate sills in respectful, responsible and sustainable collaboration. Collaborators present samples of work representative to the artist current understanding of interdisciplinary; relationship, inquiry, discovery, breakthroughs, critical theory and transformational process in relation to social, political, spiritual, environmental and/or cultural impact. Student presentations may include live performances or creative demonstrations of project including pre-recording documentation of the project. Student presentations are open to MFAI community and reviewed by Faculty Advisors. Faculty Advisor reviews and responds to ensure student successful completion of project intention and goals. Prerequisite: MFAI 580, 600.

MFAI 610 G4 Artistic Process and Practice Study (4)

Student and Advisor remote learning and study occurs through long distance communication. One-on-one student creative development with the support and guidance of faculty advisor. Student follows the self-designed study plan to examine, research, uncover and craft an interdisciplinary artistic practice. Faculty Advisor provides written and oral feedback of student work submissions throughout the semester. Faculty Advisor analysis and commentary for student progress is provided through online communication including online, email, and telephone. Students are challenged to cultivate their individual aspirations as thinking creators. Prerequisites: MFAI 600, 605.

MFAI 620 G4 Reflection Report (4)

Students develop and submit self-evaluation report which reflects current understanding of research, study, curiosity interconnections, artistic authenticity, new discoveries and prospective goals. Students include writing, reflection on professional development projects, and documentation to support current understandings. Faculty advisor reviews and

responds to ensure successful completion of semester intention and goals. Students work to craft a study plan for the next semester to continue a transformative interdisciplinary artistic practice. Prerequisite MFAI 600, 605, 610.

MFAI 630 G4 Pitch Project (4)

Student develops a project to pitch for nonprofit or commercial development under the guidance and support of the Faculty Advisor. Project is an interdisciplinary creation to demonstrate skills in developing a concept from vision to fruition. Pitches are designed for professional query and submission. Pitch Projects include mission statement, strategic plan, financial plan, accommodating budget with projections and marketing plan. Student creators present Pitch Projects during the G4 residency to the MFAI community. The project development extends through the G4 residency and culminates with the documentation of artistic work including a 20-page report inclusive of a business plan. Faculty Advisor reviews and responds to ensure student successful completion of project intention and goals. Prerequisites: MFAI 600, 605,610,620.

MFAI 640 G5 Residency (0)

An eight-day on-campus intensive community experience in which interdisciplinary art students participate in professional development workshops including artistic presentations, artistic showcases, gallery exhibits, screenings, viewings and storytelling, live productions and special events; lectures and discussions including artistic authenticity, context and audience development, community engagement, social responsibility, human interconnection, project development, grant writing, grass-roots fundraising, marketing and branding, crafting an artistic statement and practice to product. Advisor group meeting discussions include topics for discovering the meaning of interdisciplinary, as applicable to an individual, unique, and authentic artistic voice. One-on-One meetings with Advisor enable student to design a semester study plan to formulate a path to successfully complete semester goals including research, artistic process, artistic work and self-reflection. Four residences are required to complete the degree requirements. Prerequisites: MFAI 620

MFAI 645 G5 Residency Presentation (2)

Fifth semester students present Pitch Projects to demonstrate skills in developing a concept from vision to fruition. Pitches are presented as professional queries and submissions. Pitch Projects include mission statement, strategic plan, financial plan, accommodating budget with projections and marketing plan. Students share progress and current status of Pitch Project. Student presentations include live performances or creative demonstrations of project including prerecording documentation or development negotiations of the Pitch. Student presentations are open to MFAI community and reviewed by Faculty Advisors. G3 Faculty Advisor reviews and responds to ensure student successful completion of project intention and goals. Prerequisites: MFAI 620,640.

MFAI 650 G5 Interdisciplinary Arts Thesis Outline and Overview (4)

Student and Advisor remote learning and planning occurs while in residency. One-on-one student creative development with the support and guidance of faculty advisor. Student follows the self-designed study plan to craft an outline and overview of interdisciplinary arts thesis. Faculty Advisor provides feedback of student thesis plan. Students are challenged to cultivate their individual aspirations as thinking creators. Prerequisites: MFAI 640,645

MFAI 660 G5 Reflection Report (4)

Students develop and submit self-evaluation report which reflects current understanding of research, study, curiosity interconnections, artistic authenticity, new discoveries and prospective goals. Students include writings, reflection on Pitch Projects, and documentation to support current understandings. Faculty advisor reviews and responds to ensure successful completion of semester intention and goals. Students work to craft a study plan for the next semester to continue a transformative interdisciplinary artistic practice. Prerequisites: MFAI640,645,650

MFAI 670 G5 Interdisciplinary Arts Thesis and Portfolio (4)

Student Thesis and Portfolio is evidence of transformation as an interdisciplinary artist. Thesis and Portfolio content is indicative of student reflective process and degree criteria. Contents should include documentation to support an informed practice and advanced authentic artist. Students provide artist statement, mission statement, reflection essays, critical thinking essays, transformative discoveries, professional development project documentation, pitch

project documentation, samples of artistic work, tables of contents and bibliography. Faculty Advisor and second reader will review and respond to ensure individual aspirations of the student is transformed as a thinking creator.

MWSS – WRITING FOR SCREEN & STAGE

MWSS 500 Dramatic Storytelling (3)

During this residency, students are introduced to the foundational elements of all dramatic stories and will begin short writing projects. Topics include archetype characters, the hero's journey, story purpose, and essential building blocks of storytelling - theme, character, want, need and traditional structure. Guest lecturers, seminars, screening and exercises will further encompass this residency. Lastly, students will map out their writing goals for the program.

MWSS 515 Genre, Form and Style (3)

Part history, part genre and part form, this course engages in the history, form and style of writing for the screen and stage. Students will explore classical and contemporary screen and stage works to look at the spectrum of genres, styles, approaches and forms of works. Prerequisites: MWSS 500.

MWSS 520 Dramatic and Cinematic Theory (3)

Throughout history, the human race has been drawn to and lived through its stories. Cultural and societal norms are played out in stories for the screen and stage. Students in this course will research and create theories that can be used to explain the phenomena of story.

MWSS 530 Writing for Screen and Stage I (4)

Students develop and rewrite a short script and a short play. Students focus on the creation of shorter dramatic stories to understand the tenants of telling successful brief narratives. A study of 1-minute and 10-minute plays, webisodes, and short films will accompany the course. The art of pitching, story concepts, and loglines, etc. are introduced. Students start the rewrite process based on comments from advisors and fellow students. Prerequisites: MWSS 500.

MWSS 545 Engaging the Audience (3)

An in-depth analysis of dramatic and cinematic structure, formulas, principles and storytelling will be the focus of the course. Students will study a wide range of successful films, shows and theatrical works and discover the common elements that they share as well as the different approaches each can take. Students will employ narrative devices to further develop scenes, sequences, acts and stories. Prerequisites: MWSS 515.

MWSS 550 Writing for Screen and Stage II (4)

Students develop and complete a full-length feature screenplay or stage play. Students are expected to formulate and execute a draft with feedback from their advisor and selected classmates. Student will meet creative milestones throughout the semester. Prerequisites: MWSS 530.

MWSS 555 History of American Screenwriting (2)

In this semester-long course, students will explore the history of American screenwriting from the silent era to the present. At the same time, students will read pivotal screenplays and view important films written by the men and women who pushed the art of screenwriting forward.

MWSS 600 Exploring Creativity (3)

During this residency, students will engage in activities to develop skills, disciplines and a plan for ensuring creativity in stories and in life. Course introduces the habits of creative historical figures and current artists and writers as well as allows students to develop roadmaps to ensure their productive creativity. Students will also workshop stories, attend seminars, plays and, interact with a number of guest lecturers. Lastly, students will work closely with advisors and fellow students to assess, pitch and develop stories for their thesis projects.

MWSS 605 Knowledge Sharing for Storytelling (3)

(Optional.) In this optional course, students engage in numerous on-line modalities for teaching the art and craft of screenwriting and playwriting. Students explore a variety of pedagogical approaches to knowledge sharing and building writing-centered cyber communities. Students pick a specific area of study within their specialization which they will explore and research and, ultimately, share the product of their investigation with the class as a learning module or presentation. Prerequisites: MWSS 550.

MWSS 620 Thesis I – Writing for the Screen and Stage (5)

Students in conjunction with their thesis advisor will develop and complete a first draft of a feature, a stage play or other collection of other works. Students will be expected to employ the devices and materials introduced in the program to start work on drafting professional ready writing sample(s).

MWSS 630 Writing Landscapes (3)

This course is an overview of a variety of forms including situation comedies, hour dramas, podcasts, web series, comic books, interactive media, and gaming. This course outlines the fundamentals of style, content and format specific to each and looks to provide information on avenues for careers and employment in the field. Students will engage with a number of writers working professionally in specific areas.

MWSS 635 Contemporary American Playwriting (2)

Students will engage with a diverse selection of important voices in modern playwriting and playwriting theory. From Eugene O'Neill to Susan-Lori Parks, from David Mamet to David Henry Hwang, from Edward Albee to Paul Vogel and beyond, all writers hoping to master the craft of writing for screen and stage must read and learn from the artists that have come before. Over the course of one semester, students will read plays and in-depth interviews by a selection of the most relevant, innovative and diverse dramatists working in America today.

MWSS 650 Thesis II – Rewriting for the Screen and Stage (6)

In this course, students take the project they developed in Thesis I and guide that project through an extensive outlining and rewrite process to ensure their final thesis projects are developed to their highest quality professional level. Prerequisites: MWSS 620.

MWSS 660 Elective in Media Writing (6)

In this course, students take the knowledge acquired in Writing Landscapes and apply it to a project in a medium outside of their thesis subject(s). Students will appraise the media writing landscape and originate material to further diversify their writing portfolios. Prerequisites: MWSS 630.

MWSS 665 Thesis Presentation (1)

This course will serve as the capstone presentation of the portfolio of work students have created throughout the program. Material will be presented in a public forum by professional actors and open to the public. Lastly, students will hone their polishing skills and will receive final critiques of their thesis projects. Prerequisites: MWSS 650.

MWSS 670 Past, Present and Future (1)

Students take assessment of their work in the program, provide a response to the notes supplied from the readings as well as pitch projects for future work on once the MFA program is completed. Prerequisites: MWSS 650.

MWSS 690 Classroom Practicum (0)

Students from the MWSS program will be introduced to a wide-range of instructional methods and strategies they can deploy should they embark on a teaching career. The Practicum will allow students to work closely with the assigned course instructor and give the students the opportunity to observe class protocol from an instructional perspective while also engaging in a variety of pedagogical activities and responsibilities for use in the modern classroom. While students participating in the Practicum will, when requested, have input into grading, the sole responsibility for student grades belongs to the teacher of record. Beyond learning cinema-specific teaching skills, students will be exposed to general teaching responsibilities including but not limited to FERPA issues and ADA guidelines. On ground Practicum

opportunities can only be provided to students in the Pittsburgh area. Online Practicum opportunities will be available to all students.

MWSS 695 Internship or Teaching Practicum (3)

This optional course provides students the opportunity to intern with a production company, theater or similar or the ability to gain credit for teaching experience.

MWSS 698 Independent Study (3)

This optional course provides students the opportunity to develop an independent study with program mentors in a specialized area of writing for the screen and stage.