

# NCAL 406A: OIL PAINTING I FOR OLDER ADULTS

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
<b>Effective Term:</b>	Winter 2026
<b>Units:</b>	0
<b>Hours:</b>	3 lecture, 3 laboratory per week (72 total per quarter)
<b>Degree &amp; Credit Status:</b>	Non-Degree-Applicable Non-Credit Course
<b>Foothill GE:</b>	Non-GE
<b>Transferable:</b>	None
<b>Grade Type:</b>	Non-Credit Course (Receives no Grade)
<b>Repeatability:</b>	Unlimited Repeatability

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Create beginning level oil paintings that apply color theory.
- Create oil paintings that demonstrate historical and contemporary oil painting methods.
- Critique beginning level oil paintings based on terminology, technique, and criteria.

## Description

This noncredit course is targeted towards older adults. Introduction to the theory and practice of basic oil painting, including using value, color, and light to model the three-dimensional form.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Create oil paintings that show evidence of a working knowledge of the physical properties of oil painting materials
2. Organize and apply the basic formal elements and principles of design in paintings
3. Model form from observation, using value, color, and light from observation
4. Apply the principles of perceptually and theoretically based color theory to painting projects
5. Understand the preparation of oil painting surfaces and supports
6. Develop expressive content through manipulation of mark, color, and stroke
7. Examine and describe historical and contemporary developments, trends, materials, and approaches in oil painting
8. Assess and critique paintings in group, individual, and written contexts, using relevant critique formats, concepts, and terminology
9. Safely handle and use studio oil painting materials and equipment
10. Produce paintings that creatively apply subjective matter that reflects personal and culturally diverse imagery

## Course Content

1. Physical properties of oil painting materials
  - a. Transparent/opaque
  - b. Glaze/impasto
  - c. Fat over lean
  - d. Under-painting and layers of paint
  - e. Direct or alla-prima painting
2. Organize the basic formal elements and principles of design in paintings
  - a. Overlapping forms or shapes
  - b. Balance or positive and negative space
  - c. Proportion of objects, symmetry, and asymmetry
3. Painting a still-life
  - a. Model form using the value or tonal under-painting
  - b. Model form using color
  - c. Model form using the logic of shadow and light-form, core and cast shadows, half tones, highlights, and reflected light
4. Perceptually and theoretically based color theory to painting projects
  - a. Value or tonal under-painting
  - b. Monochromatic color
  - c. Warm/cool color
  - d. Complementary color
  - e. Local color
  - f. Tints, tones, and shades
  - g. Saturated/desaturated color
5. Preparation of painting surfaces and supports
  - a. Stretching a canvas
  - b. Application of gesso
  - c. Preparation of a panel
  - d. Drying process of paint mediums
    - i. Solvents
    - ii. Oil paint mediums and varnishes
    - iii. Oil paint colors and drying process
    - iv. Thickness of paint application and drying process
    - v. Mixing paint colors
6. Content through manipulation of mark, color, and stroke
  - a. Palette knife
  - b. Brush strokes
  - c. Directional strokes
  - d. Strokes borrowed from traditional artists
7. Class dialogue of historical and contemporary developments, trends, materials, and approaches in painting
8. Critique paintings in group, individual, and written contexts, using relevant critique formats, concepts, and terminology
9. Studio painting materials and equipment
  - a. Disposal of paint and rags
  - b. Organization of a paint palette
  - c. Cleaning brushes
  - d. Using an easel

## Lab Content

1. Exploration of physical properties of oil painting materials
  - a. Traditional oil paints and contemporary water-mixable oil paints

2. Organization and application of the basic formal elements and principles of design as they relate to oil painting
3. Safety rules and procedures related to the handling of oil painting materials
4. Evaluation and application of basic principles of color theory
5. Lecture or demonstration of the construction and preparation of painting surfaces and supports
6. Mixing oil paint on a palette, oil mixing mediums
7. Painting still-life or space projects from observation

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. Easels, stools, and storage space for each student. Still life storage area, room darkening drapes, portable lighting equipment.
2. When taught via Foothill Global Access, ongoing access to a computer with email address, software and hardware, and internet access.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Portfolio review: each painting will be evaluated for technical ability, craftsmanship, and personal creative and conceptual approaches  
 Written or oral critiques  
 Written or participation in lectures or dialogues of historical and contemporary painting  
 Painting revisions

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture presentation using the language of oil painting  
 Discussion using the language of oil painting  
 Demonstration of using oil paint, oil medium, brushes, supports, techniques, and methods  
 Critique and group presentation of oil painting projects followed by in-class discussion and evaluation

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Casey, Todd. The Art of Still Life: A Contemporary Guide to Classical Techniques, Composition, and Painting in Oil. 2020.

Friel, Michael. Still Life Painting Atelier: An Introduction to Oil Painting. 2010.

Aristides, Juliette. Lessons in Classical Painting: Essential Techniques from Inside the Atelier. 2016.

Robertson, Jean, and Craig McDaniel. Painting as a Language: Material, Technique, Form, and Content. 1999.

Although these texts are older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, they remain seminal texts in this area of study.

Traditional and/or contemporary water mixable oil paint and solvent free mediums are acceptable for this course.

## Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

Copy of a great work of traditional or contemporary oil painting: research the artwork, the artist, the style, subject matter, content, and context; write an essay or paper describing the artwork; write a self-critique describing the process of making an artist copy or study.

## Discipline(s)

Art