

NCAL 406J: WATERCOLOR I FOR OLDER ADULTS

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

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

Student Learning Outcomes

- Create beginning level paintings that demonstrate a variety of watercolor painting methods.
- Critique watercolor paintings based on terminology, technique, and criteria.

Description

This noncredit course is targeted towards older adults. Study of beginning-level transparent watercolor painting techniques. Emphasis on basic techniques of watercolor painting, composition, and color theory.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Apply transparent watercolor paints and color theory.
2. Use color and design principles in developing basic compositions and subject matter.
3. Paint watercolors using a variety of glazing and spontaneous applications.
4. Share through discussion in student critiques the cultural and personal differences in their artwork.

Course Content

1. Apply transparent watercolor paints and color theory
 - a. Value
 - b. Intensity
 - c. Saturation
 - d. Color wheel
 - e. Levels of opacity
2. Use color and design principles in developing basic compositions and subject matter
 - a. Landscape compositions
 - b. Value compositions and the figure
 - c. Still life compositions
 - d. Portraiture
 - e. Western and non-Western composition approaches

3. Paint watercolors using a variety of glazing and spontaneous applications
 - a. Sketchbook watercolor keeping
 - b. Brush applications
 - i. Western and non-Western brush painting
 - ii. Spontaneous brush language
 - iii. Dry brush
 - iv. Wash
 - v. Wet-on-wet technique
 - vi. Glazing and underpainting
 1. Staining colors
4. Share through discussion in student critiques the cultural and personal differences in their artwork
 - a. Group discussions and critiques
 - b. Self-critiques and personal differences
 - c. Cultural, Western, and non-Western approaches

Lab Content

1. Assignments and watercolor exercises that explore a range of brush applications, such as brush language, wash, wet-on-wet, or dry brush techniques.
2. Exercises related to value, staining colors, and watercolor underpainting.
3. Application of basic quick watercolor exercises and short landscape painting.
4. Watercolor exercises that approach a variety of different subject matter, such as landscape, still life, portrait, or urban landscapes.
5. Exercises that use the drawing and transfer methods to start a watercolor painting.
6. Exercises understanding the limitations of the watercolor paint and the drying process.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. Tables, chairs or stools, sink area.
2. When taught via Foothill Global Access: on-going access to computer with email software and capabilities; email address; JavaScript-enabled internet browsing software.

Method(s) of Evaluation

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

Portfolio review: each watercolor painting will be evaluated for technical ability, craftsmanship, and personal creative and conceptual approaches
 Written watercolor class or self-critiques
 Written participation in lectures on historical and contemporary watercolors
 Process watercolor students and paint mixing exercises

Method(s) of Instruction

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

Lecture presentation using the vocabulary of watercolor tools and techniques
 Discussion using the language of color theory and water based painting

Demonstration of a variety of watercolor techniques, such as wet-on-wet technique or color glazing
Critique and group presentation of weekly in-progress watercolor projects followed by in-class discussion and evaluation

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Whyte, Mary. Watercolor for the Serious Beginner: Basic Lessons in Becoming a Good Painter. 1997.

Although this text is older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, it remains a seminal text in this area of study.

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

1. Copy of a great work of art or historical or contemporary watercolor painting, Western or non-Western.
2. Research a Western or non-Western watercolor artwork, the artist, the style, subject matter, content, and context.
3. Write a self-critique describing the process of making an artist's watercolor study from a great work of art.

Discipline(s)

Art