

EDUC 228H - Arts, History & Social Sciences: Integration & Inquiry

A Creative Arts-Based Inquiry into Teaching History & the Social Sciences

Spring 2026

INSTRUCTORS

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“Art embodies how cultural communities construct meaning. Art can tell stories...[and] offer many entryways into social concerns and concepts to explore social life, to explore concepts through hands-on experiences, making connections between concepts and [our] own lived experience explicit and accessible...When art integration happens through inquiry, students do not simply represent academic content using art methods and materials; they connect their topic to big ideas, and they do it through an art practice that involves methods, tools, and thinking from various disciplines—such as observation, critical analysis, synthesis, questioning, connecting, and reflection. In art integration based on inquiry, learners explore content and connections through an organic, yet intentional, process that welcomes improvisation and invention.” – Julia Marshall



“Migrants & Dreamers” by Shelby Henderson, STEP 2019

WELCOME & OVERVIEW

Our course is designed as a creative arts-based inquiry into history and the social sciences. Over the next 10 sessions together, we hope to explore this critical question: **How do the visual arts and arts integrated learning**

drive inquiry and investigation into history, social science, and social justice issues, fostering transformative, inclusive and equitable classroom communities?

In this class, we will consider frameworks, instructional approaches, tools and materials for the study of the arts, history and social science in the elementary curriculum. We'll also experience the visual arts and arts integration as powerful pathways to teaching and learning history and social science. We'll discover how art and visual literacy intersect with and support academic inquiry and critical thinking skills to help students build content comprehension and connections across the curriculum. We'll explore how to foster vibrant, equitable learning communities in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. We'll support candidates' understanding of the social issues that impact their own and their students' identities, cultures and communities through the lens of history and the arts. Through "studio" art experiences, project-based learning, collaborative thinking routines and group discussion, we aim to inspire inquiry, imagination and surprise. Be ready to get curious, get engaged, think deeply, and have fun!

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- **Creative arts-based inquiry** develops students' foundational *cognitive, social, emotional, and physical capabilities* and strengthens students' abilities to *express their ideas, opinions, and emotions* around social issues, and to *solve complex problems and engage their imagination*.
- **Creative arts-based inquiry** deepens students' *understanding of history, social science, and social justice*, and the impact these have on students' everyday lives.
- **Stories and storytelling** help empower students with the *empathy and critical lens* necessary to understand and humanize *themselves and others in the context of community - past, present and future*.
- **Project-based learning and a continuous cycle of inquiry** cultivates student collaboration, authentic learning, and connection with the real world.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What is the **role and value of the arts, history and social science** in our lives, our classrooms, our communities, our world?
- How might we use **art as a medium** for historical/social science inquiry?
- What pedagogical methods and tools can we use to engage our students in **social and historical inquiry**?
- How can we **learn the stories a community tells** about its people and place?
- What can we learn from how **communities have responded to social injustices** in the past and present?
- How might we help students **emotionally navigate and make meaning of the complexities and challenges** in our world?
- How might I **reflect, communicate and engage with my colleagues** through creative arts-based inquiry into history and the social sciences?

COURSE AT A GLANCE

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8	Session 9	Session 10
Tues March 31 Raikes 111 2:45 - 5:30	Tues April 7 Raikes 111 2:45 - 5:30	Tues April 14 Raikes 111 2:45 - 5:30	Tues April 21 Raikes 111 2:45 - 5:30	Mon April 27 Raikes 102 2:45 - 5:30	Tues April 28 Raikes 111 2:45 - 5:30	Tues May 5 Raikes 111 3:00 - 5:45	Tues May 12 Raikes 111 3:00 - 5:45	Tues May 19 Raikes 111 3:00 - 5:45	Tues May 26 Raikes 111 2:45 - 5:30
				Project Planner Due			Project Updates Due		Final Presentations

Our class will mainly - but not always - take place on Tuesday afternoons. We have some variability in our schedule and room locations ([see in red above](#)) in order to accommodate Independent Student Teaching.

ASSIGNMENTS

Arts-Integrated Design Project

There is one assignment for this course: **an arts-integrated design project**. You will work with a small group of STEP colleagues to create: 1) a unit blueprint; 2) a kid-friendly research packet of primary/secondary sources based on a chosen historical/social justice issue; 3) a work of art; 4) a team presentation; and 5) a 1-2 page personal reflection. You will complete it in stages over the duration of the course, with workshop time built into class. [A complete project description will be shared separately on Canvas and walked through in class.](#)

COURSE GRADING

For Spring Quarter of 2025-26, this course will be graded based on the following components:

- 1. Arts-Integrated Design Project = 70% of course grade**
- 2. Attendance & Quality of In-Class Participation in Small & Whole Group Work = 30% of course grade**

An “A” grade is based on a demonstration of the following:

- evidence of understanding and ability to apply concepts, content, and practices central to this course
- strong depth of thinking, creative contributions, and relevance of your work to course content and discussion
- individual contribution to the collaborative Arts-Integrated Design Project
- fully meeting the guidelines for the Arts-Integrated Design Project

IMPORTANT NOTES

Professional Attendance & Participation

Both the arts and social sciences facilitate the growth of a community where creative ideas and opinions can be expressed and heard openly; where there is room to agree and disagree, and where collaboration is valued. In this spirit, we welcome you. We respect the different backgrounds, lived experiences, assets, knowledge and interests you bring to this class. Our shared goal is to develop a culture of mutual trust and respect. We see mistakes as opportunities to rethink and try again to resolve a particular challenge or problem, and we encourage you to engage and persist, stretch and grow!

We maintain high expectations for your learning and growth. We expect you to be on time and present for all classes, turn in all components of the Arts-Integrated Design Project, and be actively engaged and constructive participants in class discussions and activities. If something prevents you from attending (all or part of) class or meeting the assignment deadlines, please communicate with us as far as possible in advance so we can work with you to come up with a plan. Because our class is designed to center hands-on learning and collaborative teamwork, this also supports us to make any necessary adjustments that would impact your colleagues and the learning of the community.

Readings and Class Activities

There are some predetermined course readings that will serve as anchor texts for us. However, in order to provide material that is responsive to the evolving contexts of our immediate lives and broader world, readings might at times be supplemented or substituted. Any changes will be communicated in a timely manner so that you can be prepared for class. Always check Canvas for the latest prework/readings. Texts will include some longer readings, but we also offer several 1-2 pg hand-outs and videos, considering your assignment load and use of multiple modalities for processing information.

While there will be some discussion focused on readings, our class is designed to **prioritize active experiences and explorations into the arts and history/social science that simulate what you can use with your own students.** For this reason, many readings will serve to build important background knowledge and provide context for the learning activities. Even though we may not discuss every text explicitly in every class, each one still plays an important role in your ability to engage in in-class activities and for your overall grasp of this course's Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions.

Stanford Honor Code

All Stanford students are expected to follow the **Stanford Honor Code** and **Fundamental Standard**, as noted in the STEP Handbook and Stanford Student Guide.

Students with Disabilities

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk; phone: 723-1066; web site <http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae>

SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

SUBJECT TO CHANGE: PLEASE ALWAYS CHECK CANVAS FOR THE LATEST READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS.

THIS TABLE DOES NOT INCLUDE RECOMMENDED/OPTIONAL TEXTS WE WILL ALSO OFFER.

Session	Key Content	Required Readings/Pework Before Class	Assignment Deadlines (due before class unless stated otherwise)
Session 1 Tuesday 3/31 Raikes 111	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Course Launch ● Parts, Purposes, Complexities Thinking Routine ● Observational Drawing ● Project Based Learning & Arts Integration Overview ● Course Roadmap ● Project Sneak Peek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Course Syllabus ● Complete Survey ● Project Based Learning Overview ● Marshall (Excerpts). Making Sense of Art-Centered Integrated Learning in History/Social Sciences. ● Thinking Routine: Parts, Purposes, Complexities 	
Session 2 Tuesday 4/7 Rm 111	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging with Primary & Secondary Sources: History Mystery Packets ● Collage with Source Materials ● Project Based Learning Review ● Project Overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Austin & Thomas. <i>Examining Evidence. Seven Strategies for Teaching w/ Primary Sources.</i> ● Eisner. <i>10 Lessons the Arts Teach</i> 	Read Arts-Integrated Design Project Description

<p>Session 3 Tuesday 4/14</p> <p>Rm 111</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparing Approaches to Understanding History through the Arts • Parts, Perspectives, Me Thinking Routine • Difficult Histories & Emotional Topics: Bringing a Developmental Lens to Teaching • <i>Project Workshop Time: Beginning Inquiry</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paula Rogovin. <i>Kindergartners' Questions Become the Curriculum.</i> • Keenan. <i>The Mission Project: Teaching History and Avoiding the Past in California Elementary Schools.</i> • Thinking Routine: Parts, Perspectives, Me • Visual Thinking Strategies Handout 	<p>Reread Project Description Post possible inquiry topics to Google Doc</p>
<p>Session 4 Tuesday 4/21</p> <p>Rm 111</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying UbD Essentials to Arts-Integrated Units • Performance Art: Tableau Part I • Frameworks & Standards (History, Social Science + Arts Integration) • <i>Project Workshop Time: Inquiry and Gathering Sources</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-pager on Tableau • Building the Integrated Project with Big Ideas, EUs and EQs • Thinking Like an Artist • Connecting Standards and Frameworks (History/Social Science/Arts) 	<p>Finalize Project Teams & Inquiry Topics <u>Before</u> Class</p>
<p>Session 5 Monday 4/27</p> <p>Rm 102</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Art: Tableau Part II • Anti-Bias Guide to Critiquing and Using Texts with Children • Difficult Histories & Emotional Topics: Radical Listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radical Listening Overview • Anti-Bias Guide to Selecting and Analyzing Children's Books • Explore Google Site > Complex/Emotional Topics • Read Introduction and Explore Teaching Hard History from Learning for Justice 	<p>Project Planner & Research Graphic Organizer Due <u>After</u> Class by End of Day (template provided)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project Workshop Time: Inquiry & Unit Design</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Videos: Analyzing Perspectives through Primary Sources Part I and Part II 	
Session 6 Tuesday 4/28 Rm 111	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of Art/Principles of Design & Studio Thinking Habits of Mind • Foundations of Color Mixing • <i>Project Workshop Time: Unit Design, Visualizing Artwork, Create Painted Papers</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of Art/Principles of Design • Studio Thinking 8 Habits of Mind (SHoM) • Explore Tasha's History/Social Science Instructional ToolKit • Project Demo Slides: Painted Papers, Mixed Media Collage + Past Project Examples • Video: Arts Integration: Deepening Understanding of Core Content • Kennedy Center Arts Visual Arts Inclusion Strategies 	Read feedback on Project Planners
Session 7 Tuesday 5/5 Rm 111 3 - 5:45pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project Workshop Time: Painted Papers & Designing/Creating Mixed Media Collage Artwork</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue working on Project 	
Session 8 Tuesday 5/12 Rm 111 3 - 5:45pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project Workshop Time: Peer Consultancies & Constructing Mixed Media Collage Artwork</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue working on Project 	Project Updates Due After Class by End of Day (use same template)
Session 9 Tuesday 5/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project Workshop Time: Peer Consultancies & Finalizing All</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue working on Project 	Read feedback on Project Planners

<p>Rm 111 3 - 5:45pm</p>	<p><i>Elements of Project & Prepare for Presentations</i></p>		<p>Preview Individual Reflection component of project</p> <p>Sign up on presentation schedule</p>
<p>Session 10 Tuesday 5/26</p> <p>Rm 111</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project Presentations</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for Final Presentation • Complete Individual Reflections 	<p>Final Presentation Day All Project Materials Uploaded to Google Drive Before Class</p>



"My Two Border Towns & Mutual Aid" by Britney Debnam and Victoria Rodriguez, STEP '22



TCs working on a Thinking Routine: Parts, Perspectives, & Me, STEP '23



"American Beach" by Emma Clark, Frankie Avila, Grace Lin-Cereghino, Lindsay Goddard, STEP '22