English 3750: Text and Textile: Exploring Creativity  
Fall Semester 2011  
Tuesday 5:30 – 8:20 p.m.  
Sculpture Studio (Kimball visual Arts)

Instructor:  Dr. Judy Elsley  
Office:  EH 426  
Office Phone: 626-6801  
E-mail address:  jelsley@weber.edu  
Office Hours:  Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. and by appointment

To Buy:  
•  *The Creative Habit: Learn it and Use it For Life.* Twyla Tharp. Simon and Schuster  
  Paperbacks. ISBN: 0-7432-3527-4  
•  Class packet from the bookstore  
•  A notebook, three ring binder or box for organizing your work. (Wait to buy this)  
•  I will provide you with fabric and dyes at the start of class, but you may need/want to buy materials and supplies for your final project.

Class Purpose:  
This is a class about becoming better writers, learning how to dye fabric, and developing a sense of confidence about our creativity. We’ll explore a number of questions in this class, including:  
  •  What is creativity?  
  •  How can we develop our own creative skills as writers and artists?  
  •  What relationships can we make between visual and verbal communication?  
  •  How can we communicate, visually and verbally, what matters to us?  
We’ll approach these questions in a variety of ways. First, we’ll read about creativity and respond to what we read in writing and class discussion, testing out the ideas. Having read and thought about creativity, we’ll experience our own creative process by dyeing, printing and writing on fabric and on paper, putting the theory we’re reading into practice. Why dye fabric? Because the process of making textiles is similar enough to the process of making texts that we’ll see parallels. In fact the word “text” is derived from “textile,” so the two words are closely linked. However, text and textile are also different enough that dyeing fabric will give us a new perspective on our creativity as writers. This class invites you to explore and improve your writing as well as think in a fresh way about your creativity through the process of fabric dyeing. We’ll do a lot of writing and dyeing in this class.

Class Process:  
Before each class, you will:  
•  read the assigned chapters from the book, and write a journal response in preparation for class discussion.
• prepare your fabric for dyeing in class.

In class:
We’ll spend about half our time each week on writing and discussion, and the other half on dyeing demonstrations and hands-on fabric work:
• We’ll start each class with a 10 minute writing exercise;
• We’ll discuss the class reading and journal assignments;
• I’ll demonstrate a different dyeing technique most weeks;
• You will then work on your own fabric.
We’ll start each week with our writing and discussion which means you may find you don’t have as much time as you’d like for the dyeing exercises. The studio and supplies will be available to you during the week to ensure you have time to work on your fabrics.

Between and after class, you’ll:
• Prepare your fabrics for the next stage of the process;
• Read for the next class and respond in your journal;
• Work on your writing portfolio.
• In the last month of class, you will work on your final cloth and word project.

Assignments:
1. Journal 15%
The journal, which is based on your responses to Tharp’s book, is one full, single-spaced, computer generated page which you will bring to class each week. You will find the journal prompts in the class packet. Hand in your journal after each class session. Follow this format:
In the top left hand corner of each journal, print:
Name:
Date:
Topic:
The purpose of writing a journal is two-fold:
For me: your journal writing shows me that you’ve done the reading, thought about and understood what you read.
For you: your journal is designed to encourage you to prepare for class discussion, to become familiar with the reading. Your journal is a place to relax and explore the class material.

You’ll earn journal credit if you:
• Give me an honest, full, single-spaced page. No extra large margins or big type please;
  You may, of course, write more than two pages per class;
• Show me, through your writing, that you’ve done the assigned reading;
• Hand your work in each class session. No late work, please.
I won't grade you on spelling or grammar, but I will ask you to rewrite if I’m stumbling over too many errors. Your grade will be based on how many full pages you hand in. You have a one week “freebie,” (in other words, 1 page) and after that your grade will be effected in the following way:
2. **Binder or box for organizing your creative work.** 10%
This is a way for you to organize and document your creative process. We’ll read and talk more about this in week 3, so don’t buy a box or notebook until we’ve had our discussion.
Due: **Thursday, November 3**th.

3. **Writing Portfolio:** 30%
Over the course of the semester, you’ll do a lot of writing, some of which you’ll revise into finished pieces, and some that will remain as first drafts. Put together an attractive portfolio of your work, organizing it into finished and unfinished pieces. At the beginning of the portfolio, write a one page explanation and discussion of your work. Plan on incorporating visuals and some of your dyed fabric in the creation of your writing. The portfolio of three essays is due on **Thursday, November 17**th.

4. **Finished Project:** 30%
For your final project, you will combine text and textile in a way that is meaningful for you. You’ll give me a written proposal on **Thursday, October 27**th, and we’ll spend the last few weeks of the class foregrounding this project. You’ll show the completed project to an audience on the last day of class, **Thursday, December 1**st. We’ll talk more about this project as the class gets going.

5. **Oral Presentation:** 5%
On the last day of class, **Thursday, December 1**st, I’ll invite each one of you to show us your completed project and describe your process, design choices, challenges and accomplishments. We’ll invite family and friends to attend.

6. **Museum Visit:** 10%
One of the best “scratching” opportunities you can create for yourself is a visit to an art gallery or museum. These places showcase the work of other artists, and even if it’s a different genre, we can learn from the exhibits, get ideas for our own work, and see things in a larger context. For this assignment, you’ll visit an art gallery or museum, and then write a two page, double-spaced paper focused around the following questions and information:

- What is the title, place and purpose of this exhibition? Describe the show briefly. Include a copy of a brochure or flyer, if it’s available.
- Select one piece that strikes you. Take a photo so we can see it, too, and then explain why this piece stands out for you.
- Where do you see an interplay of text and textile in this exhibit? Comment on it.
- How does this exhibit inspire your work, shift your thinking, or give you pause for thought?

We’ll talk in class about places you can go to fulfil this assignment. You can make your visit and write your paper at any time during the semester. You’ll make an illustrated presentation in class on **Thursday, November 10**th.
Your grade:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Journal</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity notebook or box</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Portfolio</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Text/Textile Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Museum visit paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Attendance and Participation:
Your regular class attendance is vital for the following reasons:

- I’ll be teaching you a related series of skills, each building on the last one. If you miss a step, you’ll have a difficult time completing the semester’s assignments. Like you, I have a full schedule, so I don’t have time to repeat what you miss.
- I teach through discussion more often than by lecturing, so your attendance, careful preparation, and participation play an important part in creating the class community.

I’ll start promptly at 5:30 p.m. each class session, so please come to class on time. Late arrival to class disrupts me, your classmates, and the flow of activities.

Office Hours:
Holding office hours is an important part of my commitment to the class. This is a time when you can receive individual attention from me. You’ll find me in my office on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. in Elizabeth Hall. I realize those times don’t work for everyone, so I’m always willing to make an appointment with you. Leave me a phone message, e-mail me, or talk with me in class if you want to set up an appointment outside office hours. It’s easy to make contact with me; just look at the top of this syllabus for my phone number and e-mail address.

I work in the library on Mondays and Wednesdays as the Honors Director. On those two days, you can find me on the 3rd floor of the Stewart Library in the Honors Center, room 225, or you can call me at 626-6186.

Academic Honesty:
You’re expected to behave in an honest way, which means no cheating, plagiarizing, lying and/or bribery. Do familiarize yourself with the WSU Student Code as it explains your rights and responsibilities. Claim your education by doing your own work.

Students with Disabilities:
Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary. I want you to feel as comfortable as possible in this class, so please talk with me if I need to be aware of your
situation.

**Class Expectations:**
The syllabus is a contract between you and me. You can expect me to:
- Attend class regularly, on time, and prepared;
- Stick to the syllabus. If there's any reason to change it, I'll discuss the change with you before making the change;
- Return your work, graded, within a week of the due date;
- Attend my office hours on a reliable basis.

In return, I expect you to:
- Attend class regularly, and on time,
- Do the work conscientiously, and honestly;
- Meet the course deadlines for assignments;
- Take part in the life of the class by entering into discussions and group work.

I will talk with you if I have any difficulty meeting my expectations. Please talk with me if you face any challenges fulfilling your responsibilities to this class.

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**Syllabus**

**Week 1**
- Tuesday, August 25<sup>th</sup>
- Introduction to the class: Text and Textile
- Demonstration: Manipulating fabric in preparation for dyeing

**Week 2**
- Thursday, September 1<sup>st</sup>
- Demonstration: Dyeing fabric
  - Tharp Chapter 1 I walk into a white room

**Week 3**
- Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup>
- Demonstration: Overdyeing the fabric
  - Tharp Chapter 5 Before you can think out of the box

**Week 4**
- Thursday, September 15<sup>th</sup>
- Demonstration: Keeping a journal
  - Tharp Chapter 6 Scratching

**Week 5**
- Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Demonstration: Discharging fabric
Tharp  Chapter 2  Rituals of preparation

**Week 6**
Thursday, September 29th
Demonstration: Printing and writing on fabric
Tharp  Chapter 3  Your creative DNA

**Week 7**
Thursday, October 6th
Tharp  Chapter 9  Skill

**Week 8**
Thursday, October 13th
Tharp  Chapter 4  Harness your memory

**Week 9**
Thursday, October 20th: NO CLASS

**Week 10**
Thursday, October 27th
Tharp  Chapter 7  Accidents will happen
Tharp  Chapter 8  Spine
Proposal for your final project due

**Week 11**
Thursday, November 3rd
Tharp  Chapter 10  Ruts and Grooves
Creativity Box due

**Week 12**
Thursday, November 10th
Tharp  Chapter 11  An “A” in failure
Museum presentation and illustrated paper due

**Week 13**
Thursday, November 17th
Tharp  Chapter 12  The long run
Writing Portfolio due

Thursday, November 24th  Thanksgiving

**Week 14**
Thursday, December 1st
Show and Tell exhibition of final Text/Textile Project