

## **HIS/SMS 295 : Looking Closer: Botanical Drawing and its Social Origins**

August 25 - October 28, 2022

**Instructor:** Tara Shukla Jones

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Class Times:** Tuesdays 9 am - 12 am, Thursdays 9 am - 11 am

**Classroom:** Noyce 2243

This 7 week studio class will cover black and white observational techniques for drawing plants along with readings that provide context for the emergence of botanical illustration as a field (1750 - 1850 is usually referred to as the “golden age” of botanical illustration.) Students will observe plants and draw them using pencil and pen. Topics include sketching, visual analysis, pen and pencil techniques, use of line and tone and principles of composition. Reading topics will cover social factors that visually influenced how botanical drawings were conceived of and executed despite being thought of as objective and true to nature.

As this is primarily a studio class you are expected to come to all classes unless you are ill. The two most important benefits of taking a studio class are dedicated time to draw and learning through community. Students should expect a minimum of 2 hours of work outside of class. Please let me know if you have any concerns or questions. I'll do my best to help you.

At the end of each week students will be required to submit a short reflection that analyses their studio experience. The final project will be an independently conceived drawing with an accompanying written description. **The final studio class will be October 13 but students may take until Oct 25 to submit their final drawing and written description.**

Classes will take place in multiple locations, outside at the campus prairie plantings, in the college greenhouses and in the classroom. It may be hot outside and it is quite warm in the greenhouse. Please dress appropriately for these sessions. Bring a hat, sunscreen and water. Chairs will be provided outdoors and in the greenhouse.

### **Supply List: (needed for August 31)**

This is a general guide. You can use an existing sketchbook if you have one as long as it is not too small. Also if you have pens or pencils you can substitute them. **I will be going over the materials list and answering any question you may have on August 25.**

sketchbook 9 x 12 ( ex. Strathmore Sketch, 100 sheets)  
drawing paper 18 x 24 - ( ex. Strathmore drawing pad, 24 sheets)  
black Micron pens 03, 05 and 1 - 1 of each  
pencils - 2H, HB, 2B, 4B - 1 of each  
1 white rubber eraser  
1 kneaded eraser  
1 pencil sharpener  
Optional: cell phone camera or digital camera  
plant or cut flowers for final project

### **Weekly reflection (due each Sunday by 6 pm, Sept 4, 11, 18, 25, Oct 2, 9, 16 - 7 total)**

This can be written in your sketchbook, photographed and submitted through Pioneer Web. It can also be typed. Both formats can also include drawings, doodles or photographs.

Reflect on your time spent drawing this week. What are you learning about observation and drawing? What problems and challenges are you encountering? How did you resolve these (if at all)? What plants, techniques, artists do you like? What contributed to successful drawing sessions?

### **Final Drawing (Due no later than Oct 25)**

The last two weeks of the class will be spent planning and making an independent drawing on a sheet of paper (not in a sketchbook.) You will choose the size, format, composition, drawing techniques and plant subject as well as finding your source material. The campus greenhouses will be available if you want to use them or you may supply your own plant or use one outdoors.

### **Written description of final drawing (3 - 5 page, double spaced, due no later than Oct 25)**

Outline the scope of your project and why you chose it. How did it evolve and why? Describe your process including any preparatory work you did and the process of making your final drawing. Finally, how successful were you? What worked and didn't, what did you learn that isn't necessarily visible but advanced your understanding of drawing?

**Course grade breakdown:**

participation (present each class for 5 weeks, working consistently, participating in class discussions about the readings) **50%**

weekly reflections: **30%** (6 @ 5 % each, you may skip one if you get busy)

final drawing (including preparatory work) - **10%**

written description of final drawing - **10%**

Accommodations: I encourage students with documented accommodations, including invisible disabilities such as chronic illness, learning difficulties, and emotional or mental health conditions, to discuss appropriate accommodations with me during the first few days of the semester. You will also need to have a conversation about and provide documentation of your disability to the Coordinator for Disability Resources, located on the ground level floor of Steiner Hall (641-269-3124).

Grinnell College offers reasonable accommodations for students who observe religious holy days. Please contact me as early as possible in the semester if you would like to discuss a specific instance that applies to you.

<https://www.grinnell.edu/about/offices-services/crssj/resources>