Situating Practice in Civic Society
PGCFAF1005

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

ECTS credits[1]	10	Programme	MA MFA in Art and Social Action
NQF level	9	School	School of Fine Art
Stage	1	Module Co-ordinator	Dr Fiona Whelan
Trimester	1	Module Team	Brian Hand, Dr Fiona Whelan and School staff
Contact		Dr Fiona Whelan: whelanf@staff.ncad.ie	
Responsibility		The NCAD Academic Council and the School of Fine Art Board have responsibility for this module.	

1. Introduction

This module enables students to situate their thinking and/or practice in art and social action in relation to local, national and global issues and themes, and identify a specific inquiry, paradigm or network of relations relevant to their MA work. These issues may be broad and, as such, concern large constituencies such as migrant rights, minority representation, LGBTQ+ activism or they may be focused on 'smaller' neighbourhood or single-issue concerns.

Students will undertake research to understand the themes and issues that concern them, mapping key organisations and individuals connected to their area of interest and establishing first contacts. Further research will be undertaken to uncover and situate previous practice related to similar thematics, considering diverse lines of inquiry and methodological approaches used by others, to help situate their own ideas against precedents in this area.

Students will be immersed in civic society through visits to community contexts, and benefit from contact and exchange with people working in the fields of human rights, equality and advocacy. Particular focus will be placed on Dublin, but may also include current practice elsewhere in Ireland and abroad (and so classes may include 'remote' presentations from participants via online tools).

Students will explore their own motivations and roles in responding to social phenomena as well as those of others, exploring why and how different thinkers and practitioners engage others and act upon ideas.

The module will also include an examination of the institutions and agencies that commission and support socially orientated creative practices, to enable students to locate their own practice within a wider field of interests and actions. They will be encouraged to establish relationships with representatives of institutions and agencies working in the field of their concern, as well as community groups and others.

---

[1] European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, where 60 ECTS credits equate to the workload of a full-time academic year

PGCFAF1005 Situating Practice in Civic Society   *Module Descriptor*
Approved by Academic Council: 19 Sep 23   *Page 1 of 5*
This document was prepared for NCAD students. It may not be reproduced in whole or part without permission from NCAD.

The aims of this module are to:

- Ensure that students have a sophisticated and critical understanding of the current issues and challenges facing civic society.

- Create a context in which students understand the needs and interests of different communities, as well as the diverse functions and activities of institutions and agencies (state, NGOs, charities, activist groups, etc) who work with those communities.

- Ensure that each student on the programme has the opportunity to articulate their practice in ways that can be understood by various stakeholders (community, agencies and other arts organisations, etc).

2.   What will I learn?

Acting as a foundational module for their practice as artist / social activists while on the MA programme and on graduation, students will acquire a rich and sophisticated understanding of current issues and concerns in diverse fields. It will act as an introduction to the specific context of Ireland / Dublin today, and as such act as a particularly important foundation for all learners but particularly those from abroad or unfamiliar with the sector.

Students will consolidate their work on this module in the form of a personal manifesto and/or mapping exercise which they will first present as a work in progress to peers and staff, and then deliver for assessment. Feedback given in the work in progress event will take the form of peer comment, and formative commentary written by the module team offered prior to the conclusion of the module to aid the development of the chief assessment task.

On successful completion of this module students will be able to:

1. Understand the networks and relationships which constitute civic society today, as well as the limits which inhibit full and active engagement with it.

2. Identify, account for and present their concerns with different groups within civic society in a professional and articulate manner.

3. Establish the principles and ethical frameworks required for meaningful and just engagement with different communities. This will form parameters for their own practice in art and social action.

Module content

The module will combine lectures and seminars led by the Art and Social Action team as well as guests from different representative groups. Students will make site visits, engage in workshops related to the assessment task and undertake group work.

Indicative content

Sample classes include:

- A workshop organised in conjunction with the Queer Archive housed in the National Library of Ireland will involve both an introduction to the history of the collection and its uses today,

PGCFAF1005 Situating Practice in Civic Society
Approved by Academic Council: 19 Sep 23

Module Descriptor
Page 2 of 5
This document was prepared for NCAD students. It may not be reproduced in whole or part without permission from NCAD.

as well as discussion on the ethics of the use of archival material to discuss themes of privacy and consent, trauma, pornography, etc.

- A visit to Create - the national development agency for collaborative arts, to meet the staff team and be introduced to the library as a resource for their studies, and prompting a workshop/discussion on modes of categorising socially engaged arts practice used by libraries and funding bodies, framing practice in relation to thematics, demographics, context, form, eg arts and health, arts with young people, local arts, music projects.

- A manifesto workshop, examining manifestos from different periods of art history and politics, and engaging in a series of writing tasks encouraging students to examine, articulate and present/perform their own motivations for their practice.

3. How will I learn?

Learning tool	Hours
Lectures and seminars	70
Specified Learning Activities	30
Autonomous Student Learning	100
Total Workload	**200**

4. What learning supports are provided?

Like all modules which form part of the Art and Social Action MA, this course will be supported by a Virtual Learning Environment. The site will feature module-related bibliographies, links to key organisations and practices, as well as policy documents. Students will have the opportunity to use this VLE to share resources and engage in other forms of peer exchange.

Students who wish to develop particular software skills to undertake the tasks outlined in this module descriptor will have access to Linked-In Learning training (Creative Cloud programmes, storyboarding etc).

5. Am I eligible to take this module?

Module Requisites and Incompatibles

Pre-requisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Incompatibles	None
Prior learning	Where a student can demonstrate that they have achieved at least 80% of the learning outcomes of this module, by academic certified achievement, or through quantifiable and documented experience, they can apply to the School for that prior learning to be recognised. Applications must be received prior to the commencement of delivery of the module.
Recommended	None

PGCFAF1005 Situating Practice in Civic Society *Module Descriptor*
Approved by Academic Council: 19 Sep 23 *Page 3 of 5*
This document was prepared for NCAD students. It may not be reproduced in whole or part without permission from NCAD.

6.   How will I be assessed?

The assessment task will take the form of the production of a manifesto and/or mapping exercise in which students will demonstrate critical reflection on the ethical and practical elements of engaging in art practice in partnership or close relations with civic society. It will be assessed using the College's published grade descriptors and written feedback will be given to the students.

Assessment tool	% of final grade	Timing
Delivery of Manifesto	10%	Week 4
Delivery of Map	25%	Week 8
Participation in Discussion Board	10%	Week 11
Delivery of Map/ Walk	55%	Week 14
Total	**100%**	

Assessment tool	Learning outcomes assessed
Manifesto	LO 1 and 2
Delivery of map	**All learning outcomes**
Participation in Discussion Board	LO 2
Delivery of Map, Walk, Video work	**All learning outcomes**

7.   Feedback, results and grading

Students will receive written feedback on completion of assignments. Assignments will be graded using the NCAD Grade Descriptors.

8.   What happens if I fail?

Resit opportunities will be provided. Opportunities to remediate an unsuccessful assessment depend on the deficit encountered. Resit opportunities will be provided at the end of each trimester to students who do not complete all assessments by the assessment deadline. Students who are unsuccessful at Week 4, 8, 11 for Continuous assessment assignments worth 45% of module may be given the opportunity to resit each element during the 15 weeks of the module. This will not involve a resit fee. Students who are unsuccessful at Week 14 for the single assignment worth 55% of module may be given the opportunity to resit for the next exam board. This will involve a resit fee.

A student failing substantially at both continuous assessment and the 55% assignment would be required to repeat (and attend) the module in the following year, and pay the required registration fee.

9.   When and where is this module offered?

MA Art and Social Action Hub, Dept of Sculpture and Expanded Practice, Fine Art NCAD, Mondays Semester 1.

PGCFAF1005 Situating Practice in Civic Society   *Module Descriptor*
Approved by Academic Council: 19 Sep 23   *Page 4 of 5*
This document was prepared for NCAD students. It may not be reproduced in whole or part without permission from NCAD.

10. How will I have the chance to evaluate the module?

It is important to NCAD that students inform the development of teaching and learning at NCAD. We encourage all students to communicate their concerns and their observations about their study to members of staff so that any changes can be made in a timely manner.

About two-thirds of the way through the year, a student forum will be convened to gather students' comments about their study and the delivery of the programme. In addition, at the end of Trimester 2, students have the opportunity to complete an online evaluation of their study and experience at NCAD. These evaluation events are important to current and future students, to ensure we can enhance the delivery of programmes at NCAD.

In addition, you are invited to discuss your experience on the module with your lecturers at any point during the year. You can also relay your comments to the class student representative who will communicate your comments to the staff.

**For further details on the content of your module and teaching arrangements,
consult your Programme or Module Handbook**