

Glasgow School of Art Course Specification
Course Title: Worlding Fictions & Fictional Worlds

Please note that this course specification is correct on the date of publication but may be subject to amendment prior to the start of the 2026-27 Academic Year.

Course Code:	HECOS Code:	Academic Session:
PELC265		2026-27

1. Course Title:
Worlding Fictions & Fictional Worlds

2. Date of Approval:	3. Lead School:	4. Other Schools:
PACAAG August 2024	School of Design	This course is available to students on PGT programs which include a Stage 2 Elective.

5. Credits:	6. SCQF Level:	7. Course Leader:
20	Masters (SCQF Level 11)	Dr Nalini Paul

8. Associated Programmes:
This course is available to students on PGT programs which include a Stage 2 Elective

9. When Taught:
Stage 2, Taught online only

10. Course Aims:
In keeping with all Stage 2 Electives, this course broadly aims to: • Encourage interdisciplinarity, critical reflexivity from within an open set of choices; • Foster deep investigative approaches to new or unfamiliar areas of practice and theory; • Cultivate self-directed leadership and initiative-taking in both applied and abstract modes of practice/study not necessarily associated with a student's creative specialism; • Enable flexible, ethical exploration and connection of diverse knowledge and understanding within a specialist program of study. In specific terms it aims to: • Outline a series of contemporary philosophical frameworks that specifically address the inter-relation of practice-theory and thinking-being in the context of the creative disciplines

- Interrogate and analyse fiction across a range of media to examine its intersection with actually-existing world conditions, and establish fictioning/worlding as critical creative practices
- Foster within the student a capacity to critique and deconstruct established cultural conventions, conditions and practices, in order to develop new and innovative creative frameworks through which new modes of being-thinking can emerge
- Reflect on the use of a range of media to communicate critical positions and knowledge

11. Intended Learning Outcomes of Course:

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Define and demonstrate methods of fictioning/worlding as critical creative practices within a well-defined practice-theory framework
- Demonstrate an understanding of the theoretical frameworks, concepts and issues of feminist and postcolonial philosophies in the context of the creative disciplines
- Analyse fictional sources and contextual material, and understand their inter-relation and agency with real world conditions
- Evaluate complex ethical issues and make informed judgements on issues addressed within a range of interdisciplinary creative practices relating to the student's own discipline

12. Indicative Content:

"Worldmaking as we know it always starts from worlds already on hand; the making is a re-making." (Nelson Goodman 1978:6)

This course will introduce students to the concept of 'worlding', a philosophical concern with the inter-relation of thinking and being; how we know the world, how we experience the world, and our being in the world. Through this course, the concept of worlding will be explored through the interrogation of fiction, and fictions capacity for critical world-building in the creation of fictional worlds. This course will allow students to develop frameworks for 'fictioning', deploying fiction as a critical methodology through creative practice, for example through the fabrication and investigation of imaginary scenarios, environments or narratives.

Through this course, students will investigate the conditions of worlding across a range of mediums and genres, including artworks, films and literature, to cover topics such as;

- Fictional Ecologies
- Fictional Cities
- Fictional Bodies
- Fictional Histories
- Fictional Infrastructure

During this course students will participate in learning activities that will allow active development of an imaginary world and the ethical paradigms of being and knowledge which emerge through worlding.

In successfully completing this course, students will benefit from the development of a philosophical framework for creative practices that addresses the ethical characteristics of the inter-relation between thinking and being, and theory and practice.

13. Description of Summative Assessment Methods:

Assessment Method	Description of Assessment Method	Weight %	Submission week (assignments)
1. Essay	A 3500-word written essay or creative writing (this should include visual material where appropriate, as well as a bibliography)	100	Week 11, Stage 2
OR			
2. Portfolio	An annotated portfolio of critical and creative material, including a 1000-word contextualising statement	100	Week 11, Stage 2

13.1 Please describe the Summative Assessment arrangements:

Assessment takes place at the end of Stage 2. For this course, assessment of student work will consist of either:

- A 3500-word essay or creative writing, correctly presented and referenced, relating to a topic pertaining to the course. Students intending to write as essay should have the topic approved in advance by the course tutor. The text may include such aspects as outlining the student's motivations, theoretical perspective, findings as appropriate, as well as a critical reflection on the value and outcome of the research.
- A portfolio of critical and creative material relating to a topic pertaining to the course, which must be agreed in advance by the course tutor. Creative submissions should be accompanied by a 1000-word contextualising statement, outlining the student's motivations, theoretical perspective, findings as appropriate, as well as a critical reflection on the value and outcome of the creative practice.

14. Description of Formative Assessment Methods:

Engagement with formative assessment is a mandatory requirement. Formative assessment and feedback will be provided through Interim Presentation Seminar

14.1 Please describe the Formative Assessment arrangements:

The student-led Interim Presentation Seminar (Week 5) will enable you to present and discuss your ideas in preparation for your Elective submission. This is an opportunity for you to receive formative feedback from your tutor and peers.

15. Learning and Teaching Methods:

Formal Contact Hours	Notional Learning Hours
20	200

15.1 Description of Teaching and Learning Methods:

This course follows a pattern of one two-hour weekly session for 10 weeks, taught on Wednesdays or Fridays. A range of learning and teaching methods are used to support students to engage in an explorative and individual approach to learning. As an indication, these will include:

- lectures
- interim presentation seminar
- tutorials
- workshops

Independent learning skills will be developed and supported through guided activities and digital online learning resources available on Canvas.

16. Pre-requisites:

Successful completion of PGT Stage 1

17. Can this course be taken by Exchange/Study Abroad students?	Yes
18. Are all the students on the course taught wholly by distance learning?	Yes
19. Does this course represent a work placement or a year of study abroad?	No
20. Is this course collaborative with any other institutions?	No
20.1 If yes, then please enter the names of the other teaching institutions:	

21. Additional Relevant Information:**22. Indicative Bibliography:**

The course indicative reading and online resource list is accessible via [Resource Lists](#).

- Barad, Karen (2007) *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*
- de la Cadena, Marisol and Mario Blaser (eds.) (2018) *A World of Many Worlds*
- Dunne, Anthony & Fiona Raby (2013) *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction & Social Dreaming*
- Haraway, Donna (2016) *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Cthulucene*
- Le Guin, Ursula (1989) *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*
- Mignola, Walter D. & Catherine Walsh (2018) *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*
- O'Sullivan, Simon (2018) *Fictioning: The Myth-Functions of Contemporary Art and Philosophy*
- Oluo, Ijeoma (2019) *So You Want To Talk About Race?*
- Yusoff, Kathryn (2018) *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*