

AIC 200/ART 600 Cosplay

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Office Shaffer 359
Office
Hours Friday, 10:30-12:30

Prerequisite / Co-requisite:

None

Audience:

Open to all students; School of Art students receive registration priority.

Description:

Cosplay is the art/culture/act of dressing up in costumes, usually for a specific subcultural scene or event.

Cosplay is a complex physical craft, involving lots of technical knowledge, as well as lots of creativity and vision. We will build cosplay costumes and wear in them in multiple contexts. We will also investigate cosplay as a world-wide cultural phenomenon.

Credits:

3

Learning Objectives:

After taking this course, the students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an introductory competence in creating cosplay costumes and engaging in related cosplay activities.
- Analyze cosplay's place in culture.
- Critique examples of cosplay.

Bibliography/ Texts / Supplies – Required:

You are responsible for purchasing whatever materials or costs your projects incur for this class. Cosplay projects can involve many materials, and depending on the creator and the design, potentially expensive ones. If cost is an issue to you (as it is to everyone), then I recommend that you start each project by considering how you can make it both inexpensive and artistically successful. Materials may be found or purchased almost anywhere, physically or online, since cosplay utilizes almost every

material. However, cosplaysupplies.com is a fairly comprehensive online store for standard cosplay foams, tools, and other materials.

There is no required text for this class. There are thousands of free online tutorials and discussions of cosplay across the web, at locations like therpf.com, cosplay.com, cosplaytutorial.com, various 501st Legion/Rebel Legion sites, YouTube, and of course nearly infinite deviantart, Tumblr, and other social media sites.

However, if you are looking for discrete texts, you may wish to consider the book *Cosplay World* by Brian Ashcroft and Luke Plunkett, which covers well-known cosplayers and cosplay history; the book *Cosplay Basics* by Yuki Takasou and Kashiko Kurobucki which deals with basic techniques and culture; or any of the instructional digital books by Kamui Cosplay.

Studio vs Academic Paths

This class contains two paths: an academic path and a studio path. You may choose to do either one. If you take the academic path, you should list this class as an academic elective (you may need to notify your college's advisors about this). If you take the studio path, you should list this class as a studio elective (and you may also need to notify your college's advisor's about this). If you start on one path and find that you want to switch part way through the semester, let me know and we can work something out.

The academic and studio paths are not exclusively academic- or studio-based. The paths just denote a higher concentration in one or the other approach. Both paths will require you to do some academic work and some studio work. The exact requirements for each path may be found below.

Grading and Requirements:

We will be using a kind of grading that is a variant on "specifications grading" or "contract grading." Or, as I like to think of it, "choose the grade you want to get."

The way it works is this: in order to get a certain grade, you need to accumulate a certain number of points (listed below). Each project is worth a certain number of points, depending on how challenging it is. There are some required projects that everyone will do, but these will not add up to enough points to get an A, so if you want an A, you have to do additional projects of your choice from a list of elective projects. Since you choose how many to do, you choose how many points you get, and thus essentially choose what grade you get.

“Essentially,” because when you do a project, it is graded satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Satisfactory projects get full points; unsatisfactory projects get no points. So it is still possible for you to choose to try to get a B, for instance, but not actually get a B because some of your projects are unsatisfactory. However, an unsatisfactory project may be revised and resubmitted, and if it is then deemed satisfactory, it will get full points.

In contract/specifications grading, “satisfactory” has a high bar—the kind of project that would normally receive an A or B. I will provide a rubric for all projects, so you can know what a project needs to count as satisfactory.

Point to grade conversion:

95-100+ points: A

90-94 points: A-

85-89 points: B+

80-84 points: B

75-79 points: B-

70-74 points: C+

65-69 points: C

60-64 points: C-

55-59 points: D

0-54 points: F

REQUIRED PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR EVERYONE

Quick costume: this costume should NOT be fancy/involve a lot of work. The goal here is quick and dirty. It may involve pieces that are found, altered, and/or made. 5 points.

Medium-length paper/presentation: 1500 words paper or 10 minutes presentation on the cosplay-related topic of your choice. Please run your topic by me before you start it. 10 points.

Demo: Give a demo to the class on any cosplay technique. 10 points.

Wear a costume out in public for at least a couple hours: This can be a convention, some other organized activity, or even just randomly in public. Costumes might be expected at this activity, or not. The only options that don’t count are normal Halloween parties, and standard academic situations, like plays, fashion shows, and exhibitions. 10 points. Possibilities include:

RocCon: Rochester, Sept. 9-11 (~1.5 hour drive)
Furry Con: Rochester, Sept. 15-18 (~1.5 hour drive)
Upstate Comic Con: Massena, Sept. 17 (~3 hour drive)
Buffalo Comicon: Buffalo, Sept. 17-18 (~2.5 hour drive)
Rober-Con: Binghamton, Sept. 24-25 (~1.25 hour drive)
EerieCon: Grand Island, Sept. 30-Oct. 2 (~2.5 hour drive)
Scare-a-Con: Verona, Oct. 2 (~.75 hour drive)
Uticon: Utica, Oct. 2 (~1 hour drive)
Buffalo PowerCon: Buffalo, Oct. 2 (~2.5 hour drive)
New York Comic Con: NYC, Oct. 6-9 (~4 hour drive)
Chase Con: Saratoga Springs, Oct. 22-23 (~2.5 hour drive)
Cakewalk Cosplay Con: NYC, Oct. 29 (~4 hour drive)
Albany Comic Con: Albany, Oct. 30 (~2.25 hour drive)
RetroGameCon: Syracuse, Nov. 5 (local)
L.I. Who: Hauppauge Long Island, Nov. 11-13 (~5 hour drive)
Foxprowl Con: Batavia, Nov. 18-20 (~1.75 hour drive)

Westcott Street Festival: Syracuse, Sept. 18 (local)

Halloween cosplay concert by SAMMUS at the Everson. Exact date TBA.

Or other events of your own discovery. Other events must be approved by me first.

Please double check all dates, locations, and distances before choosing an event! Also please be aware that many Cons charge admission, and some—especially the NY Comic Con—may be sold out. Also, many are some distance away. I am perfectly happy if you choose a local, free event instead of something 8 hours away that costs \$100. The SAMMUS concert may be a great option. Choose the event that works best for your needs and interests! Choose something that will work with your costume-building schedule—if you know you're not going to finish the costume you're going to wear until November, then choose an event that fits with that schedule.

Cosplay Contest!: We will host a cosplay contest at the end of the semester. You can wear any costume you have made, and if you have others you've made in the past you can also wear those as a secondary entry. We will have a judge or judges from the area, and a prize—a tote bag! It may be open to other members of the community, or it may

be closed to just this class, depending on what you want to do. More details on this later as we talk about your interests. 10 points.

Participation: class participation is graded using the same “satisfactory/unsatisfactory” method as projects, with the same high standards expected for a satisfactory rating. Satisfactory participation involves involvement in class discussions and critiques, being prepared for class, using class work time well, and participating in the weekly “Cosplay We Like” tumblr. For this, each student (and I) will post 5 examples of cosplay that they like to the class tumblr each week, and give a quick explanation to the class about the images they chose. 15 points.

REQUIRED ACADEMIC PATH PROJECTS

If you are following the academic path for this class, you have this further requirement: **Write either a long paper (5000 words) or two medium-length (2500 words each) papers.** (Or, give a 40 minute presentation or two 20 minute presentations.) 25 points.

REQUIRED STUDIO PATH PROJECTS

If you are following the studio path for this class, you have this further requirement: **Create either a major, complex costume, or two medium-complexity costumes.** “Major complex costume” means something along the lines of a suit of Halo armor. “Medium-complexity costume” means something along the lines of a Black Widow costume. If you have a question about what a costume might count as, ask me! 25 points.

ELECTIVE PROJECTS

Anyone may choose as many of these elective projects as they wish:

Arm Bracer or Helmet exercise: Make an arm bracer or helmet out of foam, worbla, or a similar material. This does not have to relate to a larger costume, it is just a skills exercise. 5 points.

Weapon exercise: Make a hand weapon or gun out of any materials. This does not have to relate to a larger costume, it is just a skills exercise. Please exercise extreme caution in how and where you bring any faux weapons on campus and off campus. We do not want to cause any accidental incidents with students or security. Any weapons must be imitations/props and not real/usable. Nothing that shoots, no sharp edges—essentially the same guidelines you’d have for a Con. 5 points.

Faux finishing: Faux-finish or weather some object/costume piece. This does not have to relate to a larger costume, it is just a skills exercise. 5 points.

Make a mold exercise: Create something through the use of a mold. This does not have to relate to a larger costume, it is just a skills exercise. 5 points.

Lights exercise: Create something that uses lights. This does not have to relate to a larger costume, it is just a skills exercise. 5 points.

Post a tutorial/build thread online: Repeatable three times. 5 points.

Build a costume of any complexity or scale: Repeatable. Worth 5-25 points depending on complexity (see me first).

Write a paper or presentation on the cosplay topic of your choice: Repeatable. Worth 5-25 points depending on length (see me first).

GRADUATE STUDENT ADDED REQUIREMENTS

Graduate students are required to do 15 more points of projects to reach each grade level, i.e., they need 105-109 points for an A-, 110-115 for an A, etc.

Course Specific Policies on attendance, late work, make up work, examinations if outside normal class time, etc.:

Attendance

It is imperative that you come to class. You will get one free absence before your grade is penalized. After that, your final grade will drop one step for each unexcused absence. For instance, if you were getting an A and had one unexcused absence past the first free one, you would receive an A-; if you had two unexcused absences past the first free one, you would get a B+, and so on. You are expected to attend class not only so that you can make your work under my supervision, but also within the community of your classmates. This community provides for an exchange of ideas and skills that is innate to the practice of creative production.

If you have an excused absence, you must talk to me and find out how you can make up the work you missed. Excused absences include those for religious or extremely serious health or family issues. Just feeling somewhat under the weather is not a valid excuse. You have to be physically unable to come to or participate in class in order to be medically excused from class. For an absence to be excused, you will be expected to provide proof of some kind, as per the University's policy. If the absence was due to illness, please be aware that the Health Center **does not give out excuse notes for most visits**, so you may need to find another way to show that you were at the Health Center during class, such as a **receipt** or prescription bottle.

Tardiness

Leaving early, showing up late, or otherwise disappearing for large periods of time will count as one-third of an absence per occurrence. If you are not here when I take attendance at the beginning of class, then you are late. You must be mentally present in order to be marked present for attendance and tardiness purposes. Specifically, anyone who is found texting, emailing, IMing, Facebooking, etc. during class will be counted as late for each occurrence, based on the assumption that you are not paying attention. Reading the newspaper, continually talking about unrelated topics, showing up for class without your materials, and other related activities fall under the same category.

Additional Information:

Email Policy

When contacting any instructor by email, you should consider the email to be a formal communication, and make sure that you are giving the instructor the respect due him or her by virtue of the teacher/student relationship. In other words, when you email me, you are doing so in a professional context—please use correct grammar, spelling, capitalization, etc. Please use your syr.edu email account, not a personal account. Also, I check email regularly, but not every hour! Please assume any reply may take at least 24 hours—do not email me right before class with questions about what you need for that class, because I will not get it in time.

Academic Integrity Policy

Syracuse University's academic integrity policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy defines our expectations for academic honesty and holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit. Students should understand that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university-wide academic integrity expectations. The university policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same written work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. The presumptive penalty for a first instance of academic dishonesty by an undergraduate student is course failure, accompanied by a transcript notation indicating that the failure resulted from a violation of academic integrity policy. The presumptive penalty for a first instance of academic dishonesty by a graduate student is suspension or expulsion. SU students are required to read an online summary of the university's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/>.

Course Specific Policies on the Use of Turnitin:

By remaining enrolled in this course, you give permission for the submission of all work you turn in for AIC 200/ART 600 Cosplay to the plagiarism detection and prevention system Turnitin, which compares submitted documents against documents on the Internet and against student papers submitted to Turnitin at SU and at other colleges and universities. You understand that all assignments submitted for this class will become part of the [Turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com) reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

Disability-Related Accommodations

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498, TDD: (315) 443-1371 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. My goal is to create learning environments that are useable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment or achievement, I invite any student to meet with me to discuss additional strategies beyond accommodations that may be helpful to your success.

Religious Observances Notification and Policy

SU religious observances notification and policy, found at <http://hendricks.syr.edu/spiritual-life/index.html>, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes and by the submission deadline for flexibly formatted classes.

For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available for students in **My Slice / StudentServices / Enrollment / MyReligiousObservances / Add a**

Notification. Instructors may access a list of their students who have submitted a notification in My Slice Faculty Center.

Student Academic Work Policy

Educational use of student work: I intend to use academic work that you complete this semester in subsequent semesters for educational purposes. Before using your work for that purpose, I will either get your written permission or render the work anonymous by removing all your personal identification.

Calendar:

August 30	Introduction to class
September 1	Plan projects, work in class
September 6	CWL (Cosplay We Like), critique of Quick Costumes
September 8	Work in class, history of cosplay
September 13	CWL, demo, discussion of costuming in other contexts
September 15	Work in class, BKAC (Better Know a Cosplayer)
September 20	CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
September 22	Work in class, discussion of cosplay and identity (race, gender, sexuality, age, size, etc.)
September 27	CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
September 29	Work in class, BKAC
October 4	CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
October 6	Work in class, Heroes of Cosplay
October 11	CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
October 13	Work in class, BKAC
October 18	CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
October 20	Work in class, Heroes of Cosplay
October 25	CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
October 27	Work in class, BKAC

November 1 CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
November 3 Work in class, Face Off

November 8 CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
November 10 Visiting artist: Melissa Ebbe

November 15 CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
November 17 Work in class, Comic-Con, Episode IV

THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 29 CWL, demo, presentations/critiques as needed
December 1 Work in class, BKAC. Final papers due for academic track.

December 6 CWL, Individual reviews, work in class
December 8 Cosplay Contest (date may be changed)

FINALS WEEK. No final exam. No new work may be turned in after class on Dec. 8.
Revised work may be turned in until Dec. 16—on which day, you should go wear a Star Wars costume to the premiere of *Rogue One*!