

**Dear students and teachers,**

I think too many critiques in art school happen without prior discussion about the format of the critique itself. I created this “menu” in 2016 for students to consider and then select the appropriate format for their learning and transformation. Before using this menu, I encourage you to read and discuss Judith Leemann’s chapter in *Beyond Critique Contemporary Art in Theory, Practice, and Instruction* (Bloomsburg, 2017) as well as her 2004 [article](#). Move from dialog to action, adapting this menu in relationship to your own contexts. Please share your ideas and changes to the menu by email.

**In cooperation,**

Caroline Woolard

**I request that all reviewers / critics (peers as well as guests) do the following:**

**[ check all that you want from reviewers / critics ]**

**In preparation (to be done separately as homework or together to start the critique):**

- read a 1-5 page text that I have written about the work
- read a 1-5 page text by another person that provides context / vocabulary for the work
- watch the work in advance (a 5-15 minute video, website, or virtual space that can be shared digitally)
- watch a 5-15 minute video by another person that provides context / vocabulary for the work
- share source imagery / references images that shape the work
- require that reviewers go to a specific site / gallery / space in advance
- other:

**Group Agreements**

- Be on time!
- Be on topic / no anecdotes that are not helpful
- We will start with a short activity to become present together in the space.

- Everyone will learn and use gender pronouns to refer to people: she/her, they/them, he/him.
- No phones can be used (except for one timing device).
- Reviewers / artists will engage in active listening.
- If you are going to miss a class, there should be a collective solution about how to make up class.
- Reviewers ask themselves, "Why am I talking?" / "Why am I not talking?" (step up or step back).
- other:

### **Artist / Presenter Agreements**

- I will set up for the critique. I will think about the hour my peers are spending with me.
- I will think about what I want to learn.
- I will share my goals / intent for the experience and provide context about what you are focusing on.
- I will tell you what I want feedback on / which work is relevant for the critique.
- I will learn about the guest critic in advance and present my work in relationship to their interests.

### **Looking at the work:**

- take 5 minutes (or more) of collective silence to look at the work
- take 5 minutes (or more) to make drawings of the work, together
- take 5 minutes (or more) to write individually about the work
- take 5 minutes to touch / know the materials used in the work (materials displayed as well as work)
- other:

### **Describing the work:**

- take 5 minutes (or more) to describe the materials, media, and techniques used
- take 5 minutes (or more) to describe the the formal qualities of the work (scale, axis, line, elements, palette, texture, etc.)
- take 5 minutes (or more) to describe the presentation / mode of display / installation of the work
- take 5 minutes (or more) to describe the audience / participant for this project?
- other:

### **Analyzing / Interpreting the work:**

- What topics / issues / subject matter does the work aim to address?
- What kind of local or community-specific knowledges does the work assume?
- How do the materials / techniques connect to the topics / issues the work addresses?

Articulate your worldview / framework for analysis as you speak (feminist, anti-capitalist, modernist...)

other:

### Facilitation

I do not want to speak during the critique; I will take notes as I listen to what you see / say

I want to designate a notetaker, to help me keep track of comments

I want to designate a respondent, someone who will answer your questions for me

I will bring in someone to interview me about the work for the critique, we will both answer questions

I want all people to share their thoughts about the work (by speaking or writing)

other:

### Feedback

I want reviewers to address:

my growth over time (over the semester or year)

more than one work

one work

other artists / research related to the work (I want this: written down OR spoken)

open calls / grants / residencies / people interested in this topic (written OR spoken)

other places where I could improve my technique (written OR spoken)

ways that they would remake the work

ways that they would make semi-related works

the presentation / installation of the work

other:

I am looking for feedback that is

as critical as possible of the work

kind, giving the work the benefit of the doubt

firing squad (see Judith Leemann's [article](#))

don't kill the baby (see Judith Leemann's [article](#))

creative response (see Judith Leemann's [article](#))

observe - describe - analyze (see Judith Leemann's [article](#))

other: