

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING SOPHOMORE REVIEW

1. Read through the Sophomore Review Qualifications form.
2. Search for instructions that don't make sense to you – prepare questions for Prof. Allyn and email them far in advance.
3. Document your strongest works that meet the criteria.
4. In Slideroom: write a required narrative statement.
5. In Slideroom: complete the personal background information.
6. In Slideroom: upload your artwork images

Digital Images of YOUR Artwork

Include approximately 23 images of original work demonstrating your artistic, conceptual, and technical skills, creativity, and aesthetic ability. Please choose your two strongest artworks from each studio class taken at TCNJ. An additional three more works of personal choice should be included which reflect your creative interest. Professional presentation of the work is important. Please present documentation that is in-focus, well lit and shows your best work. As you submit your artwork on SlideRoom, please include the following information:

- a. Title
- b. Date of completion
- c. Material(s)
- d. Dimensions
- e. Course in which this work was created. Include Course Prefix, Number, and Name. (e.g., AAV 111 Drawing)
- f. Instructor of the course
- g. The Semester and Year of Course
- h. What is the Technical Focus?
- i. What is the Conceptual Focus?
- j. 1-2 Sentence Description
- k. State one element of art or principle of design that is strongly represented in the artwork.

**THE NEXT SECTION WILL REVIEW BEST STRATEGIES
FOR DOCUMENTING YOUR WORK!**

Documentation

Next to the original physical work itself, **good documentation is the best long-term investment you can make in your art practice**. It will be the backbone of your art archive, and the primary factor in how your entire practice is viewed long-term. Remember that just because you may have strong work doesn't mean that it will be perceived that way through your documentation. Bad documentation = bad work.

How you document your work determines everything from how it is reproduced in print publications to how it is seen online. Visual documentation will often be the only thing curators, writers, or grant panels will see of your work, and good documentation can mean the difference between getting a grant or securing an exhibition, or being rejected and passed over for opportunities.

Many times, documentation is all that is left over from non-permanent work, like temporary site-specific sculpture, happenings, social practice projects, performances, etc. In cases like these, the documentation will be the only thing that survives, and can actually become the work itself. This is why it is very important to plan how you will document your work ahead of time.

This section does not go into specifics with in regard to the kinds of cameras, film/digital options, or lights you should use to document your work. Every individual work of art requires a unique kind of documentation. Accurate documentation can vary with lighting conditions, the kind of work you are photographing, and how you want your end product to look.

TOOLS

You need a good graphics program. The industry standard is Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom, which you have free access to as a TCNJ Art & Art History Major, Other alternative and free options are available such as:

Pixel
Splashup
GIMP

While graphic tools like Photoshop make it very easy to retouch images after they are taken, it's always best to get the right shot the first time around. So make sure you have the right **camera, lighting, background, framing,** and **formats** for your photographs.

THE CAMERA

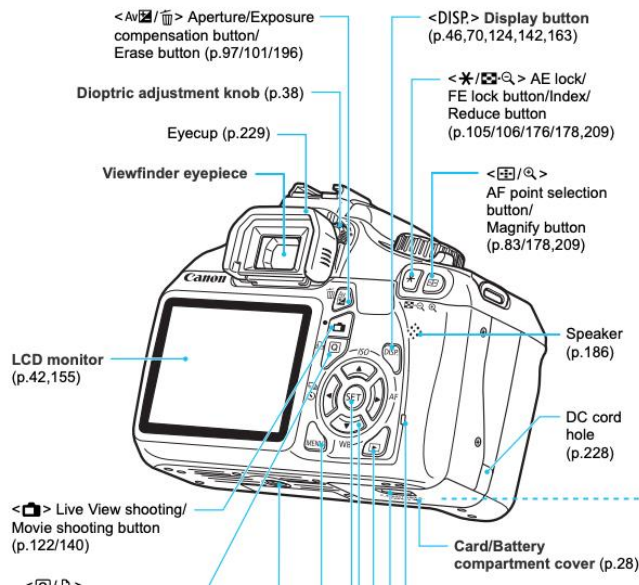
DSLR camera:

This means you need a digital camera that can capture images in a raw format. Raw format is the original, unaltered format a digital camera processes. This large file allows for greater freedom when editing the image in post production. Usually any DSLR (Digital Single Lens Reflex) camera that takes photos at 10MB (minimum) or more will do the trick. The most important thing about this kind of camera is not just that it can take very high-res images, but that it lets you manually adjust exposure rates, white balance, and a host of other features. Most cameras now come with automatic settings, which means you can skip the manual settings. Take your time when buying a camera for documenting your work. Ask around and buy used or refurbished cameras from your school, other artists, or students.

Your Phone:

[9 Common Mistakes when Photographing your Artwork with an iPhone \(and how to fix them\)](#)

1. **Set the ISO (International Standards Organization)**
to its lowest setting. This will reduce “noise,” or graininess, in the final photo. This means the camera is more sensitive to movement, so a tripod is always recommended. The lowest ISO is best used for objects that are not moving. If you are capturing a dance performance, a higher ISO may be needed.
2. **Shoot in raw format**
On your phone you can shoot RAW (see <https://creativepro.com/how-to-shoot-raw-photos-on-iphone/> and <https://photoswithphones.com/how-why-shoot-in-raw-smartphones/#:~:text=For%20shooting%20RAW%20on%20Android,times%20can't%20be%20beaten.>)
 - Try Lightroom Mobile (free when you activate your Adobe Creative Cloud account)
 - VSCO is a free app**On your DSLR** you can shoot RAW by selecting the option in your Menu under Image size/Image Quality
Look up your camera’s manual online



Make sure the work is in focus.

Don't use the zoom function. Zooming in causes your camera to interpolate, which is like making up information for the photo. Instead of zooming, **move your tripod closer**, or use the optical zoom function, especially when you are using a light meter on a work. You can zoom out to read the ambient light and then zoom in to frame in the work. This tricks the internal light meter and will take an even photograph.

Don't use your camera's built in flash. It will distort the color and shadows. To achieve a balanced tone in your photograph, diffused natural light is the best. If you are working in a studio, be sure to use the proper lighting set up to achieve the same evenly lit results.

Fill the frame with as much of your work as possible without cropping anything out of the picture. This will let you get the most detail in your shot. **Always take "detail" images** of any work. This includes capturing textures and all sides of an object.

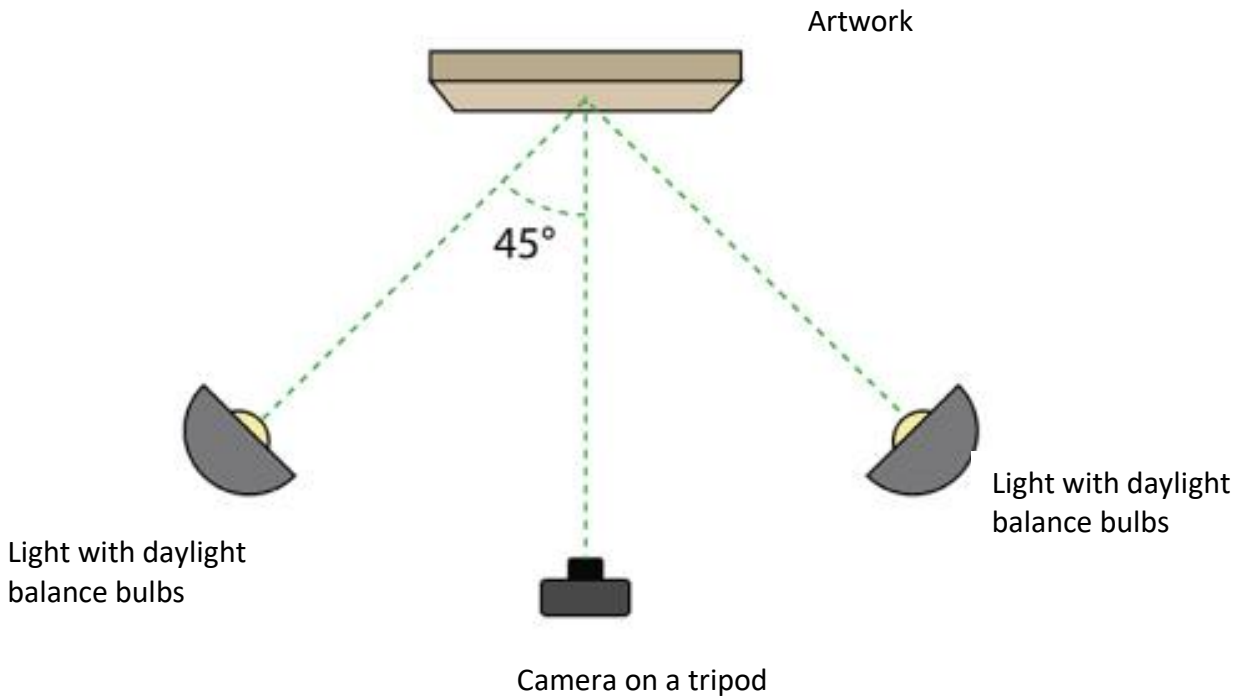
If you are documenting an installation, interactive project, or kinetic sculpture, be sure to photograph a viewer or audience member interacting with the work. In a pinch, you can be the subject of your documentation if you set your automatic timer on your camera. Otherwise, ask a friend or colleague to interact with the artwork so you can document how it functions with human intervention. The same goes for kinetic sculpture and other similar projects. It is important to show the object at rest and equally important to show it in motion. Again, the work will not always be in front of a review panel, curator, or collector. You must capture your work in a photograph or series of photographs in the best way possible for the viewer to understand the artwork. It is never acceptable to simply say: "My work is impossible to document." Remember that ALL work must be documented if you want to apply for anything in the art world, receive press, or distribute your future retrospective catalog.

THE TRIPOD & SETUP



If possible, always use a tripod to photograph work. Failure to use a sturdy tripod will often result in unfocused images and a splitting headache. Invest in a lightweight but stable tripod, preferably with a built-in level. If you are shooting a lot of flat or 2-D artwork, it might be a good idea to invest in an attachable horizontal boom arm to position your camera directly above your work.

Most, if not all, digital cameras shoot HD video along with still images. Therefore, it is a good idea to invest in a tripod that can double as a video tripod. Meaning, the tripod head has consistent fluid movement when filming. You don't want to buy a tripod that sticks or jams while you are trying to film a moving person or object.



LIGHTING

Make sure you light your work evenly and brightly enough so that all relevant aspects can be seen clearly. The sun is the ultimate light source, it's what our eyes adjust all other light for and it's the easiest light to use when photographing work. So if you can photograph your work using diffused natural sunlight, primarily 4 p.m., sunlight (not noon or in complete shade), you are in luck! A cloudy day may be a bummer to some but it is a photographer's paradise. Cloudy weather conditions provide a perfect atmosphere for soft, even light while avoiding harsh shadows and "hot spots" from the unforgiving sun.

Although you may have great lighting conditions outdoors, be mindful to not confuse the work with a cluttered outdoor background. The same goes for any documentation of your work inside a controlled studio. You may really love Leopard print but it will be downright annoying to someone attempting to view your work. Stick to a neutral black, grey, or white seamless background. This will ensure that your viewer is looking at your work and not everything around it.



If you can't photograph work in natural sunlight you will need to control two things: the lighting source and the white balance.

If you can afford it, invest in studio strobes, modeling lights, or florescent filming lights on C-stands or tripods, attached to umbrella reflectors or a diffusion soft box. One of the best things about photographing work digitally is that you can instantly review photos once you have taken them. Always set your white balance (auto or manual) that best suits your working environment. Be sure to experiment with shutter speed and aperture to adjust clarity, depth of field, and exposure. If you can, review a few test shots on a computer screen for accurate color and lighting. Often time a photograph will look entirely different from the tiny, on-camera LCD to your computer screen.

If you are photographing 2-D work, use two lights positioned 45 degrees from both the artwork and the stationary camera. Make sure the lighting is even over the entire work. If you are photographing 3-D work leave one light at 45 degrees from the work and position the other light closer to the work, at less than 45 degrees. If applicable, photographing with this light source will heighten the shadows and texture in your work. There is a delicate balance between a stylized photograph and documentation. You want to document the artwork in the most straightforward and clear manner. You do not want to take liberties with experimental camera angles, circusy lighting gels, or glittery backgrounds.

CHEAP WAY!

Clamp lights @ hardware store for \$8 (get 2)

SAVING AND ARCHIVING YOUR IMAGES

Once you have taken your photos, you will need to save them in your computer or external hard drive.

1. **Transfer the raw photo files to your image archive database.** You will probably want to peruse your photos and weed out any sub-par or blurry images.

2. **Separate the good images by individual works.** You might want to rename the files with the artwork's inventory number and the word ORIGINAL. If you have questions about how to assign inventory numbers, check out the Artwork Inventory section of this manual.

3. **Put the selected images in a Hi-Res Images folder on your external drive.** You might want to make a dedicated ORIGINALS file, nested in this Hi-Res folder. Once you have the original files in this folder you never want to alter them, ever. These are like your negatives, the ultimate archive of your work. Altering the images decreases the image integrity, and can lead to things like pixilation, interpolation, etc. When you need to color correct these files, resize them, crop them, etc., you will want to use the Save As feature and save these in a Lo-Res Images file nested in your Archive folder on your computer.

Additionally, you will want to save each image in your archive in the following formats:

Archival raw image (we addressed this before)

300dpi JPG file used for prints. Make sure it is no more than 8 x 10 inches. (This can also go in the Hi-Res images file). You will use these for your portfolio or send them to press that request images.

72dpi GIF or JPG file used for Internet images. Make sure it is no more than 800 pixels wide. (Save this file in your Lo-Res folder.) This size is also ideal to send via email for a quick reference. 72dpi is never recommended for printing due to pixilation and other forms of digital noise.

VIDEO DOCUMENTATION

Consider hiring a professional videographer or a skilled friend to shoot your work, as well as direct and edit the footage. A poorly shot video is a waste of time and money, and you may have lost the opportunity to capture your best work. Do not skimp on the quality of your documentation.

If you are documenting the work yourself make sure you have a high-quality HD camera and adequate lighting. If you are filming something relatively short (around 15 minutes or less) you can usually get away with using cameras that are equipped with a typical flash memory card. If you are filming something that requires more time, such as a live performance, you might have

to resort to a camera that uses high performance flash memory, digital video tape media, or connection to an external hard drive.

Similar to still photography, don't rely on your camera's light source. Remember that poor lighting can ruin any documentation.

Keep the focus on your work and on documentation, do not try to make the portfolio of your performance into an artwork itself. Simply document your work, not your directing abilities.

Always credit your filming collaborators, if any. Including but not limited to: director, editor, director of photography, and any other person who directly assists in the creation of the documentation.

Describing the size of your work

Examples:

Correct 6 ft. x 2 ft. (ft. = feet)

Correct 6' x 2'

Correct 72 in. x 24 in. (in. = inch)

Correct 72" x 24"

Incorrect 72 inches x 2 feet (don't mix systems of units)

HELPFUL VIDEOS



[HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH YOUR ART](#)

[HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH YOUR 2D and 3D ART](#)

Write a required narrative statement

INSTRUCTIONS

In no more than 300 words, please write a narrative statement about your artmaking practice. Please be prepared to discuss your essay during the in-person meeting. The department encourages you to include the following information:

- Describe how you see your artmaking develop further over the next two years.
- Describe your strength(s) and area(s) of needed improvement as an artist or designer.
- Describe your personal artistic goals in relation to your conceptual and technical development.
- Describe your sources of inspiration (e.g., What artists, designers, and/or scholars inspire you? Where do you find new and interesting ideas/art/design?)

Personal Background Information in Slideroom

Please prepare to include the following criteria in SlideRoom:

- a. Name
- b. TCNJ Email Address
- c. PAWS ID Number
- d. Phone Number
- e. Major (and Specialization)
- f. Minor
- g. Number of Units Transferred
- h. List of AAV courses taken at TCNJ. Please include instructor name and semester/year