



# Syllabus

**Course Title:** London Bound: The Art of Sketchbooks and Bookbinding

**Program and Date:** London Winter, December 26 – January 8, 2027

**Instructor Name:** Lu Colby

**Instructor Home Institution:** Murray State University

**Instructor Email and Phone:** [ncolby@murraystate.edu](mailto:ncolby@murraystate.edu) (270) 809-3286

**Academic Department:** Art & Design

## Get to Know Your Professor

I'm excited to explore London alongside you, not just as travelers, but as students paying close attention to the city's art, architecture, and everyday life. I bring over seven years of bookbinding experience and a background in teaching observational drawing, along with a studio practice rooted in mixed media, printmaking, and sculpture. Much of my work centers on material exploration, documentation, and the way place shapes narrative, which makes London an incredible site for creative research. Teaching abroad feels like a natural extension of my practice, stepping outside of our daily routine, engaging with all the layered history and contemporary culture, and allowing new environments to influence how we see and make. I'm especially passionate about the sketchbook as a space for experimentation and reflection, and I look forward to guiding you in turning observations into a personal artist book that captures both the city and our evolving creative practices.

## Course Description

This course introduces sketchbook practice and bookbinding as a hands-on way to observe, record, and reflect on place. Students will create sketchbooks that become personal artist books throughout the program, blending drawing, writing, and collected ephemera to document their time in London. This class emphasizes curiosity, observation, creative thinking, and process-based exploration. Through supportive instruction and guided demonstrations, students of all experience levels develop visual and reflective strategies using perspective drawing, *plein air* sketching, and creative response exercises. London's architecture, museums, and cultural landmarks, including the National Gallery and Westminster Abbey, will serve as sources for inspiration and research. Designed for students across disciplines, including creative writing and the humanities, the course invites anyone interested in expanding their creative practice through visual and book-based forms.

## Course Level and Credit Hours

Upper Division Undergraduate Level  
Three credit hours

## Prerequisite(s)

None

## Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of all coursework with a passing grade and full participation in course activities, students shall be able to:

- Construct a handmade sketchbook that functions as a working artist book for documenting visual and written observations during their study abroad experience.
- Observe and illustrate architectural, cultural, and historical landmarks in London through drawing, sketching, and *plein air* studies.
- Collect and incorporate ephemera and other cultural artifacts to support visual research and creative response.
- Analyze and reflect on the interaction between place, culture, and visual expression in London through written and visual documentation.
- Apply principles of perspective, composition, and visual storytelling in on-site drawing and sketchbook exercises.

## Required Readings and Materials

You should bring a supplemental sketchbook and drawing materials with you to get started. Bring any materials and drawing mediums you enjoy working with, keeping in mind the limitation of space and accommodations when traveling.

- Hardbound Sketchbook - 8-1/2" x 11" \*for supplemental use only
- Graphite pencils: 6B, 4B, 2B, B, H, 2H, 4H and 2 ebony pencils
- a variety of erasers. (pink pearl, gum, kneaded)
- 6" ruler
- tape for collages (I enjoy washi tapes)
- glue stick for collaging and adhering research materials to sketchbooks
- small scissors or xacto knife
- colored pencils
- travel watercolor set
- pencil sharpener
- carrying pouch



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## Assignments and Grades

The final grade will be assessed as follows:

Pre-departure Research Essay- 10%

Sketchbook Construction- 15%

On-site Sketchbook Exercises/Analyses (20 Exercises Total)- 25%

Field Trip Reflections (800-1000 words)-10%

Final Artist Book - 25%

Reflection Essay and Artist Book Documentation due a month after return from UK- 15%

## Grading Scale

The following scale will be used to compute your grade.

90 - 100% = A

80 - 89% = B

70 - 79% = C

60 - 69% = D

Below 60% = F

## Onsite Learning Experiences and Activities

Onsite learning experiences in this class will likely include the following site visits. This is a tentative list which will be replaced with a detailed daily itinerary of class meetings and field trips prior to the departure date.

Sketching architectural landmarks such as Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, and Tower Bridge to practice perspective and composition.

Visiting the British Museum to observe, document, and draw cultural artifacts from different periods and regions.

Exploring the National Gallery to study historical and contemporary art, collecting ephemera and notes for creative reflection.

*Plein air* sketching in public spaces such as parks, markets, and neighborhoods to capture atmosphere and daily life.

Guided walking tours of historical districts to contextualize observations in cultural and historical frameworks.



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## Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory at all scheduled activities and class meetings as well as field trip excursions. This includes any virtual meetings before and after the onsite experience. Repeated absences, including for ill health, will require documentation to be excused.

## Academic Integrity Policy

Plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty (see your campus student handbook for definitions) will not be tolerated and will result in failing assignment grades or even a course grade of F. Violations of academic honesty will be reported back to the student's home campus.

## Physical Expectations

Program requires walking 3-5 miles per day on uneven pavement in all kinds of weather and long periods of standing. Students must be able to carry their own bags and belongings.

## Disability Accommodation

CCSA is committed to providing access to education abroad to the extent possible in a study abroad setting. The earlier CCSA and the faculty know the needs, the more likely we can accommodate them. At a minimum, students seeking accommodations are to contact both the CCSA office and the faculty one month in advance of the program's beginning. Students seeking such accommodation must provide CCSA with a copy of the letter on file with their own Office of Disability Services outlining what services they receive on their home campus.

## Title IX Policy

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sexual discrimination violate CCSA policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain support from the Onsite Program Director or the CCSA Executive Director. To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact either of these two officers. Disclosure to faculty instructors or CCSA officers of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on the program or involving a visitor, student or employee is not confidential under Title IX. Faculty and other CCSA employees are required to forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the CCSA Executive Director.

## Statement about Final Syllabus

Please note that all CCSA syllabi are subject to change, but every effort will be made to ensure participants receive notice of such changes in a timely manner.