

Fall 2023 // SP in Metals // University of Texas at El Paso

MTLS : 4323, Special Problems in Metals, crn 11119

Fox Fine Arts, main studio room 154

Tuesday / Thursday, 9:00 am – 11:50 am

Assistant Professor // Jess Tolbert
pronouns: she/her/hers/they/them

contact info

jltolbert@utep.edu (email)

office hours

Tuesday & Thursday, 12 – 1 pm, By Appointment

153A Fox Fine Arts

Contact via email, or make arrangements during class.

There is generally sufficient time for individual counseling during our 6 hours per week of class time. If additional time is needed to discuss technical/conceptual project related questions, make an outside appointment.

Class time will not be used to discuss class performance, grades, and/or personal problems that affect performance.

An email or outside appointment will need to be made.

Jess Tolbert is the Head of the Jewelry + Metalsmithing Program at UTEP. She holds two degrees in fine arts, both with a focus on Metalsmithing and jewelry. She received her MFA from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and her BFA from Texas State University, San Marcos. Jess actively exhibits her artwork nationally and internationally, has received prestigious awards and grants, attended multiple Artist-in-Residence programs, and regularly curates exhibitions of contemporary metal and jewelry work in the USA and abroad. jesstolbert.com

course description:

It is the purpose of the special problems course to explore *METAL, ADORNMENT, FUNCTION, & the BODY* as creative material in art. Emphasis is placed on the research and development of a personal conceptual direction in conjunction with formal and technical problem solving. Students will utilize historic and contemporary precedents and issues of Metalsmithing, as well as other creative work or relevant topics as inspirational points of departure and reference. As a capstone to the Metals program, students will work independently to implement and showcase their conceptual theme through the hand skills, technique, and understanding of process they have gained throughout the program.

course goals/objectives & outcomes:

This course will expand on the technical knowledge and skills acquired in all previous levels of Metals (I-VII). Emphasis is placed upon a personal vision through a self-directed path. It is expected that students in Special Problems are independent and that they will create a clear outline for the course, with guidance from the instructor. Students will also focus on elements of professional development, including a well-written and organized artist statement, resume, thorough research & writing, and portfolio.

Students will either continue from a focus started in Metals VII or begin a consistent and tightly focused body of work that is conceptually and technically driven. Strong technical skills and materials understanding must be apparent in the completed works.

course requirements:

The course will be comprised of independently driven creative assignments, technical samples, research, sketching, reading, and writing. Technical, formal, and conceptual investigations will be expected. Students will present their independent ideas, research, writing, samples, and in progress and completed projects at interim discussions and deadlines to be given at the start of the semester. Although Special Problems students are not required to attend demonstrations taking place during class, unless they are from a visiting artist, students are expected to use class time to focus on their work and must follow the attendance as stated below.

Your responsibilities as a student are to make an *honest* effort to master the assignments and challenges that are presented to you, to contribute *positively* to the learning experience of the class by being an *active* participant in all class activities, and to be *respectful* of the studio, the tools, and all others around you.

This studio course will require significant work-time outside of class, at times. In addition to the 6 hours of face-to-face course time each week, students should anticipate spending about 6 hours outside of class per week to satisfactorily complete this class. A serious student will discover that minimum involvement in the class is not sufficient to provide a quality performance. The 6 hours per week in class are to be used at the instructor's discretion. In-class work time is structured to provide individualized instruction and assistance with the design/build process. You will gain the most insight and feedback on your work during this time if you challenge yourself outside of class to make progress. In-class studio time is limited, so it is extremely important that you are organized and disciplined to best prepare for effective use of your time, both in and out of class.

grading

Final grades will be based on the following breakdown:

75%	Creative Assignments
25%	Professional Development
100%	Final *

*Once a final course average is calculated, attendance penalties (if applicable) will be deducted and the final grade established.

Grades are translated into points for averaging as follows:

A+	12 points	100-97%
A	11 points	96-93%
A-	10 points	92-90%
B+	9 points	89-87%
B	8 points	86-83%
B-	7 points	82-80%
C+	6 points	79-77%
C	5 points	76-73%
C-	4 points	72-70%
D+	3 points	69-67%
D	2 points	66-63%
D-	1 points	62-60%
F	0 points	less than 60%

Grades are based upon a careful evaluation of the following (when applicable):

- Class participation, effort, and attitude
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Progression (in and out of class)
- Thoroughness in research, model making, design quality, & originality
- Technical Execution and Craft
- Overall visual impact of finished work
- Development of concept/intellectual basis for work
- Participation in critique, self-assessment, and in progress discussions and analysis

And are defined as follows:

A - excellent quality work	D - below average work
B - above average work	F - unsatisfactory, failing
C - average work	

As your instructor it is my goal to instill in you a passion for the overall creative process and the desire to understand, practice, and showcase the skills you learn.

assignments:

The course will consist of, at least, three major creative assignments, which must include preparatory research, designing, sketching, as well as relevant technical sample making pertaining to individual investigations.

An artist statement (short and long form), artist biography, resume, a portfolio of professional images, and the apparent structure of short and long-term planning (calendar) will comprise 25% of the semester's grade.

Late & Re-submission policies:

MAJOR CREATIVE ASSIGNMENTS will be proposed by the student following the calendar of dates given at the beginning of the semester. Your major projects are required to be turned in on time at the beginning of the class due date and in a completed condition. No late work will be accepted for major projects. They will be graded as presented at grading times.

After projects are returned, they may be re-worked, finished, and/or improved and resubmitted by the last class day for re-grading. The resubmitted projects new grade will be averaged with the original assigned grade to equal the final project grade. *Depending on the final assignment deadline, this may only apply to the first and second Creative Assignment of the semester.

IF NO WORK IS TURNED IN ON THE DUE DATE, THE STUDENT RECEIVES AN 'F' FOR THE PROJECT AND FORFEITS THE OPPORTUNITY TO RE-SUBMIT FOR A HIGHER GRADE

For illness or emergency situations, an email should be sent before the critique (or as soon as possible) indicating the nature of the emergency, in order to turn work in late. No email = F for the assignment.

ALL OTHER TYPES OF ASSIGNMENTS (technical assignments, samples, research, designs, etc.) will be submitted at the beginning of the class for which the assignment is due, unless stated otherwise. If this work is submitted late, a letter grade (3 points) will be deducted for each class session that it is not turned in. After one-week, late work will not be accepted.

professional development:

A portion (25%) of your overall grade is based on the progressive development of the following:

An artist statement, bio, & resume, submitted as drafts throughout the semester in order to develop content and structure, and to edit for grammar. A portfolio including professional images with captions of work created during time as a J+M student. A final submission of the portfolio, as well as the short and long form artist statement, artist biography, resume, and other relevant information will be turned in by the end of the term.

The professional development components will be evaluated at multiples points during the semester in order to track progress. The set of grades will be averaged into its final grade. No late evaluations accepted. See calendar for due dates. *No extra credit is available.

Blackboard:

Items posted to Blackboard include: Course Syllabus and Calendar, reference material, website links, links to videos, and slideshows. Ensure your UTEP email account works as I post weekly class updates on BB Announcements (which automatically send to email). *All course BB content is private and confidential and should not be shared or posted in any publicly accessible space (online/irl).

course policies:

Attendance, punctuality, participation, and appropriate class conduct are considered performance criteria for this class. Failure to perform to required standards will result in strong grade penalties and can cause failure of this course.

participation:

- Participation in all discussions, demonstrations, critiques, and class days is expected and required for this course.
- Development and execution of class projects must be done utilizing all class meetings. Projects executed solely outside of class will not be accepted.
- Participation and productivity are essential to the individual student, as well as the class group dynamic. The more the student does, sees, and questions, the faster skills and understanding will increase. Productivity, in the form of successes and failures, is the only way the student can visually demonstrate the knowledge acquired.

critiques: Participation and attendance on critique days is required. They are a critical element of this class and should be considered as important as exams in a lecture course. Critiques are a focused and structured opportunity to articulate thoughts and ideas about your work, as well as your peer's. They should help students consider and practice critical thinking and observation in relation to the techniques and concepts challenged by the projects, as well as in larger contexts of wearable/functional art, contemporary art, history, and culture. They should also be considered an exercise in professionalism; be on time, be engaged, be respectful, and present your work thoughtfully. Group and individual critiques rely on completed work and full student participation; unresolved work will not be critiqued.

attendance:

- ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED & PROMPTNESS IS EXPECTED. I take attendance each class.
- Each student is permitted 3 absences during the semester without penalty. Students with more than 3 absences should consider dropping the course and retaking it at a time when the student can commit to the course.
- Art Department Policy: Each absence after 3 will result in the final course grade lowered by 1 full letter grade. Absences after the first 3 may be excused at the instructor's discretion, only if the first 3 absences are excused.
- Excused absences are defined as *documented serious illness, childcare emergencies, death in the immediate family, or university sanctioned events*. Scheduled appointments, transportation problems, and job demands are not excused absences.
- Students will receive one-third an absence for arriving late or leaving early (3 times late/leave early = 1 absence). Coming to class late or leaving early is not only unprofessional & disruptive to the learning environment, but announcements, pertinent information, and demos may be presented at the beginning of class so it is critical to be on time, even early! It is your responsibility to remain up to date with tardies/absences. I have the attendance sheet available to review each class.
- Come to class prepared, have your materials, and be ready to work or participate. Unpreparedness will be regarded as absent. Please arrange all appointments (doctor, work related, etc.) around this class.
- Information missed due to being late or absent is the sole responsibility of the student.
- **Attendance on critique day is mandatory.** Outside of documented illness or emergency, any student who misses a critique/due date will receive a grade of 'F' on that project.
- No extra credit is available to offset attendance problems.

conduct:

- **Behavior:** Professional and respectful behavior is expected at all times. If there is an issue preventing you from performing to this expectation in class, during studio time, or even online, you will first be given a warning, and if it continues you will be removed from the course.
- **Sick Policy:** Under NO circumstance should anyone come to class when feeling ill or exhibiting symptoms related to the flu, COVID-19, or other contagious illnesses. If you are feeling ill, contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange necessary and appropriate accommodations regarding your coursework. Our health & safety is priority #1.
- **Guests:** No visitors are permitted in the studio during class time, or outside of class.
- **Children:** For safety reasons, children are not permitted at any time to be in the studios.
- **Cell Phones:** Please turn off, or completely silence, your phones during class time. The use of cell phones (calling, texting, social media, etc.) is prohibited during class. If this becomes a reoccurring problem, I will ask you to leave and you'll be counted absent.
- **Laptops/Tablets/Smart devices:** Please keep these in your backpacks, on the shelf, in your locker during class. The use of them is prohibited during class time, unless there is an assignment requirement. Again, if this becomes a reoccurring problem, I will ask you to leave and you'll be counted absent.

incompletes, withdrawals, pass/fail

Incompletes, 'I', grades will be considered for students completing satisfactory or better work and having serious legitimate situations beyond their control requiring additional time to complete the course requirements. All 'I' grades are at discretion of the instructor & approval of the Department Chair.

Withdrawing from the course is the full responsibility of the student. Withdrawals must be completed on or before final date to drop with a 'W'. If deadline is missed a grade will be issued for performance in the course.

Pass/fail, audit, or graduate credit options not available.

University Policy Statements

disabilities statement

Disabilities: I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally before or after class in the first two weeks or make an appointment to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact the Center for Accommodations & Student Services within the first two weeks of classes. CASS Office, Union East Bldg., Rm 106

www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/ 915.747.5148 / cass@utep.edu

academic dishonesty statement

Cheating/Plagiarism: Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student or possessing unauthorized materials during a test/quiz. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the word/ideas of another as ones' own. All work must be the original work of the student. Any quotations, paraphrases, or direct appropriation of imagery or ideas from borrowed sources must be properly cited to comply with applicable citation guidelines and copyright law, including AI tools. Do not submit work under your name that you did not do yourself. You may not submit work for this class that you did for another class, including previous metal courses. All suspected violations will be reported and subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures.

Refer to <https://www.utep.edu/hoop/section-2/student-conduct-and-discipline.html>

- **Music:** Listening to personal music is only permitted during in-class work time and on headphones at a reasonable volume. This is so you are able to work safely, and you're not shut off from engaging with the class. Watching movies, TV shows, videos, etc. on phones/tablets/laptops during class hours is not allowed. I will ask you to turn it off.
- **Open Lab Hours/Access:** The studio will be open outside of regular class hours to students currently enrolled in a Metals class under monitor supervision Monday-Saturday. As an advanced student, you must sign in and out of open lab hours each time you come & follow proper opening and closing procedures if you are first or last to be there. Only an advanced student or the instructor may open/close down the studio. See the studio doors for the semester lab hour schedule. Police Identification access is reserved for advanced students only. Be prepared with your student ID when calling for access to the lab outside of normal hours: M-F, before 8 am or after 6 pm; at any time on Sat/Sun.
- **Studio & Personal Safety:** All safety procedures will be explained to you throughout the semester, and every consideration has been taken to create a safe environment for you to work in. Be proactive regarding your health & safety.
 - Do not use any tool or equipment that has not been demonstrated to you by the class instructor.
 - Use equipment and materials with proper instruction and supervision. Do not work when you're tired.
 - Please report immediately (to myself, TA, or work-study student) any tool or equipment in need of repair.
 - No eating inside the studio. Beverages must be brought in a fully closed container and kept in your backpack/on studio shelf only. Use the patio or hall to eat or when taking extended drink breaks.
 - Always wear appropriate attire and footwear while working in the studio. Safety glasses, protective clothing, dust masks, aprons, gloves, or any specifics mentioned by the instructor. Students must wear close toe shoes at all time in the studio, pull back/pin up long hair, remove loose jewelry/headphones, avoid loose clothing, and clothing that reveals too much skin. If not in compliance, you will be asked to leave to get the proper attire.
 - Students should never work alone when possible. If you or another student has an emergency or serious accident, or you feel unsafe for any reason, you should call the UTEP police immediately (747.5611).
- **Cleanliness:** You are required to clean up your bench area and any space you've worked in every day that you work in the studio (in and out of class). The last 5-10 minutes of class time is reserved for clean up. Anytime you leave the studio you must clean up, even if you plan to return later. Please put all of your tools, materials, etc. away in your lockers, studio tools and equipment back in their proper place, and wipe down or sweep bench/table-tops, drill press area, and other communal areas once you are finished using the studios. While in class, use lockers and shelves to keep bench tops and floor surrounding benches and soldering area clear. If you have difficulty cleaning up or putting away tools you will receive a tutorial on how to clean up after class.
- **Studio Responsibilities:** Take care of the studio. The maintenance of our space isn't the sole job of the TAs, the instructors, or the cleaning staff, it is Everyone's. Being aware of your surroundings and treating it like it is your own (because it is) creates a positive working environment and a well-oiled machine! We need all hands on this.

note/disclaimer:

If it is necessary to make any changes to the content of this syllabus during the course of the semester students will be notified.

Weekly updates and important information may be provided via BB/email. Students are required to check BB/email regularly and are responsible for obtaining information given. Failure to check email is not a viable excuse for missing course information.

As an advanced student your toolbox should include ALL of the following:

- ◆ 6" Half-round #2 cut file with handle
- ◆ Jewelers saw frame, 4" or 5"
- ◆ Plier set: chain, round, flat nose
- ◆ Side cutter (sometimes included with plier sets) for cutting solder
- ◆ Set of 6 assorted needle files, cut #2
- ◆ 6" steel tweezers with sharp non-serrated tip
- ◆ 6" metal ruler
- ◆ Assorted drill bits: #60, 55, 52 are good to have
- ◆ Ring clamp
- ◆ Silver solder: Hard, Medium, and Easy (at least 1ft. each)
- ◆ Solder pick
- ◆ One jar non-fluoride paste flux for silver soldering
- ◆ One small, soft paint brush - for flux
- ◆ T-pins: Perkins sells them by the dozen
- ◆ Wet/Dry Silica Carbide abrasive paper (black color): #'s 220, 320, 400, 600
- ◆ Steel Wool: Grade #0000, fine
- ◆ Saw blades: various sizes - #2/0, #4/0 are good to have
- ◆ Beeswax, old candle, or soap - for saw blade/drill bit lubrication
- ◆ Center punch
- ◆ Scribe
- ◆ Scissors & X-acto knife with blades
- ◆ Masking tape & Rubber Cement
- ◆ Fine point & regular sharpie marker
- ◆ Sketchbook, tracing paper, pencil, eraser
- ◆ 3-ring binder
- ◆ Safety glasses
- ◆ Hand towel, rag, or old t-shirt
- ◆ Small/Medium art supply/tool box
- ◆ Metal/Wire as needed for assignments
- ◆ Expect to replace expendables: sandpapers, blades, etc.

Optional items that are handy:

- ◆ Caliper
- ◆ Square
- ◆ Miter vise
- ◆ Dividers
- ◆ Shape templates

Materials and supplies will be needed throughout the semester and you will be given advance notice to procure what is necessary for projects, samples, assignments, etc. As an advanced student is a good habit to procure a stock of a variety of metals (sheet, wire) to have on hand when needed.

Tool Loan

If needed, the Metals Program has *some* additional tool loan kits available for checkout to use during the semester. It is the student's responsibility to maintain the good care of these tools, keep track of them, and to return them at the end of the semester in good condition. Any lost/damaged tools will need to be replaced by the last class day at the student's expense. Failure to do so will result in an 'Incomplete' for final grade submission, until returned/replaced.

- ◆ 6" Half-round #2 cut file with handle
- ◆ Jewelers saw frame, 4" or 5"

Studio/Lab UTEP Course Fee:

General studio expendables; general studio tool wear and replacement; sparex/pickling solution - post-soldering cleaning acid; gases used for soldering; materials/tools for student use

studio communal tools, supplies, & studio intent:

If ever using a communal tool or supply, please help maintain access to them by ALWAYS putting things back in the appropriate place when you are finished with them. Please do not take studio tools home with you.

local suppliers:

- Perkins Jewelry Supply / 1124 E Yandell Dr. **10% student discount with ID
Open: Monday - Friday 10 am to 5 pm. Closed weekends. 915.533.6565
- Armor Metals / 9925 Carnegie * larger sheet metal
- Hobby Lobby, Michael's, Hal's Hobby Warehouse, Home Depot, Lowes, Ace Hardware

online suppliers:

- www.riogrande.com | www.ottofrei.com | www.contenti.com | www.allcraftusa.com

recommended (not required) books/resources:

- UTEP Library - There is an AMAZING selection of jewelry/metals books available!
- Online: www.artjewelryforum.org - large resource for contemporary jewelry books, articles, interviews, reviews, opportunities, etc.
- www.snagmetalsmith.org - Society of North American Goldsmiths

membership:

- SNAG - \$58/year student membership (includes digital & print *Metalsmith* subscription). THE organization for the field: Stay connected, learn of opportunities, network, conference discount, etc. *Discount when 4 or more students sign up.

ADDITIONAL CAMPUS RESOURCES:

COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION

Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible via email.

Additional COVID-19 information, including testing availability, can be found here:

<https://www.utep.edu/ehs/covid/>

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

The UTEP [Help Desk](#) is available to assist with technological needs of students: general troubleshooting, software resources, wifi hotspots, and possible laptop checkouts.

FOOD PANTRY

The UTEP Food Pantry offers support and assistance to students dealing with food insecurity. Food insecurity refers to having limited food available, including a reduction in the quality, safety or variety of food or ability to acquire food in a socially acceptable manner. Researchers have suggested that food insecurity is an issue that an estimated half of all college students struggle with.

At UTEP, we recognize that food insecurity is an obstacle to student success and think it's crucial that students' basic needs are being met. The food pantry is located in Memorial Gym and is open to all currently enrolled students with a student ID. <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/foodpantry/>

MENTAL HEALTH

Counseling and Psychological Services provides a variety of services at UTEP that support students' ability to benefit from their experience: career counseling, psycho-educational workshops, individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, and professional training experiences.

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/>

Miners Talk Crisis Line: 915-747-5302

Togetherall: Online mental health support, anonymous & 24/7. [Register here.](#)

STUDENT AFFAIRS

For more resources UTEP offers for students to meet their goals, see student affairs for additional links at <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/>

SP in Metals Syllabus Acknowledgement & Course Contract Acceptance

Please sign below if you acknowledge that you have received and read the syllabus. That you have had the opportunity to ask questions for clarification. That you understand and agree to the policies and criteria described and understand that if anything is subject to change you will be notified.

Name (print clearly): _____

Signature: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

What name you prefer to be called (nickname) / preferred pronouns:

Phone Number: _____

UTEP Email: _____

Can I include your phone and email on a class distribution list?
YES or NO

What are you excited to accomplish this semester in Metals? What are your goals?

What are your post-graduation plans?

How can I help and support you to achieve those goals/plans?