

Fall 2016 // Advanced Metals // University of Texas at El Paso

## MTLS : 4323, Special Problems in Metals

Fox Fine Arts, main studio room 154  
Tuesday / Thursday 9 am - 11:50 am

*Instructor // Jess Tolbert*

contact info

832.651.5669 (cell)  
jltolbert@utep.edu (email)

office hours / location

Tuesday & Thursday, 12 - 1 pm, By Appointment  
153A Fox Fine Arts

office appointments

Classes meet for a total of 6 hours per week. This is generally sufficient time for individual counseling. 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. Outside appointments will need to be made. *To schedule a meeting for Tuesday or Thursday between 12 & 1 pm, email or make arrangements during class.*

*Jess Tolbert 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 work nationally and internationally, is a contributing writer for Art Jewelry Forum, has attended multiple Artist-in-Residence programs, presented at the annual Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG) conference, and curated exhibitions of contemporary metal and jewelry work in Boston (2015) and Munich, Germany (forthcoming).*

*jesstolbert.com*

### course description:

It is the purpose of the advanced course to explore *METAL, ADORNMENT, FUNCTION, & the BODY* as creative material in art. With an emphasis on formal, technical, and conceptual problems, students will aim to develop their own personal direction and philosophy for Metalsmithing through independent research, thinking, and making. Historic and contemporary precedents, examples, and issues of Metalsmithing are presented and investigated during class discussions, critiques, readings, and self-directed research. We will use those examples as well as other creative work, literature, scientific analysis, digital media, or any potential relevant topics as inspirational points of departure and reference. This multitude of perspectives will encourage student's evaluation of their own and their peer's work to be informed and insightful. Emphasis is placed on the development of a personal conceptual direction in conjunction with formal and technical problem solving. In the advanced course students are expected to improve, build upon, and continue the development of their hand skills, technique, and understanding of processes. With the individual level of each student in mind, technical excellence is always expected.

This semester's focus will introduce students to the use and concepts of color and material. The course will explore the application of color through various surface treatments on metal and through the use and alteration of alternative materials, such as plastics and fibers. Alternative (non-metal) materials will be examined not only through technical process, but also through understanding of material history and their relationships with function, use, and meaning. Introduction to new metal processes and histories will also be covered.

### 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 vision for the course, with guidance from the instructor.

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 material 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 announced throughout the semester. Although Special Problems students are not required to attend demonstrations taking place during class, students are expected to use the time to focus on their work and must follow the attendance as stated below.

Your responsibilities as an advanced 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. Students should anticipate spending 6-10 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 with demonstrations, lectures, and in-class work time. The 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. Take advantage of your time in and out of class.

## grading

Final grades will be based on the following breakdown:

75%	Creative Assignments
20%	Technical Assignments
5%	Notebook/Sketchbook
100%	Final *

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

Grades are calculated using % and converted to letter grades according to the following scale:

90 - 100 %	A - excellent quality work
80 - 89 %	B - above average work
70 - 79 %	C - average work
60 - 69 %	D - below average work
Below 60 %	F - unsatisfactory work, failing

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
- Development of concept/intellectual basis for work
- Participation in critique, self-assessment, and in progress discussions and analysis

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 three major creative assignments which must include preparatory research, designing, and sketching; technical assignments will include relevant technical sample making pertaining to individual investigations, an artist resume, artist statement, as well as an annotated bibliography compiled through independent research conducted; notebook/sketchbook will comprise the final 5% of the semester's grade.

### Late & Re-submission policies:

Major creative assignments will be independently driven and follow a set of prescribed required goals. 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 before the end of the semester (see calendar for due date) for re-grading. The resubmitted projects new grade will be averaged with the original assigned grade to equal the final project grade.

**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, 1/2 of a letter grade will be deducted for each class session that it is not turned in. After one week, late work will not be accepted.

## notebook/sketchbook:

A portion (5%) of your overall grade is based on the evaluation of your complete notebook/sketchbook. The *notebook* will be a well-organized collection of all handouts given (project prompts, technical, etc.), neatly written demonstration/lecture notes, and printed research images. Only materials from Metals should be included and all pages need to be hole-punched and secured, not placed in the side pockets. You should have a separate *sketchbook* that includes your design sketches, research, and inspirational writings, drawings, photographs, clippings, brainstorming of ideas, found objects, etc. All materials should be secured in place with glue, tape, or staples. These two components of the course are for you. It is good habit to organize information that you may need to reference in the future (handouts, notes, inspirations) and to develop your interests in a way that reveal the breadth/scope of your thought process, research effort, and overall creative energies.

The notebook/sketchbook will be evaluated at multiple points in the semester in order to track progress and the set of grades will be averaged into its final grade. You will be given at least 1 weeks notice of grading days. No late evaluations accepted.

## 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 out 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 as they are a very 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 will take roll 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.
- As Departmental policy states, each absence after 3 will result in the final course grade being 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 illness or serious illness or death in the immediate family*.
- All students are required to attend class on time and remain in the class for the entire session. Students will receive one-third an absence for arriving late or leaving early (3 times late = 1 absence). Coming to class late or leaving early is not only disruptive to the learning environment, but announcements, pertinent information, and demonstrations will be presented at the beginning of every class so it is critical to be on time, even early!
- Coming to class unprepared or attending class and not working will be regarded as absent. Students will not be excused to purchase materials or for outside appointments. Please arrange all appointments (doctor, work related, etc.) around this class.
- It is important that the student be on time and prepared to work, treat the course like a job. If the student is late or absent, information missed 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.
- **Attendance at the end of semester clean up is mandatory.** Students final grade will be lowered one letter grade for failure to attend and participate.

## 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 or studio time you will first be given a warning, and if it continues you will be removed from the course.
- *Sick Policy:* Do not come to class sick. Please email me before class starts to let me know you will not be there and seek medical care and/or recuperate at home.
- *Guests:* Guests are not permitted in the studios during class. Please tell your friends, family, partners, that they may see you before or after class time. You may not step out to visit guests during class. You will be held responsible for adhering to this policy, and I will give you one warning. After that, I will ask you to leave and you'll be counted absent. If you have a guest during open lab hours please be mindful of the other students space and seating availability, especially during busy times. They may never use equipment/tools.
- *Children:* For safety reasons, children are not permitted at any time, ever, 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, Pokémon-ing, etc.) is absolutely prohibited during class. If this is a problem, you will be asked to leave and will be counted absent for the day.
- *Laptops/Tablets/Smart devices:* Please keep these in your backpacks, on the shelf, in your locker during class. The use of them is absolutely prohibited during class time. Again, if it becomes a problem you will be asked to leave and counted absent for the day.

## 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 Disabled Student Services within the first two weeks of classes. Disabled Student Services Office, East Union Bldg., Rm 106 [www.utep.edu/dsso](http://www.utep.edu/dsso) / 915.747.5148 / [dss@utep.edu](mailto:dss@utep.edu)

### plagiarism/academic dishonesty statement

Cheating/Plagiarism: Cheating is unethical and not acceptable. Plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper without giving credit to the source of that information or wording: it is also not acceptable. All art and design work, and all written work, must be the original work of the student. Any quotations, paraphrases, or direct appropriation of imagery or ideas from source material must be properly cited according to university, departmental, and/or instructor policy. 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. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy. Refer to <http://www.utep.edu/dos/acadintg/htm> for further information.

- *Music*: Communal music that is appropriate, not too loud, and agreed upon by the whole class is allowed during in-class work time on the studio music system/speakers. Listening to headphones/personal music during class is not permitted. This is so you are not shut off from engaging with your peers and participating in the learning process. You may wear headphones during open lab hours if you wish.
- *Open Lab Hours/Access*: The studio will be open outside of regular class hours to all students currently enrolled in a Metals class under monitor supervision Monday-Sunday. As an advanced student, you must have your UTEP ID available for police identification to work outside of the posted times.
- *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. Safety is the number one priority.
  - Do not use any equipment/tool that has not been demonstrated to you by the class instructor.
  - Please report immediately (to myself, TA, or work-study student) any tool or piece of equipment in need of repair.
  - There are to be absolutely no food or drinks in the studio. Please leave them outside of the classroom. You may not use class time to eat meals or spend excessive time in the hall taking food/drink breaks. Come prepared, meaning well fed!
  - 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, 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. Be proactive regarding your health & safety.
  - Students should never work alone. If you must, be sure to let someone know where you are and keep a cell phone with you. 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 special 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 janitors, the TAs, the work-studies, or myself, it is Everyone's. Being aware of your surroundings and treating it like it was your own (because it is) will create a positive working environment and a well-oiled machine! We need all hands on this. \*The last student to leave the studio will be responsible for turning off all equipment, including pickle pots, hot plates, ventilation, bleeding all oxygen & gas lines (whether or not you have been using them), filling out & signing the closing checklist, turning off all lights, and locking the main classroom doors.

#### 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 will be provided via email often. Students are required to check email regularly and are responsible for obtaining information given. Failure to check email is not a viable excuse for missing course information.

### Multi purpose required materials\*

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: #59, 55, 51 are good to have
- ✦ Ring clamp
- ✦ Silver solder: Hard, Medium, and Easy (at least 1ft. each)
- ✦ Solder pick or wire clothes hanger
- ✦ 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
- ✦ Saw blades: various sizes - #2/0, #4/0 are good to have
- ✦ Center punch
- ✦ Scribe
- ✦ Scissors
- ✦ Masking tape
- ✦ Fine point & regular sharpie marker
- ✦ Sketchbook, tracing paper, pencil
- ✦ Metal/Wire as needed for assignments\*\*
- ✦ 3-ring binder
- ✦ Safety glasses
- ✦ Hand towel, rag, or old t-shirt
- ✦ Small/Medium art supply box

Optional items that are handy:

- ✦ Caliper
- ✦ Square
- ✦ Miter vise
- ✦ Dividers
- ✦ Brass brush, long
- ✦ 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.

### note/goals:

The studio has some of the listed items, as well as others, for communal use. However, that does not mean they are guaranteed to you. If there is a particular tool you like to use and use a lot, it is a great idea to purchase one for yourself. This way you will always have access to it.

Tools have a way of 'walking off' during the semester and this is frustrating for everyone, students *and* faculty. Please help in ensuring this does not happen and that all students have access to communal tools by ALWAYS putting things back in the appropriate place when you are finished with them. Help remind other students they should do the same, and if you see a tool on a table not being used, place it back in its spot. The less time we take to look for things, the more time we have to get great work done! Group goals!

### local suppliers:

- Perkins Jewelry Supply / 1124 E Yandell Dr. \*\*10% student discount with ID  
Open Monday – Friday 9:30 am to 6 pm, closed weekends
- Armor Metals / 9925 Carnegie

### online suppliers:

- [www.riogrande.com](http://www.riogrande.com)
- [www.ottofrei.com](http://www.ottofrei.com)
- [www.thompsonenamel.com](http://www.thompsonenamel.com) (enameling supply)
- [www.eastwood.com](http://www.eastwood.com) (powdercoat supply)

### recommended books:

- The Complete Metalsmith by Tim McCreight
- The Art of Enameling – Techniques, Projects, Inspirations by Linda Darty
- Contemporary Jewelry in Perspective by Damien Skinner