

OVERVIEW

Course Description

Do you find the natural world to be a constant source of inspiration? Do you observe it, care for it, marvel at it, photograph it and even draw and paint it? Would you like to use your artwork to pay appropriate homage to the many masterpieces of nature? In this course, the Natural History Illustration staff at the University of Newcastle will encourage you to know your subjects inside and out, and they will share with you the finer points of their specialised craft. Undertaking this course and immersing yourself in the set tasks will help you to hone your skills in both art and observation.

In this course we will explore concepts related to:

- Studying your environment
- Accurately recording your observations of flora and fauna
- Studying the anatomy and form of plants and animals
- Rendering techniques
- Field sketching
- Thoughtful composition
- Colour and texture
- Scale and proportion
- 3D form
- Tonal studies
- Incorporating fine detail

A new week covering these concepts will be made available to you each week.

Prerequisites

NHI101x is ideal for natural history illustrators of all skill levels and for nature lovers who would like to learn how to record their observations in colourful detail. It is a course that sits beautifully within the realms of art and science.

Time commitment

To get the most out of the course you are encouraged to spend, at the very least, three to six hours per week viewing demonstrations, reading content, taking part in discussions, completing assessments, drawing tasks and quizzes.

COURSE OUTLINE

www.newcastle.edu.au

CRICOS Provider 00109J

SYLLABUS

Learning Objectives

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. An understanding of the application of fieldwork data to natural history illustration.
2. Observational and visual analytical skills.
3. Field sketching and recording techniques.
4. A basic ability to apply realistic drawing techniques and concepts.
5. An understanding of the fundamental structure of plants and animals.
6. An ability to accurately capture a 3D form on a 2D surface.
7. A working knowledge of compositional techniques.
8. An ability to apply tonal rendering techniques.

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

This course contains a number of ways to improve your knowledge on The This course contains a number of ways to improve your observational and drawing skills, apply new practices and gauge how you are progressing. Carrying out the weekly tasks and submitting them for peer review will help reinforce for you the core concepts of the course.

Assessments are in the form of drawing assignments (55%), quizzes (35%) and participation (10%). You will see these at the end of each week, you will need to complete these during each particular week.

The pass mark for this course is 50%. Students opting for a Verified Certificate must gain a passing grade of 50% to be eligible for the certificate.

COURSE TEAM

The course team for NHI101x are Dr Andrew Howells and Dr Bernadette Drabsch. Dr Drabsch provided the written material in each week. Dr Howells provided visual material for the studio lectures.

Artworks featured in the course were provided by: Andrew Howells, Bernadette Drabsch, Daniel Atkins, Prue Sailer, Lee Dedman, Linda Lunnon, Tanya Hoolihan, Deirdre Bean, Stephanie Holm, Kathirine Sentas, Samantha Bayly and Gina Cranson.

Tallulah Cunningham is your Course Moderator. She will provide the day-to-day support as you make your way through the course.

Project management, development and media production was provided by Dr Clare Lloyd and the UON Blended and Online Learning Design (BOLD) Lab.

SCHEDULE

The course is an ['instructor-paced'](#) course. This means each week a new week will be released.

Week	Week Opens UTC (00:00)	Topic	Learning Activity	Assessment
1	28 June, 2017	What is NHI?	Tonal experiments Research NHI illustrator	Participation (2%)
2	05 July, 2017	Observational Drawing	Draw landscape	Participation Prerequisite (2%) *Object Drawing (10%)
3	12 July, 2017	Fieldwork	Field sketches Field photographs	Mid-Course Exam (15%) Participation (2%)
4	19 July, 2017	Structure: Botanical	Leaf drawing	*Flower Drawing (15%) Participation (2%)
5	26 July, 2017	Structure: Animals	Mammal drawing Bird drawing	Participation (2%)
6	2 Aug, 2017	Rendering	Tonal study	*Final Drawing (30%) Final Exam (20%)

*Week 2 Participation Prerequisite task is a requisite for all drawing assessments. This is section 2.6

ASSESSMENT

This course has 4 assessment types. Each assessment type is described in more detail within the course material. In this course, we use assessment for these two complementary purposes:

- **Assessment for Learning:** Assists you to develop the skills to evaluate your own understanding of the course material and identify how to **improve** your learning in the future.
- **Assessment of Learning:** Assists you and the teaching team to know **how well you know the course material**.

	Assessment Name	Submission Due Date (UTC 23:59)	Peer Response Due (UTC 23:59)	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Participation	Weeks 1-5	n/a	10%	1, 2, 3 & 4
2	Object Drawing	12 July, 2017	16 July, 2017	10%	2, 4 & 7
3	Mid-Course Exam	19 July, 2017	n/a	15%	1, 2 & 5
4	Flower Drawing	26 July, 2017	30 July, 2017	15%	2 & 3
5	Final Exam	09 Aug, 2017	n/a	20%	2, 4, 5, 6 & 7
6	Final Drawing	09 Aug, 2017	13 Aug, 2017	30%	2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 8

COURSE MATERIALS

Throughout the course you will find suggestions for “further resources”. These explore relevant topics and may help you in your studies but they are not compulsory reading.

While it is recommended that you have these materials, all you really need is a pencil, some paper and time to practise.

- A3 sketchpad
- Good-quality **hard, smooth paper**
- A **hard surface** to rest your paper on (either a desk, table or drawing board)
- **Scrap paper** or paper towel to rest your hand on
- A **selection of graphite pencils**, ranging from 4B to 2H
- A **kneadable eraser** and a **hard plastic eraser**
- A **feather** or a soft brush to dispose of eraser rubbings
- A desk lamp

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK	TOPIC	WHAT WE WILL COVER
1	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet your instructors. • Set up a workspace. • Gain an understanding of key natural history illustration concepts. • Research a natural history illustrator in your area. • Experiment with pencils to produce tonal studies.
2	Observational Drawing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop visual recording techniques. • Learn mindful observational skills. • Hone visual analysis. • Explore foreground, midground & background. • Produce simplified shapes of natural objects & accurate line drawings. • Draw a habitat scene with depth, narrative & a strong focal point.
3	Field Sketching & Recording Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply observational drawing techniques in the field. • Try gestural drawing. • Record colour & texture. • Make a field journal, incorporating notes, drawings & photographs.
4	The Structure of Flowers & Leaves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw plants, considering scale & proportion. • Analyse & revise drawings. • Draw from various angles to develop 3D form. • Study plant anatomy to draw the underlying structure.
5	The Structure of Mammals & Birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to understand animal structure by considering bones & muscles. • Draw a mammal. • Illustrate bird structure with gestural sketches & finished drawing.
6	Rendering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn tonal rendering techniques. • Develop rendering skills. • Put finishing touches to drawings. • Produce a tonal study. • Add texture, patterns & features to your drawing.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Academic Policy

Students who enroll in NHI101x are expected to abide by the terms of the edX Honour Code. NewcastleX commits to taking appropriate action should there be violations of the [edX Honour Code](#), which may result in dismissal from this course. No refunds for verified students will be issued under such circumstances. The University of Newcastle and NewcastleX have created this course under strict guidelines to meet the highest academic standards and maximise benefits to students. We aim to maintain a positive and inclusive learning environment, in which discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated. If you have any concerns, please notify us via the [edX contact form](#).

Communication Methods	Communication methods used in this course include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Discussion Board on edX website. Students will receive communication via the posting of content or announcements on the course site.- Email: Students will receive communication via the email associated with their edX account.
Course Evaluation	Your feedback is sought for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement to inform future course offerings.
Discussion Guidelines	<p>For details on online forum protocol, click on the Discussion Guidelines tab at the top of the course page and/or consult the edX Code of Conduct. Students are encouraged to post at least once per week to participate in discussions about course content with peers. A course moderator will be available to answer questions on the Discussion Forum. Students are asked to be patient in the event of there being a large number of queries. The course team is based in Newcastle, NSW, Australia, and works within UTC/GMT+10. Your course moderators will be online each day (Monday-Friday) for a few hours.</p> <p>Note: Learners who violate our Discussion Guidelines and/or the edX terms of service may be subject to permanent removal from the course.</p>
Note	Students will be notified of any changes made to the course content or schedule.