



AS246

Farmstead Arts

(2 credits)

Dual Enrollment, Fall 2025

Subject Area: Living Within Limits



"We need acts of restoration, not only for polluted waters and degraded lands, but also for our relationship to the world."

-Robin Wall Kimmerer

Instructor: Prin van Gulden

Meeting Time(s): Mondays 6-8, Sep 8-Dec 15
& Sunday October 19th 8:30-10:30

Office and Hours: 3rd Floor Kane, by appointment

Email/Phone: pvangulden@sterlingcollege.edu

Course prerequisite: None

Modality: Studio, Field & Classroom-based

Class Location: Fiber Arts; Strong Hall

Course Description

In this dual enrollment class students explore their relationship to the landscape through craft. Ancient and modern traditions of turning raw materials from plants and other components of farm and forest systems have long sustained communities. The ecosystems we call home provide materials for both the utilitarian objects we need for survival and the celebration of place that comes from these arts.



Students in Farmstead Arts will learn to make utilitarian crafts rooted and useful in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. Examples include making brooms, salves, candles, and baskets.

Students will spend time reflecting through written assignments and a final display on the techniques they are learning with various skills, as well as their eco-cultural context.

Work will be displayed at the end of the semester in conjunction with the December art show.

Course Learning Objectives

Students completing this course successfully will be able to:

- Identify ways that connections are built with ecosystems through cultural practices.
- Demonstrate the ability to create utilitarian crafts using materials responsibly sourced from the local ecosystem.
- Research, source and utilize medicinal herbs for skin care.
- Identify plant species useful for basketry within a range of ecosystems and across a spectrum of basket weaving styles.
- Demonstrate skills associated with these traditional crafts, such as infusing oils, specific harvesting and weaving techniques, stitches and knots associated with broom making and basketry, and other skills that can be used within the context of these and other disciplines.

Required Resources

Necessary resources provided, additional resources found on the reserve shelf.

Assignments & Evaluation

Applied assignments 60%

(this includes brooms, baskets, salves and an independent project of each students choosing)

Attendance and participation 30%

Written work and end of semester display 10%

Attendance policy

More than two missed classes will result in failure of the course. Habitual lateness



or other class-time missed will result in a diminished grade. If students are absent they are expected to let the instructor know ahead of time and turn in any assignments on the days that they are due, and make up any missed work.

Late Work Policy

Late work will not be considered unless students communicate with the instructor directly about an extension ahead of time or about a major unforeseen life event.

Technology usage

Electronic devices should be used as learning aids, not instruments of distraction. Because extensive browsing on the internet, checking email and social media, or accessing files and media unrelated to class may negatively impact the learning environment, faculty may limit technology use. Students should follow Sterling's Code of Online Conduct, found in the Student Handbook.

In order to ensure an inviting, attentive and present learning community, devices should be silenced and stowed during class unless otherwise noted. Devices may be used during breaks and before and after class but please use them outside of the learning/ creative space. Students who use technology to accommodate documented learning disabilities may do so with written permission.

Awareness of physical demands of this course

Please be aware that in order to meet the learning objectives of this course within our standards for risk management a student must be able to:

- Walk 1 mile
- Harvest in the garden
- Safely operate sharp tools including knives
- Navigate stairs
- Utilize repetitive and fine motor skills continually for 2-3 hours
- This course takes place in both the studio and outdoors, potentially in inclement weather

The above is mentioned as an attempt to prepare students for the physical nature and outdoor settings of this course and to remind students to open a dialogue with your instructor in advance of the start of the course if you foresee any difficulties with any of the above. Reasonable accommodations will be made to allow students with documented disabilities to participate in this course. Students with documented disabilities can apply for reasonable accommodations, see 'Accommodations' section below.

If it becomes apparent that a student is not able to safely participate in a course activity, they will be asked to observe that activity rather than participate in it. If a student's actions or capabilities appear to seriously compromise their own or



others' learning experience or safety in more than a single activity, the student may be asked to drop or withdraw from the course.

A Note on Learning Styles and Learning Support

Students bring a variety of learning styles and other differences to class. Instructors aim to support different learning modes by mixing lecture, discussion, hands-on work, and visual information. Please communicate any questions or concerns about your learning environment to your instructor as soon as possible, and they will help to support your learning style if possible. Students with documented learning differences or disabilities can apply for reasonable accommodations, see 'Accommodations' section below.

Accommodations

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, you must submit your accommodation letter from the Accommodation & Accessibility Team (AAT) to your faculty member in each course in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. The AAT determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment and work program. Information on requesting accommodations is located in the Student Handbook. Contact the Director of Learning Support, Craig Wilson, for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see the Temporary Medical Conditions section of the Student Handbook and discuss your needs with your course instructor and advisor.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an essential standard in an educational institution. A student shall neither give nor receive unauthorized aid. Such unauthorized aid includes cooperation on classwork unless such cooperation is specifically approved by the instructor. A student shall neither copy another's work and represent it as their own nor fabricate data for laboratory or fieldwork. If you are unsure about specifics, please ask a faculty member. For more information see the Academic Honesty and Plagiarism sections in the Sterling Student Handbook.



Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, please endeavor to contact the instructor at least two weeks in advance if you are planning to miss class due to a religious observance. Advance notice is requested so that groups can be modified for in class work or presentations and the instructor can make efforts to schedule particularly interactive portions of class in ways that do not conflict with religious observances, where possible. See Student Handbook for full details of policy regarding religious observances.

Calendar

Subject to Change

Date & Time	Activity Details	Assignments
Week 1		
Mon, Sep 8th 6-8 pm	Intro to the course & garden harvest: Calendula & broom corn process	Due next week: Item to share
Week 2		
Mon, Sep 15th 6-8 pm	Solar infusion for salve and lip balm Making brooms: The Turkey Wing Whisk Broom	Due today: Item to share
Break Days–No Class Sep 22		
Week 3		
Mon, Sep 29th 6-8 pm	Making Brooms: Hearth broom or kitchen broom	Due next week: Finish any necessary broom weaving,
Week 4		
Optional Weekend Events: Draft Animal Field Days & VT Sheep and Wool Fest		
Mon, Oct 6th 6-8 pm	Broom sewing & Making salve and lip balm	Due Next Class: Medicinal herb exploration



Indigenous Peoples Day–No Class Oct. 13th		
Week 5		
Sun. Oct 19 8:00–10:30am	Intro to Basketry/ & Market basket	Due Next week: Written reflection
Optional Fermentation Fest in Montpelier Sunday 12–4		
Mon, Oct 20th 6–8 pm	Market basket continued	Finish basket Due 10/27
Week 6		
Mon, Oct 27th 6–8 pm	Candle Making Continued Basketry and broom sewing	Assignment: exploring basketry styles
Fall Break Days–No Class Nov. 3		
Week 7		
Mon, Nov. 17th 6–8 pm	Basketry–Ribbed willow basket Harvest Willow, make hoops and ears, prep willow for soaking	Independent Project Proposal
November Break–No Class Nov. 24th		
Week 8		
Mon, Dec. 1st 6–8 pm	Finish willow basket	Finish any projects for 12/8
Week 9		
Mon, Dec. 8st 6–8 pm	Independent Project	Finish Ind. Project
Week 10		
Mon, Dec. 15st 3:30–5:30pm		Exhibit Dunbar Foyer 4–5pm