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## UMASS Dartmouth Faculty Position Proposal

Roz Crews

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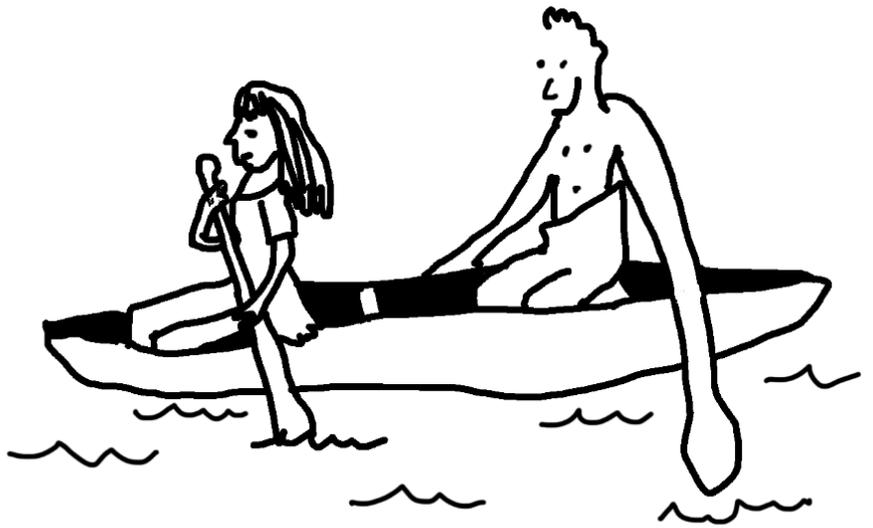
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**ROZ CREWS**



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**April 13, 2017**

### **UMASS Dartmouth Faculty Position Proposal**

As a social practice artist my work spans multiple disciplines including Contemporary Art, Anthropology, American Studies, Archaeology, Public Policy, DIY Publishing, Curatorial Practice, and Education. To create my projects, I rely on collaboration with colleagues from many different areas of expertise. I believe that art holds a special space in society where people can work between disciplines, in an interstitial space, that allows for creative solutions to surface in unexpected ways. I have often used my background in anthropology and archaeology to help a wide variety of students to understand nuances within social engagement, and I find that the skills associated with ethnography are integral to how many professionals work. During my artist residency in Portland State University's Housing and Residence Life Department (2015-2017), I worked with students studying various topics through the campus' Learning and Living Communities to help elucidate the relevance of art and the art museum to their non-art coursework. As part of this work, my focus became centered on how art can be used as a tool for developing problem solving and critical thinking skills. This is similar to how I'm approaching my current work at the Columbia River Correctional Institution; in collaboration with faculty and students from Portland State University's Art and Social Practice MFA program, I am co-facilitating a Contemporary Art course for inmates at the prison who are interested in expanding the way that their art can function to benefit their positions in society.

I would like to bring my knowledge and experiences with me to UMASS Dartmouth in order to work in an interdisciplinary way at the college level—teaching, organizing, and curating in collaboration with undergraduate students, graduate students, and other faculty. I'm interested in developing partnerships with community organizations like the Bristol County House of Corrections and Buttonwood Park Zoo, and I would like to work with students inside those institutions through Community-Based Learning courses I would develop, open to students from a range of departments. Some areas outside of CVPA that I'm interested in working with include Urban Studies, Crime and Justice Studies, Fine Art, English, History, Multidisciplinary Studies, Liberal Arts, Public Policy, Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology, and Women's and Gender Studies. I am extremely inspired by recent projects like the Urban Studies Bus Tours (occurring April 13th and April 19th) with Professors Anna Dempsey and Andrea Klimt, and in the future, I would like to create similar programs as a collaboration between the Fine Arts department and Urban Studies. The English Department's Living Literature Series is also exciting to me, and I could imagine a DIY Publishing course in collaboration with the English Department that provides students a space where they could take what they learn from visiting writers and apply that inspiration to their own self-published texts. I appreciate the statement Professor Caitlin O'Neil made about the series, "We want students to know that what they're learning is relevant to the real world." Other places on campus I could imagine collaborations with include the Public Policy Center, the Leduc Center for Civic Engagement, and the Arnold M. Dubin Labor Education Center. A few socially-engaged classes that I would like to teach as cross-listed courses between some of these departments and CVPA include: Mapping the Social Landscape of New Bedford; Socially Engaged Drawing; Resource Mining at UMASS Dartmouth: What do we have access to?; Expanded Curatorial Practice; Creating and Locating Public Art; Site and Situation-Specific Installation; Touring Our City: Who are our neighbors?; Working Together: Practice in Collaboration; and Buttonwood Park Ethnography.





As the curatorial assistant and programs coordinator for the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, I've learned a lot about curatorial strategies and the way those strategies can be incorporated into art and social organizing more generally. I would like to create a Visiting Artist Lecture Series program at UMASS Dartmouth that would be organized through a course for art students who are interested in working together to curate a Visiting Artist Lecture Series for the year. I would facilitate the course, lecture about contemporary art, bring in guest lecturers, and work with students to select and contact a series of artists who would then be invited to give a public lecture at the university. In addition to the public lecture, the artists would be asked to participate in studio visits with graduate students in the program. This type of program would benefit the students' organizing and curatorial skills, provide direct access to examples of contemporary artists, encourage professional networking, and provide visibility to the UMASS Dartmouth College of Visual and Performing Art. Ideally, the class would work with a graphic design (GD) course to create a visual identity for the series, including posters and an online archive of past lecturers; providing professional development experience for the GD students to practice their skills. As a supplementary program, I would like to initiate a "Studio Visit Critique Day" once per term where local professionals in the arts are invited to do professional critiques with undergraduate students in CVPA. I am also very interested in working with the college and the city of New Bedford to create a downtown store-front art space which I could program in collaboration with students through a course open to art and non-art majors (perhaps a good course for history and anthropology majors interested in Museum Studies). The students would work together to produce and curate social practice projects that typically wouldn't require a white-box gallery but which might benefit from having access to a public audience via a storefront downtown.

Lastly, I believe that my strong relationship with the Portland State University Art and Social Practice MFA program, specifically with faculty like Harrell Fletcher and Ariana Jacob would provide a direct link for students at UMASS to access and be part of the larger, national dialogue around Art and Social Practice. I would like to facilitate collaborations between UMASS Dartmouth students and Portland State students, and it would be exciting to create an Assembly Conference in Massachusetts, set in dialogue with the annual conference organized by PSU MFA students; alternatively, we could arrange for UMASS students to participate in the PSU conference. I also have a relationship with Jen Delos Reyes, the founder of Open Engagement (OE), the large annual conference about socially-engaged art and pedagogy, which was previously organized at Portland State and has since grown into an itinerant, nationwide convening. These relationships could provide empowering opportunities for UMASS Dartmouth students to be involved with another exceptional program and OE.

Please let me know if you have any questions,  
I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Roz Crews