Dear FIGlets,

Hello and welcome to the University of Oregon! My name is Diana Patin and I am so excited to be your FIG Assistant for the 2012-2013 school year. Originally I am from New Orleans, but for the past ten years sunny SoCal has been my home (Irvine to be precise). Here at the university I am an Art major, and I love every single second of it. During the week you can usually find me spending most of my free time in Lawrence Hall, and on weekends I am a regular at the Saturday Market.

Our College Connections professor is Professor Julie Voelker-Morris. She works in the Art and Administration department and teaches a variety of classes for the department, including ours! She is originally from Kansas, and spent a number of years teaching in the Theater Arts department at Southwestern College. She then went on to get a Masters Degree in Arts Management from none other than the University of Oregon. She has particular interest in issues related to gender and art (perfect for our class), oppression and art, and the body as a political entity.

This FIG consists of two classes, AAD250 Art and Gender with Julie Voelker-Morris and ART101 Understanding Contemporary Media with Ty Warren. Art and Gender will cover the relationship between our perceptions of gender and how it affects our understanding of art. I will be taking this class along with all of you so we can all help each other. In Understanding Contemporary Media we will be examining specific contemporary artists and the ways they directly apply issues in the modern world to their art. For our College Connections course, Professor Voelker-Morris and I will guide you through the artistic process with the help of a book called Mess: The Manual of Accidents and Mistakes. You will need to get a copy of this book before you come to campus—it should be at most bookstores, and I know the Duckstore (the bookstore on campus) has copies available for online ordering, that can be held here or shipped right to your house.

We will be having our first FIG meeting on Friday, September 21. All the FIGs will be gathering in Columbia 150 at 11 AM. It is very important that you get there on time in order to hear where our FIG will be meeting with Professor Voelker-Morris. During this meeting we will be getting to know each other, as well as collecting the summer assignment. On Sunday September 23 we will be seeing each other again at University Convocation, with our first FIG Activity to follow! One more reminder: don’t forget to bring your Student Handbook to campus with you. We will be using it throughout the term to help you figure out classes for Winter quarter and some other things as well.

Your summer assignment is to visit an art museum and observe contemporary artists’ work for yourself. Professor Voelker-Morris and I believe this assignment will expose you to some revolutionary artwork, get you excited for your fall term at the university, and maybe even inspire you in your own art! As proof of your visit, we would like you to complete a one page write up on two art pieces from 1950 or later; one that you liked and one that you disliked, and why.

Finally, I would love to hear from all of you over the summer. If you could each email me introducing yourself and perhaps share something you’re looking forward to about your time at the university, it will help me get to know each of you a little bit better so the transition is easier in the fall. If you have any other questions or concerns, include that in your email as well!

Here’s to a great summer and an exciting first year of college ahead of you!

-Diana Patin and Professor Voelker Morris 😊

P.S. If there is no large museum near you, an art gallery or center with art pieces will work just fine! Just let me know in your email if we need to arrange other guidelines for the project.