

# STUDENT TAUGHT CLASSES PROPOSAL

Class Title: Knitting

Instructor: Sierra Petersen

Faculty Advisor: Jim Barry

## Course Description

Knitting is no longer an activity for old ladies knitting ugly sweaters for grandchildren who wear them out of obligation. Wools are made to be soft and cuddly, not scratchy and hard like before. There are many fancy yarns that make the simplest project look as if they were knitted by an expert.

Knitting has come out into the mainstream, with the majority of participants in their 20's and 30's. Celebrities like Julia Roberts, Madonna, Hilary Swank, Cameron Diaz, Julianne Moore, Sarah Jessica Parker knit while on the set to pass the time and relax. Vanna White even started her own yarn label!

Clearly knitting is becoming more and more popular. Not only is the number of knitters growing, the demographic of knitters is changing. More young people are knitting fun, fashionable project that they proudly wear.

Many people have always wanted to learn to knit, or once learned but have now forgotten. This class will be designed to teach the basic skills of knitting to beginners looking to start fresh and returners looking to refresh. It will cover stiches, patterns, possible projects, and important skills. By the end of the class, students should be able to complete most patterns (of low to medium complexity) without much trouble.

Everyone in the class will be provided with 2 small balls of different solid color yarns, and a pair of needles. This will be "the swatch", which will be for classroom work, practicing new stiches and switching colors, etc. Having a swatch to practice on allows students to get going without fear of making mistakes, because it is not part of any finished project they'll ever wear.

Outside of this, students may choose a project of their own to practice what they've learned. Throughout the term, they can bring in their project and I will help them work through any problems they have. I will run some "office hours" type trips to Michael's Arts and Crafts store to help them choose out a yarn and needles appropriate for their project, which they will purchase themselves to start their needle collection. Michael's has many cheap, nice yarns available, and it is close by (right near Colorado/Wilson)

Jim Barry, my faculty advisor, has requested we have a small budget to purchase some instructional books. These will be brought to class every day to use as reference material. After the class is over they will stay in the Art House with all the art books already there. They will definitely be taken good care of, and will be a great lasting investment for the Art program as well.

I would suggest the following books. At least the first two should be purchased, and the others as budget allows.

- The Knitter's Companion by Vicky Square - \$20 – basic instructions on how to knit, good diagrams and covers a little bit of everything.
- Last Minute Knitted Gifts by Joelle Hoverson - \$25 – lots of small quick projects

- Stich and Bitch by Debbie Stoller - \$12 – hip patterns, fun designs, can give students an idea of some possible projects.
- One-Ball Knits by Fatema Khadija - \$17 – nice projects to knit with only one ball of yarn. OR One-Skein Wonders by Judith Durant - \$19 – same idea.
- The Harmony Guides by Erika Knight - \$23 – lots of possible stitches to choose from if you're designing your own project.
- Any books by Interweave Press

As I described above, everyone will be provided with a ball of a single color yarn, plus a small piece of an alternate color, plus a pair of needles. For each student, these initial supplies should run ~\$15 per person.

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## **10-week Teaching Schedule**

### **LESSON ONE**

#### Casting on

Usually because they cast on once and then knit for weeks before casting on again, people tend to forget how to do this. I will remind them later when they need it again. But they do need to know how to get started.

#### Knit stitch

This stitch makes a short, wide swatch when compared to other stitches.  
Uses: simple projects, edges (instead of ribbing)

Project: cast on 40 stitches and knit 2”

### **LESSON TWO**

### Purl stitch

Uses: Usually not used alone. Stockinette stitch.

Project: work .5” of purl, 1” of stockinette.

## **LESSON THREE**

### Ribs - various (1x1, 2x2, 3x2, etc.)

Uses: Gives the knitted fabric some stretch and cling. Cuffs, bottom edge, necklines, shaping at waist.

### Seed stitch

Once you know how to alternate knit and purl stitches you can do Seed Stitch, or Double Seed Stitch

Uses: Edges on boxy shaped sweaters, cuffs. Doesn't pull in like ribbing.

Project: work .5” of seed stitch, work .5” of 2x2 ribbing

## **LESSON FOUR**

### Checking your gauge

You could teach about measuring your gauge at this point, number of stitches per inch. Always use the stitch suggested in the pattern for your gauge.

### Knitting in the round

Uses: hats, socks, sweaters without seams, skirts,

Project: measure the gauge for each of the stitches you've already knit. At this point, they should have some individual project to work on. They can work on it in class and I will help fix problems, etc.

## **LESSON FIVE**

### Increases – adding stitches

Uses: shaping armholes and necklines, widening skirts or shaping anything, really.

Variations:

- Knit into front and back of stitch – makes a visible bump in stockinette stitch
- M1 or Make one, in the bar of yarn between the stitches – almost invisible
- YO or yarn over – creates a decorative hole. Describe differences when moving from knit to knit stitch, knit to purl stitch, purl to knit stitch and purl to purl stitch.
- Increasing evenly across a row – teach how to space the stitches

Project: Using stockinette, increase the size of your swatch by 6 stitches, practicing each of the techniques described above.

## **LESSON SIX**

### Decreases

Uses: reducing your number of stitches for any reason. Different stitches slant different ways, i.e. to the left or the right so are used at different places on a garment, e.g. left armhole with a mirror image at the right armhole

Variations:

- K2tog or knit two together – right slanting
- S11, K1, PSSO or slip one, knit one, pass slip stitch over –left slanting
- K2tog tbl or knit two together through back loop – left slanting
- P2tog or purl two together – right slanting
- P2tog tbl or purl two together through back loop
- SSK or slip, slip, knit – left slanting

Project: Decrease your swatch by 6 stitches, back to its original width using each of the techniques described above.

## **LESSON SEVEN**

### Multi-color knitting

Uses: stripes or patterns

How to hold the yarn in two hands when using two colors in a row

How to carry the yarn up the side of the knitting, weave it in as you go and don't pull too tightly or one side of your work will be shorter than the other

Project: The class will now use their small ball of an alternate color to make a striping pattern.

## **LESSON EIGHT**

### Binding off

Tight versus loose (use a larger needle size to avoid having a non-elastic edge)

### Cables

- The differences between wide and narrow, number of regular rows between cable rows give a different look.
- Cables can be used in ribbing for a nice effect.
- Twisted stitches – knitting the second stitch on the needle, then the first and then push them both off. Gives a nice twisted look if you do this.

Project: Try a short section with a few different cables. Practice following a written pattern (provided by me) to do this. At the end, bind off your swatch.

## **LESSON NINE**

### Picking up stitches

Uses: necklines, adding onto a finishes edge, borders,

### Materials

- Size of needle relates to thickness of yarn
- Types of yarn
  - wool has elasticity, cotton has no give, synthetics can be fun – eyelash and train track yarn, acrylic can pill easily,
- Colors – look at the differences as to how it looks when the yarn changes color slowly or fast (gives striped or speckled effect)
- Ring/stitch markers
- Row counters
- Storing needles – always keep the wrapping of the needles to protect them when not in use.

Project: Pick up stitches on the bottom edge of your swatch and/or along the side edge. Side edges need slightly different methods based on the stitch, e.g. stockinette stitch goes into every stitch vs. garter stitch can go into every valley between the ridges. Work an edge section in a stitch of your choice.

## **LESSON TEN**

### Lace

Uses: lace shawls, lace scarves, doilies, anything decorative

### Felting

Uses: bags, thick sweaters, decorations

Project: No project for this, just a demonstration.

## **EXTRA TOPICS:**

How to read a pattern

How to read a chart

Caring for knitted items

Overview of possible projects.