The UIC Museum and Exhibition Studies Program (MUSE) and the National Veterans Art Museum (NVAM) have partnered to offer Investigating & Curating a Century of War & Survival, a graduate seminar focused on the research and development for the first ever NVAM Triennial.

During the course, student research teams will be partnered with emerging veteran artists and curators in order to explore the commonalities and contradictions in veterans’ creative approaches across generations with a specific focus on the war experience, and the relationship between creative practices and survival strategies.

Two overarching questions will serve to provide focus for the course and will be the basis for course outputs:

— Across generations veterans have used the arts to express and share complicated, contradictory, traumatizing, and/or transforming war experiences. What are the signs, symbols, words, forms, techniques, strategies, etc. that resonate across generations, and that veterans intentionally and unintentionally repeat in order to create meaning out of trauma?

— How does this process of creating meaning and the creative practices of veterans in general relate to veterans’ personal survival, and to a larger concept of community and human survival?

Through the course students will gain a deeper understanding of veteran art movements over the last century, get experience working with veteran artists and curators, and explore novel ways to engage the public around themes of war and survival.

The class will be taught by artist, curator, veteran, and NVAM Art Committee Chair Aaron Hughes.

*Students are invited, but not required, to take Part 2 in Spring 2019.