

Critical Issues in Art – ART 3085
Spring 2017 MW 2-4:45p KVA 150

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Office hrs: TTh 11:30a – 12:30p or by appointment

Course Overview

This course will introduce students to the history of ideas in art from the ancient Greeks to contemporary currents, with a focus on Modernism and Post-Modernism. The goal of this course is the creation of a critical and theoretical foundation that will allow students to locate themselves and their work within the context of critical dialogues in the contemporary art world. Class time will involve discussions of assigned readings, with images presented to supplement and inform the ideas under consideration.

This is a reading-intensive course, requiring that all students keep up with the readings and other assigned materials on a weekly basis.

Learning Outcomes and Core Themes for the class

The Department of Visual Arts' Learning Outcomes include several that are particularly applicable to this course in the critical ideas that inform art. These outcomes state that we can judge our success when our students can:

- *Possess a basic knowledge of visual culture from prehistoric to contemporary times.*
- *Possess skills in oral and written communication as they pertain to the visual arts.*
- *Be able to think critically. Students should be able not only to analyze a work of art using traditional methods, but should also be able to develop thoughtful new interpretations.*
- *Be able to express their personal thoughts, ideas, or emotions through visual media.*

Evaluation of Learning Outcomes

The primary mode of evaluation in this course will be in the form of reading responses, discussions, and a final project.

Each week, you will be required to write a summary paragraph on each assigned reading that summarizes your understanding and response to the specific ideas introduced by the author(s). The class will be divided into small groups, which will be responsible on a rotating basis for submitting questions based on the weekly readings, in order to drive our discussions in class. Each member of the group will compile and submit three questions for each assigned reading that you think address the key ideas in the text and that bring up issues or problems you want to discuss with the group. The members of the group responsible for the week's questions will also be responsible to lead the discussions. Presenting groups will need to discuss their presentation prior to class, so as to be prepared to guide discussion.

Both types of written response (both paragraphs and questions) may also be required in relation to other resources, particularly the video lectures noted above. Summary paragraphs and questions must be submitted through Canvas (to discussion pages and assignment submission pages) by 10 PM on Sunday evening prior to our first weekly class meeting. Your

submissions will be entered into the Canvas course site, with each week's submission receiving from one to five points toward your final grade. Your groups' questions will be compiled on a discussion page and distributed to the entire class for discussion. Again, they should address key points from the readings, issues you want to discuss and terminology and concepts you want to further explore in class.

Lively and engaged class participation is crucial for this course to be a success. We will learn from and with each other. It is therefore essential that you read all assignments thoroughly so you can contribute to the class discussions.

For the final project, each student must curate a group show plus write a "catalog entry" and present this in class. The exhibition must include yourself* plus three other artists of your choice (they do not have to be contemporary or even modern artists). In presenting yourself and the other artists, you must apply the critical, evaluative and theoretical approaches that you have studied during the semester. The "catalog entry" accompanying the exhibition should be 2-3 pages, must be written in the third person and should explain the affinity of the featured artists (including yourself) to your chosen 'ideologies'. It should also include captioned images from each artist in the imaginary show.

(*If you are not an art major, you will substitute for "yourself" a contemporary artist of your choice.)

Grades

Reading responses	60%
Participation / discussion / presentation	25%
Final Project	15%

This rubric will allow for steady feedback throughout the semester, and the scores will be posted in the Canvas grade book, creating an average for the semester, based on the grading scale below. Please be aware that **a minimum grade of C** is necessary for any art major to receive credit for a course in the Department of Visual Arts toward his or her major. In other words, a grade of C- or below will not count as credit towards a degree in any art major.

Each student is responsible for completing all readings, presentations and the final project fully and on time, and will be graded on this basis. In general, you should be prepared to spend a minimum of 6 hours per week outside of class in order to complete readings, responses, and presentations. Your grade for the course will be determined by your full participation in all aspects of the course, including class discussions, writing, and portfolio development.

Letter grades will be determined according to the following guidelines:

- A Your work consistently embodies dedication and excellence.
- B Your work meets and, occasionally, exceeds requirements on a consistent basis.
- C Your work consistently meets minimum requirements of the course.
- D Your work meets course requirements only occasionally.
- E Your work consistently fails to meet requirements.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	C73-76
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A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	E	0-59

Required Materials

Harrison, Charles and Wood, Paul J., *Art in Theory 1900–2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (2nd edition). West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing 2002

Additional readings not covered in the above text will be posted on Canvas.

Much of this writing will include new terms, historical references, and figurative language complicating the task of reading and comprehension. Take notes, highlight passages, and write down questions in order to help absorb these texts. Plan on reading them more than once in order to fully understand them, and take the initiative to learn unfamiliar terms, concepts and people.

Other kinds of resources, including image presentations, links, and video lectures on important topics, will be provided in Canvas. I will let you know which of these are required, and which are recommended. However, it is strongly recommended that you use all resources provided, as they can help with a foundation of knowledge of all of the ideas under discussion.

Attendance Policy

Because of the reading load and emphasis on discussion, attendance at all class meetings is very important. It is your responsibility to manage your schedule and obligations in order to devote the appropriate amount of time to your studies, and to attend class regularly. Each absence after the first two will result in a reduction of points from your overall grade on the course. In addition, you must arrive at class each session on time, and stay for the entire session. For every two late arrivals to or early departures from class (10 minutes or more), you will be assessed one absence. Arriving to class 20 minutes late will be considered an absence. The point deductions for absences will be as follows:

3 Absences: 10 Points

4 Absences: 20 Points

Students with 5 absences will not be able to pass the class. See me to discuss withdrawing/dropping the course. Students should be sure to contact peers in order to catch up on any missed material or assignments

IMPORTANT: Our schedule, assignments, class materials, and grades will be posted through the Canvas system on the My Courses menu of your Student Services tab in eWeber. You must check this site regularly for information, readings, announcements, and messages. I may also communicate with the class through Weber's Wildcat Mail, which you must check on a regular basis. If you usually use other email accounts, make sure to forward your WSU email to that address. If necessary, I will announce class changes (i.e. cancellations) through Canvas, and it is each student's responsibility to get current information. The class schedule will be based on our

progress, and is subject to change. I will keep everyone informed as to our plans at least a week in advance. Please make sure you check the next week's Canvas calendar at the end of each week, so that you know what we will be covering in class and what is expected of you.

Class policy in the event of emergency school closures

In the event of an extended campus closure, I will use Canvas to provide class instruction. Text-based mini-lectures will be provided each week and I will expect you to login to the system on a regular basis to keep up with coursework. Assignments will be provided through the online system with clear due dates and expectations. If you should need to communicate with me, please use my regular (Weber) e-mail.

Note Regarding Course Content and Core Beliefs

This course may deal with material that may conflict with your core beliefs. It is my judgment that this material is relevant to the discipline I am teaching and has a reasonable relationship to my pedagogical goals. If you do not feel you can continue in this course, please drop it within the designated time frame to do so without penalty. Alternative assignments to the material in the syllabus will not be made.

PP-M 6-22 outlines the procedure for students to follow:

Determine before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with the student's core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs.

Academic Dishonesty

As specified in *PPM 6-22 IV D*, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is "the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person's or group's ideas or work." Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure of a specific assignment, or, in more serious cases, failure of the entire course.

Policy for Students with Disabilities

University Policy: Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

Stay Informed

The Telitha E. Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities (www.weber.edu/cah) wants to ensure you stay updated on all of the events, announcements and opportunities in our college. We encourage students to follow our college on the various social media platforms listed below.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WSUDOVA>

twitter@WeberStateArts

Facebook.com/WSUartsandhumanities.com

You Tube: Lindquist College of Arts and Humanities

Calendar

NOTE: The class schedule is subject to change. I will keep everyone informed as to our plans at least a few weeks in advance.

Week 1 Introduction

Introduction of syllabus, requirements, expectations

Video: Alan Macfarlane: *A World Without a World View* (2014)

Read: General Introduction from *Art in Theory 1900-2000* and the entry on postmodernism from The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/postmodernism/>

Week 2 Historical Overview and Context

Discuss readings and video lecture (group 1)

Read (Canvas): Thierry de Duve, *When Attitude Has Become Form- And Beyond*

Arthur Danto, *Art After the End of Art*

Week 3 The Greeks: Plato and Aristotle

Discuss readings (group 2)

Read (Canvas): Introduction to *Aesthetics a Comprehensive Anthology*, section on the Greeks

Plato, excerpts from *Ion*, *The Republic*, *Symposium*

Aristotle, excerpts from the *Poetics*

Week 4 Burke, Kant and Hegel

Discuss readings (group 3)

Read (Canvas): Introduction to *Aesthetics, a Comprehensive Anthology*, section on Kant

Selections from Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*

Selections from Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*

Selections from Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Philosophy of Fine Art*

Week 5 Early 20th Century Modernism

Discuss readings (group 4)

Read: Butler, Chs. 1&2 (Canvas)

Roger Fry, from *An Essay in Aesthetics* (75)

Clive Bell, from *The Aesthetic Hypothesis* (107)

Wassily Kandinsky, from *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (82)

Julius Meier-Graefe, from *The Mediums of Art, Past and Present* (51)

Diego Rivera: *The Revolutionary Spirit in Modern Art* (421)

Week 6 Art in the Age of Technology

Discuss readings (group 1)

Read: Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism* (146)

Umberto Boccioni, et al., *Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto* (150)

Walter Gropius, *The Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus* (309)

Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (520)

Week 7 Dada, Surrealism & Constructivism

Discuss readings (group 2)

Read: Hugo Ball, *Dada Fragments* (250)

Marcel Duchamp, *The Richard Mutt Case* (252)

Tristan Tzara, *Dada Manifesto 1918* (252)

Richard Huelsenbeck, *First German Dada Manifesto* (257)

Andre Breton, from *The First Manifesto of Surrealism* (447)

Louis Aragon, et al., *Declaration of the Bureau de Recherches Surrealistes* (456)

Alexander Rodchenko & Varvara Stepanova, *Program of the First Working Group of Constructivists* (341)

Alexi Gan, from *Constructivism* (343)

Week 8 Modernist Criticism: Greenberg, Steinberg, Fried, Rosenberg

Discuss readings (group 3)

Read: Clement Greenberg, *Modernist Painting* (773)

Clement Greenberg, *Avant-Garde and Kitsch* (539)

Leo Steinberg, from *Other Criteria* (971)

Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood* (835)

Week 9 Spring Break

Week 10 Post War Shifts

Discuss readings (group 4)

Read: Theodor Adorno, from *Commitment* (779)

Roland Barthes, from *Myth Today* (693)

Jiro Yoshihara, *Gutai Manifesto* (698)

Guy Debord, *Writings from the Situationist International 1957-61* (701)

Allan Kaprow, from *Assemblages, Environments, and Happenings* (717)

Week 11 New Criticisms

Discuss readings (group 1)

Read: Jacques Derrida, from *Of Grammatology* (944)

Roland Barthes, *From Work to Text* (965)

Fredric Jameson, *The Deconstruction of Expression* (1046)

Michel Foucault, *A Lecture* (989)

Laura Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (982)

Week 12 Toward Postmodernism

Discuss readings (group 2)

Read: *Ideas of the Postmodern*, Introduction (1013)

Eleanor Heartney, *Postmodernism* (introduction – on Canvas)

Jurgen Habermas, *Modernity-An Incomplete Project* (1123)
Jean-Francois Lyotard, *Introduction to The Postmodern Condition* (1122)
Jean-Francois Lyotard, *What is Postmodernism?* (1131)

Week 13 Postmodernism and the Critique of Originality

Discuss readings (group 3)
Read: Jean Baudrillard, *The Hyper-realism of Simulation* (1018) and *Simulacra and Simulations*
Craig Owens from *The Allegorical Impulse: Towards a Theory of Postmodernism* (1025)
Rosalind Krauss, from *The Originality of the Avant-Garde* (1032)
Michel Foucault, *What is an Author?* (949)
Roland Barthes, *The Death of the Author* (on Canvas)
Peter Halley, *Nature and Culture* (1042)
Sherrie Levine *Statement* (1038)

Week 14 Postcolonialism and Difference

Discuss readings (group 4)
Read: Edward Said, from *Orientalism* (1005)
Frantz Fanon, *On National Culture* (710)
Gayatri Spivak, *Who Claims Alterity?* (1092)
Raymond Williams, *When was Modernism?* (1085)

Gerhard Richter, from *Interview with Benjamin Buchloh* (1147) and *Notes* (1157)
Mike Kelley, *Dirty Toys: Mike Kelley Interviewed* (1099)

Week 15 Wrap-up

Discuss Richter and Kelley readings (everyone)
Final Projects Presented