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ARTH 350.01 Contemporary Art and Art Criticism

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ARTH 350.01 Contemporary Art and Art Criticism

Pre-requisites: ARTH 250 (formerly Art 203) and the full, year-long introductory art history survey (both ARTH 200 & 201; formerly Art 150 & 151) or consent of the instructor; this is a 3-credit upper-division Writing course that satisfies the L and W General Education requirements.
Spring 2014

Professor Information: Professor H. Rafael Chacón, Ph.D., Office hours: M-TR 11-12, Fine Arts 305B, (ext. 2735, hrafael.chacon@umontana.edu). Messages can also be left in my mailbox in the School of Art office (FA305).

Class Meetings: Fine Arts 302, Wednesdays, 4:10-7 PM, unless otherwise instructed.

COMPETENCIES OR STUDENT-LEARNING GOALS IN ART HISTORY AND CRITICISM:

The following represent the goals of the art history and criticism curriculum:

- Art History: to gain a comprehensive and global view of the development of history and culture; to understand that art is a manifestation of intellectual history; and to study the various methodologies used to gain that knowledge.
- Visual Literacy and Language: to develop knowledge of visual language and the terminology needed for the analysis and discussion of works of art.
- Technical Skills: to learn the range of materials and technical applications employed by artists over time.
- Critical Thinking: to gain knowledge of and competence in critically analyzing visual images, past and present, and to express their relevance to society through informed discourse, both verbal and written.

Course description: This course is an exploration of art, artists, critics, and theories in contemporary art. The class considers major art movements and ideas of the post-modern era, with an emphasis on contemporary theory and practice. It offers first-hand experiences with contemporary art, direct engagement with artists at local venues, and the latest art criticism in journals, magazines, newspapers, and other media.

Course objectives and format: The course is experiential in nature and relies primarily on direct engagement with works of art in discussion. The course is scheduled in the art history classroom, FA 302, but we may meet in the Gallery of Visual Arts (GVA), the University Center Gallery (UC) and/or other venues around town. **The class demands that you be flexible as we shall often meet in a space out of the regular classroom. I shall alert you via email as to where to meet ahead of the class session, but check Moodle regularly for announcements and assignments.**

Course requirements and grading policies:

Since we meet only once a week and class sessions are impossible to reproduce, you are expected to attend all class sessions and participate in the discussions; attendance will be taken each time we meet. All assigned course work must be completed in order to earn credit for the class. **ABSOLUTELY NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PRIOR CONSENT OF THE INSTRUCTOR.** Please submit all written work in person and keep copies of all assigned work.

Text:

Required text: Jean Robertson and Craig McDaniel, *Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art after 1980*, 2010, Oxford University Press. Additional readings will be posted weekly on Moodle.

Additional optional texts: Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art*, 1996; Lisa Phillips, *The American Century; Art and Culture 1950-2000*, 1999; Jonathan Fineberg, *Art Since 1940; Strategies of Being*, 2000; Paul F. Fabozzi, *Artists, Critics, Context: Readings in and Around American Art since 1945*, 2002; Linda Weintraub, *Art on the Edge and Over*, 1996; Robert Atkins, *Artspeak*, 1997; and Irving Sandler, *Art of the Postmodern Era*, 1996.

Summary of grades:

| | | |
|---|-------|-----------|
| Participation: (includes participation in in-class critical writing assignments) | 20 % | 200 pts. |
| Research Papers: (2 papers at 100 points apiece) | 20 % | 200 pts. |
| Term paper: (1 research paper/critical essay due at midsemester) | 40 % | 400 pts. |
| Oral presentation: (based on research paper and delivered at end of term) | 20% | 200 pts. |
| Total | 100 % | 1000 pts. |

PARTICIPATION, ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY:

Participation is crucial for successful completion of this course. Since this course is mobile, participation entails meeting outside the regular classroom and on occasion outside our regular classtime. Attendance will always be taken at the start of class; if you are absent for the roll call, you will be counted as absent. 20% of your grade is determined by attendance and participation in class discussions. At least 85% attendance and occasional participation earns a "C" and 95-100% participation an "A". Participation counts for more of the final grade if it has been exceptionally good or less if exceedingly poor.

Excused Absences:

What warrants an excused absence? A death in the family, a court or legal issue that cannot be scheduled at any other time (for example: jury duty, parole meeting, court date, incarceration, etc.) or a severe health issue (for example: being contagious with flu or pink eye, an incident that requires a visit to the emergency room or hospitalization, or a medical condition requiring an immediate appointment that cannot be scheduled at any other day/time). Upon returning to class, please bring documentation regarding the exact date of the absence (except in the case of family death). Absences due to a severe health issue can be excused only if, upon returning, you bring a signed note from the attending health care provider (physician or RN, not a member of the secretarial staff) stating that you were ill the day of the absence and sought medical attention. The note must include: the exact date of class missed and the actual signature of the attending physician or RN and his/her contact information.

What is not excused: absences due to work or lack of childcare.

Credit/No Credit Option:

Matriculation in this class is a contract to do your best and accept the traditional grade assigned. I do not convert a traditional grade to credit/no credit and release you from your contract unless I have evidence of an emergency, health crisis, or extreme personal situation in which you cannot possibly finish the course assignments in the normal fashion. The possibility of failing the class or earning a low grade and lowering your overall GPA does not rise to that standard.

Drop/Add Forms:

As per the explanation in the previous paragraph, I do not sign drop/add forms after week 10 of the term.

RESEARCH PAPERS:

Two research papers and one longer term paper will be assigned during the course with opportunities for revisions. **ABSOLUTELY NO LATE WORK OR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL.**

ACCESS, SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES:

Students with access concerns, special needs, learning disabilities, medical conditions, and/or physical impairments that may impede the successful completion of this course, please contact the office of Disability Services for Students (DSS) at x. 2243 (Lommasson Center 154) and speak with me as soon as possible.

Accommodations:

Accommodations for disabilities can be made only after I have received a letter from DSS. Request for accommodations must be made to me in writing no later than 3 weeks before the due date of the assignment.

Electronic Devices:

THE USE OF TAPE RECORDERS, CELLPHONES, CAMERAS, IPODS, LAPTOPS AND/OR RECORDING DEVICES IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED IN THE CLASSROOM. ADDRESS ALL REQUESTS IN WRITING TO ME. Please turn off all cell phones, blackberries, ipads or tablets, and any other mobile device or set them on vibrate prior to the start of class. Students failing to do so will be asked to leave class and may not be allowed to return to class that day at the instructor's discretion. However, if you are in the midst of an emergency, please communicate with me about your situation immediately.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT:

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to a penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at: www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/Index.cfm/page/1321.

Syllabus

This syllabus is only available electronically on Moodle. It is subject to change, so please check Moodle regularly for announcements and assignments.

Week 1

Orientation to the Course:

What is art? Assignment

Week 2:

What is Art Criticism?

Readings: Robertson and McDaniel, pp. xi-35.

Modernism

Bell, Barr, and Schapiro readings posted on Moodle or class handouts

Paper #1 assigned in class.

Week 3:

Postmodernism

Postmodernism readings posted on Moodle

Paper #1 due at the start of class. NO LATE PAPERS OR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Week 4:

Feminism

Feminism readings posted on Moodle or class handouts

Paper #1 returned in class with edits.

Week 5:

Multiculturalism and Identity

Readings: Robertson and McDaniel, pp. 37-72.

Paper #1 revisions due at the start of class. NO LATE PAPERS OR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Paper #2 assigned in class.

Week 6:

The Body

Readings: Robertson and McDaniel, pp. 73-110.

Paper #2 due at the start of class. NO LATE PAPERS OR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Term paper assigned in class.

Week 7:

Time

Readings: Robertson and McDaniel, pp. 111-150.

Paper #2 returned in class with edits.

Week 8:

Place

Readings: Robertson and McDaniel, pp. 151-190.

Paper #2 revisions due at the start of class. NO LATE PAPERS OR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Week 9:

Language

Readings: Robertson and McDaniel, pp. 191-232.

Term papers are due at the start of class. NO LATE PAPERS OR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Week 10

SPRING BREAK-NO CLASS.

Week 11:

Science

Readings: Robertson and McDaniel, pp. 233-272.

Term papers returned in class with edits.

Week 12

Spirituality

Readings: Robertson and McDaniel, pp. 273-310.

Term paper revisions are due at the start of class. NO LATE PAPERS OR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Week 13

Presentations begin.

Week 14

Presentations continue.

Week 15

Presentations continue.

Finals Week,

If presentations are not finished in Week 15, we shall meet during our finals week slot.