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ARTH 350.01: Contemporary Art and Art Criticism

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Syl-S16-AH350L-01-HRC

ARTH 350.01 Contemporary Art and Art Criticism

Pre-requisites: successful completion of ARTH 250, including the full, year-long introductory art history survey (both ARTH 200 & 201), or consent of the instructor; this is a 3-credit upper-division Writing course that satisfies the L and W General Education requirements.
Spring 2016

Professor Information: Professor H. Rafael Chacón, Ph.D., Office hours: M-TR 11-12, Fine Arts 305B, (ext. 2735, hrael.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 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 spaces outside 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.

Policies:

We shall utilize Moodle as our course management tool; go to UM Online for the syllabus and other course materials. **THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE CHECK MOODLE REGULARLY FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES.**

Text and Other Readings:

Required text: Jean Robertson and Craig McDaniel, *Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art after 1980, 2010*, Oxford University Press. Additional and optional readings will be posted on Moodle. I shall always let you know where we are on the syllabus, but stay abreast of the readings because you will be called upon in class and the text will inevitably show up in discussions and ad hoc writing assignments. Good class participation depends on your ability to prepare in advance of our discussions.

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 fully in the discussions. All assigned course work must be completed in order to earn credit for the class. Please submit all written work in person and keep copies of all assigned work. Please note that assignments are due in hard copy at the start of class and that no electronic submissions will be accepted. **ABSOLUTELY NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PRIOR CONSENT OF THE INSTRUCTOR.**

Grades:

Participation:	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 your final research paper and delivered at end of term)	20%	200 pts.
Total	100 %	1000 pts.

Participation:

Participation is measured both in attendance and your contributions to the course. Attendance will be taken each time we meet. Moreover, you are expected to: engage the ideas of the course, stay abreast of the readings, share your thoughts and ideas with the class, and participate fully in all class activities, including in-class writing assignments and meetings outside of class.

Attendance/Participation Policy:

20 % of your grade is determined by attendance and participation in class discussion. I expect at least 85 % attendance and occasional participation to earn a "C" and 95-100 % participation with consistent and thoughtful contribution to class discussion for an "A". Participation may count for more of the final grade if it has been exceptionally good or less if exceedingly poor. Improvement over the course of the quarter will be registered in the final grade.

Excused Absences:

What constitutes an excused absence? A death in the family, a court or legal issue (for example: jury duty, parole meeting, court date, incarceration), an appointment for public benefits or entitlements that cannot be scheduled at any other time, or a severe health issue. What is a severe health issue? Being contagious (with flu or pink eye, for example), an incident that requires a visit to the emergency room or hospitalization, or having a medical condition requiring an

immediate appointment that cannot be scheduled at any other day/time. Upon returning to class, the student must show 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, the student brings a signed note from his or her attending health care provider (physician or RN, not a member of the secretarial staff) stating that the student was 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. Weather emergencies are excused at the discretion of the professor.

Research Papers and Presentations:

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.** At the end of the semester, you will deliver an Oral Presentation on the research from your final paper to the class.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Credit/No Credit Option:

When you matriculate in this class and register for a traditional grade, you make a contract to do your best and accept the grade assigned. I do not convert a traditional grade to credit/no credit and release a student from her contract unless I have evidence of an emergency, health crisis, or extreme personal situation in which the student 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 paragraph above, **I do not sign drop/add forms after week 10 of the term.**

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 or date of the quiz.

Electronic Devices:

Research overwhelmingly states that electronic devices do NOT enhance learning at the college level, but rather detract from it. See the following articles:

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/memory-medic/201303/why-writing-hand-could-make-you-smarter>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/05/to-remember-a-lecture-better-take-notes-by-hand/361478/>

However, electronic recording devices may be used in the classroom provided you have met the following criteria:

- 1) You been identified as having a learning disability by DSS and have provided the professor with a letter from DSS.
- 2) You have addressed your request to use a device in writing. You must state what device you wish to use and why. If approved, you will receive a letter from the professor.

Please turn off all cell phones, Blackberries, I-pads and/or tablets, and any other mobile device that may cause a distraction or set them on vibrate prior to the start of class. Students who fail to do so will be asked to leave class and will be allowed to return only at the instructor's discretion. If you are in the midst of an emergency, please communicate with me about your situation, immediately.

Academic Conduct:

All students are expected to practice academic honesty and comport themselves in a civil fashion while on campus. 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: http://www.umd.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

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?” towards a functional definition

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.

Paper #2 assigned in class.

Week 4:

Feminism

Feminism readings posted on Moodle or class handouts

Paper #1 returned to class with edits.

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

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 returned to class with edits.

Week 6:

NO CLASS

Week 7:

The Body

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

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

Final term paper assigned in class.

Week 8:

Time

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

Place

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

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:

Science

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

Term papers returned in class with edits.

Week 11

SPRING BREAK-NO CLASS.

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.

Revised term papers returned.

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.