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Course Outline for HUMN 7
CONTEMPORARY HUMANITIES
Effective: Fall 2019

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

HUMN 7 — CONTEMPORARY HUMANITIES — 3.00 units

Exploration of chosen works of visual, literary, architectural, and musical works of art that reflect the issues and concepts of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

3.00 Units Lecture

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

- Humanities

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- A. Complete assignments, discussion, essays and tests to demonstrate knowledge of current trends in twentieth and twenty-first century artistic expression
- B. Analyze and apply information gained to their perception of twentieth and twenty-first century art forms
- C. Describe and explain twentieth and twenty-first century art forms and expression in modern and post-modern contexts
- D. Identify significant theories and theorists of modern and post-modern thought and their relationship to the arts
- E. Recall significant terms of modern and post-modern theory
- F. Explain the relationship between technology and the arts in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries
- G. Discuss their own worldview in light of twentieth and twenty-first century artistic thought and expression

V. CONTENT:

The specific topics to be studied will be drawn from the visual arts in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with examples drawn from painting, sculpture, assemblage, performance arts, architecture, earth art, body art, film, television, video, art on the internet, video games, music of all types and genres. These will be discussed in the context of modern and post-modern theories.

- A. Theories and theorists (at least 4 of the following)
 1. Baudrillard (simulacra, the hyperreal)
 2. Lyotard (skepticism toward metanarrative)
 3. Barthes (intertextuality)
 4. Benjamin (technology, art, mass reproduction)
 5. Lacan (structuralism)
 6. Kristeva, Irigaray, Dworkin: (postfeminism)
 7. Jameson (post-Marxism and capitalist critique)
 8. Spring (cyborgs and post-gender world)
 9. Jencks (post-modern architecture)
- B. Visual Arts
 1. Painting: Cezanne, Picasso, Hopper, Pollock, Lichtenstein, Rosenquist, Warhol, Estes, Wiley, Walker
 2. Mixed-media and assemblage: Schnabel, Cornell, Chicago
 3. Sculpture: Calder, Oldenburg, Segal, Koons, Messenger, Serra
 4. Photography: Adams, Abbott, Walker, Lange, Clark, Sherman, Morimura
 5. Earth art: Christo, Smithson, De Maria
 6. Visual arts existing only in cyberspace
 7. Body art such as tattoos and the use of the body as text
 8. Comics and graphic novels such as *Persepolis*
 9. Architecture: Gropius, Wright, Graves, Disneyland, Las Vegas, Gehry
- C. Music
 1. Classical compositions by Stravinsky, Cage, Adams
 2. Variations on classical compositions performed by artists such as Klazz Brothers and Cuba Percussion and recordings such

- as the concert with Led Zeppelin and the San Francisco Symphony
- 3. Popular music: Elvis, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Tupac Shakur, Bruce Springsteen, Mos Def, The Clash, Madonna
- D. Film/Video/Television
 - 1. Films: *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, *Children of Men*, *Blade Runner*, *Pulp Fiction*, *Terminator*
 - 2. Music videos
 - 3. Video games
 - 4. Television programs: *The Simpsons*, *The Dave Chappelle Show*, *South Park*, *Deadwood*
- E. Poetry and Prose
 - 1. Poetry by T.S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams, Maya Angelou, Billy Collins
 - 2. Prose by James Joyce, Toni Morrison, Philip K. Dick, William Gibson

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** -
- B. **Discussion** - Instructor guided discussion.
- C. **Student Presentations** - Small-group discussions and presentations.
- D. **Field Trips** - Recommended visits to local art museums and performances.
- E. **Classroom Activity** - Student-generated content: In class, students show examples of work by connecting to the internet and then discussing these examples as texts.
- F. **Guest Lecturers** - Guest artists and lecturers.
- G. Film, video, and television program analysis and discussion.

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Read pages 1-31 of *Introducing Postmodernism*.
 - 1. In your folders, summarize the key aspects of modernism.
 - 2. Then choose any one of the following artists: Picasso, Cezanne, Braque, or Mondrian.
 - 3. Research their work, and bring to class a one-page written analysis of one work of art.
 - 4. Be prepared to present this in class.
- B. After viewing *Pulp Fiction* in class, write a two-page analysis of the film, keeping in mind Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality.
 - 1. We will discuss these in class, and it will go into your folder.
- C. In small groups, students use the internet to research examples of performance art that exists only in cyberspace.

VIII. EVALUATION:

Methods/Frequency

- A. Exams/Tests
 - At least two tests, e.g. midterm and final.
- B. Quizzes
 - At least two quizzes.
- C. Research Projects
 - At least one short research project on an artist, composer, architect, or writer covered in class.
- D. Oral Presentation
 - At least one oral presentation (can be formal or informal).
- E. Projects
 - At least one creative project, e.g. a final creative project.
- F. Class Participation
 - Weekly class participation through discussion, small group work, in-class activities, etc.
- G. Class Work
 - Weekly in-class discussion and participation in group or solo activities.
- H. Home Work
 - Weekly reading assignments, frequent home work on larger essays, projects, presentations, etc.
- I. Other
 - 1. Examination: midterm - typical questions:
 - a. Short answer: Using one specific example for each term, explain these terms: text, sign, signifier, and discourse.
 - b. Essay: Explain the influence of Dadaism on Pop Art. Be sure to include a discussion of at least two major artists of each movement.
 - 2. Folders containing reading and class notes, class activities, and short assignments from the term in the form of responses to discussions or presentations.
 - 3. An analytical essay of about 700-800 words on an interdisciplinary topic, choosing from works of visual art, music, and/or poetry that complement each other. Students should discuss the works in the context of one or more postmodern theories.
 - 4. Final capstone project: Students will be asked to create a capstone project in which they synthesize the key ideas of the course. The project should include some writing/essay components, but it should also include other formats, e.g. video, live performance, recorded performance, a web-based work such as might be found on YouTube or a magazine/zine. Students will be required to explain the theoretical basis of their analysis.

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. *What was Contemporary Art?*. 1st ed., MIT Press, 2016.
- 2. *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*. 3rd ed., Thames & Hudson, 2016.
- 3. *The Humanistic Tradition, Book 6: Modernism, Postmodernism, and the Global Perspective*. 7th ed., McGraw Hill, 2015.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: