

ARH301: Introduction to the Visual Arts (19600)

Instructor: Deirdre M. Smith deirdre.madeleine.smith@gmail.com

Class meetings: MWF 2:00-3:00 pm / ART 1.110

Office hours: W 3:00-4:00 / DFA 2.108 (and by appointment)

This course is a thematic survey that will introduce you to topics in the history of art and visual culture. We will look at images, objects, buildings and films from around the world, from prehistoric times to the present. Together, we will examine the nature of art and artists, the ways that art both reflects and influences its historical moment, and the personal, social, political, and spiritual functions of art. Through this course, you will develop skills of visual literacy, critical thinking, and writing.

THERE IS NO TEXTBOOK FOR THIS COURSE. On certain weeks you will have short readings, which will be available in the Files section on Canvas. The rest of the class material (for quizzes and exams) will come exclusively from lectures, so attendance, note-taking, and participation are essential for success. Slide shows from lectures will be made available shortly after class on Canvas.

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Week 1:

Wednesday, January 23: What is art (and why study it)?, Intro to class format and syllabus

Homework: Read *Ways of Seeing* (excerpt), and *A Short Guide to Writing About Art* (excerpt)

Friday, January 25: *In-Class Activity 1: Writing About Art*

Week 2:

Monday, January 28: Introduction pt. 1: The Shifting Roles of Art & Artists

Wednesday, January 30: Introduction pt. 2: Representation, Reproducibility & Experience

Friday, February 1: *In-Class Activity 2: The History of Art History* / **QUIZ 1**

Homework: **WA 1** (Due Wednesday, February 6 at midnight)

Week 3:

Monday, February 4: Religion pt. 1: The Body as Spiritual Vessel

Wednesday, February 6: Religion pt. 2: Houses of Worship

Friday, February 8: Space and Place pt. 1: The Landscape Tradition / **QUIZ 2**

Week 4:

Monday, February 11: Space and Place pt. 2: Maps

Wednesday, February 13: Portraiture and Figuration pt. 1: Representing the Self

Friday, February 15: Portraiture and Figuration pt. 2: Representing Others / **QUIZ 3**

Homework: WA 2 (Due Wednesday, February 20 at midnight)

Week 5:

Monday, February 18: Art and Narrative pt. 1: Allegory & Iconography

Wednesday, February 20: Art and Narrative pt. 2: History

Friday, February 22: Exam 1 review / **QUIZ 4**

Week 6:

Monday, February 25: **EXAM 1**

Wednesday, February 27: Abstraction pt. 1: Historical Precedents & Aniconism

Friday, March 1: Abstraction pt. 2: The Zero Degree of Art

Week 7:

Monday, March 4: *In-Class Activity 3: Photography, Theory and Practice*

Wednesday, March 6: Camera reality pt. 1: Human Subjects

Friday, March 8: Camera reality pt. 2: Mediation, Material & Experimentation / **QUIZ 5**

Homework: WA3 (Due Wednesday, March 13 at Midnight)

Week 8:

Monday, March 11: Art and Life pt. 1: The Readymade

Wednesday, March 13: Art and Life pt. 2: Minimalism & Actual Space

Friday, March 15: Art and Life pt. 3: Performance Art & Happenings / **QUIZ 6**

March 18, 20, 22: *NO CLASSES* *SPRING BREAK*

Week 9:

Monday, March 25: The Built World pt. 1: Stone & Concrete

Wednesday, March 27: The Built World pt. 2: Glass & Steel

Friday, March 29: *In-Class Activity 4: Campus Architecture Scavenger Hunt* / **QUIZ 7**
Homework: WA 4 (Due Wednesday, April 3 at Midnight)

Week 10:

Monday, April 1: Monuments and Memorials pt. 1: War & Tragedy

Wednesday, April 3: Monuments and Memorials pt. 2: Love & Loss

Friday, April 5: Exam 2 Review / **QUIZ 8**

Week 11:

Monday, April 8: EXAM 2

Wednesday, April 10: Art and Controversy: Art trials

Friday, April 12: Art and Controversy: Theft & Repatriation

Week 12:

Monday, April 15: The Art World pt. 1: Who Makes it?

Wednesday, April 17: The Art World pt. 2: Who Pays for it?

Friday, April 19: *In-Class Activity 5: The Museum* / **QUIZ 9**
Homework: WA5 (Due Wednesday, April 24 at Midnight)

Week 13:

Monday, April 22: Visual Culture pt. 1: Advertising

Wednesday, April 24: Visual Culture pt. 2: Everyday Design

Friday, April 26: Visual Culture pt. 3: The Internet / **QUIZ 10**

Week 14:

Monday, April 29: Art and Politics pt. 1: Satire

Wednesday, May 1: Art and Politics pt. 2: Activism

Friday, May 3: *In-Class Activity 6: Political Art* / **QUIZ 11**

Week 15:

Monday, May 6: Destruction and Creation

Wednesday, May 8: Exam 3 Review

Friday, May 10: EXAM 3

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADES:

Five writing assignments (each worth 10% of final grade) = 50%

A series of short writing assignments are the core of your grade. 2-3 pages in length (Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, 1 inch margins), these assignments will be based on readings, or activities (looking closely at an artwork, visiting a museum, etc.).

Rubric for Writing Assignments:

- 10, 9 points - EXCELLENT - Dedication of time and thought are evident. Responds fully to prompt. Makes an effort at presenting a specific point of view or argument. Clear, concise writing. Virtually no spelling or grammatical errors.
- 8, 7 points - GOOD - Thoughtful, but insufficiently forceful in presentation of ideas, or does not fully address all aspects assignment. Writing may be unclear or have some errors.
- 6 - NEEDS IMPROVEMENT - Inadequate level of thought and consideration of assignment. Major problems with formatting or mechanics of writing.

At TWO points in the semester, you have the opportunity to revise a past assignment for the opportunity to receive a higher grade. You will submit these on Canvas in the provided areas. These revisions are optional, but highly recommended.

Three exams (non-cumulative) (each worth 10% of final grade) = 30%

Exams will consist of: multiple choice and fill-in-the blank questions and short answers questions (1-2 paragraphs each). Exams will be taken in a blue book (try to use the same one throughout the entire semester). You are allowed to bring a one-page study reference with you into the exam, which you must turn in with your exam.

Eleven quizzes (each worth 1% of final grade) = 10%

Quizzes will happen on indicated Fridays throughout the semester (every week except the first week and weeks with exams). They will each consist of four multiple choice or fill-in-the blank questions. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Attendance and Participation = 10%

Active presence (daily attendance, taking notes, responding to questions, not talking or using your phone) in class are expected of all students. Excused absences will be provided for legitimate excuses (illness, family emergency, religious observation, etc.) provided ideally at least one week in advance. Plan to get lecture notes from a fellow student, and to meet with the instructor to cover what you missed when necessary.

Rubric for Attendance and Participation grade:

For full credit in this portion of the grade, you are expected to:

- Attend the majority of lectures (i.e. No more than 3 unexcused absences)
- Be attentive and present during class (i.e. Not on your phone or browsing the internet - I will mark you down as absent for the day if I notice this)
- Participate in discussion (i.e. You are expected to respond to and ask questions, and participate in group discussions.)

Final grades will be determined on the following +/- scale:

A (4.00) = 94-100; A- (3.67) = 90-93; B+ (3.33) = 87-89; B (3.00) = 84-86; B- (2.67) = 80-83; C+ (2.33) = 77-79; C (2.00) = 74-76; C- (1.67) = 70-73; D+ (1.33) = 67-69; D (1.00) = 64-66; D- (0.67) = 60-63; F (0.00) = 0-59

NOTE: If you are .50 or less away from a boost that would shift you into a different grade, I will always round up. For example, a 93.50 (A-) will become 94 (A) in the final grade.

Academic Honesty:

I expect all students in this class to act with integrity. I have set up the course in a way that should make cheating impossible (and, moreover, irrelevant). HOWEVER, I will take evidence of cheating on exams and quizzes (copying another student's work, sharing answers, etc.) very seriously and will give 0s on assignments where such activity taken place.

Almost none of the assignments in this course will require research. They are based on your own thoughts and observations. Therefore plagiarism should not be an issue. However, if you do reference either a class reading or outside material (please always use a VETTED, SCHOLARLY source), you MUST cite it using whatever style you are familiar with (MLA, Chicago, etc.)

For more on the UT Honor Code (or statement of ethics) and an explanation or example of what constitutes plagiarism, see: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>.

Visual and Performing Arts Credit (VAPA):

This course can be used to fulfill the Visual and Performing Arts requirement of UT's core curriculum and addresses the following four core objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: communication skills, critical thinking skills, teamwork, and social responsibility.

Global Cultures flag:

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity and knowledge of cultures outside the United States. A substantial portion of the material will cover practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. culture.

Learning Differences and Disabilities:

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>).