Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Art
Washington University in St. Louis
College of Art, Graduate Studies

Graduate Seminar: Course Syllabus
Associate Professor Richard J. Krueger
Graduate Seminar: Course Syllabus

Instructor Information
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Course Description

Situated in the first year of the College of Art MFA program, this two-semester course is designed to introduce students to the ideas and historical trajectories that motivate contemporary artists and give shape to practice. Lectures, readings, and discussions provide a framework for understanding contemporary artistic practices, productions, and strategies in the contexts of history, theory, culture, and criticism. As such, the course will explore the values and arguments of Modern and Postmodern art and contend with emergent schemes of knowledge and developing visual logic systems.

Course Goals

Artists identify meaningful problems, generate unique, often poetic, visual logic systems, and negotiate audience involvement and response. This course will provide a framework for engaging the challenges of applied studio practice. Understandings of existing schemes of knowledge is necessary to the innovation of new ways of knowing and, as such, this course will provide an adeptness with current ideas, their trajectories, and implications. Also, this course will explore the activities of critical analysis and provide students will the expertise to interpret, navigate, and invent visual languages. No less important is the ability to articulate complex ideas. This course will provide opportunities to write and construct organized, well informed, and persuasive arguments and thusly will offer the foundational skills required to meet the challenges of the written thesis and the post-graduate experience. In summery, the goal of this course is to yield intellectually dexterous artists who have the capacity to comprehend and utilize visual language in-order to confront and engage society and meet the challenges of the present moment.

Academic Professionalism

Choosing to enter an academic environment represents a desire to become a professional. The university classroom is a unique environment dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and personal growth. In order to foster the free exchange of ideas we must treat each other with sensitivity and respect. As such, it is of utmost importance that we behave in a professional and courteous manner. Any student who corrupts the integrity of my classroom by behaving in a disrespectful fashion toward other students or myself will face a dramatic grade reduction. Threatening language and/or threatening behavior will not be tolerated and will result in automatic failure.
Participation & Attendance

Class attendance and participation is mandatory. At the beginning of class you should be in the classroom with the necessary materials and ready to start work. If we are holding a class discussion you should be prepared to contribute your insights. I can hardly imagine any reason why a student would elect to be anywhere other than this class when it is in session. But, in any case, because participation and present-ness is pertinent to the success of the course, and because the class only meets once per week, there are no allowances or excused absences. If you are unable to attend a session due to illness or emergency, you may need to provide proof of illness or emergency in order to advert penalty. It is the responsibility of the student to approach the instructor immediately following an absence to provide explanation if an allowance is requested. A missed session will result in a 3% reduction in your course grade. A second absence will result in a 6% reduction and a third absence will result in a 10% reduction. A forth absence will result in failure. If a session is missed, it is the student’s responsibility to attain the information provided during the class period and it is not the instructor’s responsibility to re-provide such information. Excessive tardiness, early departures, and/ or lack of participation in discussions will result in the lowering of a student’s letter grade; deductions will be determined by the instructor and are not negotiable.

Readings & Discussions

Readings will be assigned on a regular basis. In most cases, you will be allotted one week to read the assigned essay and prepare a written outline/ response. Your outline will be prepared in paragraph form and will consist of your re-articulation of the author’s primary arguments and a brief response to the essay. The written outlines will assist you in preparing for class discussions and in studying for the final exam (at the conclusion of the 2nd semester). Outlines are due at the beginning of the assigned class day. Late outlines will not be accepted; therefore it is important to keep up with the readings.

Class discussions will require that you carefully consider the assigned reading, analyze the author’s primary arguments, prepare topics for discussion, and be ready to contribute and consider possibilities. Because of the diversity of backgrounds and experiences, no two people will feel exactly the same way about a reading. Your insights are an important part of this class; thus participation during class discussions is a necessary requirement. At times, a group or an individual may be selected to lead a discussion.

A list of readings follows. Please understand that this is a two-semester course and as such this reading list only encompasses part one of the course. This list may be altered or supplemented as needed.

- The Intoxication Of Modernity by Celeste Olalquiga
- Kitsch And The Avant-Garde by Clement Greenberg
- Of Mother Nature And Marlboro Man by Debora Bright
- The Art of Production from Art Forum
- The Originality Of The Avant-Garde: A Postmodern Repetition by Rosalind Krauss
- The Rise Of Andy Warhol by Robert Hughes
- Making Art As If The World Mattered by Suzi Gablik
- The Interventionists by Nato Thompson
- Teaching Public Art In The Twenty First Century: With Harrell Fletcher by Shelly Willis
- Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists by Linda Nocklin
- Towards A Feminist Theory Of Art Criticism by Joanna Frueh
- Contraemplates by Marjorie Welish
- Freud with Kant? The Enigma Of Pleasure by Hubert Damisch
Assignments

The following are the graded assignments for section one (Fall semester) of this class. Also indicated is the percentage value of each assignment. Extra credit may be available, but not on an individual basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Responses (Three Essays)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Critical Analysis</td>
<td>85%</td>
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</tbody>
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Evaluation Policy

At the completion of the course you will be assigned a grade. The grade will be based upon your performance on assignments, the quality of participation during discussion sessions, and attendance. An incomplete will be given only as directed by University Guidelines.

A  Excellent performance in meeting all the challenges of the course
A- Excellent performance in meeting most every challenge of the course and above average performance in other areas
B+ Above average performance in meeting most of the requirements, Excellent performance in some areas
B  Above average performance in all areas
B- Above average performance in meeting most of the requirements, Average performance in some areas
C+ Average performance in meeting most of the requirements, Average performance in remaining areas.
C  Average performance
C- Average performance in meeting most of the requirements, Below average performance in remaining areas.
D  Below average performance
F  The student showed no sincere effort, none of the class challenges were met.