EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION
ART HISTORY
School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Department of Visual Art Art History
FA / ARTH 2680 3.0 SECTION A
CONTEMPORARY ART
FALL 2017 / WINTER 2018

COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION
Offers an introduction to the central movements of international contemporary art since the 1960s. Considers culturally diverse, indigenous, and diasporic perspectives, interconnected in an expanded notion of visual culture.

INSTRUCTOR(S)

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SPECIAL FEATURES
“Contemporary art” is a massive and, perhaps, imprecise term. Does “contemporary art” refer to very specific schools, methods, and concepts of art? Or can it simply refer to any art that is made “now”? We will attempt to address these questions by exploring some major art movements that have arisen since the 1960s. But we will do so by considering how critics and historians have defined the place of these movements within art history, and in concert with the writings and interviews of artists. Through considering the intersection of critic, artist, and history, we will also address another component of “contemporary art”: whether or not the art object can exist without a spectator and/or a larger discourse that surrounds it.

TOPICS AND CONCEPTS
*Please note: the instructor reserves the right to change minor details of the course schedule and assignments*

Week 1: Sept 12th
Introduction: What is Art?

Week 2: Sept. 19th
Conceptual Art
Readings:
- Brook, Donald. “Toward a Definition of Conceptual Art,” Leonardo 5.1 Winter 1972 (Moodle)
Pre-Class Writing: Choose one of the artists discussed in the BBC documentary, Who Is Afraid of Conceptual Art? Find one of their pieces, post a url, and discuss why you think it can or cannot be considered conceptual art (4-5 sentences).

Week 3: Sept. 26th
Considering Form and Material: Color Field and Minimalism
Readings:

Pre-Class Viewing: “Nothing Matters,” (Part 4/6) of This is Modern Art. Channel 4, 1999. (Moodle)
Pre-Class Writing: After reading these articles and watching “Nothing Matters,” consider what kinds of -- or even if -- minimalist art exists in the 21st century. Find an example that reinforces your opinion, accompanied by 4-5 sentences that explains why you chose this particular example.

Week 4: Oct. 3rd
Reshaping the Everyday: objects and artists
Readings:
- “Assemblage,” Tate (Moodle)
- Museum of Broken Relationships website (Moodle)

Pre-Class Viewings:
- “Andy Warhol Interview, 1966.” (interview with Alan Solomon)

Pre-Class Writing: Consider the following question in light of one point brought up in the assigned materials: What or who counts as an artistic object? Come up with an example not discussed in the assigned materials that helps you to answer this question. In 5 or more sentences, explain why you chose this particular example.

Week 5: Oct. 10th
Relinquishing Control: Making Art Coextensive of Life
Readings:

Pre-Class Viewing: John Cage: I Have Nothing to Say and I’m Saying It. Dir. Allan Miller, 1990. (streaming through library)
Pre-Class Writing: Look up one artist who is associated with Fluxus, and post a link to one of their works, or at the very least, documentation/discussion of their works. How might this work be seen as joining “art” and “life”? (4-5 sentences)

Week 6: Oct. 17th
Pause: Case Studies: Rosalyn Drexler, Wangechi Mutu, Reena Saini Kallat
Readings:

Week 7: Oct. 24th
Midterm: In-Class Essay

Week 8: Oct. 31st
Film: John Waters case study
Readings:

Pre-Class Viewing: One John Waters film that is online through library (TBD)
Pre-Class Writing: What is your reaction to the assigned film? Choose one scene to help demonstrate your point (half a page).

In-Class Viewing: One John Waters film (TBD)

John Waters Writing Assignment, due Nov. 6th at 11:59 pm!!! See Moodle for more details.

Week 9: Nov. 7th
Art and Social Critique -- In-Class Group Project
In-Class: Each group will create an entry for a class Wiki based on an article assigned from the “Kinship” issue of Canadian Art, Summer 2017. The information that is included in this Wiki can potentially be used in your final paper! More information and group assignments will follow, and will be posted to Moodle.

Week 10: Nov. 14th
Playing with “Outsiders”: Outsider Art and Street Photography
Readings:

Pre-Class Writing: Choose one point from Sontag’s chapter and use it to analyze Vivian Maier as an artist or as she is embraced by the public/art world. (300-500 words).

*Last Day to Drop Course: Nov. 20th*

Week 11: Nov. 21st
Art in the 21st Century

Readings:
- “What is Hybrid Art” ARS Electronica blog entry. (on Moodle)

Pre-Class Viewing: Go to Doug Van Nort’s website to get a feel for his work (link on Moodle).

Pre-Class Writing: Find an artist who is practicing in the 21st century. Post a URL to one of their works and a brief analysis as to how technology in the 21st century has or has not influenced their practice. (4-5 sentences)

In-Class Presentation by Doug Van Nort, CRC in Digital Performance and director of the DisPerSion Lab, York University

Week 12: Nov. 28th

Meet to discuss final papers: Requirements and Instructions will be posted on Moodle as well. Final exam due: Dec. 4th, 11:59 PM (on Moodle)

LIST OF LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EXAMPLES OF

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to some of the artworks, artists, and critical ideas that helped define, and continue to redefine, Contemporary Art for both the art establishment and the general public.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:
1. Recognize some of the major movements of “contemporary art” and their place in a longer art history, including their influence on present art-making practices;
2. Analyze objectively the aesthetic appeal of diverse artists and artworks in concert with their own personal opinion;
3. Evaluate the critical discourse that surrounds art made after 1960, as it emanates from artists, art critics, historians, and the more generalized public;
4. Speak and write about contemporary art in reference to a larger, pre-existing scholarship.

GRADED ASSESSMENT

Evaluation (description at end of syllabus and more details to follow on Moodle)

Pre-Class Writings: 14%
John Waters writing: 15%
In Class Group Project: 6%
Midterm: 20%
Final: 35%
Participation/Attendance: 10%

Pre-Class Writings: 14%

There are seven of these writings that are spread across the course of the semester. These writings vary in topic and requirements based on what we are studying; all due dates and instructions are listed on the syllabus and on Moodle, so be sure to consult these documents as
you prepare for each class session so that you know what to complete in addition to readings and viewings. In general, these writings are meant to accompany the assigned readings and viewings in a given week, and they are quite short and should not take you too long to complete.

Midterm: 20%

In-class essay, 1 hour 20 minutes: Choose one of the case studies discussed in week 6 and elaborate on how it reflects at least 2 of the concepts discussed in weeks 1-5. In this essay, you must engage with 3 artworks by your chosen artist, at least one of which you found through a quick web search, and reference at least 3 of the assigned or recommended readings/materials in your response. You do not need to quote your sources, but you do need to include parenthetical citations when referencing specific ideas from the writings.

John Waters writing: 15%

After reading the two short articles assigned for Week 8, and after watching two John Waters’ films (one assigned and one in class), I want you to assess John Waters as a “contemporary artist.” In order to do this, I want you to consider the major and minor themes that you’ve read about and that we’ve discussed in class thus far in the semester, from the scholarly and aesthetic aspects of “Conceptual art,” the consideration of “form and material” in art making, the use of “everyday objects” in art, and the idea of making “art coextensive of life.” How can John Waters’ films be understood through any of these topics? You will be required to use these themes to analyze John Waters as an artist, and to do so by remaining focused on the films that you have watched for this class.

Requirements: 1. You need to refer to both assigned films, in some way, to organize your argument. Do not just provide a summary of the plot of each film, but engage with the visual aspects of the film itself within your analysis. In order to fully draw out your analysis, it might be a good idea to focus on one scene from each film.
2. You need to incorporate one assigned writing from the semester thus far, as well as two outside sources that relate to John Waters and/or the films that you will discuss in your writing. These sources can be interviews with Waters, analyses of his oeuvre, and/or reviews of the two films in question. Make sure to include quotes and proper citation where necessary.
3. It might be best to choose just one major theme from the semester in order to centre your discussion of Waters as an artist and your analysis of his films. You don’t want to overextend yourself by taking on too many topics; a nice focused approach will most likely work best to truly address this question.
4. The final product is 4 pages, double spaced (approximately 1000 words), and is due on Nov. 6th, 11:59 pm!!!! Make sure to include a works cited (any citation style is fine, as long as it is consistent), and organize this essay like a normal, academic essay (intro; body with evidence from films and readings that include in-text citations and quotations; conclusion).

In Class Group Project: 6%

This group project will take place during class on Nov. 7th, with additional work possibly needed after class as well (the final entry is due on Nov. 10th). Details will follow on Moodle.

Final Paper: 35%

This final paper is going to ask you to focus more intently on the topics discussed in Weeks 9, 10, or 11. Choose one of these weeks in order to fully explore the topic at hand; you can choose to approach your discussion in any way, but you must complete the following requirements:
1. You must refer to one of the readings assigned for your chosen topic/week;
2. You must connect your chosen topic/week to any of the other topics/weeks that we discussed over the course of the semester, and you must refer to one of the readings assigned in this topic/week.

3. You must discuss two artworks in your analysis; you can choose works by the same artist, or two different works -- it’s up to you. You must find at least one artwork that has not been discussed in class.

4. You need to find two outside sources to help substantiate your argument/analysis. These sources do not need to be scholarly, but they do need to be reputable (for example, Wikipedia does not count as a “reputable” source!).

5. You need to include citations and quotations where needed, and a works cited page.

Word count: 1000-1500 words, due December 4th, 11:59 pm.

Participation/Attendance: 10%

This course demands full attendance and full mental participation. I know that we are a large class, and that not everyone is comfortable speaking in large groups. However, I will open up the classroom space to discussion that will oscillate between small groups and the class as a whole, and I encourage everyone to speak aloud, even if it is uncomfortable for you to do so. *No side conversations, please*: in a large group, this rule is especially important to follow...

I encourage you to use your phones and laptops to supplement our class discussions, but not to subvert them. You will lose points from your participation grade if you Facebook, text, etc. during class. And I will not always give you a warning (p.s. it is pretty easy to tell the difference between people chatting with friends online and using their phones/laptops for legitimate purposes)!

Because we only meet once a week, I do not allow for unexcused absences. However, if you know that you will miss class because of a legitimate reason, let our TA know ASAP so that you can make up the work.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Course, Faculty, and University Policies

Grading, Assignment Submission, and Lateness Penalties

Grading: The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ - 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar – http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/2015-2016/academic/grades/index.htm)

Students may take a limited number of courses for degree credit on an ungraded (pass/fail) basis.

For full information on this option see Alternative Grading Option in the AMPD section of the Undergraduate Calendar - http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/2015-2016/faculty_rules/FA/grading.htm

*Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles.*
Assignment Submissions: Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment. Assignments are to be handed in on Moodle; instructions will be given for each assignment as we approach the due date.

Lateness Penalty: Because we are a large class and there is a TA that will help with the marking, I need to be strict with due dates. You will receive penalties for late work, unless there is a documented reason for handing in late work, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (e.g., doctor’s letter). In these cases, students may request accommodation from myself or our TA. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to AMPD.

Penalties will vary based on the weight of the assignment, as outlined below:
- Pre-Class Writing assignments: No late submissions are accepted.
- In-Class Midterm writing: No late submissions are accepted.
- John Waters writing: Half grade deduction for every day after the due date.
- In Class Group Project: No late submissions are accepted.
- Final Paper: Half-grade deduction for every day after the due date.

University Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy
The Senate Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy stipulates that (a) the grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and that, (b) under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter or Summer Term, and 30% for ‘full year’ courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade.

"20% Rule"
No examinations or tests collectively worth more than 20% of the final grade in a course will be given during the final 14 calendar days of classes in a term. The exceptions to the rule are classes which regularly meet Friday evenings or on Saturday and/or Sunday at any time, and courses offered in the compressed summer terms.

Drop Deadlines -- 2017/2018 Academic Year
- Last date to drop a fall term (F) course without receiving a grade: November 10, 2017
- Last date to drop a winter term (W) course without receiving a grade: March 9, 2018
- Last date to drop a full year (Y) course without receiving a grade: February 9, 2018

IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS: Academic Policies
All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Curriculum & Academic Standards webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents)
http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm
- York’s Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures/Academic Integrity Website
- Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation
Academic Honesty and Integrity
York students are required to maintain high standards of academic integrity and are subject to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty (http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academichonesty-senate-policy-on/)

Access/Disability
York provides services for students with disabilities (including physical, medical, learning and psychiatric disabilities) needing accommodation related to teaching and evaluation methods/materials. These services are made available to students in all Faculties and programs at York University.
Students in need of these services are asked to register with disability services as early as possible to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation can be provided with advance notice. You are encouraged to schedule a time early in the term to meet with each professor to discuss your accommodation needs. Please note that registering with disabilities services and discussing your needs with your professors is necessary to avoid any impediment to receiving the necessary academic accommodations to meet your needs.
Additional information is available through Counselling & Disability Services at www.cds.info.yorku.ca/ or from disability service providers:
• Personal Counselling and Learning Skills Services: N110 BCSS, 416-736-5297
• Mental Health Disability Services: N110 BCSS, 416-736-5350
• Learning Disability Services: W128 BCSS, 416-736-5383
• Physical, Sensory and Medical Disability Services: N108 Ross, 416-736-5140, TTY: 416-736-5263
Deaf and Hard of Hearing students can also contact psmds@yorku.ca
Glendon students - Counselling & Disability Services, Glendon Site: Glendon Hall E103, 416-487-6709

Ethics Review Process
York students are subject to the York University Policy for the Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants. In particular, students proposing to undertake research involving human participants (e.g., interviewing the director of a company or government agency, having students complete a questionnaire, etc.) are required to submit an Application for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants at least one month before you plan to begin the research. If you are in doubt as to whether this requirement applies to you, contact your Course Director immediately.

Religious Observance Accommodation
York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for an in-class test or examination pose such a conflict for you, contact the TA within the first three weeks of class. Similarly, should an assignment to be completed in a lab, practicum placement, workshop, etc., scheduled later in the term pose such a conflict, contact the TA immediately. Please note that to arrange an alternative date or time for an examination scheduled in the formal examination periods (December and April/May), students must complete an Examination Accommodation Form, which can be obtained from Student Client Services, Bennett Student Services Centre or online at http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/exam_accommodation.pdf (PDF)
Student Conduct
Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom, and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavour. Further, the instructor is the best person to decide, in the first instance, whether such an atmosphere is present in the class. A statement of the policy and procedures involving disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available on the York website http://www.yorku.ca/univsec/policies/document.php?document=82
Please note that this information is subject to periodic update. For the most current information, please go to the CCAS webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents): http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/senate/
Additional Information can be found at the following links:
* Alternate Exam and Test Scheduling
* Important University Sessional Dates (you will find classes and exams start/end dates, reading/co-curricular week, add/drop deadlines, holidays, University closings and more. http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/index.htm
* Manage my Academic record
http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/

Many courses utilize Moodle, York University's course website system. If your course is using Moodle, click here to access it.
Moodle @ York University