Course Description

This course will focus on artistic production from approximately 1940 to the 1980s with particular attention paid to the legacy of the European avant-garde, the influence of new types of media and materials on artists, the shifting philosophical arguments of artistic production and theory, and the transition from modernism to antimodernism and postmodernism. Some of the major questions we will address are:

- Why do we see such a rapid progression of artistic experimentation?
- What are the social conditions and changes that allow this to happen?
- How closely are politics and art related during this time?
- What role does theory (literary, philosophical, psychoanalytic, feminist) play in artistic production, criticism and the writing of art history?
- What effect has the introduction of a variety of new mediums into the realm of art (digital photography, film, video, etc.) had on artistic production?
- Where do we stand with the study of art history today? The production of art? What is the role of art in today’s society?
- Is the category of Art and its sub-categories (painting, sculpture, etc.) still viable?

This course will be comprised of a combination of lectures and discussions, which will revolve around a series of readings relevant to the questions posed above. I encourage thoughtful and interrogative questioning and discussion at any point.

Readings

All readings are to be completed for the class meeting under which they are assigned. Readings are available on E-Reserve, accessible through Blackboard and the library’s website.

There is no required textbook for this course, however, I recommend the following books for those who wish to supplement course readings and lectures:


These textbooks will provide you with wide array of information on contemporary art and artists, much of which we will not have time to cover in just one semester.

Course Requirements

Course Requirements for 3750:
Exams

You will complete two take home exams – The mid-term exam will be posted on Canvas on October 8th and DUE in-class on October 13th – The final exam will be posted on Canvas on December 10th and DUE on December 15th (sent to me via e-mail).

Writing

Papers are DUE IN-CLASS and PRINTED OUT (no e-mail attachments!) on the days noted; please mark these dates on your calendars. Late papers will be assessed a penalty of one grade letter for each late day.

*Note the guidelines for papers posted on Blackboard.

Spiral Jetty

Just write…

Due on site: September 19th

* This is a required trip scheduled by the Art + Design Department for September 19th. Transportation will be provided. Times and meeting place TBD. Further instructions are posted on Canvas under “Assignments.”

Exhibition Review

4 pages

Due to WF: October 13th

Final Due in class: October 27th

Further instructions are posted on Canvas under “Assignments.”

Campus Art Proposal

6 pages

Due to WF: November 24th

Final Due in class: December 10th

Further instructions are posted on Canvas under “Assignments.”

* Alternative Assignment (and strongly encouraged for art history majors and/or those considering applying for an advanced degree in the humanities). You may opt to write a research paper in lieu of the Exhibition Analysis and Campus Art Proposal.

Research Paper

10 pages

Brief Summary of Project Due in class: October 1st
Bibliography, Abstract, and Outline Due to WF: November 3rd
Final Paper Due to WF: November 24th
Final Paper Due in class: December 10th

This is an open topic research paper in which you will expand on one of the areas covered in this course. I STRONGLY encourage everyone to come and talk with me at any point in your process, from choosing a methodology, to compiling a bibliography, to structuring your approach. To this end, I am always available to discuss your topic, thoughts, concerns, beliefs, new theories, etc. outside of class. Further information is provided on Canvas under “Assignments.”
Course Requirements for 6750:
* Students enrolled in 6750 will meet for one additional hour per week, day/time TBD

**Article Presentation and Review**
- 3 pages
- Due on the day of your presentation
  
  You will choose one essay from the grad-level course readings, present the main arguments to the group, and post at least two questions on Canvas for discussion. The questions should be posted under “Discussion” on Canvas **by 6 pm the day before your presentation** so that your peers may have time to contemplate the issues you raise. Further information is provided on Canvas under “Assignments.”

**Research Paper**
- Brief Summary of Project Due in class: October 1st
- Bibliography, Abstract, and Outline Due: November 3rd
- Final Paper Due in class: December 10th

  This is an open topic research paper in which you will expand on one of the areas covered in this course. I STRONGLY encourage everyone to come and talk with me at any point in your process, from choosing a methodology, to compiling a bibliography, to structuring your approach. To this end, I am always available to discuss your topic, thoughts, concerns, beliefs, new theories, etc. outside of class. Further information is provided on Canvas under “Assignments.”

**Writing Fellows (3750 only)**

This class has been selected to participate in the Writing Fellows program, a special program designed to help students develop their writing skills with the help of specially trained fellow students. Here's how the program works: for the three papers listed on our syllabus, you will first submit a good draft to me for your WF. He or she will write comments on the paper, which will then be discussed during a conference between you and the WF. These comments will raise questions, suggest changes, and provide you with a valuable resource for revising your material for the final draft. You will then submit both the original draft (with the WF's comments) and the final paper to me. The WF **will not** grade your papers. His/her responsibility is to act as a reader--to make suggestions; you are still ultimately responsible for evaluating these suggestions, revising the draft, and putting it in its final form. As assignment deadlines near, you will be given a sign-up sheet for arranging your individual conference. **NOTE:** final papers will not be accepted if you fail to meet with the WF. The assignment grade will be recorded as a 0.

**Grading**

Papers are **due in class** in paper form on the days noted – This means no e-mail attachments! Please mark these dates on your calendars. **Late papers will be assessed a penalty of one letter grade for each late day.**

**AHIS 3750**
- Exam 1 = 10%
- Exam 2 = 10%
- Spiral Jetty = 15%
- Exhibition Review = 25%
- Campus Art Proposal = 40%
**AHIS 6750**

Spiral Jetty = 10%
Article Presentation and Review = 30%
Bibliography and Abstract = 10%
Research Paper = 50%

All grades will be determined according to the following scale:

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<td>Etc.</td>
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**Participation and Classroom Etiquette**

Attendance and active participation is vital to success in this class. Intelligent, respectful, enthusiastic, and consistent participation can bump up a borderline grade. **REMEMBER:** to participate, you MUST complete the readings and attend class every week.

**Out of respect to your classmates and me, all cell phones must be turned off or inaudible while you are in the classroom and you should refrain from texting or internet browsing during class.** I understand that many of you will want to use your laptops in order to take notes, but this should be all you are doing on your computer during class time. Discovery of texting, emailing, or use of the internet in class is cause to mark the student absent from that day’s class.

**Course Schedule**

*Subject to change due to weather, discussions, etc. Any changes to the syllabus will be posted on Canvas.*

** All readings are to be completed for the class date under which they are listed. All readings are available on Canvas and are to be completed for the class date under which they are listed.

*** All readings listed as “grads” are additional assignments to be completed by graduate students enrolled at the 6750-level. These readings are optional, yet encouraged, for undergraduates.

**September 1: A Brief History of Early 20th Century Modernism**

**September 3: High Modernism and the Emergence of the New York School**
2. Clement Greenberg, “Towards a Newer Laocoon” (1940)

**September 8: Postwar Europe, from Art Brut to CoBrA**

**Grads**
September 10: Action Painting and the Unconscious

*Grads*

September 15: International Responses to Abstract Expressionism

*Grads*

September 17: Abstract Expressionism and Role of Gender

*Grads*

September 22: Color Field, Hard Edge, and Art Criticism

*Grads*

September 24: Black Mountain and the Neo-Avant-Garde

*Grads*

September 29: Working on the West Coast: San Francisco and Los Angeles

*Grads*
October 1: “This is Tomorrow”: Transitionary Pop

Grads

October 6: Pop Goes Consumer Culture

Grads

October 8: Pop and the Ma(r)kers of Gender

Grads

October 13: Minimalism and the Reduction to the Object
* ER Draft Due to WF

Grads

October 15: NO CLASS - FALL BREAK

October 20: The Monochrome and the Grid

Grads

October 22: Critical Responses to Minimalist Objectness

Grads

Recommended

October 27: Post-Minimalism and Process Art
* ER Paper Due
Grads

October 29: Conceptual Art and the Move Away from the Object

Grads

November 3: Site Specificity and the Expansion of Sculptural Practices

Grads

November 5: L.A. Cool School: Light, Space, and Finish Fetish

November 10: Setting the Stage: Viennese Actionism, Happenings, and Fluxus

Grads

November 12: Art and/as Politics

Grads

Recommended

November 17: Performance/Body Art

Grads
November 19: Video as Medium

**Grads**

**Recommended**

November 24: Institutional Critique as Artistic Practice
* CAP Draft Due to WF

**Grads**

November 26: NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING BREAK

December 1: Pictures, Pictures, Pictures

December 3: Post-Modernism Theorized

**Grads**

December 8: Controversies & Crises Since the 1980s, or Why the NEA has minimal funding

**Recommended**

December 10: What Was Contemporary Art?
* CAP Paper Due

**Recommended**