Arts and Ideas
ARTS 310: Visual Culture
Course Syllabus

Carrie Tomberlin
tomberl@unca.edu
Office: Owen Hall 218
Office hours: Tuesday, 5:00 - 6:00 pm, Wednesday, 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Emails will be answered in a timely fashion, Monday – Friday 9 am – 5 pm

REQUIRED TEXT:
An Introduction to Visual Culture, 2nd Edition, by Nicholas Mirzoeff

COURSE WEBSITE:
https://sites.google.com/a/unca.edu/visual-culture/

PREREQUISITES: 60 earned hours (junior standing)

CREDITS: This 3 credit course satisfies the UNCA Arts Requirement

ARTS AND IDEAS DESCRIPTION:
The interdisciplinary Arts program is not an art appreciation course or an introduction to any of the particular arts, but stresses the human significance of art, its social role, its foundation in aesthetics, and its importance as a way of interpreting reality. Drawing upon the expertise of faculty from various academic departments, the program furthers the interdisciplinary aspects of the University through the study of artworks from different times, places, and having different purposes.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
From da Vinci, to Warhol, to Facebook, culture informs and reacts to the visual. This course explores the many incarnations of image: visual art, advertising, film, the snapshot, and more. By looking at a vast array of images and making some images of our own, we will discover how visual rhetoric shapes the way we perceive our world and each other.

COURSE GOALS:
What is visual culture? In a world saturated with images, it is imperative to develop visual literacy. In this course we will develop a greater understanding of
visual imagery and the arts, learn to read visual cues and analyze the wide array of visual texts that permeate contemporary culture, and use this knowledge to look more critically at the world around us.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
• Articulate the value of the arts studied and their impact on the self and others
• Recognize cultural, historical, spiritual, and/or political aspects of the arts studied
• Define and articulate the concepts, methods, and organizing principles of the arts studied

COURSE POLICIES:
You are responsible for knowing and understanding all of the information in this syllabus, on the course website, and in handouts that may be given out in class. Your lack of familiarity with any of this information will not release you from the course responsibilities. Your enrollment in the class assumes an acceptance of all the course policies.

All essential information for the class can be found on the course website - please read it.

COURSE CALENDAR
Our course calendar is available on the class website and includes links to all course assignments, course readings, and class resources. It is your responsibility to be familiar with this calendar and to check it regularly.

PARTICIPATION AND CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:
I expect that both your body and your mind need to be present. Be on time to class and do not leave early. See attendance for further explanation.

You are expected to actively participate in all discussions. Participation is essential. effort, attitude, and participation, which comprises 15% of your final grade, will be determined by a combination of factors, including: the quality, substance, and frequency of participation in class discussions; and the quality of your interactions with others in the class; and your participation in the group in-class projects. You need to read and make notes about course reading before class discussions so that your insight can act as a catalyst for dialogue. Successful students are attentive, curious, and fully engage with the content of the class.

Please respect the instructor, each other, and all visitors at all times. Students disrespecting anyone will be asked to leave immediately. This will count as an absence.
Phones MUST be turned OFF and put away while in ALL classes. Do this BEFORE you enter the classroom. After the first week of class, if your phone rings, it will count as a ‘late arrival.’ If you answer a ringing phone or text message, it will count as an absence, and you will be asked to leave the class for the day.

Food and drinks are permitted in the classroom, but you must remove all trash at the end of class. Please be courteous to the rest of class by making sure food in class is non-odorous, quiet, and limited - this is class, not mealtime.

Successful students are attentive, curious, and fully engage with the content of the class.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
This is a fast-paced course that meets just once a week. As a result, each student is allowed only one absence; each absence thereafter will result in a full letter grade drop of your final grade for the semester. For example, if you have two absences a B+ would become a C+. Roll is taken at the start of class; two late arrivals or early departures will equal one absence. If you miss a class you are responsible for the material covered during the class(es) missed.

ASSIGNMENTS:
All assignment details are available on our course website. It is expected that you complete them on time and according to the assignment guidelines in order to receive full credit.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:
All assignments need to be submitted one time. Response Papers are due as a printed typed copy turned in at the beginning of class. Your Photo Essay is due by midnight of the due date. Your Final Presentation is due on the date of our final.

Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day late. Note that per day means that if an assignment is due on Wednesday and submitted the following day (Thursday), it will be penalized by a full letter grade deduction. If an assignment is due on a day of absence it is the student’s responsibility to get the work submitted on time or it will be considered late. No final projects will be accepted after the due date.

READINGS:
In order to fully understand the complex issues surrounding visual culture you must do the readings.
RESPONSE PAPERS:
Weekly response papers will be assigned to ensure that students are keeping up with the reading, and all response paper grades will be averaged together and account for 20% of your course grade. Detailed directions on what is expected in your response paper are available on our course website.

PHOTO PROJECT:
For our midterm, you will be asked to create 2 images that question ideas of truth. This may be done individually, with a partner, or in a group of 4 people or less. Please understand that my expectations rise as the number of students in each group increases. Specific instructions for this assignment are on our course website.

ESSAY:
In the second half of the course, you will be asked to analyze a piece of artwork and articulate your findings to demonstrate what you have learned in this course. Specific guidelines and examples are posted on our course website.

FINAL PRESENTATIONS:
The final for this class is to create a presentation. This may be done individually or with a partner, but please understand that my expectations rise as the number of students in each group increases. Specific instructions for this assignment are on our course website, and I encourage you to begin thinking about this project early in the semester so that you can find a topic you are excited to explore in more depth. The goal of this presentation is to explore an area of interest in greater depth, to provide your peers with insight, and to utilize the skills that you have learned in this course.

EXTRA CREDIT:
There are two opportunities to earn extra credit this semester:
1) Submit current events related to visual culture for class discussion. You can e-mail Carrie visuals prior to class, and explain their significance in class.
2) Arts Fest, sponsored by the Arts and Ideas Department, will be held Thursday - Sunday, April 10-13: http://arts.unca.edu/ARTSfest. In addition to being a wonderful opportunities, I will raise your lowest grade by half a letter grade for attending. To receive credit, turn in a printed response paper briefly detailing what you attended and your reactions to that event. More details are available on the course website.

GRADING:
Your course grade will be calculated as follows:
15% Effort, Attitude, and Participation
15% Reading Response Papers
15% Essay
25% Photo Project
30% Final Presentation

100% Total

Grades will be calculated using the following system: A+ = 100, A = 97, A- = 94, B+ = 91, B = 88, B- = 85, C+ = 82, C = 79, C- = 76, D+ = 73, D = 70, D- = 67, F = 66-0

**FINAL GRADE:**
If you have exceeded the allotted absences, your final grade will be penalized according to the attendance policy.

Final Grades for the course will be averaged and calculated as follows:
100 - 94.5 = A, 94.4 - 91.5 = A-, 91.4 - 88.5 = B+, 88.4 - 85.5 = B, 85.4 - 82.5 = B-, 82.4 - 79.5 = C+, 79.4 - 76.5 = C, 76.4 - 73.5 = C-, 73.4 - 70.5 = D+, 70.4 - 66.5 = D, 66.4 - 0 = F

**ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:**
All work submitted in this course must be created specifically for our class and our class alone. Work that was not made during this semester for our class or submitting work that is not your own will result in a failing grade on that assignment with no chance for resubmission. Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty are strictly enforced. For further information, please see section 5 (p. 131) of the student handbook.

**DISABILITY SERVICES:**
Any student with a disability is encouraged to meet with their studio instructor privately during the first week of class to discuss accommodations. Each student must bring a current Memorandum of Accommodations from the Office of Student Disability Services, which is a prerequisite for receiving accommodations. Accommodated examinations through the Office of Student Disability Services require two weeks notice. All course documents are available in alternate format if requested in the student’s Memorandum of Accommodations.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER**
Should the university cancel classes due to weather, our course calendar is subject to change. Should this occur, I will be in touch with you via your UNCA e-mail.

CHANGES TO THE COURSE CALENDAR
Our course calendar is subject to change, and if it does, I will give you ample notice in class or via your UNCA e-mail.