

“Like art, revolutions come from combining what exists into what has never existed before” – Gloria Steinem

Green Sheet: Humanities 16 – Arts, Ideas and Values

Spring 2021

Instructor: Salamander Breiter

Office & Hours: M, T, W and Th from 11:30 – 12:20 via Zoom by appointment

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Description: Interdisciplinary introduction to artistic cultural studies. A critical analysis of the dynamic process through which contemporary cultural values and social constructions of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class, religion and globalization shape and have been shaped by artistic expression. Special emphasis is placed on art as a tool for social change.


Student Learning Outcome: Synthesize critical thinking, imaginative, cooperative and empathetic abilities as whole persons in order to contextualize knowledge, interpret and communicate meaning, and cultivate their capacity for personal, as well as social change.

Student Learning Outcome: Analyze the dynamic relationship between contemporary culture, artistic expression, and individual assumptions, beliefs and values.

Required Text: *Practices of Looking – An Introduction to Visual Culture - 3rd Edition*
By Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright
ISBN – 978-0-19-026571-7

Welcome: I am incredibly excited to work with all of you. I have designed a course for you that I believe will be meaningful and accessible and that you will be able to be successful in. Please do not be intimidated by the number of assignments, as they follow a very predictable pattern. There are 2 styles of assignments (experiential projects and personal reactions) and 1 type of exam. By the end of the first week, I am confident that you will have a deep sense of the potential for your success and the rhythm of the quarter. Please bring me your concerns and questions so that I can help you prepare for a positive learning experience.

 **Zoom:** Class will be held via Zoom during our scheduled hours. You will access our meetings by using the Zoom tab in Canvas. If you are not able to attend our synchronous class meeting, the recording will be available within 2-24 hours in the Zoom recordings tab. This class can be taken 100% synchronously or 100% asynchronously or a blend in-between.

 **Canvas:** The reading and writing assignments in this class are arranged into easy to understand Canvas modules, accessed through your Portal account. You can use these modules to follow your progress through the course. On the homepage and on the calendar, you will be able to see the format and rhythm of the course and within each individual assignment you will find instructions/links to readings and specific explanations of my expectations for your writing.

Assignments and Exams:

Visual Experiments (430 points total): You will complete 9 experiential visual art projects and a “happening” over the course of the quarter. Each project will ask you to demonstrate your understanding of a technique or philosophy that we will explore simultaneously during class. You will experiment with materials you have on hand while sheltering in place to create unique images that communicate your ideas and values. We will emphasize exploration and discovery and de-emphasize outcome and product. The idea is to encourage you to become more comfortable with image production in a variety of formats and contexts. By the end of the quarter, you will have the knowledge and ability to use visual language to create social change. This is your opportunity to learn about art by making it in a supportive atmosphere with low stakes!

Idea Reactions (270 points total): You will write 2 types of weekly reflections based on your life experiences, informed opinions, and personal perspectives related to each course reading, lecture, and discussion. Midway through each week, you will submit reading reactions based on the assigned readings for the week. You will be asked to prepare an engaging open-ended question for each reading that we will use as a foundation for reading discussions. At the end of each week, you will submit your reactions to each of the lectures and each of the discussions for the week. This reflective process provides the intellectual backbone to our process of discourse and discovery in this course.

Exams (300 points total): You will take 3 exams over the course of the quarter. Each exam is worth 100 points. For each exam, you will have a choice of writing a single essay or writing 10 short essays. I will always give you more prompts than you need to answer. I will give you class time to take your exams, but they will not be due until midnight of the exam day in case you want to take more time to work on them. For the most part, the exams are not comprehensive. The 3rd exam will have a few comprehensive questions that we will prepare for together. During week 9, I will offer you the optional opportunity for you to make-up either exam 1 or exam 2. There will not be a make-up exam available for exam 3.

Extra Credit (30 points extra): I strongly believe that extra-credit should not be used as a substitution for doing the work of this course in a timely manner, particularly because most of your due dates precede conversations with your classmates. They will be relying on you to make informed contributions to their learning experiences. That said, I do believe that extra-credit (coupled with a generous late policy) can relieve a great deal of stress or anxiety when unanticipated events occur in our lives. For that reason, there are 2 ways that you can get extra-credit during this quarter. First, each of you will start the quarter with 30 points of extra-credit in the grade book. This is my way of recognizing up front that learning from home presents personal and technological difficulties and that having a little extra space to turn in a few assignments late or guess on a few exam questions without having to worry about your grade can make an important difference in your success this quarter. Second, the 30 points possible for your idea reactions (reading and lecture/discussion) for Week 1 are in addition to the 300 points for idea reactions included in your grade. This serves as a jump start to the quarter and encourages you to get reading and writing early. It also offers you the potential to go into week two with a large lead on your good grade.

Reminder: Please see the weekly modules and calendar in your Canvas account to see specific reading assignments, writing prompts and due dates related to each type of assignment or exam.

Grading Scale:

To keep the math relatively straightforward, I have designed this class to have assignments and exams that add up to 1000 points. Your grade at the end of the quarter will be based on how many points you have accumulated.

970+ = A+
930+ = A
900+ = A-
870+ = B+
830+ = B
800+ = B-
770+ = C+
700+ = C
670+ = D+
630+ = D
600+ = D-
599 - = F

The Fine Print:

Cell Phones: I strongly suggest that you set aside your cell phone during our class meetings. I have found that any academic or intellectual value of phones is far outweighed by the distraction they present. If you are expecting an important call or text, set your phone to vibrate and feel free to step aside from our Zoom meeting for a moment to respond.

Late Policy: You can submit assignments late for a 10% reduction per day late – with no greater than a 50% reduction. This work can be turned in up until our FINAL class meeting, and will NOT be accepted after the FINAL class meeting.

Cheating Policy: Your assignments in this class are all based on your life experiences, informed opinions, and personal perspectives. This means that everything you write should be from your own heart and mind. Any work turned in that is not your own, whether is plagiarized/copied or represents the ideas of others will be consider cheating. Cheating on worksheets, experiments, or exams one time will result in an automatic zero for that specific item. For each subsequent instance of cheating, you will receive a zero for this specific item and I will file an official academic integrity violation report.

Expectations: I expect you to be on time to class and ready to begin at start of our meeting. That said, I would rather have you arrive late than not at all. I know that this quarter will be a little bit wonky and we will all be doing our best to balance being at home with our families and potentially demanding work lives. If you are not able to make a class meeting, the recording for the meeting will be available in the recordings tab of ConferZoom between 2-24 hours after our synchronous meeting. If you are unable to participate in a class discussion, I will expect you to have a discussion with a family member or friend outside of class and to use this conversation as a basis for writing your discussion reaction due at the end of the week.

Changes: I will not add any extra assignments or extra readings to your workload during the quarter. I will adhere to the due dates on your Canvas calendar and will not change them unless something significant occurs during the quarter. In the rare case that this occurs, I will notify you directly through e-mail.

Student Support and Resources:

I understand that your success in this course will be dependent on many factors in your life. Please let me help you find any academic support or personal support you need. This might range from accommodations from disability support services, to tutoring/writing help/academic skills building, to psychological counseling or a wide variety of life needs. On my faculty website and on Canvas, I have created a series of links you can use to find open help-desk hours or to make appointments both on and off campus. The Equity Initiative Resources link will open to a very long list of services and opportunities for support that I hope you will take advantage of. If you are not sure which of the services you need, I am happy to show you how to get help during office hours.