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Office: Robinson Hall B 373A
Office hours: TR (2:00-2:30 PM) & by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVE

This course will introduce the student to the critical issues and major artistic developments of art since 1945. Examining major works of art and the artistic contributions of particular artists who revolutionized art during the second half of the twentieth century, the student will gain a greater understanding of artistic trends and innovations that led aesthetic production in new directions during this period. Among the critical issues that will be considered are the new materials of art, the re-assessment of the art object, intersections of art and life, the shifting contexts of art, the concepts of “modernism” and “postmodernism,” the re-definition of “Art,” the changing role of the artist, the active spectator, and the politicization of art. Students will examine and discuss major artworks and related concepts in light of artist statements, writings by art critics, and prevalent theories of art. The course objective is to provide the student with the historical framework and theoretical tools needed to critically evaluate mid-to-late twentieth century art and the more recent art of the emerging twenty-first century.

CAUTIONARY NOTE: *Because many contemporary artists address issues of gender, race, class, religion, sexuality, violence, and politics, as well as different conceptions of beauty, some material viewed and discussed in this course is of a sensitive nature. Keep in mind that one goal of much contemporary art is to challenge viewers to see things from different perspectives or to confront issues that may be uncomfortable, controversial, and / or offensive. Be prepared to encounter and understand the motivations behind these expressions. You are not expected to like all the works you will encounter, but you will be expected to discuss these challenging works and to engage with the difficult issues and topics they raise in a critical and respectful manner. The goal is for you to understand the artists' reasons for creating these works and their art historical significance.*

GRADING

15% Class Participation - *in-class & online* [attendance, discussion, and assignments]
5% Quizzes
40% Two Exams (20% each exam)
40% Research Project (Paper 20%, Presentation 20%)

GRADE SCALE

A+ 100-99	A 93-98	A- 92-90	
B+ 89-87	B 86-83	B- 82-80	
C+ 79-77	C 76-73	C- 72-70	
D+ 69-67	D 66-63	D- 62-60	F 59 & below

** Regardless of numerical score, a grade of A+ will be given as a final course grade only if the student's overall performance in the course is exceptional and exceeds course expectations.*

BLACKBOARD

The Blackboard page for this course is an essential component of this class. In it you will find readings, course documents (*online lectures, study guides, assignment guidelines, etc.*), discussion boards, quizzes, exam images, and important announcements.

Please note that four lecture topics (four weeks) will be presented in a hybrid (in-class/online) format this semester. On the Tuesday of the hybrid week, you will not come to class and will work entirely on Blackboard. More information regarding this hybrid aspect of the course will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

Because of Blackboard's significance to the course, it is very important that you familiarize yourself with the website immediately and test that you have the technology necessary to run the course. Please email me, and tech support, immediately if you have any issues.

BE SURE TO CHECK BLACKBOARD OFTEN – ESPECIALLY BEFORE COMING TO CLASS. You are responsible for all information posted on Blackboard.

MASON EMAIL

MasonLIVE is the required email address for all GMU correspondence. You are responsible for all email messages sent to your MasonLIVE email account. Be sure to **check it frequently** and **clear your inbox so that you are not over quota**. If you rely on another email account, you should consider forwarding your MasonLIVE emails to the account you check most often. **You are responsible for all information that is emailed.**

IMPORTANT NOTES ON EMAIL

When emailing the instructor, be sure to **include your name, class, and meeting day / time**. I will make every effort to respond in a timely manner. You can expect a reply within 1-2 days. If you have not heard back after 48 hours, please resend (email does at times get lost in cyberspace).

Before emailing, be sure that you are not inquiring about any of the following:

- **Information that is easily found in the syllabus, Blackboard, the textbook, handouts, or any course document.** *I am happy to clarify or elaborate on certain elements, but cannot be expected to look up information that I have already provided and made easily accessible to you.*
- **Excusing an absence.** *You have 4 online days and one free absence to deal with any emergency situation. In the case of extenuating circumstances, they must be addressed in person. Refer to the section on attendance for details.*
- **What you missed in class the day you were absent.**
It is your responsibility to be in class and to contact a classmate for notes and any other information you missed during your absence, regardless of the reason. Once you have reviewed this material, then we can discuss any questions or concerns you may have about the information you missed.
- **To define terms, explain concepts, or re-teach information delivered in class.** I am happy to clarify and discuss any course material that is unclear after the student has taken the initial step to engage the material.

If you are unclear about an idea discussed in class, review your notes and the textbook section on that topic, and then formulate a more focused question that you can raise in class or discuss in person. Email is not an effective means of teaching or clarifying course content. Instead, email me to request a time to discuss the material in person. I am always happy to assist students with any difficult course material.

***** Email messages containing any of these requests will not receive a reply.**

REQUIRED TEXTS

Required readings will be available as either a pdf or a link on Blackboard. They will be posted in topic-specific folders.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Your final class participation grade will be calculated according to your attendance, completion of any in-class and take-home assignments, and contribution to formal and informal class discussions held both in-class and online. Other situations in which you participate and demonstrate a high degree of engagement with the course will also be considered (for example: informal discussions with the professor, posting to the Knowledge Café, actively *participating in the online Study Center*, or engaging the material in ways that exceed course requirements)

ATTENDANCE

*The majority of the course content will be presented in the class lectures. The readings supplement the lecture material, providing critical insight on the topics under evaluation. **Therefore, in order to be successful in this course, you must attend class regularly, take good notes, and come prepared to discuss the assigned readings and online resources, as well as, the material presented in class.** In addition to the course content, there may also be important announcements and reminders issued in class for which every student will be held responsible, whether they were in attendance or not. Therefore, in order to be successful in this course, you must attend class regularly.*

*Please note that **the discussion/workshop day of the hybrid week weighs more heavily into your participation grade, since the in-class discussion and assignments cannot be made up.** Review the course schedule ASAP and take note of those dates in your agenda to avoid being absent.*

Attending Class

- An attendance sheet will be placed at the front of the classroom each day we meet – it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to make sure you sign it before class starts. If your signature is not on the sheet, you will be marked absent; if you sign it after class, you will be marked late.
- Attendance does not simply mean showing up to class.
*Attendance is defined as **arriving on time, attending the entire class period, paying attention to the lecture, and being courteous.***
- Habitual tardiness, early departures, and disruptive entrances will not be tolerated. Plan your schedule accordingly.

Absences

- In addition to the four Tuesdays you work from home, you are allowed one free absence without consequence. This is a total of five days, in addition to university holidays.
- The free absence is offered to assist with any emergency situation that may arise. Reserve it for unexpected situations, since **there will be no excused absences**. Do not send emails informing me of your absence, explaining why you didn't attend class, or inquiring about having an absence excused.
- In the case of extenuating circumstances that require a student to miss more than 5 days of class time, the absences must be explained in a signed and dated letter from a physician, the dean, or other comparable authorizing agent. Only under these conditions will I *consider* re-evaluating your grade. Assignments for other classes, travel plans, and most employment situations are not excusable. For these cases, you may apply the two free absences described above. Schedule your time accordingly.
- If you must miss class, it is **your responsibility to get notes**, handouts, and any important announcements from another student.

ASSIGNMENTS

Occasionally there may be an in-class, take-home or online assignment to complete. These assignments may take the form of group work, answering a series of questions, a "pop quiz," a open-note quiz, etc. These assignments are designed to facilitate student learning and to assess the student's level of comprehension.

- In-class assignments that are missed because of an absence (for any reason) **cannot be made up.**
- At-home assignments must be **typed and submitted in class as a hard copy on the day it is due.**
- ***Students are expected to keep up with the course material by reading before the lecture, taking good notes, and reviewing the notes before the next class session.*** If it becomes clear that students are not fully prepared for class, students will be quizzed and/or called upon to answer questions about the material under review.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Class discussion takes a variety of forms – formal and informal, in-class and online.

Formal Discussions are those that will be graded as an individual assignment. It may be a discussion board that is set up on Blackboard to which all students must contribute; or it may be an in-class discussion in which all students must participate. These in-class discussions may take place within small groups or with the whole class; and they will usually be part of the activities scheduled for the Thursday of the hybrid week, when we will discuss the topics you learned about online the previous Tuesday. Because discussions require group participation, **they cannot be made up**. Be sure to be in attendance the Thursday of hybrid week and do not miss any online discussions.

Informal Discussions are any discussions that happen in a more improvised manner and are not graded as an individual assignment, but are still considered when evaluating an individual student's overall participation grade. In class, these informal discussions occur in response to a question posed by the professor or by another student. Online, it can be a post or response to another student's post.

This portion of the class participation grade will be assessed according to the quality of the student's contribution to the discussion, taking into consideration whether the student raises substantial questions about the material, answers questions in a critical manner, and initiates further discussion. Discussions with the professor outside of class will also be assessed in this manner and considered when evaluating class participation. Each student's class participation grade will also take into account how attentive and respectful the student is while others are speaking.

GRADING CLASS PARTICIPATION

The GMU catalogue states: ***"Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register...instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of non-participation."***

The class participation grade will take into account the student's attendance, performance on assignments, contributions to class discussion, and the overall level of commitment and engagement with the course. Therefore, a student's class participation grade will drop considerably if he or she is disrespectful or disruptive to the learning environment we create in the classroom.

- All students will start with a grade of "B+" which reflects that the student has met the expectations for class participation (regular attendance, being on time, keeping up with the readings, completing assignments successfully, paying attention, and participating in group activities).
- An "A" will be given to any student participating at an exceptional level (having perfect attendance, playing a critical role in class discussions, and demonstrating a significant engagement with the course).
- A grade of "B-" or lower will be issued according to the severity of any of the following situations:
 - Being unprepared for class
 - Disrupting lecture or discussion with questions answered in the study guide, textbook, or lecture you missed
 - Missing more than a week's worth of class
 - Excessive tardiness or early departures
 - Missing a test or failing to submit an assignment
 - Disruptive behavior of any kind (see section on classroom etiquette below)

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

NO Electronic Devices in the Classroom

- **Computers, tablets, phones, and all other electronic devices (mp3s, PDAs...) must be OFF and stored out of sight.**

A visible or noisy device is disruptive and will be subject to the terms of disruptive classroom behavior as stated below.

Disruptive Behavior

We are all responsible for maintaining a respectful and courteous classroom atmosphere.

There is no excuse for disruptive behavior of any kind.

I do not take kindly to behavior that is discourteous and which inhibits others from learning.

Disruptive behavior includes:

- (1) Violations of the electronics regulation as stated above.
- (2) Distracting physical behavior.
For example: sleeping, talking while someone else is speaking (the professor or a student), wandering in and out of class, working on unrelated assignments, gesturing inappropriately, approaching the front of the classroom during lecture, etc.
- (3) Discourteous or offensive language and behavior.

In short, any behavior that is distracting to the professor or to your fellow classmates is disruptive and compromises the learning environment.

Consequences for Disrupting the Learning Environment

All disruptions – with or without warning – will result in lowering of the overall class participation grade

- If lecture must be interrupted to remind a student to behave appropriately, the grade will drop significantly
- In the case of extreme or recurring disruptions, the student will not be allowed to remain in class and/or the final course grade will be negatively affected

** The consequences will reflect the severity and frequency of the disruption.*

QUIZZES

The purpose of these quizzes is to familiarize students with the language of the exams and to allow students an opportunity to review the material before continuing on to the next topic. The content for the quiz will come from the same sources as the exams (see the section on exams below).

- Quizzes will be given as reviews of important topics and concepts. They will occur every three weeks for the most part (please check the course schedule for dates and topics). There are five quizzes in total.
- The quizzes, with the exception of Quiz 2, will be multiple-choice, open-book and submitted online. They will be timed, may be submitted only once, and are accessible only within a limited amount of time. The timeframe for each quiz will be announced in class and on Blackboard. Once time is up, students will receive their grades immediately so they can review their answers while the material is still fresh.
- *All quizzes are required, and because they are designed to assess the material in a timely manner, **make-up quizzes will not be given.** Failure to take a quiz will result in a grade of "0," but the lowest quiz grade will be dropped.*

Staying on top of the material in this way, will cut down on exam study time and will provide the student with better comprehension of the course material, since the course material builds on itself as we progress through the semester. These assessments will also help students get a sense of how they are performing in the class while they can still make adjustments.

EXAMS

- Exams are non-cumulative and will consist of a combination of any of the following: slide identification, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, short answer, term definitions and/or short essay.
- Questions will be drawn from both in-class and online materials, including: lectures, handouts, discussions, readings, multimedia resources, and assignments. Regular lecture attendance and close readings of the course materials are therefore required for a passing grade. Details will be provided closer to exam time.

- **Study guides with key terms and image lists will be available for each lecture and posted on Blackboard.** Students must print the study guide pertaining to that day's lecture and bring it to class with them, since much of the course material (including terms and images) will not be found in the readings.
- **All exams are required.** Failure to take a scheduled exam will result in a grade of "0" for that exam. **MAKE-UPS WILL NOT BE GIVEN**, except in emergency situations and at my discretion. If you miss an exam for an excusable reason, you must inform me PRIOR to the exam or, in an emergency, no later than the next day. Refer to the section on attendance for information on excusing an absence. Only under those conditions will I consider administering a make-up examination. Without legitimate documentation even those excuses will not be reason for making up the missed exam. Assignments for other classes, travel plans, and most employment situations are not acceptable excuses. Schedule your time accordingly.

***** If you have any questions about the exams or how to study, please see me or my assistant well in advance of the first exam. I am happy to suggest tips and strategies for succeeding in an art history class and to help any student implement more effective study habits. Also, use the Study Center discussion board to set up study groups – this is a very effective way of studying for these exams.**

RESEARCH PROJECT

***** Detailed project information and writing guidelines will be provided on separate handouts *****

This project requires students to research, analyze, and present the work of a contemporary artist in the form of an online powerpoint presentation and a brief 2-3 page paper. Students will research and analyze the artist's work, describing the work, contextualizing it within the historical time period, and evaluating it in line with the practices and issues of contemporary art. The project presents the student with an opportunity to explore an artist that interests them, while putting into practice the skills and knowledge acquired in class. It is also an exercise for strengthening communication skills since the student will present the material in both formal writing and a combination of visual and written language that is more concise and addresses a general audience. In addition, it also presents the class with an occasion to learn about recent art in a broader global context. More detailed information about the project will be provided on a separate handout.

A list of suggested artists will be provided on Blackboard. Please review the list for ideas, choose three artists you would like to research (in order of preference), and submit these for review no later than **Thursday, September 10**. You are not required to select from the list, but all topics must be approved before you commence the research process.

As with any research project, I encourage everyone to approach this assignment with much anticipation. You have almost three months to work on these papers and to plan ahead. Make sure you begin the process ahead of time, stick to the deadlines, and come see me or my assistant immediately with any questions or concerns you have about the assignment. Doing poorly or not understanding assignment guidelines will not grant you an opportunity to revise your paper or presentation. Plan ahead for computer problems, sickness, emergencies, libraries being closed, etc. These are not acceptable excuses. Also give yourself time to edit, revise, and contact The Writing Center (see contact information listed below). Both the paper and presentation must be polished and written in good English.

Please note that simply submitting these assignments will not earn you a satisfactory grade. The presentation and paper will be graded in accordance with the quality of your discussion and analysis: how well you understand the course material and how well you prepared and presented the material. In short, your grade will reflect how well you taught the class about your artist and the level of sophistication presented in your written analysis of the artist's work.

***** I am always available to discuss any questions or concerns about your topic, as well as to suggest research sources and strategies. As with any research project, I encourage everyone to approach this project with much anticipation.**

LATE SUBMISSIONS

All assignments must be submitted on Blackboard by 11:59PM EST on the day it is due. Instructions on how to do this will be provided.

- Unexcused absences are not acceptable excuses for the late submission of an assignment.
- E-mailed assignments will not be accepted, unless an assignment clearly asks for digital submission.

Points will be deducted for lateness – half a letter grade (5 points) for each calendar day your assignment is late.

- No assignment will be accepted after being five days late and a grade of "0" will be issued.

If you require an extension for an assignment, you must discuss your situation with me well BEFORE the due date in the event that you are not granted the extension.

****** The late policy and extensions do not apply to quizzes, exams or discussions, which will only be accepted the day they are due.***

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Assignments must be written in good standard English. If English is not your first language, please see me so we can discuss a strategy to help you succeed in this course. Email correspondence will not suffice; you must come speak with me. Also, do not wait until a few days (or the night before) the exam date or assignment deadline to address this; you will not have enough time to remedy the situation.

Please contact the following centers for assistance. But be sure to plan in advance; they are very busy, especially as the semester comes near its end.

The English Language Institute (ELI) 703.993.3660 or <http://eli.gmu.edu>

The Writing Center Located in Robinson Hall A114 & Enterprise Hall 076
703.993.1200 or <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student is responsible for observing academic integrity with regard to all work assigned in this course. It is the student's responsibility to familiarize herself/himself with GMU's Honor Code as outlined in the university's catalogue: (<http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=410&bc=1>). Neither plagiarism (presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own) nor cheating will be tolerated. Also refer to <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/>

STUDENTS NEEDING ACCOMODATIONS

Accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities, in accordance with law and university policies. Students requiring accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) -- (703) 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu> -- to self-identify their needs and attain necessary documentation. After meeting with the Coordinator, please arrange a meeting with me ***well in advance of the first exam or the class during which special accommodations will be required.*** It is your responsibility to remind me in advance of each exam that you are in need of specific accommodations.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SEE AND LEARN ABOUT CONTEMPORARY ART

There are many opportunities on campus, in the metro DC area, and within driving distance for you to explore contemporary art and gain a richer understanding. Please visit the Blackboard link to events, exhibitions, and public works available to you right now! Take advantage of these opportunities and to your proximity to cities hosting much contemporary art (DC, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore). Listening to lectures and viewing contemporary art as you study it will benefit you greatly. It will allow you to “practice” what we are learning in class, reinforcing the ideas and helping you clarify them.

I will update these listings as the semester progresses. Feel free to add suggestions of your own!

Of note are two GMU-sponsored activities that you will want to check out:

- ***Visual Voices – a lecture series on contemporary art, held on campus.***
For the list of speakers, dates, location, and more information visit:
<http://soa.gmu.edu/exhibitions/visual-voices.html>
- ***ArtsBus – monthly day-trips to NYC***
For dates, prices, and more information visit: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu>