

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Visual Arts  
Fall 2017-08-30

**VAH 2241G: Theories and Practices of Art History and Visual Culture**

Lecture: Thursday 11:30 – 2:30 PM – VAC Room 100

Professor: Dr. Joy James  
Email: [jjames53@uwo.ca](mailto:jjames53@uwo.ca)  
Office Hours: Monday 1:30 – 2:30PM  
(or by appointment)

Office: VAC Room 120  
Phone: (519) 661-2111 Ext. 86198

Graduate Teaching Assistants: VAC Room 240  
Jessica Cappuccitti [jcappucc@uwo.ca](mailto:jcappucc@uwo.ca)  
Margherita Papadatos [mpapadat@uwo.ca](mailto:mpapadat@uwo.ca)

Office Hours  
Monday 1:15 – 2:15pm  
Thursday 2:30 – 3:30pm

**Course Description:**

This course provides a brief introduction to historical and contemporary theories, methods, and practices for the study of art history and visual culture. Students will become familiar with the history of ideas that has shaped art historical investigation and the study of visual culture. From theory, to history, to criticism and analysis, students will study disciplinary and institutional specificities intrinsic to organizing knowledge and epistemological systems. Through the examination of a diverse range of visual production—from pictographs to digital media, the construction of public space in ancient civilizations to the Internet, early medical illustration to current technological imaging systems—course content presents theoretically informed approaches to think critically about the many ways in which art and visual culture functions.

**Learning Outcomes:**

This course is designed to assist you in gaining:

- knowledge about the historical and contemporary theories and practices of art history and visual culture studies
- familiarity with disciplinary terminology employed in the study of art history and visual culture studies and its application to the history of ideas
- competency in the ability to communicate orally and in writing the knowledge you have acquired in the course

**Assigned Course Texts:**

Two assigned course texts are available in the Western University Bookstore textbook section under Course # VAH2041G:

*Introducing Critical Theory (A graphic guide)*, Stuart Sim and Borin Van Loon  
*Methods & Theories of Art History*, Anne D'Alleva

**Required Readings and Podcasts:**

All other resources and communications will be posted on OWL/Sakai Course site:

<<https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>>

You access this site by using the same ID and password as your UWO email account.

**Additional Resource:** A digital copy of Grant Poole and Diana Newall's *Art History: The Basics* (Routledge 2008) is available through Western Libraries:

[bin/ezpauthn.cgi?url=http://www.mylibrary.com?id=131359](http://www.mylibrary.com?id=131359)

The text provides information regarding key terms, concepts, theories and methodologies used in the discipline of Art History.

#### **Course Protocols:**

**Office Hours/Email:** Please see course instructor [jjames53@uwo.ca](mailto:jjames53@uwo.ca), Jessica Cappuccitti [jcappucc@uwo.ca](mailto:jcappucc@uwo.ca) or Margherita Papadatos [mpapadat@uwo.ca](mailto:mpapadat@uwo.ca) during office hours when you have course-related questions or concerns. Office hours are listed on the top of this course outline.

Course instructor will respond to emails within a 24-hour period, excepting emails sent after 4:00pm on Fridays—these will be answered the following Monday.

**Assignment Submissions:** All materials submitted must be work done entirely by the student, expressly for this course. Please consult the Writing Centre if you have any confusion regarding definitions of academic honesty within University practices. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of policies governing academic honesty and what constitutes plagiarism and/or cheating. Writing Centre, UCC Room 217;

<http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing>

#### **Citation Style Guidelines:**

The Department of Visual Arts adheres to Chicago Manual of Style guidelines. A set of guidelines to be used for any written assignment submission is posted on the course OWL site.

**Late Assignment Policies:** Hard copies of all assignments must be submitted when due unless there are mitigating and documented circumstances. Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation.** Accommodation for missed assignments, or attendance, **totalling less than 10% of final course grade**, due to medical reasons, may be arranged with the instructor as long as the student contacts the instructor no later than the day after the assignment or attendance is due.

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic\\_policies/rights\\_responsibilities.html](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html) Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): [student.uwo.ca](http://student.uwo.ca) under the Medical Documentation heading.

All other late assignments will lose 10% per day for two days only, and no late assignment submission without accommodation will be accepted following the two-day limit.

#### **Grade Distribution:**

Attendance, Participation, Pop quizzes	15%	Ongoing
In-Class Exam	20%	February 08, 2018
Essay Assignment	25%	March 08, 2018
Final Exam	40%	(3-hr Winter Exam Period)
Total	100%	

**Course Structure:**

This lecture/discussion course is virtually supported by a course WebCT site that provides access to information, resources, on-line activities and workshops. Lecture attendance is recorded each week and attendance is a mandatory component of the course. Instruction on how to approach the assigned course texts and required reading will be covered during the first lecture.

**Syllabus**

Weekly lecture, discussion and reading assignments will be distributed to course participants via OWL

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**ESSAY ASSIGNMENT:**

Visual Methodologies (25%)

Length: 4-5 pages (2000-2500 words)

Due Date: March 08,2018

Choose any image in the presented in lecture up to and including Week 6 lecture. Using formalism and one of the other methodologies you have been introduced to thus far, analyze and interpret the image using the assigned course texts (*Methods and Theories of Art History*, and *Introduction to Critical Theory*), along with one other scholarly text—for a total of three sources. You may use more than three sources if you wish, but no less.

The purpose of this assignment is to have you think critically about an issue in relation to an image. Your use of both formalism and one other methodology will allow you to focus your discussion. Please make the essay a coherent and concise response, written in proper essay format. Include both an introduction and a conclusion that reflects your findings. Wherever appropriate, use the vocabulary introduced in the Key Terms sections lecture presentations. Where applicable include the artist's name, the title (in italics), and the date produced. The first time you refer to the artist use his/her full name and after that you may use last name only, the full name, or refer to them as "the artist".

Please document your sources according to Chicago format (see OWL course site for guidelines). At the end of the paper include a separate bibliography page and a copy of the image you are working with. Use a cover page at the beginning of the paper stating your name, title of your essay, course number, due date and instructor name. The bibliography, copy of the image and title page are **not** included in the required word count. Please do not cite any websites in your bibliography. Online journals held in the Western library are the only exception.

**Grading Scheme:**

10% Analysis: Has your discussion used two methodologies (formalism and one other)? Have you used your research effectively in the development of your

thesis or main idea? Have you considered the larger social and political context of the work?

5% Research: Have you consulted and developed your ideas in relation to three sources: one of the assigned art history texts, the assigned critical theory text, and one other text.

5% Clarity and Organization: Does your paper have a clear direction? Is your thesis stated in your introduction? Have you included a strong conclusion?

5% Presentation: Is your essay free from all spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors? Have you cited all quotations according to MLA? Have you included a cover page with your name and date and an appropriate title for the essay? Have you included a reproduction of your image?

Late papers will not be accepted without accommodation or arrangements with the instructor.

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## **The University of Western Ontario – Department of Visual Arts**

### **Undergraduate Grading Guidelines - Art History**

These guidelines are benchmarks that are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. For example, grades in first-year courses are generally lower than in fourth year.

#### **90-100 (Outstanding, A+)**

The writing shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background research is exemplary. Regarding research, all major secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

#### **80-89 (Excellent, A)**

The writing shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Writing is probing through the use of comments and/or questions, and is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing immediately engages the reader. Mastery of complex materials and ideas is demonstrated. The writing is of appropriate length, and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are meaningful and not simplistic. Regarding research, a majority of the secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

#### **75-79 (Very Good, B+)**

The writing shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Written claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The work is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. Written analysis is organized around focal points and the development of the argument is easily followed. The writer demonstrates an above average ability to write in an

intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material. Regarding research, a representative selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**70-74 (Good, B)**

The writing shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Written claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The work is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. Written analysis is organized around focal points. The text is generally well written and well argued. Regarding research, a somewhat limited selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

**60-69 (Competent, C)**

The writing demonstrates adequate engagement with the topic. The writing is on topic and is a reasonable response to material covered in the course, but goes no further. Written facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the text. Regarding research, an insufficient number secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted but proper citation has been used.

**50-59 (Marginal, D)**

The writing shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The writing is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Written facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the text. Regarding research, few secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted; proper citation may or may not have been used.

**Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)**

The writing demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. Written material is disorganized and unintelligible. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Regarding research, secondary sources pertaining to the topic have not been consulted and proper citation has not been used.

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**Western University  
Visual Arts Department**

**POLICIES****Student Conduct:**

All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

**Attendance:**

A student who misses more than 15% of the course hours, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, can be debarred from writing final exams, or participation in final studio evaluations. Note that if a student consistently is absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and can be debarred.

**Prerequisites:**

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are

not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism, which may be defined as “The act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own,” will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from Black’s Law Dictionary, 1999, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 1170). (Refer to [www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg113.html#](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg113.html#) with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.) This includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or Aural Plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism – work submitted for assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to similar academic penalties as those identified in Western’s Academic Calendar.

**Medical Policy:**

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. See course outline for specific arrangements regarding less than 10% of assignments.

**Mental Health:**

“Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental\\_health/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

**Building Access:**

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:00pm each night. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00-5:00pm. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm and 5:00pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

**Permission re: Promotion:**

You grant permission for Western University to reproduce your name, information describing your artwork, representations of your work and any other information you have provided for the purpose of display, promotion and publicity either now or in the future.

By installing your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you grant Western University an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free world-wide licence to photograph your artwork and use such photograph(s) for the promotion of your artwork and/or Western University, including, without limitation, advertising, display, editorial, packaging, promotion, television, social media, the Department of Visual Arts website, flickr, Twitter, Instagram etc.). Students wishing to not have their work photographed should not exhibit it in the Visual Arts Centre, Artlab Gallery or Cohen Commons. As the area is open to the public, students, faculty, staff and other visitors will not be prohibited from photographing your artwork while on exhibit at the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.

You otherwise retain all ownership in your artwork.

**Artwork Installation Liability Release:**

You understand that the area where your artwork will be hanging or displayed is unsupervised and is in a part of the building that may be open to the public, day and evening, whether or not the building is open. Western University accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of, artwork at any time while on display or while being transported to or from the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre. By displaying your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you accept all risk of loss or damage to your artwork. Western University does not provide insurance for the artwork on exhibition. **If you wish to insure artwork, it is your responsibility to do so.**

**Removal:**

Western University reserves the right to dispose of artwork not picked up by April 15th of each year.

**Please remember:**

One of the most important resources for course counselling, special permissions, course changes, grade appeals, etc., is the Undergraduate Chair of Visual Arts, Professor C. Barteet (tel. 519-661-3440; [vaugc@uwo.ca](mailto:vaugc@uwo.ca)). Please note, however, that should you encounter any serious difficulties due to illness, family emergency, etc., you should consult the Academic Counselor for your Faculty. Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the academic counselors in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities located in IGA Building, Room 1N20.

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; [www.sdc.uwo.ca](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca)) offers a wide range of useful services including workshops on learning skills, career and employment services, and an effective writing program, amongst many more.

The D.B. Weldon Library offers orientation tours from the first week of classes until Thanksgiving, where you will get acquainted with the numerous research resources available. As well, the University libraries have an extremely useful website where you can search the library system, the databases, view your circulation record, renew materials, access your UWO e-mail account, and much more. Check it out at: [www.lib.uwo.ca](http://www.lib.uwo.ca).

Financial Aid Services is your main source of information for OSAP, bursaries, loans, scholarships, and the work-study program which offer part-time positions on campus for Western students. Tel: 519-661-2100; e-mail, [finaid@uwo.ca](mailto:finaid@uwo.ca); or check out their website at [http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student\\_finances/financial\\_counselling.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student_finances/financial_counselling.html)

**Academic Sanctions:**

In instances of non-payment of prescribed tuition and other fees, the University shall seal the academic record. When an academic record is sealed, the student will not be able to: a) view grades; b) register in future courses; c) receive transcripts or a degree diploma; d) obtain admission or readmission.

The above prohibitions shall be in force until such time as indebtedness to the University, including payment of fee for removal of the seal, has been cleared to the satisfaction of the University. <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg115.html>

November 24, 2017