

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES - DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL ARTS

VAS 2274A - *ART NOW I*

COURSE OUTLINE

PROFESSOR: Matthew Ryan Smith (msmit269@uwo.ca)
- Office Hours: Thursdays from 5:30-6:30pm, VAC 240C

TEACHING ASSISTANT: Sophie Quick (squick2@uwo.ca)
- Office Hours: Tuesdays from 2:00-3:00pm, VAC 242

COURSE MEETING ROOM: VAC 100 (auditorium) John Labatt Visual Arts Centre

COURSE MEETING TIME: Thursdays: 7:00pm – 10:00pm

COURSE READINGS: All course readings are available on WebCT and can be accessed at:
<http://www.uwo.ca/its/webct/index.html>

COURSE DESCRIPTION: *Art Now* explores contemporary art production with special emphasis on the perspectives of practicing artists, curators, critics and theorists. As a result, it will offer students exposure to a wide range of contemporary art practices through lectures, slide and video presentations as well as presentations by visiting speakers.

COURSE OBJECTIVE: The primary objectives of *Art Now* are to introduce students to the cultural forms of the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, including direct engagement and dialogue with artists and cultural practitioners. Throughout the course, students should be developing an appropriate language for discussion, analysis and evaluation of contemporary art and ideas. This language will be put to use in both written and material assignments that will encourage students to respond to and analyze art works, theoretical projects and other elements presented in the course.

CLASS FORMAT: Classes will meet on a weekly basis throughout the semester in room VAC 100 (auditorium). Group lectures will be used for concept presentations, power point and video screenings, guest lectures and general information. Frequently, the class will break-off into small group tutorials to be led by the Professor and Teaching Assistant. Tutorial groups will be set on the first day of class and will stay this way for the remainder of the semester. Please note that your tutorial leader will alternate weekly between the Professor and Teaching Assistant.

ATTENDANCE: *This course is strongly oriented toward your participation.* 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. Please note: lectures will not be repeated to individuals or will be posted on WebCT. Since *your* contributions to class discussions make up part of your final grade, be advised that if you miss a class you should make a special effort to contribute in another class.

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.

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.

COMMUNICATION: Every student is required to check their UWO e-mail regularly. If you do not have internet access where you live, please schedule a regular check at a public terminal on campus. Important class announcements may be sent out via email; therefore, it is your responsibility to check your email regularly. During the term, your Course Instructor and Teaching Assistant will generally respond to emails within 48 hours or less.

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 Counseling 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. For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>

Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca>

ACCOMMODATIONS

Please approach your Course Instructor during the first week of class if you require any accommodation in course requirements or scheduling due to a disability. You are encouraged to visit the Student Development Centre for assistance with a disability. Students who want to request academic accommodation must register with the Centre, meet with a counselor, and provide appropriate documentation. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/> for more information.

CELL PHONES/SOCIAL NETWORK WEBSITES/INSTANT MESSAGING: Cell phones are to be turned off in the classroom and any use of social networking websites or instant messaging services are strictly prohibited.

PLAGIARISM & CITATION: 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, 7th ed., p. 1170). (Refer to the 2010/2011 Western Academic Calendar, p. 23, with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.) Students must write their essays and assignments *in their own words*. Taking an idea or a passage of text from another author must be acknowledged in full by quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. The Department of Visual Arts uses Chicago Manual Style for all citations and references. A .PDF copy of the C.M.S. guide is listed on WebCT under the desktop webpage of this course. For more information, please contact the UWO writing centre (<http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/>).

All assignments *may* be subject to review through plagiarism detection software. The University of Western Ontario uses Turnitin.com for this purpose. Turnitin is an anti-plagiarism tool that

screens assignments against a database of the internet, e-journals, e-books, and a range of other scanned material, including other assignments for this course. Use of this software means I can focus on the ideas in your assignments rather than on policing. It also means I can spend my grading time providing students with useful feedback rather than on investigating the few papers that seem to present academic honesty issues. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. An added benefit is that when you submit your paper to Turnitin.com, it is time and date stamped so that it cannot go missing.

NOTE ON ASSIGNMENTS/LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Students are expected to complete all assignments *on time*. Beyond the due date, students may hand in late work to the Course Instructor, TA, or department secretary (for a date stamp) with a 5% per day deduction from the assignment. Failure to complete assignments without prior arrangements with the instructor will result in a failing grade. Extensions will be given upon official notification from the student's faculty advisor due to documented serious health and bereavement reasons.

All written assignments will **not** be accepted via email or as an email attachment (unless in special circumstances). All assignments must be formally typed as described below.

PLEASE REMEMBER:

One of the most important resources for course counseling, special permissions, course changes, grade appeals, etc., is the Undergraduate Chair of Visual Arts, Prof. K. Robertson (tel. 519-661-3440; 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 (Mrs. B. Barratt and Mr. Ben Hakala are the counselors for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities).

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; www.sdc.uwo.ca) offers a wide range of useful services to students 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.

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; or check out their website at www.registrar.uwo.ca/FinancialServices/index.cfm

BUILDING ACCESS: The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:30 pm each night. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00 noon-6:00 pm. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:30 pm and 6:00 pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

COURSE EVALUATION BREAKDOWN:

Attendance	5% (attendance will be recorded each week)
Participation	15% (in lecture and tutorial)
Guest Speaker Response	15% (1 st response: 3%, other two responses: 6%)
Term Quiz	15%
Term Paper	20%
Studio/Creative Project	30%
Total Grade	100%

Week 1: Thursday, September 16

- Course introduction
- Overview of the semester (attendance, participation, readings, speaker series, responsibilities, evaluation breakdown, expectations, tutorial structure)

Week 2: Thursday, September 23

Lecture: Repeat course overview/Discuss guest speaker response assignment(s).

Film: What is contemporary art?

Guest Speaker (8:00pm): Robyn Collyer (Sculpture/Installation • Toronto, ON)

Readings: Wolfgang Kemp – “The Work of Art and its Beholder”

Speaker response assignment guidelines distributed

Week 3: Thursday, September 30

Lecture: Photography

Seminar discussion

Readings: John Szarkowski – Introduction to: *The Photographer's Eye*

Susan Sontag – Excerpt from: *On Photography*

Lisa Liebmann – “Goldin’s Years”

Week 4: Thursday, October 7

1st Guest Speaker Response Due (Robyn Collyer)

Lecture: Land and Earth Art

Guest Speaker (8:00pm): Darren O’Donnell (Performance • Toronto, ON)

Readings: Robert Smithson – “Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan”

Week 5: Thursday, October 14

Guest Lecture: Sophie Quick – “New Media Art”

Seminar discussion

Readings: Lev Manovich – “What is New Media?”

(Optional): Mark Hansen – “Between Body and Image: On the ‘Newness’ of New Media Art”

Week 6: Thursday, October 21

2nd Guest Speaker Response Due (Darren O’Donnell)

Lecture: John Cushnie, MFA – “Why Paint?”

Guest Speaker (8:00pm): Claude Gosselin (Curator • Montreal, PQ)

Readings: Michelle Meagher – “Jenny Saville and a Feminist Aesthetics of Disgust”

Mark Cheetham – “Possible Futures: Abstraction as Infection and Cure”

Week 7: Thursday, October 28

Term paper guidelines assigned

Lecture: Autobiography

Seminar discussion

Readings: Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson – “The rumpled bed of autobiography: Extravagant lives, extravagant questions.”

Tamar Tembeck - “Exposed Wounds: The Photographic Autopathographies of Hannah Wilke and Jo Spence.”

(Optional): Matthew Ryan Smith – “Autobiography and the Family Frame”

Week 8: Thursday, November 4

3rd Guest Speaker Response Due: Claude Gosselin

Lecture: Performance and the Body

Seminar discussion

Readings: Interview with Marina Abramovic and Ulay

RoseLee Goldberg – “Performance—Art for All?”

(Optional): Jolene Rickard – “Rebecca Belmore: Performing Power”

Week 9: Thursday, November 11

Term Paper Due

Lecture: Conceptualism

Seminar discussion

Readings: Ken Friedman – “Forty Years of Fluxus”
Liz Kotz – “Post-Cagean Aesthetics and the Event Score”

Week 10: Thursday, November 18

Lecture: Installation

Guest Speaker: Andrea Fatona (Curator • Ottawa, ON)

Readings: Roy Kozlovsky – “A Short History of the Slide”
Jessica Morgan – “Forward” (On Carsten Holler’s *Unilever Series*)

Week 11: Thursday, November 25

Term Quiz

Lecture: Film and Video

Readings: Martha Rosler – “Video: Shedding the Utopian Moment”
Bruce Hainley – “Legend of the Fall”

Week 12: Thursday, December 2

Studio/Creative Projects Due

Class critique of studio/creative projects