

Libs 497.02H: History of Contemporary Art
Dr. Emily Newman
Texas A&M University - Commerce

TR 2:00-3:15PM, DTH 201, Fall 2022
Office Hours: by appointment only (F2F or Zoom)
Email: emily.newman@tamuc.edu
Office: Talbot 211

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OUTCOMES

By exploring art from all over the world since the 1960s, this course examines the way that contemporary art reflects shifting political trends, the explosion of popular culture, the conflation of high art and kitsch, activist movements, and a total reimagining of the potential of art. Not only will this course serve to introduce students to contemporary art and artists, but we will also explore curatorial and exhibition practices. Students will complete a major research project for this course, developing their own thematic exhibition and writing the accompanying labels and brochures. Additionally, students will have two exams that will require memorization and analytical discussion of artwork and artistic movements.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- discuss and explain historically significant works of contemporary art
- become acquainted with the characteristic features of the major styles and movements from 1960 to present
- learn to analyze the relationships among content, context, and style
- acquire a working knowledge of the specialized vocabulary used in art history
- develop ability to analyze important documents, artist writings, and criticism
- enhance visual literacy and critical thinking skills

ASSESSMENT

Students' ability to meet the course objectives and learning outcomes will be evaluated through written assignments, class participation, exams, and essay questions.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

Jonathan Fineberg, *Art Since 1940*, 3rd Edition (July 2010) ISBN – 0131934791, open access and available through our D2L page

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Available on ecollege or will be handed out in class. You are expected to bring the assigned readings to class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Grade Breakdown:

10% Participation
15% Reading Responses
26% Exhibition Project
22% Exam #1
27% Exam #2

Grade Scale:

A = 90%-100%
B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F = 59% or Below

Participation: Each person is expected to come to class prepared, which means having completed the reading, brought appropriate textbook, paper, and writing utensils, and ready to engage in the class. The class should not just be a lecture, rather, people are encouraged to speak up, contribute to the conversation and ask questions. A major part of the participation requirement is ATTENDANCE, which is mandatory.

Attendance: Each student in this course is allowed no more than **three** unexcused absences. Each absence after this results in the lowering of the grade by 1/3 of a letter grade. When a student accrues **more than eight unexcused absences** the instructor has the right to drop the student from the course or to give them a failing grade.

Unexcused absences require no explanation. For an absence to be considered excused, appropriate documentation must be presented. Excused absences are defined in The Student Guidebook and various university policies, but the policy employed in this class is confined to the following: (1) Participation in pre-approved University activities such as athletic events, sponsored field trips, and travel for specific University-related academic reasons; (2) Verifiable legal proceedings; (3) Documented cases of illness, injury, or emergencies. **All such excuses must be shown to the instructor in original, written, documentary form within 7 days of the absence(s) together with a photocopy for the instructor's records.** (Please understand that this copy is a student's only record of an absence.) In lieu of documentation, absences become unexcused and are counted as such.

Exams: Throughout the course, you will have two exams. They will have the following components: slide identifications (where you must identify the artist/title/date/style of the photograph), short answer questions, compare/contrast problems, and essay questions. These exams will NOT be cumulative; they will only cover material preceding the exam.

Exhibition Project: A major part of this course is the research project where you will curate a thematic exhibition. This is your chance to envision an ideal show – you can include paintings, sculpture, performance art pieces, video, installation art, etc. This requires you think about how different works relate to one another, exhibition design, the research that is incorporated into creating exhibitions and the materials that the public can take with them after the show, such as brochures. This project will also require significant research.

Reading Response Papers:

Must complete short responses for four of the six articles listed below (everyone **must** write a response to Chave and Wagner's articles on Eva Hesse on 9/8 AND the three articles on Basquiat on 10/18. The other two articles are your choice). The response is due on the date the reading is to be completed.

Sept 8 – Chave/Wagner/Chave articles on Eva Hesse (discuss all THREE articles, all female writers and female artist)

Sept 15 - Krauss, "Sculpture in an Expanded Field" (woman)

Sept 27 – Piper, "The Triple Negation of Colored Women Artists" (woman)

Oct 18 - Hughes, "Jean-Michel Basquiat: Requiem for a Featherweight;" Gopnik, "Madison Avenue Primitive;" hooks, "Altars of Sacrifice: Re-membering Basquiat" (discuss all THREE articles, Hughes, Gopnik = men, bell hooks (no capitals) = woman)

Nov 3 - Fusco, "Passionate Irreverence: The Cultural Politics of Identity" (woman)

Nov 10 - Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics" (woman)

These responses are designed to show that you have a critical understanding of the reading. They should be 2-4 pages and composed of three parts.

1. Make very clear the thesis and main argument of the article.
2. Summarize the article in YOUR WORDS. Use quotes from the article only sparingly. *If you use quotes, you must make sure to put the page number from where the quote is taken. Artwork titles must be italicized.*
3. Address the author's argument. What were its strengths? What worked? Be critical and address the issues and the problems the article brings up.

SAMPLE OUTLINE FOR A RESPONSE PAPER

I. Introduction

- a. Identify the article being criticized
- b. Present thesis of the article discussed
- c. Preview your argument – what are the steps you will take to prove your argument (this could be something like- the author successfully supports her/his thesis with strong evidence or the author makes a good point, s/he fails to support it, etc.)

II. Short **summary** of the article

- a. Does not need to be comprehensive
- b. Present only what the reader needs to know to understand your argument

III. Your **argument** - likely will involve a number of sub-arguments –mini-theses you prove to prove your larger argument true. For example, if your thesis was that the author's presumption is that photography is not art, you might prove this by:

- i. Clarifying how the author is defining art
- ii. Explaining how photography does not meet that definition
- iii. Outlining the author's discussion of how that affects the photography.

IV. Conclusion

- a. Reflect on how you have proven your argument.
- b. Point out the importance of your argument.

FORMATTING

All written assignments must be typed using the following guidelines: 12 pt. Times New Roman font, 1" margins, double-spaced, with page numbers. Failure to format properly will result in a lower grade. Artwork titles **MUST** be italicized.

HANDING IN ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments must be turned in online to Brightspace/D2L by 11AM (class start time) the day due, unless stated. **Assignments will NOT be accepted over ONE week late.** For each class day late, the grade will be reduced by ½ letter grade.

Note: Personal computer problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the school or local library, office service companies, an Internet cafe, or a bookstore, such as Barnes & Noble, etc.

WORKLOAD:

The rule of thumb for time required for course study and preparation each week for a face-to-face class or an online course during the spring and fall semesters is three times the number of credit hours (or 9 hours per week) for the course. If you find yourself unable to complete course requirements in a timely manner, refer to the University's withdrawal policy and the appropriate dates. Incomplete grades are only granted for extreme emergencies. Being "overloaded" either from other class assignments or job commitments are not considered to be emergency situations.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

A&M-COMMERCE SUPPORTS STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

UNIVERSITY'S PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Students should not attend class when ill or after exposure to anyone with a communicable illness. Communicate such instances directly with your instructor. Faculty will work to support the student getting access to missed content or completing missed assignments.

CAMPUS CONCEALED CARRY

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Discussion: Each person will bring their own experiences to this class, and should feel comfortable expressing their opinions and vulnerabilities. The classroom is a safe environment, and each student should behave with integrity and treat their peers with respect.

Statement on Student Behavior: All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenet of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (See Student's [Guidebook](#). Policies and Procedures, Conduct). Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

All students must show respect toward the instructor and the instructor's syllabus, presentations, assignments, and point of view. Students should respect each others' differences. If the instructor determines that a student is not being respectful towards other students or the instructor, it is the instructor's prerogative to ask the student to leave, to refer the student to the department head, and to consider referring the student to the Dean of Students who may consider requiring the student to drop the course. Please refer to pages 42 – 46 of the Texas A&M University-commerce Student guidebook's Codes of Conduct for details.

Prohibited during F2F class:

- **Cell Phones/Blackberries/MP3 Players:** Please keep these devices off while class is in session. It is disrespectful to your classmates. No cell phones are allowed during exam sessions. If you need to check the time, consult the clock in the classroom. Repeated use of these devices will result in being asked to leave.
- **Computers and tablets**
- **Headphones of any kind / Sunglasses / Sleeping**
- **Disruptive or distracting behavior:** Texting, conversing with other students during class, loud eating, etc.
- **Repeated entering/exiting the classroom:** Please be on time to class. Not only is disruptive to the class environment, but you could miss important class announcements. This is a short class, so there should be no need to come in and out throughout the class period. Additionally, repeated tardiness will count with your absences, and could result in a lower grade.

Academic Dishonesty: Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. There is no tolerance for any kind of academic dishonesty in this course. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, theft of instructional material or exams, representing the work of someone else as one's own, and misrepresenting absences. Academic dishonesty is a severe transgression and may result in referral to the Dean of Students, expulsion from class and/or the University, and a failing grade.

It is the student's responsibility to:

1. research and write their own papers
2. give proper credit through documentation when using words or ideas of others
3. rely on their own knowledge when taking tests
4. refuse to give another student the opportunity to be dishonest

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

STATEMENT ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ADA ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
 Texas A&M University-Commerce, Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835, Fax (903) 468-8148
 Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu
 Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

After contacting the Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor of what accommodations are needed **IN ADVANCE** of when they are needed (for example, if testing accommodations are necessary, please inform the instructor with appropriate documentation at LEAST one week before the test date).

EMAIL POLICY:

Email is the preferred form of communication, with a general response time of 24 hours during the week (do not expect replies over the weekend). For all emails sent, please **include full name, student ID, and the class** that you are attending. Do not send emails to myself and other professors at once, as each professor has different issues to address. You are allotted three absences for this course; plan accordingly and there is no need to contact me about unexcused absences that are incorporated into this allowance. For excused absences, you need to bring in a hard copy of appropriate documentation of your absence.

TEST AND GRADE POLICY:

Make-up exams will be administered only in instances of excused absences (and acceptable documentation) and may not be designed in the same format as the regularly-scheduled exam. When an excused absence causes a student to miss an exam, it is the student's responsibility to inform--or to have someone else notify--the instructor within 4 days of the exam. If permitted, these exams must be made up within two weeks of the scheduled date, at a time and place determined by the professor.

Assignments are due at the start of the class on the assigned date. Late work will only be accepted for one week after the due date, and the grade will be penalized. Concerning grade decisions, I will not discuss specific grades on ANY assignment or test the day it is the grade is given. If you have concerns regarding a grade, email me within one week of receiving the assignment back clearly explaining why you think the assignment was addressed incorrectly. After the email is received, we will then set up an appointment to discuss the concern.

*** THERE WILL BE NO EXTRA CREDIT***

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PROGRAMS NEEDED

At a minimum, you must have access to and be able to use Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Please note that on the 4th Sunday of each month there will be System Maintenance which means the system will not be available 12 pm-6 am CST.

Contemporary Issues Schedule*

8/30 - 1950s

Fineberg: Chapter 4

9/1 - Performance Beginnings

Fineberg: Chapter 7

9/6 – Performance into Pop

Fineberg: Chapter 8 and 9

9/8 – Minimalism and Post-Minimalism

Fineberg: Chapter 10

Reading: Anna Chave, “Eva Hesse: A Girl Being A Sculpture” in *Eva Hesse: A Retrospective* New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1992: 99-117.

Anne M. Wagner, “Another Hesse” *October* 69 (Summer 1994): 49-84.

Anna Chave, “[Response to “Another Hesse”]” *October* 71 (Winter 1995): 146-8.

9/13 – Conceptual Art/Performance Developments

Fineberg: Chapter 11

9/15 - The Environment of Art

Fineberg: Chapter 10-11

Reading: Rosalind Krauss, “Sculpture in an Expanded Field” *October* 8 (Spring 1979): 30-44.

9/20 - Paintings in the 1960s/early 70s

Fineberg: Chapter 13

9/22 – Feminist Art

Fineberg: Chapter 12

9/27 - Activist Art

Reading: Adrian Piper, “The Triple Negation of Colored Women Artists” in *Next Generation: Southern Black Aesthetic*, ed. Devinis Szakacs and Vicki Kopf.

Winston-Salem, NC: South-Eastern Center for Contemporary Art, 1990: 15-22.

9/29 - Figurative Developments

Fineberg: Chapter 15

10/4 - TBA

10/6 - Politically Charged Art and Architecture

10/11 - Test #1

10/13 – Pictures Generation

Reading: Douglas Crimp, "Pictures," *October*, 8 (Spring 1979): 75-88.

10/18 - Late 70s and 80s NY

Fineberg: Chapter 14

Readings: Robert Hughes, "Jean-Michel Basquiat: Requiem for a Featherweight," reprinted in *Nothing if Not Critical*. New York: Penguin Books, 1992, 308-312; Adam Gopnik, "Madison Avenue Primitive," *New Yorker*, November 9, 1992: 137-139; and bell hooks, "Altars of Sacrifice: Re-membering Basquiat," *Art in America* 81, no. 6 (June 1993): 69+

10/20 – TBA

10/25 – Postmodern Art in Germany

Fineberg: Chapter 13

10/27 – Commercialism

Fineberg: Chapter 16

11/1 - YBAs / PROJECT DISCUSSION & HANDOUT DUE

Reading: Steven C. Dubin, "When Elephants Fight: How Sensation Became Sensational" in *Displays of Power*. New York: NYU Press, 2001, 246-275.

11/3 – Identity Politics

Reading: Coco Fusco, "Passionate Irreverence: The Cultural Politics of Identity" in *1993 Whitney Biennial Exhibition* edited by Elisabeth Sussman et al. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993, 74-85.

11/8 - Contemporary Chinese Art / PROPOSAL DUE

11/10 – Relational Aesthetics

Reading: Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October* 110 (Autumn 2004): 51-79.

11/15 – TBA

11/22 - Spirituality

11/29 – Questions of Class and Portraiture / THEME PARAGRAPH AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

12/1 - TBA

12/6 - TEST #2

12/8 – Project Discussion, Peer Review

Reading: Ingrid Schaffner, "Wall Text," in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?* edited by Paula Marincola. London: Reaktion Books, 2007.

12/13 – 1:15-3:15 - Project Presentation

*subject to change