



**ARTS 503.01E CRN 81523**  
**GRAD SEMINAR:**  
**Contextual Review is the new Literature Review**  
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2025

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Instructor:	Dr. Laurel Jay Carpenter
Office Location:	ART 208
Office Hours:	By appointment; day or early evening
University Email Address:	laureljay.carpenter@etamu.edu

**Course Description**

Graduate Seminar primarily emphasizes research, readings, and critical discussion as a means of understanding contemporary trends in the visual arts and how a student's practice fits within its cultural trajectory. Following the methodology of "close reading," as introduced to your Professor by Erin Manning, this course delves with slow and nuanced attentiveness to open our thinking to what Bertrand Russell (1996), as quoted by Manning, calls 'a hypothetical sympathy.'"

**More Convincing from Erin Manning:**

"All of this unfolds before even beginning to explore the question of "where I stand," which arguably is probably the least interesting question of all, for "where I stand" in the common academic mode of positioning is the question that stops the process, that takes the writing out of the act, that situates it within this or that family of knowledge, that aligns it to disciplinary method and to institutional power. We all do this, of course, to a certain degree, but it seems to me that we must bear in mind that this "taking a stand" too often becomes the death-knell of creative acts of reading (and, of course, of making). Another kind of stand must be taken, one that erupts from the midst, one that engages sympathetically with the unknowable at the heart of difference, one that heeds the uneasiness of an experience that cannot yet be categorized. Otherwise we find ourselves right back where we started, outside looking in at what is already recognizable, at what is already known."

—"Against Method," Chapter 1 of Manning, Erin. *The Minor Gesture*. Duke University Press, 2013. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv111jhg1>.

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

### **Optional Texts and/or Materials:**

Students are expected to procure theoretical readings, as related to their practice, to offer for discussion, and to drive written reflections.

### **Caveat**

Additional readings/resources and the shape of our discourse may shift as discussion and shared interests lead in new and unexpected directions. I will always be clear with expectations and deadlines. I hope you are willing to allow this seminar to be organic, dynamic and open to new discoveries.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will demonstrate effective communication about the readings as related to their research and practice.
2. Students will gain an awareness of a broader art discourse and its positioning culturally.
3. Students will demonstrate a more comprehensive understanding of their own working methods research methodologies and be able to articulate those more clearly.
4. Set and meet writing goals.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

Access to D2L and Zoom  
Reliable Internet connection

### **Instructional Methods and Student Responsibilities**

Students are expected to attend class as “discussion leaders” having read the text closely, marked points of interest, written notes to remember flow/associations, and formulated (rhetorical) questions. This is not a lecture class with the professor doing all the talking. This is a discussion seminar, with expectations of student-driven investigation toward other writings/artists’ works/points of significance.

## **GRADING**

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale, **although for Grad Programs, a grade of C is not permissible for advancement to the next stage.**

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

A = 451- 500 Points

B = 401- 450 Points

C = 351- 400 Points

D = 301- 350 Points

F = 300 & > Points

**Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade:**

<b>Drafts of Writing + Edits</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Participation in Discussion</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Sharing of Additional Resources/Readings</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Assessment**

Your work and activity in the course will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Your self-motivated, sustained and thoughtful attention to the readings, and the reflection of that attentiveness in the quality in your in-class discussion and submitted materials.
2. Your genuine commitment to the the course as reflected in your:
  - Attendance and preparedness for each meeting
  - Active participation
  - Honoring due dates

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **LMS**

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University 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](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

[https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom\\_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu](https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu)

## **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](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection 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 local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

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

### **Technical Support**

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>

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **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.

## University Specific Procedures

### Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

### ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedures 13.99.99.R0.01](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

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

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

### Students with Disabilities—ADA Statement

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**

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

East Texas A&M University 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.

## **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University 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 the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

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.

## **ETAMU 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](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

## **AI use policy [Draft 2, May 25, 2023]**

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

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