

Western University, Department of Visual Arts  
**Seminar in Photography: Photography & Social Change**  
AH 4650G / 9594B / 9694B - Winter 2020



Gilles Peress, *FDNY paramedics near the Brooklyn Bridge walk toward the scene of the attack of the World Trade Center. NYC. 9/11/2001*

Class time: Tuesdays 11:30 am – 2:30 pm  
Location: VAC 247

**Professor Sarah Bassnett**

Email – [sarah.bassnett@uwo.ca](mailto:sarah.bassnett@uwo.ca)

Office hours – Thursdays 1:30 – 2:30 pm and by appointment in VAC 219

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Many of the social and political upheavals of the late 20th and early 21st centuries are familiar to us through photographs: the Vietnam War, the civil rights protests of the 1960s, 9/11 and the subsequent war in Iraq, the war on terror, and global migration. Focusing on modern conflict, social movements, and changes brought about by globalization, this seminar explores the diverse ways photography has been used to negotiate social transformation. In the process, we look at different practices of photography – from portraiture and photojournalism to contemporary art. We discuss recent scholarship on issues such as spectatorship and the ethics of witnessing, photography as a form of encounter, and the role of iconic images in public memory. Seminar participants will develop their own research on some aspect of photography and social change.

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze and evaluate photographs using appropriate terminology.
- Conduct research using library resources, such as books and journal articles in databases, and use the sources effectively in a research essay.
- Articulate an argument in writing, support the argument using appropriate evidence, and address counter-arguments.
- Apply knowledge of issues and debates in photography history and theory to develop their own views, and articulate their ideas clearly in oral and written form.
- Solve problems by participating constructively in group discussions and activities. This includes sharing ideas and listening respectfully to the views of others.

## **PREREQUISITE**

Registration in years 3 or 4 of a Department of Visual Arts Module, or permission of the Department. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as the basis for an appeal.

---

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### **PARTICIPATION – 10%**

The participation portion of your grade will be based on your commitment to the course, which includes your attendance, your level of preparedness, and your contribution to class discussions and other activities. Arriving late to class, leaving early, not being prepared to discuss the readings, and not participating in discussions will significantly reduce your participation mark. This portion of your grade will assess how effectively you are able to participate in discussions by sharing ideas and by listening respectfully to the views of others. The seminar format is dependent upon participation from all students. In order to encourage participation from everyone, class members will be assigned to introduce readings throughout the course.

### **READING RESPONSE JOURNAL – 10%**

Select five of the assigned course readings, and write a brief summary of each, along with your own thoughts about it. These should be approximately 300-350 words each. Your summary should state the main idea of the essay, while our comments should discuss your views on the issues. Be sure to indicate the title and author for each of the readings, followed by your summary and comment. Readings for the course are posted as PDFs on OWL. Submit one Word document with all reading responses through the assignments link in OWL.

### **TEST – 25%**

The end-of-term test will be comprised of short answer and essay questions. It will assess your understanding of the readings and issues we have discussed throughout the course. Students who are absent for the test and provide adequate documentation (including self-reporting the absence) may receive a make-up test or an alternate written assignment at the professor's discretion.

## RESEARCH PROJECT

### Proposal & annotated bibliography 10% / presentation 10% / research paper 35%

Your research essay should focus on a series of photographs that relate to a conflict or social movement. You may choose to delve deeper into one of the topics we've discussed in class, although you should select a different set of photographs than the ones we have looked at. Alternatively, you are free to investigate issues that we haven't considered in class but that relate to the themes of the course.

Proposal and annotated bibliography: Your proposal should include a brief (approximately 300-word) outline identifying the issue and the selection of photographs you will write about, along with an annotated bibliography of at least six published sources you expect to use for your research. Your bibliography should include journal articles as well as books. (Relevant web sites can be used, but they should be in addition to six published sources).

Presentations: You will present the results of your research project to the class at the end of term. Presentations should take the form of a 15-minute presentation followed by questions. These will be scheduled during the last two weeks of classes.

Research paper: Undergraduate final papers should be 8-10 pages and approximately 2500 words. Graduate papers should be approximately 3000-3500 words and are expected to demonstrate greater originality, more extensive research, and more sophisticated argumentation. Essays should be thesis-driven and should offer an interpretation of a series of photographs that is supported by suitable evidence derived from your research.

## DUE DATES & GRADING

Assignment	Due date	Grading
Attendance & participation	Weekly	10%
Proposal and annotated bibliography	Feb. 14 @ 11 pm	10%
Reading response journal	Feb. 28 @ 11 pm	10%
Final Test	March 10	25%
Presentation	March 24 – 31	10%
Research paper	March 31 @ 11 pm	35%

## LATE POLICIES

Contact me BEFORE an assignment is due if you require an extension. Late assignments will be penalized by 5% each day, unless you provide appropriate documentation (a doctor's note, for example) or self-report an absence.

Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a self-reported absence form online provided that the absence is 48 hours or less and the other conditions specified in the Senate policy at

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic\\_Consideration\\_for\\_absences.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf)

are met. Students whose absences are expected to last longer than 48 hours, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds). The Student Medical Certificate is available online at

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic

responsibilities missed during their absence. **Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.** All course work must be submitted by the last day of classes.

Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

All work for the course **MUST** be entirely your own. All sources that you use for your assignments must be accurately cited. If you have doubts about how and when to cite sources, consult the Chicago Manual of Style guide on OWL in the Resources section, or talk to me before the assignment due date. All course work must be completed specifically for this course. Plagiarism and cheating are very serious academic offences and they will be dealt with strictly. Submitting the same work for credit in more than one course is considered cheating. Plagiarism includes:

1. Quoting verbatim or almost verbatim from any source, including all electronic sources, without acknowledgement;
2. Adopting someone else's line of thought, argument, or supporting evidence without acknowledgement;
3. Submitting someone else's work, in any form, without acknowledgement;
4. Knowingly representing as one's own an idea of another.

For information concerning Western's Plagiarism and Academic Offences (Scholastic Offences) policies see:

[http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&command=showCategory&SelectedCalendar=Pre&ArchiveID=.](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&command=showCategory&SelectedCalendar=Pre&ArchiveID=)

All assignments may be subject to review through plagiarism detection software. The University of Western Ontario currently 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. 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.

## **CITATION STYLE**

The Chicago Manual of Style, Humanities format, is the standard style for art history. Use this style to cite your sources for your research paper and other assignments. Please refer to the guide in OWL and the Library website for examples: <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/services/styleguides.html>.

---

## **POLICIES & CONDUCT**

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend and participate in every class. In particular, it is essential that you come prepared to discuss the readings. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from a class mate.

- Under Western's regulations, if a student misses 15% of their classes, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, they can be debarred from participation in final tests, evaluations and/or critiques.
- If a student is consistently absent from a portion of class, they will be considered as exceeding the 15% cut off and can be similarly debarred.

- After three unexcused absences, a student may be withdrawn from the course.

Academic Accommodation: For Western's complete Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities see

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&command=showCategory&SelectedCalendar=Pre&ArchiveID=>. Please talk to me during the first few weeks of the course if you require accommodation in course requirements or scheduling due to a disability. Please 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 of a disability. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/> for more information.

Electronic Devices: Computers should only be used to for work related to the course. You will be asked to put your computer away if it becomes a source of distraction for you and others. Please ensure cell phones are off, and please do not check email, social networking sites, or engage in other distractions during the seminar. Under no circumstances are cell phones or any electronic devices to be used during tests or examinations.

Code of Conduct: Students will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Student Conduct and treat all members of the Western community with respect. See

[http://studentexperience.uwo.ca/student\\_experience/studentconduct.html](http://studentexperience.uwo.ca/student_experience/studentconduct.html).

I am committed to fostering a class environment that is comfortable for all students, especially those from marginalized or underrepresented backgrounds. These core values include using preferred gender pronouns and human-centred language, which convey respect for people's diverse experiences. We do not always have to agree with one another; however, in this class I expect everyone to show respect for other people's viewpoints. Behaviour that is disruptive or discriminatory will not be tolerated.

Absences on Religious Holy Days: For purposes of this policy "the University has approved a list of dates which are recognized religious holidays which require members of those religions to be absent from the University; this list is updated annually and is available at departmental, Deans' and Faculty advising Offices." For Western's Policy on Religious Holidays see

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic\\_policies/rights\\_responsibilities.html](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html) .

*Students should request permission if they wish to record lectures or class discussions for study purposes. Lectures are the intellectual property of the professor.*

The last day to drop this course without academic penalty is **March 7, 2020**.

## **EXPLICIT CONTENT WARNING**

In this course, we look at and discuss a broad range of visual material, including some images that addresses controversial subject matter and some that depicts explicit scenes of a sexual or violent nature. If you do not want to engage with work of this kind, this may not be the right course for you.

## **RESOURCES**

---

### **OFFICE HOURS / EMAIL**

Please see me during my office hours if you are having difficulty with any aspect of the course, including readings or assignments. If you would like to talk to me and cannot make it to my office hours, please ask for an appointment or contact me by email. I will make every effort to reply to your email within one to two business days. As I have other professional and personal responsibilities I typically respond to email Monday through Friday during normal business hours.

## **OWL**

We will be using OWL to supplement the in-class portion of the course. I will post slides from class as pdf files for your review, and the syllabus and a range of other resources will also be available. Also, all assignments will be submitted through OWL. Go to <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal> to access OWL. Use your Western user name and password to sign on. Please be sure to check your browser and make sure everything is working at the beginning of the course. See the ITS technical assistance info on the above mentioned web site, and contact ITS for additional technical assistance. The ITS Support number is (519) 661-3800.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

There are many organizations and offices on campus designed to assist students with the challenges of university. Please see the web site for a description of the full array of services:

<http://studentexperience.uwo.ca/>. Learning Skills Services, for example, offers one-on-one assistance with academic issues. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning/> for details.

## **WRITING SUPPORT CENTRE 4100 WSSB**

The Writing Support Centre is part of the Effective Writing Program at Western and is open to all registered students. It offers instruction on all aspects of writing and is not merely for students who have difficulty with writing. Most effective are the one-on-one tutoring sessions, where you can work with a tutor on course assignments. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/> for details.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health support <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**The University of Western Ontario  
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 <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 perimeter doors open at 8am and close at 7pm Monday to Friday. Perimeter doors are locked over the weekend.

**After-Hours Access**

Students must have their student card to access the building outside regular building hours. Undergraduate Visual Arts students have access to the building from 7pm until 10pm, Monday to Friday and from noon to 5pm Saturday and Sunday by use of student cards at designated card readers outside of Exits 10 and 2. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm Monday to Friday and 5:00pm Saturday and Sunday. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours. Access to studio spaces will vary, depending on staffing. Failure to follow Department policies or abide by the student code of conduct may result in revoking of swipe card access.

**Third Floor Access**

Please note: All students requiring access to the third floor (first year and fourth year students) will always require their student cards to activate the third floor card readers at the stairwell entrances and for the card reader in the elevator.

**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 T. Johnson (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)

August 29, 2019

### **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.