

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Visual Arts

COURSE: VASTUDIO 2274A: Art Now! 1  
TERM: Fall 2015  
TIME: Thursday 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm  
LOCATION: NCB 113  
INSTRUCTOR: Jason Hallows  
EMAIL: jhallows@uwo.ca  
TA: Ido Govrin  
TA EMAIL: igovrin@uwo.ca  
OFFICE HOURS: TBA

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

*Art Now* will explore contemporary art production with special emphasis placed upon 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 talks by visiting speakers. The course will navigate the complex and heterogeneous terrain of contemporary art by focusing upon key ideas and artworks in current areas of production and discourse. Emphasis will be placed on major recent art movements and concerns. The course will also focus on developing critical writing skills and art vocabulary.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course can expect to:

- Develop a familiarity with contemporary art practices.
- Gain knowledge of the key theoretical and critical concerns pertaining to contemporary art.
- Develop critical thinking skills. Students will learn to engage in the critique of artwork, using the language acquired and developed in class, both orally and written.

### COURSE FORMAT

Classes will meet on a weekly basis throughout the semester in NCB 113. Class time will be spent in lectures, slide and video screenings, and visiting artists' talks. An important aspect of the course will involve student engagement with visiting speakers and in the facilitated discussion groups. Students are expected to participate actively in all areas of the course.

### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND PREPARATIONS:

Students are expected to attend all classes punctually and participate in all class discussions and critiques. Failure to meet these expectations will be reflected in their overall assignment grade.

The visiting speakers series is an integral part of the course and attendance is absolutely mandatory for all guest lectures. Written responses to the lectures are integrated into the course requirements and are calculated in the final grade.

### CELL PHONES

Cell phones are to be turned off during class time. This is especially important during visiting lectures – which are open to all faculty, students, and the public. The guest lecturers have been invited to the department from outside the city, and it is our responsibility to be respectful of their generosity.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY:

As this is a lecture course without a textbook, attendance is crucial. Under University regulation, a student who is absent from 15% of class hours may be debarred from final evaluations without prior consultation unless a documented excuse (illness, bereavement, etc.) is provided from the student's academic advisor. If a student consistently misses one hour of a three hour class, they may exceed the 15% absence rate, and be debarred from final examination.

In accordance with University policy, Students are responsible for making themselves aware of all assignments, and due dates. With fair notice, course assignments, schedule or due dates may change. Students are responsible for keeping abreast of course changes.

Failure to attend an important demonstration or lecture without due cause will result in the student researching the information for themselves.

#### 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.

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>

#### 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.”

#### OWL:

All students will have access to the OWL Sakai course site: <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/owldocs>

#### EVALUATION:

<b>Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>	
Students are expected to maintain a dedicated level of engagement in class discussions. This includes participation in all critiques and discussions of assigned readings and lectures. Students arriving unreasonably late, or leaving early, will not be considered as having participated in a class.		
<b>Mid Term Quiz</b>	<b>20%</b>	
<b>Guest Speaker Responses: (6 @ 5% ea.)</b>	<b>30%</b>	
<b>Term Paper</b>	<b>20%</b>	<i>(7pages/ 2100 words before bibliography)</i>
<b>Studio Project</b>	<b>20%</b>	
<b>Total Possible Grade</b>	<b>100%</b>	

#### **Marking Criteria for each Assignment**

Grades will be determined by the student’s ability to clearly demonstrate:

1. An understanding of the assignment objectives and requirements
2. Resolution in the presentation of the finished work
3. Evidence of research and development, both materially and conceptually
4. Resourcefulness, ambition and originality

#### READINGS

Throughout the course readings will be assigned relevant to concurrent studio assignments. On scheduled dates students are expected to come prepared, having read the texts and ready to participate in discussion. As stated above, engagement in this part of the course will factor into the substantial Participation and Research grade. All texts will be available via WebCT.



SYLLABUS VAS 2274A: ART NOW!

September 10	Introductions. Course Outline. Short introductory lecture.
September 17	Lecture: Prehistory of Contemporary Art
September 24	Guest Speaker: Sandra Meigs
October 1	Lecture. Studio assignment overview. Meigs paper due.
October 8	Guest Lecture: Lili Huston-Herterich and Laurie Kang
October 15	Guest Lecture: Derek Liddington Huston-Herterick / Kang paper due
October 22	Lecture. Liddington paper due.
October 29	Fall Break
November 5	Guest Speaker: Danielle St. Amour
November 12	Guest Speaker: Christine Negus
November 19	Lecture. Mid-term quiz. Term paper due
November 26	Guest Lecture: Sandy Plotnikoff
December 3	Studio Assignment Critiques

## Visual Arts Studio Grading Rubric

**90-100 (Outstanding, A+)** - The **studio work** shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated analysis and synthesis involving complex theoretical and conceptual thinking are demonstrated. Mastery of complex ideas is immediately evident. The studio work has originality, clarity and ambition. The project is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is exemplary.

**80-89 (Excellent, A)** - The **studio work** shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. The work is clearly focused and intelligently presented. Mastery of complex ideas is demonstrated. The studio work has clarity and ambition. The quality of the studio production immediately engages the viewer. The studio work has been sufficiently developed and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are compelling. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is impressive.

**75-79 (Very Good, B+)** - The **studio work** shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. It demonstrates a clear awareness of the parameters of the assignment and a very good attempt to respond creatively to them. The work demonstrates reasonable depth and/or breadth and engages in a production that is appropriate to the level of the course. The quality of studio work engages the viewer and demonstrates above-average mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is very good.

**70-74 (Good, B)** - The **studio work** shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. It shows a good attempt to respond to assignment parameters. The work demonstrates some depth and/or breadth, making references to appropriate course material/art context. The studio production engages the viewer and demonstrates a sufficient mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is satisfactory.

**60-69 (Competent, C)** - The **studio work** demonstrates adequate engagement with the project. It shows an attempt to respond to assignment parameters but does so at a very basic level that lacks creativity. Engagement with studio production demonstrates basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is competent.

**50-59 (Marginal, D)** - The **studio work** shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The studio work waivers in its attempt to respond to assignment parameters and tends to be simplistic. Engagement with studio production demonstrates less than a basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is less than satisfactory.

**Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)** - The **studio work** demonstrates a failure to comprehend/engage the topic. The studio work is incomplete and lacks redeeming creative merit. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is unacceptable.

## 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 anti-requisite 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/2015/pg113.html> or the 2015/2016 Western Academic Calendar, with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.)

#### **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.

Accommodation for missed assignments, or attendance, totalling less than 10%, 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.

#### **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 10:30 pm each night. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00 noon-5:00 pm. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:30 pm and 5:00 pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

#### **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, Prof. David Merritt (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, IGA Building, Room 1N20 (Ms. Amanda Green 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](http://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](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)