

**Colorado State University-Pueblo**  
**College of Humanities and Social Sciences // Department of Art**  
**Spring Term 2012 // Visual Dynamics // ART100**  
**Mon/Wed/Fri, 11:00 - 11:50am, Room: AM-120**

**Instructor: Ellen Mueller**  
**Office: AM-102A**  
**Hours: Mon & Tue, 3-4pm, and by appointment**  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The goal of this course is to expand your knowledge and appreciation of art and visual culture. I aim to show you some ways to view art/visual culture more deeply, to come up with more interesting insights on how pieces of art/visual culture work, to have informed, intelligent reasons for liking or disliking a piece of art/visual culture, and to write - clearly, persuasively, and interestingly - about stuff you've viewed. We'll use the basic analytic categories of formal elements, biography, feminism, marxism, and iconography. We'll read, write, and create a few simple art projects. We'll discuss the relationships between artists and society, the impact of art/visual culture, and how art develops over time and space. Additionally, we'll go over the basic forms, contexts, techniques and materials in/with which artists work.

**INTENDED STUDENT COMPETENCIES & OUTCOMES**

Students will:

1. Explore art/visual culture for communication and meaning.
2. Develop and use a visual vocabulary including the elements and principles of design.
3. Develop a process of art appreciation and critique.
4. Understand and discuss art/visual culture, formally and contextually (culturally, socially and historically).
5. Recognize art forms and styles.
6. Demonstrate some art techniques to understand and appreciate creative processes.

By the end of the semester, each member of this class should have the vocabulary, sensibility and historical context to engage with the visual and conceptual aspects of culturally based products - be it painting, an advertising campaign, video game, building, kitchen appliance or viral video. The goal of this course will be not only to enhance your experience in a gallery or museum, but also to encourage you to look at the world itself with new eyes.

This course is consistent with CSU-Pueblo's General Education goals to prepare students to: effectively communicate and think critically, articulate the nature of a multicultural society and recognize the role of aesthetic awareness (Diversity and Social Responsibility), explain and reflect on positive and negative responses to controversial artworks (Personal Values and Ethics), and analyze the role of artists as both integrated with/isolated from mainstream society (Wellness and Well-Being).

**HOW WE WILL CONDUCT THIS COURSE:**

You are required to bring your copy of the text under discussion, a notebook, and a pen/pencil to each class.

- 1. Midterm and Final Essays** (these are open-book/take-home)
  - 2. Gallery/Museum visits** (on your own time - not in class - we won't all fit in some of the spaces)
  - 3. Weekly readings and writings** (reviews and reflections demonstrating critical thinking)
  - 4. Unscheduled (a.k.a. 'pop') quizzes** on readings assignments, and things viewed/discussed in class
- Since this is also a course on how to write about art/visual culture, there will also be exercises and

quizzes on principles of writing, usage, mechanics, spelling, and vocabulary. (You are responsible for finding out the meaning of any unfamiliar word you encounter in either the readings or the class discussions: you can either look it up in a dictionary or ask me).

**5. Class participation** is essential (critiques, in-class discussions, group work)

You must not censor yourself from asking questions that you may think sound dumb, obvious, unsophisticated, or lame. Because art and visual culture are such hard, weird things to try to study, a stupid-seeming comment or question can end up being valuable or even profound. If anyone snickers/ groans, smirks, eye-rolls, or in any way ridicules someone else's comment/question, they will be warned once in private, and on the second offense they will be kicked out of class. This does not mean we all have to sit around smiling at one another for 3 hours each week. No truths about art and visual culture are carved in stone or beyond dispute. I urge you to respectfully disagree with one another and with me -- and I get to disagree with you too. This is not just a Find-Out-What-The-Teacher-Thinks-And-Regurgitate-It-Back course. It's not like math or physics -- there are no right or wrong answers (though there are interesting versus dull, fertile versus barren, plausible versus whacko answers).

**6. Lecture/video/discussion** classes

**7. Hands-on class activities** to process through doing

See schedule for dates and times

## **BLACKBOARD**

You must check e-mail and Blackboard on a regular basis to take this course. Assignments will be dispersed via email/Blackboard.

## **EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE**

Visit [this link](#) for guidelines on email correspondence.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Visit [this link](#) for complete attendance policy.

## **WRITING POLICY**

Visit this link for complete writing policy.

## **LATE WORK POLICY**

I do not accept late work. Further [details here](#).

Hard-copy/physical assignments are always due at the start of class - I do not accept late assignments, so no, you cannot hand in the assignment 5 minutes after class has started, or at the end of class.

Blackboard assignments are always due one hour before the start of class.

## **GRADING SYSTEM:**

I want all of you to receive an honest and fair grade for the work you perform in this class. If you confused as to [why you received a specific grade \(click link for clarification\)](#), please do not hesitate to discuss it with me. If you are having any other difficulties in this course, please consult with me so we can resolve them. Final grades will be determined by the [assignments](#) and [attendance](#).

## **ACCOMMODATIONS:**

This University abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which stipulates that no student shall be denied the benefits of an education "solely by reason of a handicap." If you have a documented disability that may impact your work in this class and for which

you may require accommodations, please see the Disability Resource Coordinator as soon as possible to arrange accommodations. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with and provide documentation of your disability to: the Disability Resource Office, which is located in the Library and Academic Resources Center, Suite 169.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**

“Academic Dishonesty” is defined in the CSU-Pueblo Catalog 2009 as “any form of cheating which results in students giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work that is not their own.” For more information and for a detailed description of specific acts of academic dishonesty or misconduct, please see pages 42 and 43 of the catalog.

### **TEXTS**

*Looking at Art* by Laurie Schneider Adams

### **WARNING**

This is a challenging course. There is a lot of writing. I will hold you accountable to the attendance policy.

For those who are concerned about grades, here is the breakdown from last semester:

A: 12, A-: 7, B+: 5, B: 8, B-: 4, C+: 1, C: 6, D+: 0, D: 1, D-: 3, F: 12 (7 of these F's are due to attendance)

### **SCHEDULE**

See [online schedule](#). Check back often.