

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film
COMS 367 (L01): Visual Communication and Culture
SPRING 2022: May 4 to June 16 (excluding May 23)
Lecture: TR 12:00 to 14:45

Instructor:	Maria Victoria Guglietti
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Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	<i>Friday 9:30-11:30 (Zoom or in person) or by appointment</i>

Course Description

This course introduces students to the critical study of images in society. Topics will include the relationship between images and culture, the centrality of vision in Western thought, the role images play in the formation of identity, the rise of a society of spectacle and a disciplinary society, visual methods and visual literacy, and the construction of audiences through visual technologies.

Additional Information

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline or on D2L. Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

Objectives of the Course

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- critically analyze visual phenomena from multiple theoretical perspectives
- reflect on and evaluate multidisciplinary scholarly work in the area of visual culture
- identify, analyze, experience and reflect on how visual practices produce a “way of seeing”
- produce a visual argument through multimodal practices
- critically reflect on their own visual thinking

Textbooks and Readings

The following are MANDATORY readings:

Arnheim, R. (1983). Perceiving, thinking, forming. *Art Education: Art and the Mind*, 36(2), 9-11.
https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1vibdgm/TN_informaworld_s10_1080_00043125_1983_11653390

Barthes, R. (1977). The rhetoric of the image. In *Image, Music, Text*, (pp. 32-51). NY: Hill and Wang. **Excerpts on D2L**

Cartwright, L. (1995). An etiology of the neurological gaze. In *Screening the body: Tracing medicine's visual culture*.

<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=310310&ppg=66>

Debord, G. (1994). The society of the spectacle. In N. Mirzoeff (Ed.), *The visual culture reader* (2nd edition). (pp. 142-144). Routledge. **D2L**

Elkins, J. (2001). *Envoi: How to look and possibly be moved*. In *Pictures and tears: A history of people who have cried in front of paintings* (pp. 166-176). Taylor & Francis. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=242017&ppg=175>

Foster, H. (1991). *Armor Fou*. *October*, 56, 65-97. doi:10.2307/778724
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/778724>

Jay, M. (1993). The disenchantment of the eye: Bataille and the Surrealists. In *Downcast eyes: The denigration of vision in twentieth-century French thought*. University of California Press. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=223794&ppg=129>

Marks, L. (2002). Introduction from *Touch: Sensuous theory and multisensory media*. In A. Jones (Ed.). *The feminism and visual culture reader* (2nd edition). (pp. 139-145). Routledge. **D2L**

Phillips, R. (2001). Performing the Native woman: Primitivism and mimicry in early twentieth-century visual culture. In L. Jessup (Ed.). *Antimodernism and artistic experience* (pp. 26-49). <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=4669961&ppg=41>

Slater, D. (1995). Photography and modern vision: The spectacle of "natural magic." In C. Jenks. (Ed.) *Visual Culture* (pp. 218-237)
<https://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=17365295&site=ehost-live>

Sontag, S. (2004). Regarding the torture of others. *New York Times Magazine*, 6.24.
https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1vibdgm/TN_proquest215471234

Learning Technologies and Requirements

In order to complete courses, University of Calgary students are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates, with current antivirus software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection, and a current and updated web browser;
- A webcam (built-in or external), and a microphone and speaker (built-in or external) or headset with microphone (for online synchronous courses only).

If you need access to other software programs to complete assignments, your instructor will provide relevant information and links.

If you have technical difficulties, contact IT support services. See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html>

Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

The use of smartphones or other electronic devices is strictly limited to activities connected with the class.

Please familiarize yourself with the University’s policy on the recording of lectures, which is outlined at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>, and carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
3%	<p>Opening Reflection on Visual Literacy- Individual (written or multimedia)</p> <p>Students will complete a written or multimedia reflection of their visual literacy skills based on Arnheim’s discussion of visual literacy introduced in week 2. The written reflection will be approx. 500 words while a video will be 3 to 5 minutes long. Those interested in producing a multimedia reflection should consult with the instructor for the length and duration of the multimedia artifact.</p> <p>The reflection will receive a pass/fail grade if it meets the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it has the appropriate length - it addresses visual literacy according to Arnheim - it constitutes a reflection. <p>A more detailed rubric will be posted in D2L.</p>	<p>May 12 by 11:59PM (D2L dropbox)</p>
30%	<p>Visual Journal- individual (each entry includes written reflection approx. 400 words and image production)</p> <p>Students will complete a reflective visual journal assignment throughout the term. To complete the journal students will address 6 of 12 questions provided by the instructor. Each question addresses a reading discussed in class. The questions promote the written and visual reflection of students, who will be not just writing their answers but producing an image (i.e., the alteration and repurposing of a publicly available image or the production of an original image) to answer each question. This production will not be evaluated in technical or formal terms but in terms of depth of reflection and clear engagement with the readings. A more detailed rubric will be provided in D2L.</p>	<p>First part (3 entries- 15%) due on May 20 by 11:59PM (dropbox)</p> <p>Second part (3 entries- 15%) due June 15th by 11:59PM¹(dropbox)</p>
27%	<p>Group activities (written, approx. 1000 words)</p> <p>In groups of four, students will collaborate to complete three open book assignments, each will require the theoretical analysis of a case study. Instructions will be posted a week before the deadline. Students will have the chance to form groups the first week of class. Each group assignment is 9%.</p> <p><u>Group members will receive the same grade on assignments; however, the instructor reserves the right to award differential grades based on group peer reviews or information indicating significantly uneven contributions by group members.</u></p>	<p>Due on: May. 18th June 1st AND 10th</p> <p>One submission per group by 11:59 PM</p>

¹ Note that most deadlines are scheduled outside class time.

	Further instructions will be posted on D2L.	(dropbox)
40%	<p>Experiencing vision (Final Project) (individual- multimedia and written)</p> <p>This assignment requires students to plan, experience, analyze and reflect on their own visual practices. To this end, students will plan an experience that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. involves visual practices (observing, participating in, consuming, analyzing, evaluating and/or producing visual phenomena) 2. it is not just mediated by a screen. <p>Examples of embodied visual practices are attending a museum exhibit, walking in the mountains, going to the cinema, drawing, sculpting, watching people walk, attending a performance, taking pictures, dressing up, dancing, meeting with friends, etc.</p> <p>The project has three main components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the documentation of the experience in the form of a photo or multimedia essay (approx. 10 images + 500/800 words, 15%) b. a written theoretical analysis of the experience that adopts at least two of the theoretical lenses discussed in class. (approx. 1800 words, 15%) c. a written critical reflection to identify the main learning associated with the experience. (approx. 1000 words, 10%) <p>Further instructions will be posted on D2L the first week of class.</p>	June 18 th (D2L dropbox)

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will attempt to schedule the final exam in the evening, but there is no guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

Note: You do not have to complete all the assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

Submission of Assignments

Please submit all assignments by uploading them to the designated D2L dropbox. Include your name and ID number on all assignments. Be sure to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to submit the proper version.

Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recording for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. An assignment received two days after the deadline will receive an automatic 0.

***The Day of Grace:** One day of grace is available to all students to cover unforeseen problems that prevent them from meeting a deadline such as computer crashes, vehicle breakdowns, lack of printer ink or money, unexpected family obligations, etc. Students may use this day **ONLY ONCE** during the semester. **Students using this day of grace must upload the assignment by 4:30 pm the next calendar day** to avoid a late penalty and write "grace" on their subject line. It should be noted that assignments handed in this manner may be returned 1-2 classes later than those submitted on the due date.

Student Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. For the full policy on Student Accommodations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require a medical note. For information on the use of a statutory declaration, see the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

Expectations for Writing

Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, final grades are reported as letter grades. All assignments will receive a percentage grade.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%

1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

* Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. **In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin.** Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support> or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

Course materials created by the instructor (including lectures, course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed, or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

To ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes & electronic versions of textbooks), all students are required to read the *University of Calgary Policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright* at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy> and the requirements of the *Copyright Act* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>). Students who use material protected by copy-right in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the *University of Calgary Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics>

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal

For university regulations and procedures related to deferral of term work, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

For information about deferrals of final examinations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

For information about requesting a reappraisal of course work or of a final grade, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk. For resources on D2L, Zoom, Yuja, etc., see <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/resources-for-students/>. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

	Tuesdays 12:00 – 14:45 SA129	Thursdays 12:00- 14:45 SA129
Week1 May 5		Topic: The constructed nature of seeing Reading: Berger, <i>Ways of seeing</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0pDE4VX_9Kk
Week 2 May 10 & 12	Topic: Visual Literacy Reading: Arnheim, <i>Perceiving, Thinking, Forming</i> , pp. 9-11	Topic: Interrogating images Reading: Barthes, <i>The Rhetoric of the Image</i> , Assignment: opening reflection due May 12
Week 3 May 17 & 19	Topic: The ethics of seeing Reading: Sontag, <i>Regarding the torture of others</i> , pp. 6-24. Assignment: group activity 1 due May 18	Topic: Visualizing the body Reading: Foster, <i>Armor Four</i> , pp. 65-97 Assignment: visual journal (first part) due May 20
Week 4 May 24 & 26	Topic: Pure vision Reading: Slater, <i>Photography and modern vision</i> , pp. 218-237.	Topic: Performing Authenticity Phillips, <i>Performing the Native Woman</i> , pp. 26-49

<p>Week 5 May 31 & June 2</p>	<p>Topic: Resisting ocularcentrism Reading: Jay, The disenchantment of the eye: Bataille and the Surrealists (pp. 211-262) Assignment: Group activity 2 due June 1</p>	<p>Topic: Spectacle Reading: Debord, The society of the spectacle (excerpts), pp. 142-144.</p>
<p>Week 6 June 7 & 9</p>	<p>Topic: Discipline Reading: Cartwright, An etiology of the neurological gaze, pp. 47-80</p>	<p>Topic: Haptic vision Reading: Marks, Introduction from <i>Touch</i>, pp. 139-145. Assignment: Group activity 3 due June 10</p>
<p>Week 7 June 14 & 16</p>	<p>Topic: Feeling Reading: Elkins, <i>Envoi</i>: How to look and even possibly be moved. pp. 166-176. Assignment: Visual journal (second part) due June 15th</p>	<p>NO CLASS- TIME DEDICATED TO FINAL EXAM</p> <p>Final take-home due June 18th @ 11:59PM via dropbox</p>