

CRITICAL THEORY IN THE VISUAL ARTS

AVT 472:002, 3 credits, Spring 2016

TR 12:00-1:15 p.m., AB 1005

Prerequisite: ARTH 374 or permission of instructor.

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2017 Art & Design Building
Office Hours: By appointment
MW noon-1 p.m.
TR 9:30-10:30 a.m.

This so-called contemporary art is not a form but a philosophy of society.
– Ai Weiwei, Chinese contemporary artist and dissident

Reality is not defined by matters of fact...Matters of fact are only very partial, and, I would argue, very polemical, very political renderings of matters of concern.

- Bruno Latour, French theorist of science

Art is in the business of questioning facts.

-Holland Carter, “Well, It Looks Like Truth,”
New York Times 1.18.2008

*We've all got opinions/Where do they come from?
Each day seems like a natural fact/But what we think/Changes how we act.*

- Gang of Four, “Why Theory?”

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Critical theory has two meanings in this course. First, it refers to the sets of ideas developed over the course of the last century that form the basis of serious critical response to contemporary art (as found in *Art Journal* and *Artforum*, for example). Second, it refers to a type of writing and thinking that attempts to make sense of what art means in contemporary society—to see the art of the moment, for example, as an expression of, product of, and participant in the currents of social, political, cultural and economic power moving in society as a totality.

We will be more deeply engaged with the second meaning, but the goal of the course is to help you gain the ability to move comfortably in both realms. Investigating the concerns and language of critical theory will help you as artists think more deeply about your own art practice and about the ways in which art is interconnected with the rest of your social and cultural environment. Even better, studying critical theory will give you tools to decide *where* you stand, *why* you might stand where you stand, and *what* political, social and cultural beliefs and values you are expressing when you make or champion certain types of art. Critical theory will help you make links between art history, your own and other artists' practices, and the responses of various art publics to new and challenging art. It will also give you the tools to understand and communicate

with others about contemporary art and visual culture—perhaps the most important role of the artist or art-educated person as a citizen in a democratic society.

To achieve these goals, we will begin with a highly selective and focused overview of the roots of critical theory in the arts over the last century. Then we will spend our time looking at three extended case studies of subject areas in which contemporary artists explore, enact and extend critical theory in their artmaking. In your required work for the course, you, too, will have the opportunity to reflect on and extend the case studies.

This is not, in the end, a course primarily about translating artwork into words; rather, it is about experiencing the ways that art both draws on theory created in language, and makes theory in its own languages. Art is a way of thinking as much as it is a way of making; in particular, it is an extraordinary way of thinking about how to make the world better and more humane, because even when art is a searing critique of human failings, that critique has the extraordinary virtue of putting a creative new object or experience into the world, even while lamenting failure and ruin. So instead of picking the world apart, art augments the world.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who actively participate in this course will:

- Understand how art and critical theory relate to each other
- Have a greater appreciation for contemporary art that is theoretically informed and that generates theory in its own languages
- Read contemporary art criticism with greater understanding of the vocabulary, assumptions and theoretical commitments of the writers
- Write with greater skill and clarity about art within a theoretical framework
- Better locate their own artistic productions within the framework of contemporary art theory and practice
- Make better-informed and better-reasoned arguments in response to public discussion on such subjects as "the future of art" and "what is art for"?

COURSE TEXTS

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following three required texts are available in the George Mason University Bookstore:
Jeffrey Kastner, ed. *Nature*. Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art. MIT Press, 2012.
ISBN 978-0262517669

Lisa Le Feuvre, ed. *Failure*. Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art. MIT Press, 2010.
ISBN 978-0262514774

Richard Noble, ed. *Utopias*. Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art. MIT Press, 2009,
ISBN: 978-0262640695

According to the George Mason University Bookstore, all three books will cost between \$33.75 and \$74.85, depending on whether you rent or purchase them, and whether they are new or used. If buying from an online retailer, be sure you will receive the books in time to prepare for the

classes in which each book will be used (see the schedule of assignments at the end of this syllabus).

Assignments from these texts are listed in the schedule of assignments later in this syllabus. I will also require readings that are not in this book, as well as web links and media assignments; these resources will be linked or otherwise made available to you for download on our AVT 472 course site on Blackboard. Files distributed in this way may be password protected—I will provide you with the password in class, and it is also provided in a PDF file at the top of the Course Content page on our Blackboard site.

Any moving-image materials assigned for viewing *outside* of class either will be screened at an announced time and location, made available on reserve in the Media Services area of the Johnson Center Library, or provided to you via Blackboard as a link to a download or a streaming site. Where viewing assignments are available for streaming on such sites as Netflix, HuluPlus, Amazon Video, or other repositories, I will identify these sites for you for your convenience in viewing them.

From time to time, I may substitute or supplement the assignments on the schedule with other materials (articles, websites, etc.). If and when I do so, you will receive instructions for accessing the material by e-mail and on Blackboard.

Statement on Materials of a Potentially Objectionable Nature: For AVT majors pursuing a BFA in the School of Art, this is a required course that investigates a range of contemporary art practices. We may from time to time be viewing or reading materials that some students may find distressing or objectionable for religious, cultural, or personal reasons. These materials are presented as objects of study and analysis and as part of the educational process, without any intent to cause offense or distress. If you are concerned that your religious or cultural beliefs would make it impossible for you to participate in part or in whole in this class, please see me at the beginning of the term so that we can discuss ways to manage your concerns.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

The following resources are available in the Mason library and from online booksellers. They will help you research topics in critical theory and the visual arts that you want to explore in more depth. I will be glad to help you select specific resources from this list to pursue your interests.

Robert Atkins. *ArtSpeak: A Guide to Contemporary Ideas, Movements, and Buzzwords, 1945 to the Present*. Abbeville Press, 2013. ISBN 978-0789211514

Diarmuid Costello and Jonathan Vickery, eds. *Art: Key Contemporary Thinkers*. Berg Publishers 2007. ISBN 1845203208

Cynthia Freeland. *Art Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2007. ISBN 0192804634

Charles Harrison and Paul J. Wood, eds. *Art in Theory 1900 - 2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas, 2nd edition*. Wiley-Blackwell 2002. ISBN 0631227083

David Joselit. *After Art*. Princeton University Press, 2013. ISBN 978-0691150444

Pamela M. Lee. *Forgetting the Art World*. MIT Press, 2012. ISBN 978-0262017732
Simon Leung and Zoya Kocur, eds. *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*. Wiley-Blackwell 2004. ISBN 0631228675
Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, eds. *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings, Second Edition, Revised and Expanded by Kristine Stiles*. University of California Press 2012. ISBN 978-0520257184
Sarah Thornton. *Seven Days in the Art World*. W. W. Norton, 2009. ISBN 978-0393337129
Sarah Thornton. *33 Artists in 3 Acts*. W. W. Norton, 2014. ISBN 978-0393240979
Brian Wallis, ed. *Blasted Allegories: An Anthology of Writings by Contemporary Artists*. New Museum of Contemporary Art/distributed by The MIT Press 1989. ISBN 978-0262730860
Robert Williams, *Art Theory: An Historical Introduction, 2nd edition*. Wiley-Blackwell 2009. ISBN 978-1405175531

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ATTENDANCE

DON'T MISS CLASS, DON'T BE LATE, DON'T LEAVE EARLY.

Much of the learning in this course takes place in the classroom and cannot be gleaned merely from reading texts or completing assignments. ***Therefore, each absence beyond THREE over the course of the term will lower your final grade by 5 points; significantly more than three absences may cause you to fail the course regardless of your grades on particular assignments. Each late arrival or early departure will count as ½ absence.*** *Late arrival* means arriving after I have taken the initial roll. *Early departure* means leaving before the scheduled end time of the class. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to sign the "late arrival" sheet that I will set out in the classroom when I have completed the initial taking of the roll.

In case of absence, you are responsible for finding out what happened in class by consulting a classmate. If we have in-class assignments or presentations when you are late or absent, this work cannot be made up.

Please understand: there are no "excused" absences. I permit three absences that will not count against you, so be sure that you preserve them for use during illness, unavoidable personal issues, or other situations that require you not to be present. If a serious issue arises that may affect your presence or participation for a longer period of time (serious personal illness, family illness, etc.), consult with me immediately and we will determine what you should do.

If you are absent on either day that we do proposal planning work in class before each proposal presentation, your final grade for that proposal presentation may be reduced, depending on your level of participation in the project and your share of responsibility for the presentation. I will make a decision based on the nature of your absence and the information I gather about your participation in the planning and execution of the proposal presentation.

SPECIAL NOTE: MASON CLOSURES AND UNFORESEEN INSTRUCTOR ABSENCES

MASON CLOSURES

Please be sure you are signed up for Mason Alerts to receive notification of unanticipated university closures or delays caused by campus emergencies, weather issues or other unforeseeable problems. In the event of such an alert, we will follow the university's decisions for whether our class will meet. I will also send an announcement as soon as possible via Blackboard to confirm, and will follow that as soon as possible with a second announcement to let you know how we will adjust our schedule and assignments.

I understand that inclement weather may involve special challenges for some students who drive long distances on secondary roads or who have children whose schools may open late when Mason is open. Do not risk your safety or the safety of your children; in these circumstances, keep me informed, and we will discuss what to do.

UNFORESEEN INSTRUCTOR ABSENCES

If I ever have to cancel class because of illness or a personal emergency, I will send an announcement via Blackboard as soon as I am aware of the issue. If you miss the announcement, you will see a note on the classroom door when you arrive. I will follow my announcement as soon as possible with a second announcement to let you know how we will adjust our schedule and assignments.

PREPARED PARTICIPATION

Consistent class participation is expected of all students. I expect you to read and/or view carefully all assignments, and to come to class prepared to discuss the day's materials. I will also expect courteous behavior in discussions; that is, respectful exchanges (even in heated disagreements) and enough self-awareness to keep yourself from monopolizing the discussion.

Your participation will be considered "adequate" (C-level) if you are paying attention, adding a comment now and then, and following my instructions for in-class activities. "Good" (B-level) participation includes all of the C-level expectations plus active interaction with teacher and students on a regular basis about the works we read or the projects we've done. "Excellent" (A-level) participation includes all of the B-level expectations plus out-of-class enrichment activities, such as bringing to class the URL for a website that is relevant to the class discussion. D-level participation grades result from disruptive behavior, texting or using social media during class, discourtesy, inattention or sleeping in class, or lack of involvement in group work. F-level participation grades result from excessive absence and/or egregious D-level behaviors.

The "group work" days for each of our practical theory modules are especially important in terms of your grades for the proposal presentation. Your group will be counting on you to pull your weight and contribute actively to the process. You will be asked to identify the part you played in the group process, as well as the part played by your fellow group members. Attendance is critical on those days, as is active and productive engagement with the group. I will be closely observing your group activities to determine your level of commitment and participation, which will ultimately affect your grade for these activities.

You will have the opportunity to boost your participation grade by submitting reading response sheets for the readings you complete during the “nature,” “failure,” and “how are we to live?” portions of the course. These sheets are a way for you to gather your thoughts about the readings and to use them to prepare for your group work. Each sheet acceptably completed will add one-half point to your participation grade.

REQUIRED COMMUNICATION VIA MASON EMAIL AND BLACKBOARD

Please note that because of university policies, I can only communicate with you via your Mason e-mail address. You will be expected to check your George Mason University e-mail and the Blackboard site for this course frequently during the term. Updates to the syllabus and other vital course information will be sent to you at your George Mason University e-mail address and via the Blackboard site. You will be responsible for having read whatever I send you via these means.

ABSOLUTE BAN ON ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND NON-CLASS-RELATED COMPUTING DURING CLASS

It is extremely rude to be engaged outside the classroom while class is in session—especially in a small room where we are all packed together and can see each others’ actions. Phones and social media distract other students, and they distract me too. **PUT YOUR PHONE AWAY** and deactivate social media apps on your tablet or computer during class time.

Computers and tablets may **ONLY** be used during class time if the work is **DIRECTLY** related to what we are doing at the moment. **NEVER** work on assignments for other classes during our class time. One violation will result in a warning; more than one violation will affect your grade, because I will mark you absent for that class.

ASSIGNMENTS

Students will demonstrate their mastery of the course learning objectives by completing the assignments and requirements listed below. *Detailed instructions for Paper #1 and for the Linkages Project will be given in a project assignment sheet for each, posted on Blackboard; for the papers and proposal on Nature, Failure, and “How Are We to Live?” instructions and due dates are included in the Nature, Failure, and “How Are We to Live?” Process Sheets.* Due dates are also incorporated into the schedule in this syllabus.

- **Prepared Participation:** Completing all reading and viewing assignments (along with any reading response sheets) and coming to class prepared to participate fully and actively in discussions.
- **Proposal Presentations:** You will work in class with an assigned group of students to create a proposal for a public artwork related to each of the three case study areas we engage with. Only the final proposal will require any formal documentation to be turned in.
- **Short Papers:** You will write three short papers (of approximately 4 pages each) in response to the work we do in three of the subject matter units we work on this term. A detailed assignment will be made on each section’s instruction sheet. Due dates are listed in the schedule of assignments appended to the syllabus and on the assignment sheet.
 - Paper #1: Problem/Response (intro to critical theory)
 - Paper #2: Reflection on Nature unit

- Paper #3: Reflection on Failure unit
- **“Linkages” Project:** A one-page paper linking one or more of your own works to the work of the term (this is in lieu of a final exam). The due date is on the schedule of assignments and on the detailed assignment sheet for the project, available on Blackboard. In-class presentation is a required part of the project; any student who is not present to present her/his project will receive a one-letter grade deduction from the final grade for the project.

Please note that, regardless of grades earned in individual activities, ALL three papers and the Linkages Project must be turned to pass the course.

TURNING IN YOUR WORK

All work for my review will be turned in via an assignment drop box on Blackboard, No printed copy is required.

NOTE: If your deadline is approaching and Blackboard is experiencing problems, send your submission to me via e-mail so that you can meet the deadline, and then post it to Blackboard at your first opportunity.

ASSIGNMENT LATENESS PENALTIES

Any assignments turned in after the *announced due date and time* will be **marked down one letter grade per day it is late, with an additional one letter grade deducted for each subsequent class period until the assignment is turned in.** Work that is more than two weeks late will not be graded, but it is to your advantage to turn it in anyway: a paper or project that is accepted but ungraded counts into your term grade as an F, while a paper or project not received at all counts into your term grade as a zero.

No additional work will be accepted for a grade after 11 A.M. today (5/3). NO EXCEPTIONS.

WEIGHTING OF ASSIGNMENTS

Course assignments and requirements will be weighted as follows in determining your final grade:

Paper #1	15%
Paper #2	15%
Paper #3	15%
Proposal Presentations 1 & 2 (5% each)	10%
Proposal Presentation 3	10%
Linkages Project	10%
Attendance and PREPARED participation (including reading response sheets)	25%

Note that excessive absence or failure to turn in any of the major assignments may result in failure of the course regardless of these weightings. For further explanation, please see the sections above on “Attendance” and “Assignment Lateness Penalties.”

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS

IN WRITING ASSIGNMENTS, I WILL LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- A clear understanding of the assignment, evidence of engagement with the topic, and an attempt to find personal solutions
- Individual initiative and an effort to carry assignments as far as possible
- Evidence of drawing upon the materials studied in class, additional research and other resources to expand understanding and enrich content
- Overall quality of thinking and writing.
- Attention to the proprieties of college-level writing

IN YOUR PROPOSED PUBLIC ART PROJECTS, I WILL LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- The degree to which the project responds to the assignment and demonstrates growth of understanding of the issue through the process of developing the project
- Individual initiative and an effort to think through the implications of the proposed project
- Clear presentation of your process in class and your openness in responding to questions and to *constructive* criticism from me and from your fellow class members
- Technical and aesthetic merit, the feasibility of the project proposed, and the degree to which it engages its intended audience

In general, a paper or project in the A range shows SUPERIOR mastery of these criteria (exploring the possibilities of the assignment well beyond what's required, with significant success); a paper in the B range is STRONG (showing ambition and effort beyond the bare requirements, with some success); a C or C+ paper is COMPETENT (meets all criteria adequately); a C- or D paper is FLAWED (missing the mark on several important criteria); an F paper is SEVERELY FLAWED, INCOMPLETE, or MORE THAN TWO WEEKS LATE. A paper that is not submitted receives a zero.

COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Final grades reflect how well you accomplish the objectives of the course. Possible grades for this class are A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F.

In calculating your final grade, I will apply the following equivalencies:

A+: 98 and above	B+: 88-89	C+: 78-79	D: 60-69
A: 95-97	B: 85-87	C: 75-77	F: 59 and below
A-: 90-94	B-: 80-84	C-: 70-74	

Note: Scores are rounded one decimal place to the nearest whole number. Thus 93.5=94; 88.467=88.

Academic Policies

As a courtesy to others in the class, and in accordance with George Mason University policy, please turn off all cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion.

Commitment to Diversity

This class will be conducted as an *intentionally* inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity and expression, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Resource for University Policies

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Important Deadlines

Last Day to Add/Last Day to Drop with no tuition penalty	February 1
Last Day to Drop	February 19
Selective Withdrawal Period	February 22-March 25
Incomplete work from Fall 2015 due to instructor	March 25

Once the add-and-drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the School of Art office (or in the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed). Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT/School of Art majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, College Hall C211.

Official Communications via Mason E-Mail

To comply with university, Virginia and federal student privacy requirements, I am only permitted to exchange e-mail communications with you via your MasonLive e-mail account. You are responsible for the content of all university communication sent to your MasonLive e-mail account, so be sure to activate and check it regularly.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design

As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Academic Integrity

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously, and violations are handled as grave matters.

What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind), please ask for guidance and clarification.

No grade is important enough to justify Honor Code violations, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the Mason Counseling and Psychological Services staff.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences

If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Office of Disability Services (703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

The Collaborative Learning Hub (CLUB)

Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual-monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects. Macs are also available, as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ittraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.

Other Useful Campus Resources

- *For help with writing:* The Writing Center, A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200 or <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>
- *For help with research:* University Libraries "Ask a Librarian" service; send a text message to 703-291-1468 or go to <http://library.gmu.edu/ask>
- *For help with academic problems or with personal problems affecting academic performance:* Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS); (703) 993-2380 or <http://caps.gmu.edu>

School of Art Enrichment Opportunities

ArtsBus

The dates for Spring 2016 ArtsBus trips are February 20, March 19, and April 9.

The ArtsBus is an all-day trip to New York City's art districts via chartered buses. School of Art faculty members accompany the trip and offer 2-hour guided tours of various museums and galleries when you arrive. If you choose to join one of the tours, you will have several hours of free time on your own afterwards (typically starting at about 1 p.m.) to have lunch, to visit additional art venues or to explore the city.

- AVT 300 is a 0-credit course open to students in any major; the course has no tuition charge but does have a course fee. The course fee covers the cost of your seat on the bus, plus the administrative costs of running the ArtsBus program. The fee is less than the cost of a ticket purchased at the general box office rate.
- Each SOA major must have up to five AVT 300/ArtsBus credits before graduation. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.
- If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.
- Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need ArtsBus credit for graduation **BUT** may need to go on the ArtsBus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center for the Arts.

Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.

Visual Voices Lecture Series

Visual Voices is a yearlong series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater. The Spring 2016 schedule includes four lectures:

January 28	SoA Graduate Students	"Loading Content"
February 4	Kevin Wylie	"Looking backwards before we design forward. Learning to question fashion before we build."
February 18	Bibiana Obler	"Jewelry/Art/Performance"
March 3	Sonja Mejcher-Atassi	"The Book as Document in Iraq"
March 17	Carrie Schneider	"Lucida Obscura"

Publishing Work Completed for This Class in *The George Mason Review*

The George Mason Review, Mason's journal of undergraduate student scholarship, publishes excellent undergraduate scholarship and creative research from across the disciplines. Every year *The George Mason Review* recognizes outstanding student work with a total of \$900 in awards. For more information, talk to me or visit the GMR website at <http://gmreview.gmu.edu/>

AVT 472:002 Topic and Assignment Schedule Spring 2016

This schedule is subject to change. Updates will be announced in class and/or by e-mail and will be made available on Blackboard. Each class will include significant visual material to complement the readings. You are responsible for both the reading material and the visual material. Be sure to check Blackboard folders for each class date for the latest links to readings, visual materials and websites.

Date	Topic	Assignments due on this date
Week 1 1/19-1/21	Introduction to class: What is critical theory in the visual arts? What can we learn from studying it? How is it part of contemporary art practice? (framework for understanding)	1/19: no assignment
		“Why Theory?” lyrics are posted on Blackboard
Week 2 1/26-1/28	Art in Theory: Locating and Dislocating Art (Modernism to Postmodernism)	1/21: Shiner, “Introduction,” <i>The Invention of Art</i> ; online, view Berger, “Ways of Seeing, Pt. 1
		1/26: NO CLASS—snow cancellation
Week 3 2/2-2/4	Art in Theory: Questioning Art’s (Dislocated) Purpose (Contemporary disillusionments and optimisms)	1/28: Selection from Baudelaire, “The Painter of Modern Life”; Rosenberg, “The Avant-Garde”; Tansey, “The Innocent Eye Test”
		2/2: readings from Baudrillard, “On the Murderous Capacity of Images”; Foucault, from <i>Discipline and Punish (on the panopticon)</i>
Week 4 2/9-2/11	Introduction to “Nature” (see assignment sheet for details)	2/4: Sarah Thornton, “10 Reasons Not to Write About the Art Market”; Peter London, “Art as Transformation”
		2/9: “Nature” introduction (consult the “nature” Process sheet for assignment)
Week 5 2/16-2/18	“Nature” (see assignment sheet for details)	Links on Blackboard in the Nature introduction folder to work by and about Rachel Sussman
		2/11: “Nature” articles #1
Week 6 2/23-2/25	“Nature” (see assignment sheet for details)	<i>Problem/Response Paper #1, “Intro to Critical Theory” due (posted to Blackboard no later than 11 a.m.)</i>
		2/16: “Nature” articles #2
Week 7 3/1-3/3	“Nature” (see assignment sheet for details)	2/18: “Nature” articles #3
		2/23: Wrap-up of “Nature”; start of group work
“Failure” (see assignment sheet for details)		2/25: Groups meet in the classroom to prepare nature proposal/presentation
		3/1: “Nature” presentations/proposal competition
		3/3: Introduction to “Failure”

AVT 472:002
Topic and Assignment Schedule
 Spring 2016

This schedule is subject to change. Updates will be announced in class and/or by e-mail and will be made available on Blackboard. Each class will include significant visual material to complement the readings. You are responsible for both the reading material and the visual material. Be sure to check Blackboard folders for each class date for the latest links to readings, visual materials and websites.

Date	Topic	Assignments due on this date
Week 8 3/8-3/10	NO CLASSES—SPRING BREAK	
Week 9 3/15-3/17	“Failure” (see assignment sheet for details)	3/15: “Failure” articles #1 3/17: “Failure” articles #2 <i>Reflection Paper #2, “Nature” due (posted to Blackboard no later than 11 a.m.)</i>
Week 10 3/22-3/24	“Failure” (see assignment sheet for details)	3/22: “Failure” articles #3 3/24: wrap-up of “Failure”; start of group work
Week 11 3/29-3/31	“Failure” (see assignment sheet for details)	3/29: Groups meet in the classroom to prepare failure proposal/presentation 3/31: “Failure” proposal presentation/competition
Week 12 4/5-4/7	“How are we to live?” (see assignment sheet for details)	4/5: Introduction to “How are we to live?” 4/7: “How are we to live?” articles #1 <i>Reflection Paper #3, “Failure,” due (posted to Blackboard no later than 11 a.m.)</i>
Week 13 4/12-4/14	“How are we to live?” (see assignment sheet for details)	4/12: “How are we to live?” articles #2 4/14: “How are we to live?” articles #3
Week 14 4/19-4/21	“How are we to live?” (see assignment sheet for details)	4/19: Wrap-up of “How are we to live?”; start of group work <i>Linkages project due (posted to Blackboard no later than 11 a.m.)</i> 4/21: Groups meet in the classroom to prepare “How are we to live?” proposal/presentation

AVT 472:002
Topic and Assignment Schedule
 Spring 2016

This schedule is subject to change. Updates will be announced in class and/or by e-mail and will be made available on Blackboard. Each class will include significant visual material to complement the readings. You are responsible for both the reading material and the visual material. Be sure to check Blackboard folders for each class date for the latest links to readings, visual materials and websites.

Date	Topic	Assignments due on this date
Week 15 4/26-4/28	“How are we to live?” proposal competition	4/26: “How are we to live?” proposal presentation/competition
	Wrap-up	4/28: “Linkages” projects presented in class
Week 16 5/3	Individual consultations (optional)—AB 2017	Turn in required individual response materials for “How Are We to Live?” proposal presentation on Blackboard by 11 a.m. today. NO ADDITIONAL WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR A GRADE AFTER 11 A.M. TODAY (5/3)—NO EXCEPTIONS!