

## SPCM 3310: Visual Culture, Rhetoric, and Performance

Dr. Melanie Kitchens, Email: [melkitch@uga.edu](mailto:melkitch@uga.edu)

Office: 124 Terrell Hall, Office Hours: MWF 10-11, M 12:15-1:15, and by appointment



### REQUIRED TEXTS:

Bang, Molly. *Picture This: How Pictures Work*. New York: SeaStar Books, 2000.

Barrett, Terry. *Criticizing Photographs: An Intro to Understanding Images*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Lon: Mayfield, 2000.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin Books, 1972.

Excerpts and Handouts.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

This course will provide both a theoretical and practical introduction to visual culture. A variety of theories and ways of looking/seeing will provide you with tools to analyze, critically evaluate, represent, and recreate the images you encounter from day to day.

### ASSIGNMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Participation and Attendance: Based on attendance, preparedness, and involvement in discussions and activities. Everyone will complete (in journal) a short homework assignment in response to the readings each week. Your responses should reflect your grasp of the material and prepare you for class discussions.

Visual Journal: Each student is required to keep a visual journal throughout the semester. You should be committed to your journal, recording and writing in it several times a week. I will give you visual and writing exercises throughout the semester. These exercises should be done in your journals and may include clippings and other visual representations. You will have several larger projects and presentations. Your journal should help you complete these projects. The more you contribute to your journal, the more your journal will be able to contribute to the richness and success of your larger projects. On occasion, I will ask you to share an entry from your journal with the class or you might volunteer to share if a

particular discussion inspires you to do so. I will also collect and view your journals several times during the semester. Please make sure you bring your journals to class.

Visual Exercises: You will do 6 Visual Exercises throughout the semester. You will receive an assignment handout with a written description for each assignment. They are due on the date indicated on the schedule. Preparation and execution for/of these exercises should be recorded in your visual journal.

Postcard of Forms I and II: The postcard form projects are described on the assignment handout as well and are due on the indicated date. For the first, you will be expected to bring and present to class two visual representations of a postcard of your choice. For the second, your visual representation will include you (your body representing/recreating the image and text of the postcard). Record and explore this project in your visual journal as well.

Image Text Critique: You will write a paper analyzing and critiquing a mediated image of your choice. Your paper should be proofread, typed, 4-5 pages, printed and turned in on time.

Image Performance: For your final presentation you will do a performance as described on the assignment handout. You must be present on all performance dates and prepared to perform on your assigned date.

Exams: You will take two short answer exams. On the exams, you will be expected to discuss and apply key concepts learned throughout the semester. I will provide you with a study guide for both exams.

**LATE OR MISSED WORK:** All assignments, presentations, and exams are due on the date noted on the schedule, and must be completed to pass the class. If for some reason you are absent on such a date, you may turn in your work late, but it will be docked one letter grade for every late day. No exceptions.

**FINAL EXAM:** Exam II will be given during the final exam period. No exceptions. Do not plan to leave for the holidays until after completing the final exam.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** The University, the Department of Speech Communication, and I personally take academic honesty very seriously. Every student at the University of Georgia should be familiar with the booklet, "A Culture of Honesty: Policies and Procedures on Academic Dishonesty." This document has a thorough presentation of four types of academic dishonesty including plagiarism, unauthorized assistance, lying/tampering, and theft, as well as the procedures that are in place to adjudicate alleged incidents of academic dishonesty.

**LEARNING ACCOMODATIONS:** Any students who need special accommodations for learning or who have particular needs are invited to share these concerns or requests with me as soon as possible. The Disability Resource Center (542-8719, Clark Howell Hall) provides written documentation that specifies the needed modifications (i.e., note taker, extra time for tests) to the instructor. If you have not contacted The Disability Resource Center to request a letter be sent to your instructor, please do so.

#### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADE**

##### **VALUES:**

To receive a passing grade, each student must complete the following:

Participation	50
Visual Journal	150
Visual Exercises (6)	300
Postcard of Forms I	100
Postcard of Forms II	100
Image Text Critique	100
Image Performance	100
Exam I Midterm	50
Exam II Final	50

##### **GRADE SCALE:**

A (930-1000); A- (900-929)  
B+ (880-899); B (830-879); B- (800-829)  
C+ (780-799); C (730-779); C- (700-729)  
D (600-699)  
F (599 and below)

## Tentative Schedule

August

### WHAT IS VISUAL CULTURE?

M17 Introductions

W19 Introductions

F21 Read: "What is Visual Culture," Evans and Hall  
"Images, Power, and Politics," Sturken and Cartwright

### VISUAL CULTURE/VISUAL FORMS AS CONSTRUCTS

M24 **Visual Exercise ONE due**

Read: Chapter One (1-14) and Chapter Two (15-16, 20-35), Barrett

W26 Read: Bang

"Formal Aesthetics," Kitchens

F2 Read: Chapter Three (36-52), Barrett

### VISUAL FORMS AS CONSTRUCTS

M 31 **Postcard of Forms I due** (2D and 3D Visual Representations)

Read: Chapter Five (96-103), Barrett

September

W 2 Is Seeing Believing?

Read: Chapter One, Berger

F 4 **Visual Exercise TWO due**

Forms: Montage, Collage, Bricolage

### WHAT IS PERFORMANCE/PERFORMING FORMS

M 7 Labor Day – No Class

W 9 Open and Closed Performance, Analogous, Qualitative, and Radical Forms

Read: "Performances: belief in the part one is playing," Goffman  
"What is performance?" Carlson

F 11 Repetition and Ritual

### DOING IMAGES

M 14 **Postcard of Forms II due**

Read: Chapter Six (116-130), Barrett

W 16 **Postcard of Forms II** (3D Performative Representation)

F 18 No Class

M 21 Read: "Rhetoric of the Image," Barthes  
Chapter Seven (140-167), Barrett

W 23 **Visual Exercise THREE due**

Punctum and Studium

F 25 Sounds as Images

Read: Cage excerpts

### THE GAZE

M 28 Being Seen and Looking

Read: Chapter 2 and 3, Berger

"The Gaze and the Other," "…and Gender," Sturken and Cartwright

W 30 Read: "Ink Marks" Jenkins

October

F 2 **Exam I**

### SPACE AS VISUAL

M 5 Proximity

Read: "Reading the Beach" Fiske

W 7 **Visual Exercise FOUR due**

F 9 **Visual Exercise FOUR** continued

THE ARCHIVE AND COLLECTING

M 12 Read: “Collecting, Display, and ...,” Sturken and Cartwright  
“Reading an Archive: Photography between Labor and Capitol,” Sekula  
“Unpacking My Library,” Benjamin

W 14 Watch “Shooting the Past”

F 16 Watch “Shooting the Past”

**Visual Exercise FIVE due**

IMAGES IN MOTION

M 19 Read: “Motion and Sequence,” Sturken and Cartwright

W 21 Read: “You Have to Love Dancing to Stick to it,” Cunningham  
“Physical Fitness,” Jenkins

F 23 Watch “True Stories”

POPULAR MEDIA AND CULTURE

M 26 Read: Chapter Seven, Berger  
“Media in Everyday Life,” Sturken and Cartwright

W 28 Read: “Advertising, Consumer Culture,” Sturken and Carwright

F 30 No Class – Fall Break

November

M 2 Read: “Reflexivity, Pomo, Pastiche ...,” Sturken and Cartwright

W 4 **Image Text Critique Due**

F 6 Image work

M 9 Image work

W 11 No Class – Kitchens at Conference

F 13 No Class – Kitchens at Conference

M 16 **Visual Exercise SIX due**

W 18 **Visual Exercise SIX due**

F 20 No Class

M 23-7 Thanksgiving Break

M 30 **Workshop Image Performance**

December

W 2 **Workshop Image Performance**

F 4 **Image Performance**

M 7 **Image Performance**

T 8 **Image Performance**

**FINAL EXAM: EXAM II MON, DEC 16 12:00-3:00**

**Bold Face indicates required attendance.**

Excerpts are taken from the following texts:

Barthes, Roland. “Rhetoric of the Image.” *Visual Culture: The Reader*. Ed, Evans and Hall. London: Sage, 1999.

Benjamin, Walter. “Unpacking My Library.” *Illuminations*. Trans. Harry Zorn. London: Random, 1999.

Carlson, Marvin. “What is performance.” *The Performance Studies Reader*. Ed, Henry Bial. London: Routledge, 2004.

Cartwright, Lisa and Marita Sturken. *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford P, 2009.

Evans, Jessica, and Stuart Hall. *Visual Culture: The Reader*. London: Sage, 1999.

Goffman, Irving. “Performances: Belief is Playing.” *The Performance Studies Reader*. Ed, Henry Bial. London: Routledge, 2004.

Jenkins, Emily. *Tongue First: Adventures in Physical Culture*. NY: Henry Holt, 1998.

Sekula, Allan. “Reading an Archive.” *Visual Culture: The Reader*. Ed, Evans and Hall. London: Sage, 1999.