



COURSE OUTLINE

<u>ART 125</u> Course Number	<u>Topics in Contemporary Art</u> Course Title
<u>3</u> Credits	<u>3 lecture</u> Hours: lecture/laboratory

Catalog description:

Exploration of trends and topics in contemporary art from 1945 to the present, involving a diverse range of artists who challenge preconceived notions of the role of art in today's society. Students learn to identify, analyze, and write about art through multi-media presentations, discussions, artists' talks, and a field trip.

Prerequisites: ENG 101 or divisional permission

Co-requisites: None

Required texts/other materials:

- Twentieth- Century American Art, Erika Doss, Oxford History of Art
- The Humanistic Tradition: Volume 6: Modernism, Globalism, Gloria K Fiero, McGraw-Hill
- Field trip fee.

Last revised: 2006

Course coordinator:

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Information resources

- Art 21, Season I, II, and III, DVDs, PBS Home Video,
- American Visions, VHS 5 tape set, PBS Home Video,
- Twentieth- Century American Art, Erika Doss, Oxford History of Art
- The Humanistic Tradition: Volume 6: Modernism, Globalism, and the Information, Age, Gloria K Fiero, McGraw-Hill
- Ways of Seeing, John Berger
- Beyond the Brillo Box, Arthur Danto
- Interpreting Art, Terry Barrett
- Various periodicals including: *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *Flash Art and Contemporary Visual Arts*

Other learning resources:

A group field trip to art exhibitions in NYC will be coordinated.

Course goals:

The student will be to:

- identify and analyze artists, trends and movements of the 20th century (from 1945-present)
- contextualize the art of today within the societies that create it, including cultural and technological influences
- gain familiarity with a number of strategies for interpreting art through applied criticism in group discussion
- research, critique, and decode artwork through written and oral presentations, while developing a personal voice as an interpreter
- understand the complex motivations behind art being made today, including personal, political, and economic incentives
- experience the impact of seeing art in person within a contemporary gallery/museum setting

Course-specific General Education goals and objectives

1. **Communication—English Language:** Student will communicate effectively in both speech and writing. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6)
3. **Critical Thinking, problem solving and information literacy:** Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information gathered through different media and from a variety of sources. (3.2 and 3.3)
4. **Ethical Dimension:** Students will recognize, analyze and assess ethical issues and situations. (4.1, 4.2, and 4.3)
7. **Society and human behavior:** Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions. (7.2)
8. **Aesthetic perspective:** Students will analyze works of the literary, visual or performing arts. (8.1 and 8.2)
9. **Historical perspective:** Students will analyze historical events and movements in western or non-western societies and assess their subsequent significance. (9.3)
10. **Diversity and global perspective:** Students will analyze the implications of commonalities and differences among culturally diverse peoples. (10.1 and 10.5)
(see attached form)

Units of study in detail

The student will be able to...

Unit I **Modern Art**

Learning Objectives

- identify movements and artists of Abstract Expressionism, Hard Edge and Color Field painting
- understand postwar abstraction and New York's new place in the art world
- gain knowledge of the theorists behind the movements, with emphasis on Greenberg.

Unit II Influence of the 50s-60s

Learning Objectives

- identify movements and artists of New Realism & Pop Art Op Art, and Super Realism
- analyze issues involving commodity and art.
- question the role of the artist in society

Unit III New Media in the 60's

Learning Objectives

- identify movements and artists of Happenings, Body Art, Performance Art, and Video Art
- discuss the connection between performance and the body
- organize and participate in a happening
- understand the impact of new technology on communication and the arts

Unit IV Form and Thought in the late 60's

Learning Objectives

- identify movements and artists of Conceptual Art, Minimalism, Heavy Metal, and Land Art
- juxtapose ideas of environment, interaction and traditional art viewing
- explore the theories behind the art including Sol Lewiitt and Robert Smithson.
- challenge ideas of authorship and the production of artwork

Unit V From the Margins to the Mainstream

Learning Objectives

- identify movements and artists of feminist and marginalized art
- correlate political and social changes with advances in art
- question the canonization of art and its exclusion of certain artists
- challenge the myth of the autonomous white male artist

Unit VI Money, Fashion, Politics: The 80's

Learning Objectives

- explore ideas of appropriation
- analyze artistic strategies of dealing with identity
- examine the relationship between a strong economy and art production
- debate ideas of censorship in relationship to publicly funded art

Unit VII Introduction to Pluralism from the 90's-Today

Learning Objectives

- explore ideas of pluralism, globalization, and post-modernism
- be introduced to artists working today
- examine the concept of gallery as a white cube.
- understand the impact of digital and internet technology on the arts

Unit VIII Gallery Visit

Learning Objectives

- experience first-hand art in person
- learn the “etiquette” of gallery visits and research gathering methods
- critically analyze work in the context of today’s society
- develop strategies for viewing and using published information

Unit IX The Abject vs. Beauty and The Spiritual In Art

Learning Objectives

- identify and analyze art and artists dealing with challenging subject & material
- explore the relationship between sensationalism and the art world
- analyze ideas of the abject in art and question traditional notions of beauty
- address the use sexuality in contemporary art

Unit X Outside the Gallery/ Museum as Institution

Learning Objectives

- identify and analyze art and artists dealing with installations, new graffiti, outsider, and public art.
- discuss impact of blockbuster shows on the canonization of art
- raise ideas of the museum as a site for cultural critique
- explore graffiti and underground art movements as an alternative to mainstream culture

Unit XI New Photography

Learning Objectives

- identify and analyze a variety of artists working with photography today
- question the idea of photograph as fact and the construction of a new reality.
- examine photography's complex relationship to documentation and marketing

Unit XII Art as Big Business

Learning Objectives

- identify and analyze a variety of artists working with large budget projects
- analyze Hollywood's impact on the production and scale of art
- question the role of funding and sponsorship in the creation of art
- examine challenging forms of narrative

Unit XIII Digital Frontiers: Technology and Art

Learning Objectives

- experience interactive projects on the internet
- examine the relationship between art and science
- understand concepts of 3D animation and computer generated imagery
- discuss ideas of accessibility and audience with new media.

Evaluation of student learning:

Students will learn through a journal component featuring written responses to lectures and readings, vocabulary quizzes, identification exams and two additional papers. Grading is based on quality of class participation, exams, written communication, preparedness, and attendance. The following is a breakdown of the final grade by percentage:

Papers (two total)	30%
Exams (two total)	30%
Journal/ Homework/ Quizzes	30%
Attendance/Participation	<u>10%</u>
Total:	100%

Students will be graded according to the following criteria:

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all course specific objectives. • Outstanding, distinguished participation in class discussions. • Journal is kept up-to-date and shows effort in preparation and presentation • Brings to class relevant examples of current cultural phenomena to share with classmates. • Papers are well thought out and reflect depth of understanding. • Observes rules of courtesy and arrives for classes on time. • Demonstrates knowledge of concepts and artists covered through written exams.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Above average, but <u>one</u> of the above criteria is average or below
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs all of the requirements to a satisfactory minimum
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deficient, unsatisfactory
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to meet even minimum requirements

Academic Integrity Statement:

Students are expected to comply with the college-wide requirements for academic integrity. Mercer County Community College is committed to Academic Integrity—the honest, fair, and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free from fraud or deception. This implies that students are expected to be responsible for their own work. Presenting another individual’s work as one’s own and receiving excessive help from another individual will qualify as a violation of Academic Integrity. The entire policy on Academic Integrity is located in the Student handbook and is found on the college website (http://www.mccc.edu/admissions_policies_integrity.shtml).