

ENC 1145- Writing About Pictures (14018)
Spring 2019



Instructor Name: Fi Stewart-Taylor

Course meeting times & locations: T | Period 8 - 9 (3:00 PM - 4:55 PM), R | Period 9 (4:05 PM - 4:55 PM) [TUR 2328](#)

Office Location and Hours: Turlington 4337, 11-1pm Mondays or by appointment

Course website: canvas

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Course Description: Writing About Pictures introduces students to longstanding debates about the visual, particularly the supposed power of images to compel, entrance, and, at times, control. With primary and secondary texts ranging from canonical art criticism to visual rhetoric, and writing exercises from traditional argumentative essays to curatorial text in a digital museum “exhibit,” students will situate their engagement with images in public spheres. Often, discussions about images repeat the canard that we live in an ‘increasingly visual culture’ without seriously considering the histories of the visual criticism which came before the digital turn. This class will proceed from the assumption that students are neither experienced art critics versed in the commercial/cultural language of ‘high art,’ nor naïve viewers, uncritically adopting the values they are shown in advertisements, but rather sophisticated users of various image/text literacies as part of their day to day lives.

Students will be asked to read excerpts from texts like WJT Mitchell's *What Do Pictures Want*,

Susan Sontag's *On Photography*, John Berger's *Ways of Seeing*, as well as contemporary art writing for popular sites like Hyperallergic, and Rose Gillian's anthropological approach to contemporary image circulation.

The course will focus on some of what has been written about how art painting and photography affect us, with some attention to the use of photography in advertising and digital images.

Students will produce three major types of written assignments- first, a "standard" academic argumentative essay in the claim- evidence-analysis model responding to ideas discussed in the course. Second, students will write two pieces of art criticism- one, a script for a video project, and the other, a more traditional written piece. Finally, students will be asked to consider themselves as mediators of the image sphere when they write captions and explanatory texts for a class-wide collaboration on a "museum" on an image-subject of the class's choosing, to be hosted online. This curatorial and explicatory work will be accompanied by individual research essays on the image or images the student has selected for the class's museum.

General Education Objectives:

This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) *or* Humanities (H).

This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).

Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.

Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.

The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

General Education Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.

Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.

Critical Thinking: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Required Texts:

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*

Gerald Graff and Kathy Berkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*

All other texts will be available on Canvas- be sure to check the course Canvas daily.

Assignments (see below for Grading Rubric):

- Critical reflections (270 words each x 3 reflections =810 words) (100 points for completion of all reflections)
 - Students will occasionally be asked to write reflections as part of preparation for class discussion. These will be graded for completion, but are meant to give students a way of organizing their thoughts about the reading prior to discussing it with their classmates- each has a guided subject, which will be the subject of discussion for the class in question. Each should contain students' critical thinking about the text they have read, reflecting students' insights and opinions on the text. They should be somewhat more than organized note taking, therefore, and instead should offer a start place for a significant discussion. They are also meant to give less outspoken students a chance to demonstrate engagement with the material. Each reflection should contain an element of summary and an element of further thought- something of the students' own original ideas, insights, or connections to other texts, scholarly or informal, which students may be interested in discussing with or against the reading.
- Argumentative essay (1000 words) (150 points)
 - Students will write an argumentative essay, using the "claim, evidence, analysis" model, which responds to WJT Mitchell's *What Do Pictures Want*
- Picture 'essay' (0 words) (100 points)
 - Students will create a short image sequence (5-10 images) to explore an idea, to prove a claim, unpack a thought, or provoke novel connections and comparisons. Students will locate image credits or copyrights for those images and attribute them appropriately, including, if necessary and wherever possible, locating the original uploader or 'source' for images found online. Work will be mostly in class.
- Sister Wendy style art response (350 words) (100 points)
 - Script for a Sister Wendy style response to a piece of art. The response should involve some visual analysis of *why* the art provokes the response it does, following the examples from Berger, Mitchell, and Sister Wendy, and present some historical background, including, if appropriate, biographical information on the artist. The priority is the students' own (emotional or otherwise) response to a piece of art. This need not be highly researched, but should involve basic

- background information on the piece and its contents.
- Art criticism (1000 words) (150 points)
 - Building from the art “response,” students will write a piece of original art criticism of a photograph from the FSA/OWI collection or a piece of their choosing, which must be approved by the instructor, after reading classic and contemporary art writing across popular, professional, and scholarly register. Students will consider their intended audience, intended circulation context, and will research the artist, artwork, and art movement to which the piece might belong. Students work should reflect engagement with the visual register and affective impact of the picture, as well as art historical framings.
 - Curatorial project (1000 words) (150 points)
 - Students will collaborate with their classmates on curating and captioning a digital exhibit on the subject of their choosing. Curatorial captions will follow the model of the Harn art museum, and students will have the opportunity to discuss and read other texts on curation, circulation, and public reception of art.
 - Prospectus for Research Essay (350 words) (100 points)
 - This should outline a thesis for the project, explain how sources will be integrated, and list three or four sources students are interested in using with a brief annotation for each one.
 - Research essay (1500 words) (150 points)
 - Students will write a research essay about the image they chose for inclusion in the digital curation project. If their chosen artist is well known or frequently discussed, they should demonstrate engagement with existing writing about the artist or work. Otherwise, they should use their critical research skills to contextualize the work and all students should their engagement with theoretical concepts from the course to write an original piece with an arguable thesis.
 - Participation and classroom culture building (50 points)
 - Students are the architects of their classroom communities. Daily participation, collaboration, and support for the ideas, insights, and contributions of their classmates are essential to a functional, productive, and enriching classroom, so 50 points are available for participation.

Course Policies:

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. *Attendance:* This course is a collaboration, between myself and the class as a whole as well as between you and your classmates. Your presence in class is, hopefully, useful to you, as well as certainly valuable to your classmates and the quality of overall discussion and engagement. Missing more than two weeks of class without a University approved reason for absence will result in a failure, or an incomplete if such documentation, from a medical professional, is provided after the fact. Missing more than a week of class will impact your grade. Missing any significant amount of class will certainly impact class discussions as well as your exposure to course materials and discussion.
3. Tardiness is strongly discouraged. Students who must be tardy to class should attempt to be minimally disruptive and maximally prepared and constructive participants in class.

More than three significant instances of tardiness will constitute an absence, barring extenuating circumstances.

4. *Paper Format & Submission*: All papers must be submitted in either hard copy during class time on the day they are due or in pdf only via Canvas. Reflection and discussion board posts must all be submitted at least an hour before class time, and papers in soft copy must arrive no later than midnight the day they are due to count as “on time.” Papers in formats I cannot open will not count as received- only .pdfs or hard copies will be accepted as “on time.”
5. *Late Papers/Assignments*: Late papers will be accepted for all University excused absences, as well as for personal, medical or family emergencies. Students needing an extension for any reason should contact me as soon as they know they will need one. Students who turn in work late, or do not turn in work at all, without either discussing the terms of an extension or providing a University approved reason for not doing so, will be permitted to turn in such work for a reduction of half a letter grade on the first day and a full letter grade any day thereafter. No late work will be accepted during the final week of the term without prior arrangement.
6. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*. Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
7. *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism*. Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.
8. Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor early in the semester. Every possible effort will be made not only to accommodate but to welcome and collaborate with students with different abilities and needs. This classroom is a space where all abilities are valued; students are encouraged to meet with me to discuss what can be done to enable their full participation in the class’s intellectual work.
9. For information on UF Grading policies, see:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
10. *Grade Appeals*. In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
11. *Course Evaluations*. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>
12. Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>. Students missing class due to such difficulties are encouraged to be in touch with me to discuss a schedule for makeup work if needed.
13. This classroom welcomes and affirms diversity, including but not limited to gender, race, sexuality, and all intersections thereof. As part of our classroom culture, students should feel comfortable speaking from their individual experiences as well as honoring experiences of other students, while engaging seriously and with an open mind with both others’ experiences and the

substance of the course material. Much of our work is collaborative; discussions as well as some writing assignments. Students are therefore asked to treat their classmates, and myself, as collaborators in an educational and intellectual project, with all the respect they would provide collaborators in any other setting.

14. UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty: <http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>

15. *Policy on environmental sustainability.* Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available, or used copies of print texts. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County Friends of the Library annual book sale.)

SYLLABUS

Wk	Date	Read for class/planned activities	Due
1	1/8	First day of class- syllabus day & read from Lynda Barry's <i>What It Is</i>	
	1/10	From the Chicago School of Media Theory Keywords: Image & Picture In Class: Discuss keywords	
2	1/15	WJT Mitchell's "What Do Pictures <i>Really</i> Want" (on canvas) Discussion: What is the 'power' of images?, Introduce first paper:	Preparation for class: critical reflection on Mitchell's use of 'image' and 'picture', 270 words
	1/17	Thesis statement workshop- they say/I say ch 1	Preparation for class: identify a 'claim' from Mitchell- can be one we discussed in class, or new. Bring a quote or page #.
3	1/22	Jon Berger's <i>Ways of Seeing</i> part I In-class writing exercise: summary and quotation w/ Berger excerpts They Say/I Say exercises (bring book to class)	Preparation for class: bring in three quotes from Berger which get across one of his arguments

	1/24	Ways of Seeing part II introduce image essays + FSA/OWI loc.gov	Preparation for class: pick one of Berger's image essays to discuss in class
4	1/29	First half: In-class peer review of Mitchell paper Second half: image essays, continued	preparation for class: explore a topic, place, or photographer in the FSA/OWI archives
	1/31	Susan Sontag, from <i>On Photography</i> : In Plato's Cave Alfred Steiglitz + Diane Arbus photographs	Preparation for class: 270 word critical reflection on Sontag's opinion of the ethics of photography
5	2/5	Conclude Sontag discussion/ in class writing about HONY examples using Sontag quotes	Mitchell paper due
	2/7	Roland Barthes' <i>Rhetoric of the Image</i> On canvas- in class: write own "rhetoric" of an advertisement- find one online or bring in from a magazine	Preparation for class: locate an advertisement which interests you
6	2/12	Laura Mulvey- cinematic gaze, on canvas. In class: movie clips, discuss "gaze" in film + elsewhere	
	2/14	Sister Wendy clips- on youtube, linked on Canvas In class: discuss individual responses to art, select art for Sister Wendy piece discuss Berger vs Sister Wendy on art	
7	2/19	Introduction to visual methodologies, on canvas In class: discuss 'art criticism', 'social' responses to art, Introduce art criticism assignment	preparation for class: begin to research your piece for a Sister Wendy style art response Resource to know: One Button Studio
	2/21	Research day: ARTSTOR, introduction to library databases, introduction to academic citations	
8	2/26	In class: Writing workshop on structure, using students' art criticism topics	Due: Sister Wendy clips

	2/28	Hito Steryl In Defense Of Poor Images Walter Benjamin: The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction	
9	3/5	Spring break- no class	
	3/7	Spring break- no class	
10	3/12	Inside the White Cube- on canvas - discuss 'what is a museum' and introduce final project- show example 'museums'	preparation for class: free write about your experience with museums
	3/14	Hyperallergic article- museums and colonialism https://hyperallergic.com/473575/understanding-the-migrant-caravan-in-the-context-of-imperial-plunder-and-dispossession/ Gorilla Girls materials on canvas	Art criticism piece due
11	3/19	Harn Visit I- reading in the galleries	
	3/21	In-class discussion on curation + visitor experience	Harn critical reflection due: Is the Harn a 'white cube'? 270 words
12	3/26	Harn Visit II- writing in the galleries (re-captioning assignment- in class work)	to prepare for class: think about what images you might like to recaption while you visit
	3/28	Curation project teams assigned based on Harn work- Class time turned into team meetings to discuss projects	
13	4/2	in-class work time on museum project	Prospectus due
	4/4	Prospectus feedback returned- group meetings w/ prof to discuss projects & in-class work time	
14	4/9	Rose Gillian on circulation on Canvas in-class discussion: digital contexts	
	4/11	In-class writing workshop: how to do revisions	
15	4/16	In-class peer review of research paper	research paper draft for peer review
	4/18	Presentations on curation project	
16	4/23	Presentations on curation project- Last day of class	Final paper due by the 25th

Grading/Assessment Rubric

A work

Will put forth a clear argument, with a thesis statement, develop it from specific, adequately cited, primary and secondary sources, critically engage with and challenge the secondary sources and clearly engage with the visual, rhetorical, and formal properties of the

primary sources. Such work will always or mostly always demonstrate mastery over conventions, grammar, etc.

B work

Will put forth an argument, support it with primary and secondary sources, reference the argument put forth by the secondary sources and engage with the visual, rhetorical, and formal properties of the primary sources. Such work will mostly always demonstrate mastery over conventions, grammar, etc.

C work

Will put forth an argument, support it with primary and secondary sources, and reference the visual, rhetorical, and formal properties of the primary sources. Such work may struggle with conventions, grammar, etc.

D work

May not yet have an argument, but will engage with primary and secondary sources and reference the visual, rhetorical, and formal properties of the primary sources. Such work may struggle with conventions, grammar, etc.

E work

Work which does not engage with visual, rhetorical, or formal qualities of primary sources will receive an E.

Grading Scale

A / 100 - 94

A- / 93 - 90

B+ / 89 - 86

B / 85 - 83

B - / 82 - 80

C+ / 79 - 76

C / 75 - 73

C- / 74 - 70

D+ / 69 - 66

D- / 65 - 60

E / 59 - 0