**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**HUMAN EXPRESSION**

*This proposal form is intended for departments proposing a course for inclusion in the Northern Michigan University General Education Program. Courses in a component satisfy both the Critical Thinking and the component learning outcomes. Departments should complete this form and submit it electronically through the General Education SHARE site.*

**Course Name and Number: AD 181 Visual Literacy in Global Culture**

**Home Department: Art & Design**

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): **Daric Christian**. x2194. dachrist@nmu.edu.   
 *Chair of Curriculum, School of Art & Design*: **Stephan Larson**. x1488. stlarson@nmu.edu.

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course** (e.g. every semester, every fall): every winter

**Official Course Status**: Has this course been approved by CUP and Senate? YES IN PROGRESS

*Courses that have not yet been approved by CUP must be submitted to CUP prior to review by GEC. Note that GEC is able to review courses that are in the process of approval; however, inclusion in the General Education Program is dependent upon Senate and Academic Affairs approval of the course into the overall curriculum.*

**Overview of course** (please attach a current syllabus as well): *Please limit the overview to two pages (not including the syllabus)*

**A. Overview of the course content**  
This course is an introduction to visual literacy, which is about the ability to read visual images, to verbally describe them, and to understand their intended and implied meanings. Students learn a basic terminology for visual literacy in order to examine images from fine arts, advertisements, news, movies, video games, etc. The basic ideas and methods for a shared terminology of visual grammar are explored in the context of global culture, which has been largely structured by worldwide proliferation and sharing of designed, manipulated, and mutating images of diverse media from diverse regions and historical times. The methodologies include formal, iconological, socio-political, and semiotic analyses, as well as broader hermeneutic and cross-cultural approaches. The primary aim of this course is to learn how to read visual images in our life and in global culture.

**B.** **Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes**   
With this course, students learn to be able to demonstrate “critical thinking” and to demonstrate “analysis and evaluation of artistic, literary or rhetorical expression” as discussed below.

**Critical Thinking** is the essential foundation of AD 181. The course is structured by the series of analyses and interpretations of visual materials (primary sources) in relation to the subject matters and a variety of contexts (political, religious, economic, gender, racial, biographical, scientific, technological, and other historical, social, and cultural conditions). The course requires students to discuss how visual forms can be described, how the forms convey meanings, and how they socially functioned (or are functioning) in different historical and cultural conditions, in order to understand the significance of images in profusion in today’s society. The “**Evidence”** dimension is addressed primarily in understanding the distinction between fact and opinion, identifying components of visual materials that are contextually relevant versus personal preference. The “**Integrate”** dimension is addressed through the synthesis of the known facts and formal analysis of each image in order to understand its iconography (themes and narratives generated by form), style, aesthetics, as well as context. Constant practices of comparing and contrasting two or more images in form and content enhance this dimension. The “**Evaluate”** dimension is addressed through in-depth examination and comparison of visual materials, so as to assess specific historical, social, or cultural conditions that the similarities or differences among those images convey and to understand “established principles and guidelines” of imagery in society.

Demonstrating **analysis and evaluation of artistic expression** is the primary outcome of AD 181. The visual materials discussed throughout the course include images from a variety of art and design mediums such as painting, photography, graphics, movies, computer arts, media images, etc. The “**Knowledge of the role of the aesthetic”** dimension is thus addressed throughout the semester. In determining what similarities and differences convey about the works’ visual elements and their meanings in relation to a variety of contexts, student must understand aesthetic relationships between works. The “**Innovative thinking”** dimension will be addressed in the practices of analyzing new works not previously discussed in the class. Identifying new images and assessing similarities and differences with other works (new or known) will require students to draw from their experience of visual analysis of variety of images and from study of how the visual qualities convey certain meanings, and to synthesize that information with their own interpretation. The “**Acknowledging contradictions**” dimension will be addressed through developing alternative interpretations beyond sound conclusions provided by logical and informed contextual readings of visual forms. The speculations will be drawn from experience, principles of evaluation, reasoning, insight, and an understanding of the works but creating an alternate interpretation will require creativity and synthesis of information drawn from the entire semester.  
  
**C. Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)**   
The target audience of AD 181 *Visual Literacy in Global Culture* primary consists of freshman and sophomore level students, who are not in Art and Design Majors. The course is specifically designed to serve General Education.  
  
**D. Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)**   
This course is not required for Art and Design Majors.  
  
**E. Provide any other information that may be relevant to the review of the course by GEC**  
This course is designed to serve the broader campus community beyond the School of Art and Design. The Art and Design majors have already been developing visual literacy and exposed to visual culture studies regularly through required studio foundation courses and art history courses, as well as specialized major courses. AD 181 thus applies to our broader mission of advocating for the visual arts.

The **learning outcomes** will be assessed in the final **essay exam**, in which students compare and contrast two images, which have not been presented in class, answering **five specific questions** for five sections of a coherent essay. Each question pertains to one or two dimensions of the learning outcomes. The five questions are:

1. In the introductory paragraph, identify each image in a sentence (or two), using basic information provided. You should then briefly describe its visual features (form) along with possible content (iconography) and social function (context) that the form represents. [Critical Thinking: **Evidence** – information forms the basis of the entire essay]
2. In the second section of your essay, analyze and compare two images in terms of their similarities in form, iconography, style/aesthetics, and context (historical, social, cultural, etc.). [Critical Thinking: **Integrate** – applying evidence to determine similarities; Human Expression: **Innovative Thinking** – apply evidence to two new sources based on prior experience]
3. In the third, analyze and contrast two images in terms of their differences in form, iconography, style/aesthetics, and context (historical, social, cultural, etc.). [Critical Thinking: **Integrate** – applying evidence to determine differences; Human Expression: **Innovative Thinking** - apply evidence to two new sources based on prior experience]
4. In the fourth, evaluate how those similarities and differences convey a specific historical, social, or cultural condition in which those images were made. [Critical Thinking: **Evaluate** – evaluate based on multiple established contexts; Human Expression: **Knowledge of the role of the aesthetic** – the aesthetic is correlated to evaluating broader historical, social, and/or cultural contexts]
5. In the final section, challenge and contradict the conclusion of the previous section in order to provide an alternative interpretation (or bold assumption) based on the evidence explored in your essay. [Critical Thinking: **Evaluate -** evaluate based on multiple established contexts; Human Expression: **Acknowledging Contradictions** – define/acknowledge a contradictory conclusion]

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
CRITICAL THINKING**

*Attainment of the CRITICAL THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Critical Thinking Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this area. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

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| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | See essay questions above. Question 1 will be used for assessment. As question 1 is relevant to all of the following questions in the exam, determining the basic evidence for the entire exam is critical. Some information about the two images presented in the exam will be given to students as a starting place, such as culture/nationality, creator, title, and date (medium, size, or location, if relevant) since the two works will have not been presented in class previously. In identifying key criteria for the presented works, students must be able to assess which information or characteristics are relevant to the subsequent questions (2-5).  The first section, which is 20% of the material being assessed, will clearly pertain to the dimension. The anticipated success rate is 70% of students at the Proficient or Exceeds Proficiency level. This number is based on the relative need for the ability to survey available evidence for inclusion in an assessment of a visual image.  All tests and most discussions will pertain explicitly or implicitly to this dimension. The General Education assessment artifact will be the final essay exam, which will have, to some degree, a cumulative evaluation of the semester. |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | See essay questions above. Questions 2 and 3 will be used for assessment. Identifying similarities and differences in imagery will require reasoning and insight from students. The similarities and differences can be found in form (visual elements and their qualities), iconography (themes and narratives generated by form), aesthetics or style (period, regional, etc.), and context (political, religious, economic, gender, racial, biographical, scientific, technological, and other historical, social, and cultural conditions).  The second and third sections, which compose 40% of the material being assessed, will clearly pertain to the dimension. The anticipated success rate is 70% of students at the Proficient or Exceeds Proficiency level. This number is based on the relative need for the ability to survey available evidence for inclusion in an assessment of a visual image.  All tests and most discussions will pertain explicitly or implicitly to this dimension. The General Education assessment artifact will be the final essay exam, which will have, to some degree, a cumulative evaluation of the semester. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | See essay questions above. Questions 4 and 5 will be used for assessment. In determining how similarities and differences convey specific historical, social, or cultural conditions in which two images in question were made, students will have to utilize guidelines and principles presented in class as well as the textbook. Question 5, related to an alternative interpretation (or bold assumption), will require students to re-evaluate the evidence and ideas explored in the previous sections of essay.  The fourth and fifth sections, which compose 40% of the material being assessed, will clearly (fourth) or implicitly (fifth) pertain to the dimension. The anticipated success rate is 70% of students at the Proficient or Exceeds Proficiency level. This number is based on the relative need for the ability to survey available evidence for inclusion in an assessment of a visual image.  All tests and most discussions will pertain explicitly or implicitly to this dimension. The General Education assessment artifact will be the final essay exam, which will have, to some degree, a cumulative evaluation of the semester. |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
HUMAN EXPRESSION**

*Attainment of the HUMAN EXPRESSION Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this learning outcome. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

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| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Knowledge of the role of the aesthetic** | Demonstrate comprehension of the role of aesthetic in the human experience including artistic, literary, and rhetorical expression. | See essay questions above. Question 4 will be used for assessment. In determining what similarities and differences convey about the works presented in the exam in relation to a variety of contexts, student must understand aesthetic relationships between works.  The fourth section, which is 20% of the material being assessed, will clearly pertain to the dimension. The anticipated success rate is 70% of students at the Proficient or Exceeds Proficiency level. This number is based on the relative need for the ability to survey available evidence for inclusion in an assessment of a visual image.  All tests and most discussions will pertain explicitly or implicitly to this dimension. The General Education assessment artifact will be the final essay exam, which will have, to some degree, a cumulative evaluation of the semester. |
| **Innovative Thinking** | Create or adapt activities, ideas, or questions expressing both creativity and experience | See essay questions above. Questions 2 and 3 will be used for assessment. Identifying similarities and differences between images that have not been presented in class will require students to draw from their experience of visual analysis of variety of images and from study of how the visual qualities convey certain meanings, and to synthesize that information with their own interpretation.  The second and third sections, which is 40% of the material being assessed, will clearly or implicitly pertain to the dimension. The anticipated success rate is 70% of students at the Proficient or Exceeds Proficiency level. This number is based on the relative need for the ability to survey available evidence for inclusion in an assessment of a visual image.  All tests and most discussions will pertain explicitly or implicitly to this dimension. The General Education assessment artifact will be the final essay exam, which will have, to some degree, a cumulative evaluation of the semester. |
| **Acknowledging contradictions** | Integrates alternate interpretations or contradictory perspectives or ideas. | See essay questions above. Question 5 will be used for assessment. Students will have to challenge and contradict the conclusion of the previous section in order to provide an alternative interpretation (or bold assumption) based on the evidence. The speculation will be drawn from experience, principles of evaluation, reasoning, insight, and an understanding of the works but creating an alternate interpretation will require creativity and synthesis of information drawn from the entire semester.  The fifth section, which is 20% of the material being assessed, will clearly pertain to the dimension. The anticipated success rate is 60% of students at the Proficient or Exceeds Proficiency level. This number is based on the relative need for the ability to survey available evidence for inclusion in an assessment of a visual image.  Most discussions will pertain explicitly or implicitly to this dimension. The General Education assessment artifact will be the final essay exam, which will have, to some degree, a cumulative evaluation of the semester. |

**AD 181 Visual Literacy in Global Culture**

MW, 10:00-11:40 p.m. (A&D Building 290), Fall 2020

## Dr. Mitsutoshi Oba

Office Hours (rm. # 276): Thursday, 9:00-10:30 a.m. & 2:00-3:30 p.m. (walk-in);

Friday, 9:00 a.m.-12 noon (by appointment via Art & Design Office: x2194)

Office Phone: x2862; e-mail: [moba@nmu.edu](mailto:moba@nmu.edu)

This course is an introduction to visual literacy, which is about the ability to read visual images, to verbally describe them, and to understand their intended and implied meanings. Students learn a basic terminology for visual literacy in order to examine images from fine arts, advertisements, news, movies, video games, etc. The basic ideas and methods for a shared terminology of visual grammar are explored in the context of global culture, which has been largely structured by worldwide proliferation and sharing of designed, manipulated, and mutating images of diverse media from diverse regions and historical times. The methodologies include formal, iconological, socio-political, and semiotic analyses, as well as broader hermeneutic and cross-cultural approaches. The primary aim of this course is to learn how to read visual images in our life and in global culture.

Upon successful completion of this course, a student should be able to:

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| Expected Outcomes | Means of Assessment |
| Understand and use basic terminology in order to identify and describe formal qualities of visual images | Assignments, class discussion, examinations |
| Understand and use basic terminology in order to identify and describe iconographies of visual images | Assignments, class discussion, examinations |
| Relate form and iconography of a picture to its socio-political contexts | Assignments, class discussion, examinations |
| Relate form and iconography of a picture to cross-cultural or global contexts | Assignments, class discussion, examinations |

***This course fulfills General Education, Human Expression requirement.***

**Required Textbook:**

Howells, Richard, and Joaquim Negreiros. ***Visual Culture, Third Edition***. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019.

**Course Requirements:**

Reading and Study Guide Creation: Before attending each class session, you are expected to read the **textbook chapter** listed in the **course schedule**. Please refer also to the **List of Pictures** (with key terms and other info) for each unit, which is the **essential guide** for lectures and the unit exam, and can be downloaded from the EduCat course homepage. Additional reading materials may be announced later. I also expect everyone to **CREATE YOUR OWN STUDY GUIDE** with the **List** of Pictures, **textbook** descriptions, your notes from **lectures**, **images** you search online, and other materials.

Picture Study: Since this is an art history course, it is essential for you to become familiar with visual materials. Please look through and examine illustrations in your textbook as frequently as possible. The majority of those works are also reproduced in digital images that you can easily find online via the **Google search** or at major digital image collection websites such as the **ARTstor** (<http://library.nmu.edu/guides/onlinedb/index.php?s=2>). Visiting libraries and museums to look through art books and objects related to this course is highly recommended as well.

Attendance: **Attendance** at class is **mandatory** for all students. Excessive absences will lower your final grade (may result in F, regardless of your assignment grades). For an excused absence in case of an official university activity, serious sickness, or other emergency situation, you need to submit an official request written by an appropriate person other than yourself.

Class participation: Qualities of your preparation, attentiveness at lectures, and, above all, **participation in class discussion** will be evaluated. Your general efforts in and outside of classroom will be considered as well. Everyone will be assigned to provide **OUTLINES of textbook chapters** for critical issues to be discussed in class throughout the semester.

Examinations: There will be **THREE UNIT EXAMS** to evaluate your understanding of materials discussed in class as well as in the textbook (and other documents, if provided). Each exam consists of short-answer questions, multiple-choice questions, and essay questions (one or two). Make sure the exam schedule in the syllabus.

There will be **NO MAKEUP EXAM** unless you happen to be seriously ill at the time of an exam or in an extremely devastating situation that would totally prevent you from taking an exam. Should you need a makeup exam, you must make an arrangement with me in timely fashion. You are also required to **submit an appropriate** **documentation** (such as a doctor’s note) **to prove your situation**. Remember that making up for an exam is (and should be) quite troublesome - try your best to avoid it. Please also note that there will be **NO EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS**.

**Grading:**

* **Reading and Participation: 20%** (reading and chapter outline assignments; participation to class discussion; cooperativeness and efforts)
* **Exams One & Two:** 20% each **= 40%**
* **Final Essay Exam = 40%**

Grading Scale:

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| 93.0 – 100 % = A  90.0 – 92.9 % = A-  87.0 – 89.9 % = B+  83.0 – 86.9 % = B  80.0 – 82.9 % = B- | 77.0 – 79.9 % = C+  73.0 – 76.9 % = C  70.0 – 72.9 % = C-  67.0 – 69.9 % = D+  63.0 – 66.9 % = D  60.0 – 62.9 % = D- | 00.0 – 59.9 % = F |

**Americans with Disability Act**: If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Dean of Students Office at 2001 C. B. Hedgcock Building (227-1700 or [disserv@nmu.edu](mailto:disserv@nmu.edu)). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state, and University guidelines.

**Student Personal Property Policy:** It is the responsibility of the student to safeguard his or her personal property, including any personal property that is required for any course. Northern Michigan University, the School of Art and Design, faculty and staff, are not responsible for loss or damage to personal property of students.

**Veteran Student Services:** If you are a veteran and need assistance with your benefits or are experiencing complications with your education due to military service connected issues, contact the Veteran Resource Representative in 2101 Hedgcock (227-1402 or [mrutledg@nmu.edu](mailto:mrutledg@nmu.edu)).  The Veteran Resource Representative can advocate for you before the Veterans Administration and can also help you solve any veteran specific issues you may have.

**Additional Notes:**

1. Do not bring food or drink into the classroom. Let me know if you have a medical excuse.
2. Make sure you turn off your cell phone before entering the classroom.
3. The laptop use in the classroom during lecture and discussion is not prohibited as long as it is strictly to take notes for (or participate in) an ongoing class discussion (or activity). On your laptop screen, do not display materials which may be distracting or offensive to your classmates.
4. Electronic recording of lecture or discussion is prohibited unless you receive my permission beforehand.
5. During the class session, avoid any personal conversation, which annoys your classmates (and is quite apparent to me) more than you would think.
6. Since you are supposed to see me at least twice a week, I strongly recommend you to come talk to me in person (rather than e-mailing), if you have a question or concern. I would be happy to talk to you after class, during my office hours, or whenever you find me at school. I may not reply your e-mail, unless I find it necessary. If you do need to write to me, please be considerate in your wording.

