

Syllabus (Course description)

Course title: Introduction to Visual Culture Studies / Theoretical lecture and reading seminar /				
Course instructor(s), contact details: ZSÓFIA BÁN, Associate Professor, banzsofia@gmail.com				
Code: M-AE-E-201-A	Curriculum (program/level): ESMA	Recommended semester: 1-3	Credit: 5	Number of class hours: 36 Student task hours: 114
Related codes: M-AE-201, ER-THEO-BA-ELM- 20242501-02	Type: (seminar/lecture/ consultation, etc.)	Can it be an elective course? No.	In case of an elective course what are the specific prerequisites:	
Course connections (prerequisites, parallels):				
Aim and principles of the course: This course intends to investigate a field of study that has emerged as a discipline in its own right during the mid-1990s in the US as a result of the so-called "pictorial turn", i.e. a supposedly new hegemony or dominance of images in our society. Visual culture is fundamentally about the social construction of the visual field but, at the same time, it is also about the visual construction of the social field. Our readings and discussions will shed light on different instances thereof.				
Learning outcomes (professional and general competences to be developed): Knowledge: Familiarity with leading figures of visual culture theory and with certain basic theoretical texts related to the field of visual culture. Skill: Ability to interpret and understand the given texts and formulate related questions and opinions. Attitude: active in-class participation Autonomy and responsibility: Ability to convert theoretical knowledge to practical, contemporary use.				
Topics and themes to be covered in the course:				

What is Visual Culture Studies (an approach); the society of spectacle; empowerment and disempowerment of vision; photographic images; the question of the Other; real and virtual bodies; representation, race and identity; image, history, memory.

Specificities of process organisation / organisation of learning:

1. **Introduction** - - Nicholas Mirzoeff: What is Visual Culture?

2. **Visual Culture: An Approach**

- W. J. T. Mitchell: The Pictorial Turn

3. **Perception, Vision, Spectacle I**

- Donald Lowe: from *The History of Bourgeois Perception*

4. **Perception, Vision, Spectacle II**

- Jonathan Crary: Modernizing Vision

5. **Empowerment and Disempowerment of Vision**

- Michel Foucault: Panopticism

6. **Photographic Images**

- Roland Barthes: Rhetoric of the Image

- Roland Barthes: from *Camera Lucida* (Part I)

7. **Mid-term test**

8. **The Other Question**

- Richard Dyer: White

- Adrian Piper: Passing for White, Passing for Black

9. **Bodies, Real and Virtual**

- Anne Balsamo: On the Cutting Edge

10. **Representation, Race and Identity**

- Edward Said: from *Orientalism* (Orientalizing the Oriental)

11. **Image, History, Memory**

- Marianne Hirsch: Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory

- Geoffrey Hartman: Tele-Suffering and Testimony in the Dot Com Era

12. **End-term test**

Students' tasks and responsibilities: Reading the course material and coming to class prepared. Not having read the text counts as an absence. Presentation (15-20 minutes, PP pres. w. images). Failure to appear on day of presentation or tests will make your course incomplete.

Learning environment: classroom

Classroom.

Assessment:

Requirements to be met: Reading and understanding the texts; a midterm test and endterm test; one presentation, active in-class participation.

Method of assessment:

2 tests, presentation, in-class participation.

Assessment criteria:

All of the above.

How is the mark calculated:

An average of marks received.

Required Literature: see course material.

Recommended Literature:

Nicholas Mirzoeff: *The Visual Culture Reader* (2000); W. J. T. Mitchell: *Iconology* (1986); Jonathan Crary: *Techniques of the Observer* (1992); Roland Barthes: *Camera Lucida* (1980); Edward Said: *Orientalism* (1978); Marianne Hirsch: *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Post-memory* (1997).

Other informations:

Course material will be made available with scanned texts.

Recognition of knowledge acquired elsewhere/previously/validation principle:

No exemption.

- No exemption from attending and completing the course.
- Exemptions from the acquisition of certain competences and the completion of certain tasks may be granted.
- Some tasks may be replaced by other activities.
- Full exemption may be granted.

Out-of-class consultation times and location:

Thursday, after class, location to be determined.