

**The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Visual Arts**

**VAH 3394F Latin American Art: Contemporary Art in Latin America,  
1990-2015**

(Prerequisite: 1.0 from VAH 1040 History of Art and Visual Culture, or two of VAH 1041A/B – VAH 1045A/B, or permission of the department<sup>1</sup>)

**Instructor:** Andrés Villar

**Email:** avillar2@uwo.ca

**Office:** VAC 214

**Office hours:** Tuesday 10:30 am–11:30 am (or by appointment)

**Course Description and Objectives**

Students in this course will examine work produced by contemporary Latin American artists since the 1990s. The first few classes will concentrate on debates surrounding contemporary art, which will provide a framework for a student-driven, comparative investigation of artistic practices in Latin America. The intent of the course is not to construct a definitive list of contemporary Latin American artists, but rather to investigate some of the salient cultural, social, political, and aesthetic issues that artists from this region have grappled with in the past few decades.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course students will have

- become acquainted with work produced by contemporary Latin American artists
- examined how contemporary art produced in Latin America is engaged with the global instantiations of contemporary art
- demonstrated their capacity to develop a comparative critical analysis of contemporary artistic production

**Texts**

**Mandatory:**

- Adler, Phoebe, Tom Howells, and Nikolaos Kotsopoulos. *Contemporary Art in Latin America*. London: Black Dog Publishing, 2010.
- All material posted on OWL.

**Reference:**

- Ades, Dawn. *Art in Latin American Art: the Modern Era, 1820-1980*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

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1 Unless you either have the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

- Barnitz, Jacqueline. *Twentieth-Century Art of Latin America*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2001.
- Frank, Patrick, ed. *Readings in Latin American Modern Art*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Lucie-Smith, Edward. *Latin American Art of the Twentieth Century*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2004.

### Grades

Attendance and Participation	17.5%
Short Essay (October 26)	17.5%
Presentation 1 _____	17.5%
Presentation 2 _____	17.5%
Research Essay (December 7)	30%

All assignments **must** be written using the Chicago Manual of Style. You can find a PDF file with examples of Chicago-style citations on the OWL page for this course.

*Please be aware that extensions will **NOT** be granted unless students have a justified excuse for which they have received official accommodation. Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments – regardless of whether these are **worth 10% or more, or less than 10%** of their final grade– must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Download the official form **before** being assessed by a professional such as a doctor. Academic Counselling will only accept the information on this official form. You can download a copy of the form by following this link:*

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

*You can also download a copy of this form on the OWL page for this course.*

*For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:*

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf)

*Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental\\_health/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.*

### Evaluation

#### **Attendance and Participation**

#### **17.5% of grade**

Students are expected to attend all classes. Any missed classes will affect both the **attendance** and **participation** mark. Please be aware that if you miss too many classes you can be debarred from taking the final exam. If you miss more than three (3) classes without a justified excuse,

your name may be forwarded to the office of the Dean of Arts and Humanities, as required by university senate regulations. You can find the relevant information in the Academic Calendar by following this link:

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2015/pg130.html>

Students will write **short** Reading Responses (**less than** 300 words, or one page of double-spaced text) to assigned readings or topics. Reading Responses are due at the end of the class for which they have been assigned. Late Reading Responses **will not be accepted**.

The participation grade will take into account whether a student

- comes prepared to class
- hands in the reading responses
- participates in class discussions

***Short Essay***

**17.5% of grade**

**(Due October 26)**

A short essay on a topic to be determined. The text should be approximately 3 pages long (900 words).

***Presentation 1***

**17.5% of grade**

**(on assigned date \_\_\_\_\_)**

Each student will prepare a short presentation about a contemporary Latin American artist. The presentation should be approximately 15 minutes long.

***Presentation 2***

**17.5% of grade**

**(on assigned date \_\_\_\_\_)**

Each student will prepare a short presentation about a contemporary Latin American artist. The presentation should be approximately 15 minutes long.

***Research Essay***

**30% of grade**

**(Due in class on December 7)**

The Research Essay should be approximately 10-12 pages long (3000-3600 words) and is due on the last day of class. The corrected essay will be available for pick up on Monday, December 14.

*Plagiarism and Citation: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. The Department of Visual Arts uses the Chicago style (see attachment). Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).*

*\*Please note that the **syllabus can change**. Any modifications will be announced in class and posted on OWL.*

<b>Week 1</b> – Sept. 14	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>Week 2</b> – Sept. 21	<b>Modern Art, Contemporary Art</b> → Andrea Giunta, <i>When Does Contemporary Art Begin?</i>
<b>Week 3</b> – Sept. 28	<b>Contemporary Art in Latin America</b> → Gerardo Mosquera, “Against Latin American Art,” 12-23
<b>Week 4</b> – Oct. 5	<b>Presentation Session 1</b> → Student presentations and class discussion
<b>Week 5</b> – Oct. 12	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday</i> ————— <b>No Class</b> —————
<b>Week 6</b> – Oct. 19	<b>Presentation Session 2</b> → Student presentations and class discussion
<b>Week 7</b> – Oct. 26 <i>Short Essay is due</i>	<b>Contemporary Art in Latin America 2</b>
<b>Week 8</b> – Nov. 2	<b>Presentation Session 3</b> → Student presentations and class discussion
<b>Week 9</b> – Nov. 9	<b>Presentation Session 4</b> → Student presentations and class discussion
<i>*(November 5 is the last day to withdraw from the course without academic penalty)</i>	
<b>Week 10</b> – Nov. 16	<b>Research Essay Checkpoint</b> → Group work on essays
<b>Week 11</b> – Nov. 23	<b>Presentation Session 5</b> → Student presentations and class discussion
<b>Week 12</b> – Nov. 30	<b>Presentation Session 6</b> → Student presentations and class discussion
<b>Week 13</b> – Dec. 7	<b>Conclusions</b> <b><u>Research Essay is due</u></b>

## **VISUAL ARTS Undergraduate Grading Guidelines - Art History**

### **90-100 (Outstanding, A+)**

The **writing** shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background research is exemplary. Regarding **research**, all major secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

### **80-89 (Excellent, A)**

The **writing** shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Writing is probing through the use of comments and/or questions, and is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing immediately engages the reader. Mastery of complex materials and ideas is demonstrated. The writing is of appropriate length, and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are meaningful and not simplistic. Regarding **research**, a majority of the secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

### **75-79 (Very Good, B+)**

The **writing** shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Written claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The work is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. Written analysis is organized around focal points and the development of the argument is easily followed. The writer demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material. Regarding **research**, a representative selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

### **70-74 (Good, B)**

The **writing** shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Written claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The work is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. Written analysis is organized around focal points. The text is generally well written and well argued. Regarding **research**, a somewhat limited selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

### **60-69 (Competent, C)**

The **writing** demonstrates adequate engagement with the topic. The writing is on topic and is a reasonable response to material covered in the course, but goes no further. Written facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the text. Regarding **research**, an insufficient number secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted but proper citation has been used.

**50-59 (Marginal, D)**

The **writing** shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The writing is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Written facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the text. Regarding **research**, few secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted; proper citation may or may not have been used.

**Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)**

The **writing** demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. Written material is disorganized and unintelligible. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Regarding **research**, secondary sources pertaining to the topic have not been consulted and proper citation has not been used.

**The University of Western Ontario  
Visual Arts Department**

**POLICIES**

**Student Conduct:**

All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

**Attendance:**

A student who misses more than 15% of the course hours, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, can be debarred from writing final exams, or participation in final studio evaluations. Note that if a student consistently is absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and can be debarred.

**Prerequisites:**

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal.

If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism, which may be defined as "The act or an instance of copying or stealing another's words or ideas and attributing them as one's own," will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from *Black's Law Dictionary*, 1999, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 1170). (Refer to <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2015/pg113.html> or the 2015/2016 Western Academic Calendar, with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.)

**Medical Policy:**

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. See course outline for specific arrangements regarding less than 10% of assignments.

**Building Access:**

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:30 pm each night. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00 noon-5:00 pm. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:30 pm and 5:00 pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

**Please remember:**

One of the most important resources for course counselling, special permissions, course changes, grade appeals, etc., is the Undergraduate Chair of Visual Arts, Prof. David Merritt (tel. 519-661-3440; [vaugc@uwo.ca](mailto:vaugc@uwo.ca)). Please note, however, that should you encounter any serious difficulties due to illness, family emergency, etc., you should consult the Academic Counselor for your Faculty, IGA Building, Room 1N20 (Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the counselors for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities).

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; [www.sdc.uwo.ca](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca)) offers a wide range of useful services to students including workshops on learning skills, career and employment services, and an effective writing program, amongst many more.

The D.B. Weldon Library offers orientation tours from the first week of classes until Thanksgiving, where you will get acquainted with the numerous research resources available. As well, the University libraries have an extremely useful website where you can search the library system, the databases, view your circulation record, renew materials, access your UWO e-mail account, and much more. Check it out at: [www.lib.uwo.ca](http://www.lib.uwo.ca).

Financial Aid Services is your main source of information for OSAP, bursaries, loans, scholarships, and the work-study program which offer part-time positions on campus for Western students.

Tel: 519-661-2100; e-mail, [finaid@uwo.ca](mailto:finaid@uwo.ca); or check out their website at [http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student\\_finances/financial\\_counselling.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student_finances/financial_counselling.html)