



**ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
COURSE OUTLINE FORM**

COLLEGE OF IMAGING ARTS AND SCIENCES

Art History

REVISED COURSE: CIAS-ARTH-457-ArtAndActivism

10/15 prerequisite chg ARTH-136 corrected course title

1.0 Course Designations and Approvals

Required course approvals:	Approval request date:	Approval granted date:
Academic Unit Curriculum Committee	December 1, 2010	December 1, 2010
College Curriculum Committee	February 11, 2011	February 11, 2011

Optional designations:	Is designation desired?		*Approval request date:	**Approval granted date:
General Education:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Writing Intensive:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Honors		No		

2.0 Course information:

Course title:	Art and Activism
Credit hours:	3
Prerequisite(s):	ARTH-136 History of Western Art: Renaissance to Modern and either ARTH-368 20 th Century Art 1900-1950 or ARTH-369 20 th Century Art Since 1950
Co-requisite(s):	None
Course proposed by:	Clarence Burton Sheffield, Jr.
Effective date:	Fall 2013

	Contact hours	Maximum students/section
Classroom	3	20
Lab		
Studio		
Other (specify)		

2.a Course Conversion Designation

√	Semester Equivalent (SE) Please indicate which quarter course it is equivalent to: Art and Activism, 2039-452
	Semester Replacement (SR) Please indicate the quarter course(s) this course is replacing:
	New

2.b Semester(s) offered

Fall	Spring	✓	Summer	Other
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2.c Student Requirements

Students required to take this course: (by program and year, as appropriate)

None

Students who might elect to take the course:

This course is open to all students from RIT who have fulfilled the necessary prerequisites or by permission of instructor.

3.0 Goals of the course (including rationale for the course, when appropriate):

- 3.1 To define and/or develop a working definition of art and politics in relation to social and cultural change.
- 3.2 To introduce students to important texts, theories, criticism and artists within the boundaries of political art
- 3.3 To familiarize students with the language of contemporary criticism.

4.0 Course description

Course number: ARTH-457

Long Course title: Art and Activism

Short Course title: Art and Activism

Pre-requisites: ARTH-136 History of Western Art:Renaissance to Modernand either ARTH-368 20th Century Art 1900-1950 or ARTH-369 20th Century Art Since 1950

Class 3, Credit 3 (S)

This course will focus on artists who use their work for the explicit purpose of changing society, and who subscribe to the belief that all representation is ideological. It considers work by both individual artists (and artists working collectively) that cause critics, art historians, other artists, and the viewing public to ask if what they are doing is truly art. Although there will be forays back to the 19th and early 20th centuries, the main focus will be on artists of the last three decades. We will examine texts that propose a form of activism and persuade artists to be responsible for the way they represent the world – and perhaps, even determine if the goal of art is not to represent it in the first place. “What is Art?” “What should Art do?” “How Can Art Incite Social Change?” “Does the Artist Have Any Social Responsibility?” are just some of the questions raised when art comes into contact with the political sphere– especially when that art proposes to make a political or social change – i.e., when art becomes action. Although these questions may not seem immediately answerable, it is our responsibility to ask them, and then attempt to answer them as best we can. The artists and theorists that we will discuss are concerned with problems in our society that effect gender, race, sexuality, poverty, labor issues, and the environment. Most of the theorists and artists can be classified as angry and confrontational or at least evoking a form of contestation and, therefore, their art and ideas are reflective of these positions. Key artists to be discussed include: Martha Rosler,

Kara Walker, David Hammons, Allan Sekula, Mel Chin, Barbara Kruger, Hans Haacke, Fred Wilson, General Idea, Guerilla Girls, Adrian Piper, and Alfredo Jaar.

5.0 Possible resources (texts, references, computer packages, etc.)

Required Texts

- 5.1 Stephen Duncombe, ed., Cultural Resistance Reader. (London: Verso Press, 2002).
- 5.2 Joseph Childers and Gary Hentzi, eds., The Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism (NY: Columbia University Press, 1995).
- 5.3 Nina Felshin, ed., But is it Art? The Spirit of Art Activism. (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995).
- 5.4 Carol Becker, ed., The Subversive Imagination: Artists, Society, and Social Responsibility. (NY: Routledge Press, 1999).
- 5.5 Raymond Williams, Politics of Modernism. (NY: Verso, 2007).
- 5.6 Grant Kester, Art, Activism, and Oppositionality: Essays from Afterimage (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).
- 5.7 Gregg Bordowitz, The AIDS Crisis is Ridiculous and Other Writings, 1986-2003(Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004).
- 5.8 Rosalyn Deutsche, Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998).

These will be supplemented by readings on course reserve at Wallace library and daily class handouts.

6.0 Topics (outline):

- 6.1 Keywords with Acknowledgment to Raymond Williams
- 6.2 Ideology, Culture and Anarchy
- 6.3 AIDS Activism, ACT UP and General Idea.
- 6.4 Politics That Does Not Look Like Politics
- 6.5 Subcultures
- 6.6 Dismantling the Master’s House
- 6.7 A Woman’s Place
- 6.8 Commodification of Culture
- 6.9 Race is the Place
- 6.10 Pop Culture and Politics
- 6.11 Institutional Critique

7.0 Intended course learning outcomes and associated assessment methods of those outcomes

Course Learning Outcome	Assessment Method
7.1 Identify, differentiate, and evaluate the many theoretical impulses of social and cultural critical theory and intellectual history connected to issues within aesthetic and political discourses as well as familiarize the key thinkers associated with this period.	Critical response papers
7.2 Write a coherent synopsis of the concepts discussed throughout the quarter and be able to understand the	

7.3	period as an intellectual, social and cultural logic. Describe and summarize the trajectory of art and theory and its historical change and development through out the 20 th century.	Term paper Critical response papers.
7.4	Place the material objects and the theoretical texts of the latter 20 th century within its broader intellectual and historical context, and critically discuss some of their ideological implications.	Critical response papers.

8.0 Program outcomes and/or goals supported by this course

8.1	Enable students to obtain an understanding of the forms, functions and meanings of works of art and architecture in their historical context.
8.2	Enable students to develop critical thinking and reading, writing and speaking skills that may be applied to the contextual analysis of works of art and architecture, and, in fact, an entire world of objects and images. These skills will be of capital importance in whatever field the student chooses to work.

9.0

	General Education Learning Outcome Supported by the Course, if appropriate	Assessment Method
Communication		
√	Express themselves effectively in common college-level written forms using standard American English	Critical response papers
√	Revise and improve written and visual content	Critical response papers
√	Express themselves effectively in presentations, either in spoken standard American English or sign language (American Sign Language or English-based Signing)	Brief individual and group presentations
√	Comprehend information accessed through reading and discussion	Critical response papers and written exams
Intellectual Inquiry		
√	Review, assess, and draw conclusions about hypotheses and theories	Critical response papers and written exams
√	Analyze arguments, in relation to their premises, assumptions, contexts, and conclusions	Critical response papers and written exams
√	Construct logical and reasonable arguments that include anticipation of counterarguments	Critical response papers and written exams

√	Use relevant evidence gathered through accepted scholarly methods and properly acknowledge sources of information	Critical response papers and written exams
<i>Ethical, Social and Global Awareness</i>		
	Analyze similarities and differences in human experiences and consequent perspectives	
	Examine connections among the world's populations	
√	Identify contemporary ethical questions and relevant stakeholder positions	Brief individual and group presentations and critical response papers
<i>Scientific, Mathematical and Technological Literacy</i>		
	Explain basic principles and concepts of one of the natural sciences	
	Apply methods of scientific inquiry and problem solving to contemporary issues	
	Comprehend and evaluate mathematical and statistical information	
	Perform college-level mathematical operations on quantitative data	
	Describe the potential and the limitations of technology	
	Use appropriate technology to achieve desired outcomes	
<i>Creativity, Innovation and Artistic Literacy</i>		
√	Demonstrate creative/innovative approaches to course-based assignments or projects	Critical response papers and written exams
√	Interpret and evaluate artistic expression considering the cultural context in which it was created	Critical response papers, written exams.

10.0 Other relevant information

10.1 Plug and Go Classroom with DVD, VCR, and laptop projection.