COURSE DESCRIPTION: Selected topics in the history of art.

COURSE CONTENT: This course will consider the importance of mass culture to visual art in the post-war period. More specifically, though, it will be structured around an intriguing contradiction: While much contemporary art history views Pop as a radical break from Modernist approaches to art-making, one can identify a Pop tradition within avant-garde practice—one that Pop itself occasionally references. And yet it is also clear that, in many ways, Pop reformulates the very concept of tradition. To be sure, Pop Art self-consciously privileges an existing cultural context, much as Neo-Classical painters of the nineteenth century did, but Pop artists tend to lead our attention away from the revered masterworks of “high” culture and toward the common, the everyday, the “low.” Or if they reference high Modernism, they do so in a way that foregrounds the importance of popular culture to the history of avant-garde art. This peculiarity will frame our activities in this course. We will begin by briefly exploring the ways in which mass culture played a central role in Modernism—from Impressionist and Post-Impressionist depictions of magazines and popular novels to Cubist collages of newspapers and Dada and Surrealist appropriations of industrially produced commodities. The main focus of the course, however, will be on the new and important ways in which this tradition reasserts itself in the 1950s and 1960s. We will explore a range of contexts, including Pop Art in England, Neo-Dada in the U.S., the Nouveau Réalisme in Europe, and, of course, Pop Art in America. We will conclude by considering the continuing importance of this Pop tradition for contemporary practitioners. This class is designed for students who have had substantial experience with art historical coursework—that is, it presupposes a good working familiarity with art historical terminologies, methodologies, and practices. Class meetings will involve PowerPoint lectures and large- and small-group discussions of critical texts and artworks. Students will be required to conduct a focused, independent course of research that will culminate in a formal piece of scholarly writing.

Please bear this in mind: Some of you may find this material disturbing. Graphic violence, alternative life styles, and explicit sexuality are themes pursued by a number of contemporary artists. By remaining in this course, you are committing yourself to discussing and viewing these works.

Please also bear this in mind: You may find this course quite challenging. The art of the post-war period tends to be, intellectually speaking, extremely sophisticated. We will be reading a series of critical and theoretical texts that will be very difficult to understand. It is by no means impossible to excel in this course, but if you are looking for that “easy A,” you may want to look elsewhere. This is not an “art appreciation” course.
COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. To learn about the history of Pop Art—its precursors, its full flowering, and its influence.
2. To develop and hone research skills.
3. To develop and hone skills of analysis and critical thinking.
4. To develop advanced writing skills.
4. To develop the skills necessary to organizing and carrying through an extended project.

Course Textbooks


Using “Blackboard”

I will post a number of important documents to the course Website on “Blackboard,” including this syllabus, informational sheets and handouts, and reading assignments not contained in the course textbook. I will also post your grades on this site, and I will ask you to turn your writing assignments in electronically using its Turnitin function. You can access “Blackboard” by following these steps:

1. Go to the UNT homepage.
2. Click on the Blackboard link.
3. Log into the system.

Course Requirements

*Attendance and Participation*—20% of final grade
*Mid-Term Examination*—20% of final grade
*Final Examination*—20% of final grade
*Formal Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography*—10% of final grade
*First Draft of Research Paper*—5% of final grade
*Research Paper*—25% of final grade

*Attendance and Participation*

*Attendance* and timely arrival are mandatory. If you cannot commit to attending lectures, or if you believe you will regularly be late to class, please drop this course. I will take attendance five times during the course of the term, on random dates (each of these days will count as 2% of your final grade). If you should miss more than half a class meeting, you will be counted absent. If you arrive late or leave early and are not present when I call attendance, it is your responsibility to speak with me before we adjourn for the day; otherwise, you will not receive credit for attendance. If you are absent for a legitimate reason on one of these days and wish to receive credit for the class, (1) you will have to provide me with proper documentation of your
excuse, and (2) you will have to make up the work for that day by writing a short response paper reviewing the material we covered in class. Please see me for details. If you cannot document a legitimate reason for missing class (illness, a death in the family, military duty, a religious holiday, for instance), you may not make up an absence. If you are going to be absent in order to observe a religious holiday, I ask that you notify me in advance, by e-mail, during the first two weeks of the term.

It is also mandatory that you arrive having carefully prepared the day’s assignments. I cannot emphasize this last point enough. This means that you must read the day’s assignments closely, making written notes about items of interest, points of critique, possible connections to other materials that we have covered, etc. While in class, I expect students to draw from their preparation and participate in the classroom community—that is, I expect all students to get involved in the conversation. If the conversation flags noticeably, I reserve the right to give unannounced quizzes or assign discussion questions or in-class writing assignments. These will count toward your participation grade, and they may only be made up in cases of documented excused absence. On occasion, I will collect informal assignments—peer review worksheets, for example. These will also count toward you’re participation grade. In total, participation will count as 10% of your final grade.

I do not allow the use of cellular phones, pagers, laptops, iPads, or recording devices in this classroom, except by special permission. If you have a disability that forces you to use a laptop or a recording device, please provide me with the proper documentation (see below), and I will gladly make an exception in your case. If you are in the midst of a personal emergency that requires you to keep your telephone active, please notify me at the beginning of class. Otherwise, all cell phones and laptops MUST be shut off and put away before the start of class. If you do not adhere to this requirement, I will ask you to leave the classroom.

Finally, please be aware that I hold this class to appropriate standards of collegiality and decorum. The free exchange of ideas requires that we respect each other and listen carefully to one another. Please feel free to disagree with an interpretation and debate ideas with other students and with me. I do ask, however, that you refrain from insulting or abusing other students, and I ask that you do not conduct conversations, sleep, read the newspaper, send text messages, or wander in and out of class while I or one of your classmates is speaking. If you cannot observe this requirement, I will ask you to leave the classroom.

Formal Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography
At mid-term, you will submit a formal, 1-page, double-spaced research proposal, complete with working thesis, and an annotated bibliography of 5 sources that you feel will be important to your project. Please note that proper bibliographic form is important here. You are, after all, putting together a bibliography. Please use the form outlined in the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition. This assignment will be submitted electronically, using Turnitin.

First Draft of Research Paper
Each student will write a carefully-researched and well-argued essay of 6-8 pages. Topics must be selected from a list provided by the professor. Be prepared to submit a complete draft of your paper on the date listed below on the course schedule for First Draft of Research Paper. You
will receive full credit for submitting a complete draft electronically, using Turnitin. However, if you only submit a partial draft, you will receive partial credit. You will also be submitting hard copies of your paper to your classmates for peer review. Please bring 2 hard copies of your draft with you to class on the day the draft is due.

A note on paper format: A page requirement ALWAYS refers to FULL pages. Additionally, please do NOT pad your papers by adding unnecessary spacing, particularly between paragraphs. All papers should have 1” margins all around, 12-point font, double spacing (NOT triple spacing), and single returns (there should not be any double returns anywhere on a paper). Include a title page, as well as footnotes and a bibliography. Use Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition, footnote format for the humanities to document your use of source texts. Include “figures” (images of the works you discuss), as necessary, at the end of the paper (not spliced into the text), and identify them by artist, title, and date in a caption. Finally, always staple and number your multi-page papers. I will not accept a multi-page paper that is folded or paper-clipped.

Research Paper
The requirements listed above, under First Draft of Research Paper, apply here. Students will revise their projects for final submission on the due date listed below on the course schedule. Papers will receive a number grade ranging from 0 to 100. Corresponding letter grades will conform to the grading scale listed below.

Mid-Term and Final Examinations
You will demonstrate your grasp of the material we have covered in class by sitting two in-class examinations (see the course schedule for respective dates and times). The format will include multiple choice questions and essays. Exams will receive a number grade ranging from 0 to 100. Corresponding letter grades will conform to the grading scale listed below. I only grant make-up exams in extreme cases, and I require formal documentation of hardship before I schedule them. The exception to this rule is the observance of religious holidays; however, if you are going to miss an exam for this reason, I require advance notification. Additionally, no matter what the cause of your absence, you MUST contact me no more than 24 hours after the exam concludes, either by phone or by e-mail to schedule a make-up; if you fail to contact me within this period, you will forfeit your right to taking a make-up exam.

Late and Missed Assignments
A late assignment will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for every calendar day it takes the assignment to reach my hands. If you are submitting a project electronically, the date and time of electronic submission will serve as the official submission date and time. If you miss a deadline of any sort due to absence, and you have a legitimate excuse (for example, you were seriously ill, or your car exploded in the parking lot of McDonald’s while you were inside getting breakfast on the way to class), then you MUST notify me within 24 hours. You MUST also have proper documentation of your excuse. If you cannot document a legitimate excuse, then your work will be subject to late penalties. If you are experiencing difficulties that you believe will interfere with your ability to complete an assignment on time, please notify me in advance of the due date so that we can discuss the situation.
### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### University and Departmental Policies

**Plagiarism and Cheating**

I shouldn’t have to talk about such things at this level, but please note: I feel very strongly about this. *Please* do not do this in my course. It would embarrass us both, and it would make me feel stressed out, disappointed, and depressed. If I catch you cheating or plagiarizing, I will certainly fail you for the assignment, possibly for the course, and report you for disciplinary action. Please take pride in your abilities and your work and give this class your best honest effort. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please see me. In general, if you use someone else’s words or ideas, you must acknowledge that you are borrowing them—you may not pass them off as your own. In addition, if you accept so much assistance on a project that the work is no longer substantially your own, you have cheated. Regarding quizzes and exams, all of these will be “closed book.” Accepting or seeking any assistance from, or seeking reference to, another person, piece of writing, or electronic source, constitutes cheating. Put simply, just bear in mind that your responsibility in this course is to earn your score by virtue of your own best effort.

**Students with Disabilities**

The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course. If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes for students registered with the ODA as of the beginning of the current semester. If you register with the ODA after the first week of classes, your accommodation requests will be considered after this deadline. Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at www.unt.edu/oda, and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You also may call the ODA at 940-565-4323.
Course Risk Factor
According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category one course. Students enrolled in this course will not be exposed to any significant hazards and are not likely to suffer any bodily injury. Students will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves or others.

Building Emergency Procedures
In case of emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather related threat, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your teachers and act accordingly.

Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities
Each University of North Texas student is entitled to certain rights associated with higher education institutions. See www.unt.edu/csrr for further information.

Course Schedule

Week 1

08/25: Introductions; overview of course material; the academy and the role of tradition in academic art

Week 2

08/30: Defining Pop Art; Defining Culture: High vs. Low


09/01: Nineteenth-Century Pop Precursors—Realism


Week 3

09/06: Nineteenth-Century Pop Precursors—Impressionism


09/08: Twentieth-Century Pop Precursors—Cubism; **last day to drop this class without a “W”**


Week 4

09/13: Twentieth-Century Pop Precursors (cont.)—Futurism, Dada, and Surrealism; **Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography assigned**


09/15: Early Thought on Art and Mass Culture


Week 5

09/20: The Advent of Commodity Culture


09/22: Neo-Dada

Week 6

09/27: Neo-Dada (cont.); writing thesis statements; CMOS bibliographic form


09/29: The Beginning of Pop in England

   Livingstone, pp. 33-45.


Week 7

10/04: The Beginning of Pop in England (cont.); Formal Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography due


10/06: Nouveau Réalisme

   Livingstone, pp. 47-61.


Week 8

10/11: Nouveau Réalisme (cont.)


10/13: Mid-Term Exam.

Week 9

10/18: Pop Art in America, the Early Years

   Livingstone, pp. 63-91.

10/20: Pop Art in America, the Early Years (cont.)


Week 10

10/25: The Second Wave of Pop in England

Livingstone, pp. 93-113.


10/27: Pop in America, 1962-64

Livingstone, pp. 115-139.


Week 11

11/01: Pop in America, 1962-64 (cont.)


11/03: Pop Art in Europe, 1960 and after

Livingstone, pp. 141-159.

Week 12


11/10: Pop Art in America, 1965 and After


Week 13

11/15: Pop Art in America, 1965 and After (cont.)


11/17: Pop’s Legacy in the 1980s

Livingstone, pp. 221-248.

Week 14

11/22: Pop’s Legacy in the 1980s (cont.).


11/24: No class today; Thanksgiving break!

Week 15

11/29: Preliminary draft of research paper due today—bring 2 hard copies to class

12/01: Research Paper Workshop
Week 16

12/06: Pop’s Legacy in the 1990s; post an artist’s Website to the Blackboard Discussion Board labeled “Contemporary Artists’ Websites” by 5 p.m., along with a brief explanation of why you think her or his work is interesting/worthy of study and why you think her or his work relates to the theme of this course. Please make the artist’s name the title of your post. To find the Discussion Board, click on the “Communications” button on the Blackboard menu.


12/08: Contemporary Practitioners; research paper due

Artists’ Websites, posted to Blackboard.

Week 17

12/15: Final exam, 10:30 am-12:30 pm (Thursday)

*The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus at his discretion.*
AEAH 4801-003:
Topics in Art History: The Pop Art Tradition

I have read this syllabus. I agree to comply with all of the provisions it describes. I understand the course structure, grading and attendance policies as well as the risk factor rating. I understand that this class includes a substantial amount of reading and discussion. I understand the attendance and late policies, and I am aware that absences and late work will result in a lowered final grade. By taking this course, I agree not to commit acts of academic dishonesty including plagiarism, cheating, and failing to cite sources. I understand that, at a minimum, any act of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of “F” for the assignment. I further understand that Dr. Rahmlow will pursue disciplinary actions against me with the University of North Texas should I commit any act of academic dishonesty. These disciplinary actions may range from all the way from an “F” for the assignment to an “F” for the course, to suspension or expulsion from the University. I acknowledge that Dr. Rahmlow reserves the right to alter his syllabus at his discretion during the course of the semester.

________________________________________
Signature

________________________________________  _______________________
Printed name                                      Date

____________________________________________
Student ID Number

The return of this syllabus agreement is required for continued enrollment in the course.