COURSE DESCRIPTION: Selected problems in 19th-century art. May be repeated for credit as topics vary.

COURSE CONTENT: As the avant-garde emerged in the Euro-American context of the nineteenth century, the identity of the artist in the west vacillated between two poles. On one hand, artists asserted their essential character as observers of contemporary material reality. On the other, they laid claim to abilities that were unavailable to ordinary persons. The latter insisted on the inherently subjective nature of art making, and as a result, these artists produced works of heightened emotion and visionary content, and they appeared in the art world—as well as in their own works—as mystics, even prophets. This course will trace this latter trend, beginning with the prophetic works of such Romantics as William Blake and Caspar David Friedrich and winding up by considering the fulfillment of this vision in Symbolist art of the 1890s and 1900s by such artists as Paul Gauguin, Auguste Rodin, and Anne Brigman. Along the way, we will look closely at the writing associated with these trends—this will include art theoretical texts and critical essays, but it will also include influential literary sources—such as the poetry of Charles Baudelaire and key novels, such as Joris-Karl Huysmans’s Against Nature. Class meetings will involve some lecturing, but as this is a seminar, students will be charged with contributing to the course content by helping to lead and more informally participating in discussions. Students will be required to complete a significant amount of reading each week, post a response to the week’s reading on the course discussion board, and produce a substantial research project (a research paper for art historians and art educators; a research-based creative project for studio art majors).

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. To trace the development of visionary art over the course of the nineteenth century, focusing on Europe and the United States.
2. To develop research skills at the levels expected of art-world professionals.
3. To develop skills of analysis and critical thinking at the levels expected of art-world professionals.
4. To develop advanced writing skills at a level appropriate to art-world professionals.
5. To develop the skills necessary to organizing and carrying through a major research project.

Course Textbooks


**Using “Canvas”**

I will post a number of important documents to the course Website on “Canvas,” including this syllabus, informational sheets and handouts, and numerous reading assignments. 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 will be using the discussion board, as well. You can access “Canvas” by following these steps:

1. Go to the UNT homepage.
2. Click on the Canvas link.
3. Log in to the system using your EUID and password.

**Course Requirements**

*Attendance/Participation*—15% of final grade  
*Co-Leading Class Discussion*—10% of final grade  
*Research Paper/Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography*—20% of final grade  
*Rough Draft of Research Paper/Project*—10% of final grade  
*Peer Review of Research Paper/Project*—5% of final grade  
*Formal Presentation of Research*—15% of final grade  
*Final Research Paper/Project*—25% of final grade

**Attendance and Participation**

Attendance and timely arrival are mandatory, and I will be taking attendance. If you cannot commit to attending class, or if you believe you will regularly be late to class, please drop this course. Please understand this: I consider all of you professionals-in-training. I will be assuming a learning curve—that is, I recognize that you are in the process of acquiring the skills and information that will see you through your careers; I will not expect you to have mastered these at the beginning. However, I will be expecting all of you to be taking this course seriously, as a part of your professional preparation. 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 role, it is your responsibility to speak with me before we adjourn for the day; otherwise, you will not receive credit for attendance. Students may miss one class meeting without incurring a penalty. Any absences thereafter will result in lowering of the student’s final attendance/participation grade by 10 points. **Undergraduates who can document an excused absence may request to make up an attendance day by writing a short essay.**

It is **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 **in-class writing assignments** and **small-group discussion tasks**. These will count toward your
participation grade. Students who do not regularly and substantively contribute to discussion should expect that their attendance/participation grade will be adversely affected.

Class preparation will, in part, be staged on the discussion board on Canvas. Each week, students will be asked to post a response to the week’s readings on the course discussion board on Canvas. This must be done by Tuesday evening, at 8:00 pm, to be counted for credit. Posts must run at least 250 words, and they must make direct reference to the weeks’ readings (quoting from each one directly). In addition, any direct reference to the texts (whether as a quotation or a summary) must include a page number in parentheses. Students may miss one post without incurring a penalty; any postings missed thereafter will result in a lowering of the student’s attendance/participation grade by 5%. I will not require students to respond to their classmates’ posts, but I encourage them to do so. However, I do require that students treat one another with respect.

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. This is a particular point of emphasis for me in a graduate classroom. I’m expecting students to behave like professionals-in-training.

**Helping to Lead Class Discussion**

Once during the course of the semester, each student will help me to lead class discussion. This will involve reviewing classmates’ posts on the discussion board on Canvas, as well as carefully reviewing the week’s readings and highlighting key concerns. I would like students begin by rehearsing (talking through) the argument of each reading, but I am also asking that co-leaders be ready to lead a critique of the week’s readings by identifying strengths and weaknesses or important concerns. You will want to attend to the quality of analysis and rhetoric in each instance and pay attention to methodological concerns. I ask that co-leaders arrive prepared with PowerPoint images (either from the readings or additional examples that might be used to clarify or extend the discussion). Please take these assignments seriously; you will be graded on how well you know the material and how effectively you help shepherd an informed discussion of it. A good approach would be to discuss the purpose, thesis, and main points/key examples of an article, identify its critical methodology/methodologies, and discuss its particular strengths and weaknesses, then open the discussion with a question. If you are concerned about preparing for this task, please see me; I will be more than happy to help you along. Please be aware that I am viewing this as a joint endeavor—I will be leading the discussion along with you, and oftentimes that will involve re-directing it. Please do not take this personally; I am not trying to make any of you look bad. However, there will be occasions when I feel that we need to address certain issues in a particular text. When I introduce a new point of discussion or line of inquiry, please feel free to jump in and help move the conversation in that direction. Undergraduates are required to meet with me during office hours to briefly review the readings and put together a list of talking points.
Formal Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography
At mid-term, you will submit a formal, 400- to 600-word research proposal, complete with a working thesis and an annotated bibliography of 5-7 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. More specific instructions will be detailed on an assignment sheet, to be distributed as the course progresses. To be clear, this will be required of all students (including those pursuing the creative project option).

First Draft of Research Paper/Creative Project
For the research paper option, all students will write a carefully-researched and well-argued essay of 8-10 pages on the topic of their choice, as dictated by their own programs of study and intellectual interests. However, papers must be object-driven (focused firmly on a specific work of art). Topics must be approved in consultation with the professor. Be prepared to submit a complete draft of your essay (with all the fixin’s) on the date listed below on the course schedule for First Draft of Research Paper. This will need to be a complete paper to receive full credit, so please give it your best effort. Just to be clear on this: If you only turn in 6 pages, you cannot score above 50%. I will be circulating an assignment sheet later in the semester that will outline the specific requirements regarding this task.

For the creative project option, there are multiple requirements. The ultimate goal is for the student to make productive use of this experience in developing her/his artistic potential through scholarly art historical study. That means that I will requiring students to develop a new direction in their work in response to/inspired by/in dialogue with the material that we will be studying in this course. This should not be easy, and it should not be a simple extension of something you are already working on. It must also be something that you work on over the course of the semester—NOT something you produce during Final Exam Week. Ultimately, here’s what I will require: Each student will submit or document (1) a final art work that clearly and substantially relates to the subject matter that we will have studied in this course. The student will also be required to provide (2) documentation (images) of previous versions/attempts at developing the piece over the course of the term. The student will be required to keep and submit (3) a working journal of at least 5 dated entries discussing the development of the project. Finally, the student will need to submit (4) a 1500- to 1800-word analytical, research-based discussion of the work that makes productive use of 7-10 sources NOT on the course syllabus and that contextualizes the piece, both historically and theoretically. I will circulate an assignment sheet with additional details later in the term. Please be advised: Students have told me that this option involves more work than they thought it would, up front. However, I’ve seen some fascinating projects emerge as a result of this.

Presentation of Research/Creative Project
At the close of term, each student will give a 10-minute formal presentation of her or his research project/creative project to the class. This talk must include images and must be composed and coordinated to serve effectively as an oral presentation. Please use this as an opportunity to craft a ready-made conference paper to keep in your pocket for a rainy day. You never know when one of these will come in handy.
Final Draft of Research Paper/Creative Project
Having received feedback on a complete first draft, students will revise their work and submit a new and improved final draft of their research papers/creative projects on the date listed on the course syllabus. The requirements stipulated for the first draft, of course, still apply, with one exception: Expectations will be higher for the final draft. My concern in looking over the first draft is degree of completion. My concern in scoring the final draft is quality of work.

Late and Missed Assignments
All major written assignments must be submitted in electronic form using the Turnitin function on Blackboard. (Turnitin is the plagiarism detection software used by UNT.) These projects are due on the dates and at the times noted on their respective assignment sheets. Any assignment submitted later than the time specified on the assignment sheet, even by one minute, will be counted late. Late submissions of major assignments will be accepted for two days after the posted deadline. However, once I have closed the link and begun grading, late submissions will no longer be accepted. All late major assignments will be penalized 10 points for every calendar day they are late. If you miss a submission deadline for a major assignment for a legitimate and unexpected reason, and you have a legitimate, documented excuse (for example, you became seriously ill), then you MUST notify me within 24 hours. 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. Because students will have a full week to post their responses to the discussion board, these postings may not be made up, if missed. Because of the scheduling difficulties relating to leading class discussion, students may only be re-scheduled for this process to accommodate extreme and unforeseen circumstances, and these circumstances will need to be formally documented.

Resubmission of Work Originally Done for Other Courses
All written and creative work must be original to this section of this course. That is, you may not submit a paper, discussion post, part of an essay, etc. that you originally wrote to submit to another course. If you do resubmit material, you will receive a 0 for the assignment.

Grading Scale
Your final grade in this course will appear on your transcript as a straight letter grade, without a “+” or a “-.” However, individual assignments will be scored as follows:

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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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, usually by citing your source—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. 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 Access (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 202 of Sage Hall. 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.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress
Please be advised of the following university policy: A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility. If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. Please visit “http://financialaid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements” for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

Course Schedule

Week 1

01/15: Course introduction; students sign-up for helping lead discussion; a primer on leading discussions; a primer on writing discussion board posts; introduction to Romanticism and Symbolism in the nineteenth century


Week 2

01/22: Defining Romanticism; readings:


Helping Lead Discussion: Shellye Tow
Week 3

01/29: The British Romantics, including Henry Fuseli, William Blake, and J.M.W. Turner; readings:


Helping Lead Discussion: Matthew Johnson

Week 4

02/05: The German and French Romantics, including Caspar David Friedrich, Phillipp Otto Runge, and Eugène Delacroix; readings:


Helping Lead Discussion: Lydia Moore

Week 5

02/12: Aestheticism and Decadence in England, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti and James Abbott McNeill Whistler; readings:


Week 6

02/19: Decadence in France, including Gustave Moreau; readings:


Week 7

02/26: Decadence in France (cont.); readings:


Week 8

03/04: Defining Symbolism; sign-up sheet for conferences circulated in class; research proposal and annotated bibliography assigned (students must be prepared to briefly discuss their projects with the class); reading:


Helping Lead Discussion: Maria Villanueva
Week 9

03/11: Spring break—class does not meet!

Week 10

03/18: Student conferences to discuss research projects this week—I will be meeting with students individually in my office; times TBD.

03/20: Class does not meet, but research proposal and annotated bibliography due (on-line submission, by 5:00 pm).

Week 11

03/25: The French Symbolists, including Odilon Redon, Jeanne Jacquemin, and Suzanne Valadon; readings:


Helping Lead Discussion: Kelsey Shurbet

Week 12

04/01: The French Symbolists—Van Gogh and Gauguin; readings:


Helping Lead Discussion: Macy Shackelford
Week 13

04/08: Symbolist Sculpture—Auguste Rodin and Camille Claudel; readings:


Helping Lead Discussion: Maria Haag

Week 14

04/15: The Secessionists, including Edvard Munch and Gustav Klimt, followed by alternative conceptions of Symbolism, including Arnold Böcklin and the Rose+Croix Salon; readings:


Helping Lead Discussion: Emma Thompson

04/19: Class does not meet, but **rough draft due (on-line submission, by 5:00 pm).**

Week 15

04/22: The American Symbolists, including Anne Brigman, Henry Ossawa Tanner, and Edward Steichen, followed by **peer-review session** (each student must review two papers/projects, as assigned), followed by a primer on making a successful presentation; readings:

Week 16

04/29: **Formal Presentations of Research**—attendance is required.

**Final Exam Week**

05/06: During our officially-scheduled final exam period (our regular meeting time), if necessary, we will finish up **Formal Presentations of Research**—attendance is required.

05/07: Class does not meet, but **Final drafts of research papers/creative projects due** (on-line submission, by 5:00 pm).

*The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus at his discretion, with or without notice.*