Instructor: Dr. Kurt Rahmlow  
E-mail: Please use the messaging system on Canvas (“Canvas Inbox”)  
Zoom office hours: By appointment; please contact me using the messaging system on Canvas

AEAH 4812-002:  
Modernism and the Visual Arts, 1890-1945*

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Considers the emergence of “modernism” in the visual arts, exploring the development, interpretation, and use of works of modern art, while examining the historical, social, and cultural conditions of “modernity” in Europe and North and South America, from the late-nineteenth century to 1945. Prerequisite(s): ART 1200, 1301, or 2370, as well as 2350 and 2360.

This course surveys major movements in modern art from the later 19th century to the middle of the 20th century. More properly, this will be a course that focuses primarily on modernism in art—that is, avant-garde or experimental art works that relate, or have typically been thought to relate, to the broadly conceived modernist attempt to always “make it new.” We will begin by considering Impressionist and Post-Impressionist experimental art, and we will work through late Surrealism. In the process, we will consider such movements, schools, and strains as Fauvism, Expressionism, Cubism, De Stijl, Suprematism, Constructivism, and Dada. This class is designed for students who have had some experience with art historical coursework—that is, it presupposes a basic familiarity with art historical terminologies and methodologies. In order to facilitate proper social distancing, I will be conducting this course using a remote modality. Much of the course will be “asynchronous.” That is, I will be posting pre-recorded lectures on-line and requiring a series of assignments to be submitted using Canvas, UNT’s on-line course management platform. Students will have to keep up with weekly readings and written assignments, but they will have some flexibility regarding when they view the lectures and submit the assignments. Having said that, I will also require that students attend and participate in a series of on-line small- and large-group discussions using Zoom. These will be held during our regularly scheduled meeting time, and the dates are listed on the syllabus.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:
1. To learn about modern art and artists, as well as the theoretical and philosophical principles that inform modern artworks.
2. To develop and hone research skills.
3. To develop and hone skills of analysis and critical thinking.
4. To develop advanced writing skills.

Textbooks


On-Line Technology Requirements and Skills

Since this course will be conducted exclusively on-line, you will need to be prepared with the proper equipment and abilities. In short, these will include:

- Regular access to a functional computer
- A stable internet connection
- The ability to navigate internet connections and websites, including Canvas

These requirements are spelled out in more detail on the “Online Course Technology Requirements & Skills” page on Canvas. Please look that over, if you have any questions.

Using “Canvas”

This semester, we will be conducting the course entirely on Canvas. Students are required to check the course Website on Canvas on a regular basis. I will be using the Canvas e-mail style messaging system to communicate with the class rather than my UNT e-mail account, so please keep on top of your Canvas Inbox. In addition, I will post a number of important documents to the website, including this syllabus, but also including video lectures, informational sheets, handouts, and several reading assignments that are not contained in the required course textbook. We will meet for our scheduled discussion sessions using the Zoom function on Canvas. Finally, you will be able to track your grades on this site, and I will require you to submit your participation and formal writing assignments electronically using the Canvas interface. You can access “Canvas” by following these steps:

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

When submitting work on-line, please remember that it is your responsibility to (1) keep a copy of your submission, in case your submission fails to go through the first time, (2) submit the final version of your work before the deadline has passed (you will be able to revise and resubmit your work up until that point, but you will not be able to do so after), (3) upload your paper in a timely fashion in advance of the deadline (it is not an excuse that the system was slow or overloaded on the day the assignment was due; you will have adequate time in which to complete these assignments and submit them), and (4) confirm that your submission went through successfully. I will not accept a hard copy in lieu of an electronic submission; all submissions MUST go through the designated link on Canvas. If you are having difficulty uploading your paper, you must contact me in advance of the deadline.

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation—20% of final grade
Formal Interpretation Essay—15% of final grade
Annotated Bibliography—25% of final grade
On-line Mid-Term Exam—20% of final grade
On-line Final Exam—20% of final grade

Attendance and Participation
I will only be requiring students to be on-line together during our small- and large-group discussion activities—identified on the syllabus as “Discussion Days.” These will be held at our regularly scheduled meeting times, beginning at 2:00 pm, but they will not be required every week, so please check the course schedule for their dates. Discussion Day activities may require students to review readings together, or they may require students to review key concepts or issues that are important to the course material. Discussion Days may also be used to review assignment sheets and otherwise prepare students for drafting the formal writing assignments. Discussion Day meetings will generally require that students complete short participation assignments—these will go toward the “participation” grade in the course. Attendance is required on Discussion Days, and students will satisfy this requirement by participating in Zoom meetings that I have scheduled using the Zoom interface on Canvas. If you should miss more than half a Discussion Day 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. If you are absent for a legitimate reason on one of these days and wish to be excused, you will have to provide me with proper documentation of unavoidable circumstances that prohibited you from participating.

Otherwise, I will not be requiring students to meet as a group. However, in order to succeed in the class, students will need to (1) keep up with the weekly readings listed on the course schedule, (2) view the pre-recorded lectures in a timely fashion (there will be one recorded lecture per week, and each lecture will only be available on Canvas during the week for which it is assigned), and (3) complete and submit assignments/exams on time and in accordance with instructions. I have scheduled a series of informal homework assignments—short reading responses, for the most part. These will count toward your participation grade. These will need to be submitted electronically, using the Participation Assignments module on Canvas.

Please be aware that I hold this class to appropriate standards of collegiality and decorum—sometimes referred to as “netiquette.” 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. However, I do require that all students treat other members of the classroom community with respect.

Formal Interpretation Essay
As mid-term approaches, you will write a 600- to 750-word Formal Interpretation Essay on a single work of modern art reproduced in the course textbook. This work will also be the subject of your Annotated Bibliography (see below). The Formal Interpretation Essay will not be research-based, but will be your response to a specific task, as outlined on an assignment sheet that I will post to Canvas two weeks before the essay is due. This assignment will receive a numerical grade ranging from 0 to 100. A corresponding letter grade will conform to the grading scale below. This assignment must be submitted electronically using the appropriate module on Canvas.
Annotated Bibliography
In lieu of a final research paper, I will be requiring you to assemble an annotated bibliography of 4-5 critical or theoretical texts that relate to your chosen work of art (that is, the work that you treated in your Formal Interpretation Essay). I will describe this assignment in more detail as the term progresses. Unlike the Formal Interpretation Essay, this assignment will be research based, and it will require students to dedicate a significant amount of time on their own to completing it, but it will not require students to physically visit the UNT library—students will be able to make exclusive use of scholarly on-line research. This assignment will receive a numerical grade ranging from 0 to 100. A corresponding letter grade will conform to the grading scale listed below. This assignment must be submitted electronically using the appropriate module on Canvas.

On-Line Mid-Term Exam and On-Line Final Exam
You will demonstrate your grasp of the material covered in the readings and in lectures by sitting two open-book, on-line exams (see the course schedule for the respective dates and times). These exams will be timed, but you will have some flexibility regarding when you take them. The format will consist entirely of short answer questions. Exams will receive a number grade ranging from 0 to 100. Corresponding letter grades will conform to the grading scale listed below.

Late and Missed Assignments and Exams
All major written assignments must be submitted in electronic form using the appropriate assignment module on Canvas. Please note that each submission will be processed using Turnitin, which 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 and on Canvas. Any assignment submitted later than the time specified on the assignment sheet, even by one minute, will be counted late. Late submissions of major writing assignments will be accepted for 48 hours after the posted deadline. However, once that 48-hour period passes, late submissions will no longer be accepted for credit. All late submissions of major writing assignments will be penalized the equivalent of one full letter grade (10 points) for every calendar day they are late.

Participation assignments/homework assignments will not be accepted late.

On-Line Exams must be completed during the window specified on the course syllabus; these will not be accepted late.

I expect that students will work toward completing coursework even when suffering from a minor illness (cold, flu, etc.). If you are in the military and have been deployed or have an illness that requires hospitalization or treatment that does not allow you to work on a computer, please contact the Dean of Students office (deanofstudents@unt.edu). That office will contact your instructors to make arrangements for missed work.

As for technological problems, I do understand that technology is fallible—internet connections can be unstable, for instance. However, all assignments and exams in this course can be completed in advance of the final deadline. Therefore, I will not accept technological problems as an excuse for late submission of work. I strongly recommend that students get started early.
and submit work well in advance of the deadline. That way, if technical difficulties crop up, those problems can be sorted and work can be submitted in a timely fashion.

Resubmission of Work Originally Done for Other Courses
All written work must be original to this section of this course. That is, you may not submit a paper, a reading response, a part of an essay, etc. that you originally wrote to submit to another course or even another section of this course. If you do so, you will receive a 0 for the assignment.

Grading/Scoring of Work

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>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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Here is an explanation of my standards for evaluating written work:

A = A grade of “A” indicates outstanding work (that is, it stands out from the crowd for its clarity, insight, organization, etc.). An “A” grade on an essay means that the introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion were developed fully and persuasively, using convincing evidence and offering interesting ideas. It also means there were few errors in grammar/spelling. In short, an ‘A’ grade indicates that the submission provided exceptional responses to the questions/tasks posed in the assignment/exam guidelines.

B = A grade of “B” indicates work that ranges from good to very good. Such a grade suggests that the student met the minimum requirements of the assignment and that the submission stood out for certain of its qualities, but that the submission was uneven, underdeveloped, or flawed in some regard/s. A grade of ‘B’ also usually indicates that there were limited structural, spelling, or grammatical problems.

C = A grade of “C” indicates that the submission met the minimum requirements of the assignment and met minimum standards of organization, development, clarity, grammar, and spelling. This means that the response addressed the prompt to a substantial degree and with
some degree of success, but that it did not distinguish itself in developing that response. Often, an essay scored as a “C” fails to offer a clear central argument or fails to develop detailed, focused analysis by following a clear train of thought.

**D** = A grade of “D” indicates that the submission did not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment—that it did a poor job in following the prompt and/or in answering questions to complete the assignment/exam—or that it failed to meet minimum standards regarding organization, clarity, development, grammar, spelling, and/or length. Most typically, a “D” essay is very difficult to read and understand, but sometimes an essay is scored as a “D” because it is simply off-topic (it does not do the sort of work that has been required by the assignment sheet or question).

**F** = As with the grade of “D,” a grade of “F” indicates that a submission failed to meet the minimum requirements of the assignment or that it failed to meet acceptable standards of organization, clarity, development, grammar, spelling, and/or length. This may indicate that the assignment/exam was not done or was only partially completed, or that what was done was simply unacceptable for some reason. This may include instances of plagiarism.

**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, 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—use your own ideas, and put them in all your own words, unless the use of sources is permitted/encouraged for a specific assignment.

**Students with Disabilities**

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

**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.

UNT Emergency Procedures
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 11-15):
Recorded lecture: Modernism vs. the Academic Tradition
Discussion Day (Tuesday, 01/12, 2:00 pm): A Welcome to the Course, Followed by a Review of Course Policies
Homework Assignment #1: Due Friday, 01/15, by 11:59 pm

Week 2 (Jan 16-22):
Recorded lecture: Early Photography and Realism
Reading/s: Arnason and Mansfield, pp. 14-24
Discussion Day (Thursday, 01/21, 2:00 pm): A Primer on Making Proper and Effective Use of Source Texts

Week 3 (Jan 23-29):
Recorded lecture: Impressionism
Reading/s: Arnason and Mansfield, pp. 24-41; Charles Baudelaire, from “The Painter of Modern Life” (1863), available for download on Canvas
Homework Assignment #2: Due Wednesday, 01/27, by 11:59 pm
Discussion Day (Thursday, 01/28, 2:00 pm): Baudelaire’s “Painter of Modern Life” and Realism/Impressionism

Week 4 (Jan 30-Feb 5):
Recorded lecture: Post-Impressionism and Neo-Impressionism

Week 5 (Feb 6-12):
Recorded lecture: Symbolism
Reading/s: Arnason and Mansfield, pp. 50-69; G.-Albert Aurier, “Symbolism in Painting: Paul Gauguin” (1891), available for download on Canvas
Homework Assignment #3: Due Friday, 02/12, by 11:59 pm
**Week 6 (Feb 13-19):**
Recorded lecture: Art Nouveau and the Beginnings of Expressionism
Reading/s: Arnason and Mansfield, pp. 74-89
Discussion Day (Tuesday, 02/16, 2:00 pm): Formal Interpretation Essay Assigned, followed by a Primer on Academic Writing

**Week 7 (Feb 20-26):**
Recorded lecture: Fauvism, followed by the Sculpture of Brancusi
Reading/s: Arnason and Mansfield, pp. 90-110; Henri Matisse, “Notes of a Painter” (1908), in AIT, pp. 69-75
Formal Interpretation Essay: Due Friday, 02/26, by 11:59 pm—please upload your essay as a pdf file, using the Formal Interpretation Essay Module on Canvas

**Week 8 (Feb 27-Mar 5):**
Recorded lecture: Expressionism in Germany and Austria
Reading/s: Arnason and Mansfield, pp. 111-135; Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, “Programme of the Brücke” (1906), in AIT, pg. 65; Emil Nolde, “On Primitive Art” (1912), in AIT, pp. 96-97; Wassily Kandinsky, from “Concerning the Spiritual in Art” (1911), in AIT, pp. 82-89; Franz Marc, “The ‘Savages’ of Germany” and “Two Pictures” (1912), in AIT, pp. 93-95
On-Line Mid-Term Exam Review materials become available—please read over the review sheet and instructions posted to the On-Line Mid-Term Exam Module on Canvas
Discussion Day (Tuesday, 03/02, 2:00 pm): Understanding the Exam and How to Study

**Week 9 (Mar 6-12):**
On-Line Mid-Term Exam: The On-Line Mid-Term Exam link will open on Monday, 03/08, at 12:00 am; responses are due by Friday, 03/12, at 11:59 pm

**Week 10 (Mar 13-19):**
Recorded lecture: Cubism
Reading/s: Arnason and Mansfield, pp. 136-168; Guillaume Apollinaire, “The Cubists” (1911), in AIT, 185-186; Guillaume Apollinaire, from The Cubist Painters (1912), in AIT, 188-190
Discussion Day (Tuesday, 03/16, 2:00 pm): Annotated Bibliography Assigned, followed by a Primer on Research Tools and Strategies

**Week 11 (Mar 20-26):**
Recorded lecture: Fantastic Art, Futurism, and the Russian Avant-Garde
Homework Assignment #4: Due Friday, 03/26, by 11:59 pm

**Week 12 (Mar 27-Apr 1):**
Recorded lecture: Dada
Discussion Day (Tuesday, 03/30, 2:00 pm): *Chicago Manual of Style* Bibliographic Form, followed by a final Q&A on the Annotated Bibliography assignment

Annotated Bibliography: Due Thursday, 04/01, by 11:59 pm—please submit your project as a pdf file, using the Annotated Bibliography Module on Canvas

**Week 13 (Apr 3-9):**
Recorded lecture: Surrealism

Homework Assignment #5: Due Wednesday, 04/07, by 11:59 pm
Discussion Day (Thursday, 04/08, 2:00 pm): From Dada to Surrealism

**Week 14 (Apr 10-16):**
Recorded lecture: De Stijl and the Bauhaus

**Week 15 (Apr 17-22):**
Recorded lecture: Modern Art in the Americas

On-Line Final Exam review materials become available—please read over the review sheet and instructions posted to the On-Line Final Exam Module on Canvas

Discussion Day (Thursday, 04/22, 2:00 pm): On-Line Small-Group Final Exam Review/Study Session—come prepared with questions or topics that you’d like to focus on as you review the course material with your classmates

**Final Exam Period (Apr 24-30):**
On-Line Final Exam: The On-Line Final Exam link will open on Monday, 04/26, at 12:00 am; responses are due by Thursday, 04/29, at 3:30 pm (at the conclusion of our officially scheduled exam period)

*The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus, as required.*