

# **SEMINAR IN CONTEMPORARY ART: Contemporary Art & Globalization**

VAH 4478F - FALL 2015

THURSDAY 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM

JOHN LABATT VISUAL ART CENTRE, ROOM 249



Olafur Eliasson, *The Weather Project* (2003)

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO**  
DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL ARTS, ART HISTORY

**PROFESSOR SARAH BASSNETT**

OFFICE – VAC 220

OFFICE HOURS – Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:30pm (and by appointment)

EMAIL – sarah.bassnett@uwo.ca

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Globalization has been described as the most important change in human history. Although difficult to define, globalization is typically associated with an increase in the movement and connectedness of people, goods, information, and knowledge, along with new systems and networks to regulate or expedite their flow. This seminar examines how the forces of globalization have shaped contemporary art, changing the institutional frameworks of art and resulting in a new emphasis on international markets, biennials, and art fairs. By focusing on key themes in art since 1980, we also consider how artists have engaged with the issues of our time, including changes brought about by globalization, such as migration, inter-cultural exchange, climate change, and global capitalism. This seminar will provide a task-centred context for students to develop their own research projects.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze and evaluate works and exhibitions of contemporary art using appropriate terminology.
- Conduct research using library resources, such as books and journal articles in databases, and use the sources effectively in a research essay.
- Articulate an argument in writing, support the argument using appropriate evidence, and address counter-arguments.
- Apply knowledge of issues and debates in contemporary art to develop their own views, and articulate their ideas in oral and written form.
- Solve problems by participating constructively in group discussions and activities. This includes sharing ideas and listening respectfully to the views of others.
- Work collaboratively on a group assignment.

## PREREQUISITE

The prerequisite for the course is VAH 2278E Art since 1945 or VAH 2281F/G. If you have not taken this course, you require permission of the Professor or the Department. In cases where students have not taken VAH 2278E, some of the courses that may be considered suitable prerequisites include VAH 2277E Modern Art, VAH 2276E Canadian Art, and VAH 2282E History of Photography. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as the basis for an appeal.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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The texts for this course are available at the University Bookstore.

### Required texts:

Jean Robertston and Craig McDaniel, *Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art after 1980*, third edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. (ISBN 9780199797073) \$56.05

Julian Stallabrass, *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. (ISBN 9780192806468) \$12.20. This book is also available electronically through the Library catalogue.

## POLICIES & CONDUCT

Attendance is required. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and be prepared for and participate in discussions. Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures and for the required readings. Students who miss less than two classes are not required to seek accommodations for their absences. For subsequent absences students will need to seek accommodations according to the Medical Accommodation policy below. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from a classmate.

- Under Western's regulations, if a student misses 15% of their classes, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, they can be debarred from participation in final tests, evaluations and/or critiques.
- If a student is consistently absent from a portion of class, they will be considered as exceeding the 15% cut off.
- After three unexcused absences, a student's final grade may be lowered by half a letter grade.

Academic Accommodation: For Western's complete Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities see <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014>. Please talk to me during the first few weeks of the course if you require accommodation in course requirements or scheduling due to a disability. Please visit the Student Development Centre for assistance with a disability. Students who want to request academic accommodation must register with the Centre, meet with a counselor, and provide appropriate documentation of a disability. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/> for more information.

Electronic Devices: You may use a computer in class to take notes. All other activities (e.g. checking email or social media sites, etc.) are strongly discouraged, especially as this is distracting to others. Students should turn off all cell phones while in the classroom. Under no circumstances are cell phones or any electronic devices to be used during tests or examinations.

Code of Conduct: Students will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Student Conduct and treat all members of the Western community with respect. See <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014>. I will make every effort to foster a class environment that is comfortable for all students and where students respect all class members. We do not always have to agree with one another, however, it is important that we respect each other's viewpoints. Behaviour that is disruptive or discriminatory will not be tolerated.

Absences on Religious Holy Days: For purposes of this policy "the University has approved a list of dates which are recognized religious holidays which require members of those religions to be absent from the University; this list is updated annually and is available at departmental, Deans' and Faculty advising Offices." For Western's Policy on Religious Holidays see <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014>

Students should request permission if they wish to record lectures for study purposes. Lectures are the intellectual property of the professor.

The last day to drop this course without academic penalty is **November 5, 2015**.

### **EXPLICIT CONTENT WARNING**

Contemporary artists are known for breaking rules and challenging social norms. In this course, we will look at and discuss a broad range of contemporary art, including some work that addresses controversial subject matter and some that depicts explicit scenes of a sexual or violent nature. If you do not want to engage with work of this kind, I recommend taking a different course.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

All work for the course MUST be entirely your own. All sources that you use for your assignments must be accurately cited. If you have doubts about how and when to cite sources, consult the Chicago Manual of Style guide on OWL in the Resources section, or talk to me before the assignment due date. All course work must be completed specifically for this course. Plagiarism and cheating are very serious academic

offences and they will be dealt with strictly. Submitting the same work for credit in more than one course is considered cheating. Plagiarism includes:

1. Quoting verbatim or almost verbatim from any source, including all electronic sources, without acknowledgement;
2. Adopting someone else's line of thought, argument, or supporting evidence without acknowledgement;
3. Submitting someone else's work, in any form, without acknowledgement;
4. Knowingly representing as one's own an idea of another.

For information concerning Western's Plagiarism and Academic Offences (Scholastic Offences) policies see: [http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2013/print\\_pg113.html](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2013/print_pg113.html)

All assignments may be subject to review through plagiarism detection software. The University of Western Ontario currently uses Turnitin.com for this purpose. Turnitin is an anti-plagiarism tool that screens assignments against a database of the Internet, e-journals, e-books, and a range of other scanned material, including other assignments for this course. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

## **RESOURCES**

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### **OFFICE HOURS / EMAIL**

Please see me during my office hours if you are having difficulty with any aspect of the course, including readings or assignments. If you would like to talk to me and cannot make it to my office hours, please ask for an appointment or contact me by email. I will make every effort to reply to your email within one to two business days. As I have other professional and personal responsibilities I typically respond to email Monday through Friday during normal business hours.

### **OWL SAKAI**

We will be using OWL to supplement the in-class portion of the course. I will post slides from class as pdf files for your review, and the syllabus and a range of other resources will also be available. Also, all assignments will be submitted through OWL. Go to <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal> to access OWL. Use your Western user name and password to sign on. Please be sure to check your browser and make sure everything is working at the beginning of the course. See the ITS technical assistance info on the above mentioned web site, and contact ITS for additional technical assistance. The ITS Support number is (519) 661-3800.

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

There are many organizations and offices on campus designed to assist students with the challenges of university. Please see the web site for a description of the full array of services: [http://communications.uwo.ca/western/current\\_studservices.html](http://communications.uwo.ca/western/current_studservices.html). Learning Skills Services, for example, offers one-on-one assistance with academic issues. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning/> for details.

### **WRITING CENTRE 217 UCC**

The Writing Centre is part of the Effective Writing Program at Western and is open to all registered students. It offers instruction on all aspects of writing and is not merely for students who have difficulty with writing. Most effective are the one-on-one tutoring sessions, where you can work with a tutor on course assignments. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/> for details.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

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### **LATE POLICIES**

Extensions, granted for valid reasons, must be negotiated BEFORE assignments are due. Late assignments will be penalized by 5% each day, unless appropriate documentation (a doctor's note, for example) is provided.

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 Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the professor or the department. Accommodation for missed assignments, or attendance, totaling less than 10%, due to medical reasons, should be discussed with the professor. In order to have a request considered, students must contact the professor no later than the day after the assignment is due or attendance is missed.

### **SUBMISSION POLICIES**

All major assignments must be typed and submitted both in hard copy and electronically through turnitin.com in OWL. All course work must be completed before the last day of classes, which is 9 December 2015.

### **CITATION STYLE**

The Chicago Manual of Style, Humanities format, is the standard style for art history. Use this style to cite your sources for your research paper and other assignments. Please refer to the guide in OWL and the Library website for examples: <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/services/styleguides.html>.

### **GRADING**

Participation	15%	Weekly
Wikipedia Artist biography	10%	Due Oct 8
Proposal	5%	Due Oct 15
Test	25%	Nov 12
Presentation	10%	Nov 19 – Dec 3
Final paper	35%	Due Dec 3

**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/2013/pg113.html> or the 2013/2014 Western Academic Calendar, p. 19-21, 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.

**Mental Health Policy:**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**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. Barteet (tel. 519-661-2111 ext. 86182; [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 (Mrs. B. Barratt 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 [www.registrar.uwo.ca/FinancialServices/index.cfm](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/FinancialServices/index.cfm)

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

These guidelines are benchmarks that are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. For example, grades in first year courses are generally lower than in fourth year.

#### **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.