CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

☐ Undergraduate Council
☐ New Course  ☑ Course Change
Core Category: Soc Behv Sci  Effective Fall 2009

or

☐ Graduate/Professional Studies Council
☐ New Course  ☐ Course Change
Effective Fall __

1. Department: Visual Studies  College: CLASS

2. Faculty Contact Person: Tracy Xavia Karner  Telephone: 713-743-3961

3. Course Information on New/Revised course:
   - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:
     VIST / 1300 / Introduction to Visual Studies
   - Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)
     VIST / 1300 / INTRO TO VISUAL STUDIES
   - SCH: 3.00  Level: FR  CIP Code: 24.0101.00.01  Lect Hrs: 3  Lab Hrs: 0

4. Justification for adding/Changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements

5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course? ☑ Yes ☐ No
   If Yes, please complete:
   - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:
     ___ / ___ /
   - Course ID: ___  Effective Date (currently active row): ___

6. Authorized Degree Program(s): VIST minor
   - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department? ☐ Yes  ☑ No
   - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments? ☛ Yes  ☐ No
   - Can the course be repeated for credit? ☛ Yes  ☑ No (if yes, include in course description)

7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...)  Instruction Type: lecture ONLY  (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)

8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from
   the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title
   VIST / 1300 / Introduction to Visual Studies
   - Course ID: 45243  Effective Date (currently active row): 20083

9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none").
   Cr: 3.  (3-0).  Prerequisites: ENGL 1304  •  Description (30 words max.): Required foundational course for
   the VS minor. Components on vision and light, the philosophy of art, aesthetics; modes of interpretation;
   and the use of visual sources in ethnographic investigation.

10. Dean's Signature: ____________________________  Date: 10/07/08

Print/Type Name: Dr. Sarah Fishman

- Created on 10/2/2008 12:24:00 PM -
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

CORE CURRICULUM COURSE REQUEST

Originating Department/College: Visual Studies/CLASS

Person making request: Tracy Xavia Karner Telephone: 713-743-3961

E-mail: txkarner@uh.edu

Dean's signature: __________________________ Date: __________

I. General Information:

Course number and title: VIST 1300: Introduction to Visual Studies

Catalog description must be included on completed CBM 003 form and attached to this document.

Category of Core for which course is being proposed (mark only one):

- Communication
- Mathematics
- Mathematics/Reasoning (IDO)
- American History
- Government
- Humanities
- Visual/Performing Arts Critical
- Visual/Performing Arts Experiential
- Natural Sciences
- X Social/Behavioral Sciences
- Writing in the Disciplines (IDO)

II. Objectives and Evaluation (respond on one or more separate sheets):

Call ext. 3-0919 for a copy of "Guidelines for Requesting and Evaluating Core Courses" or visit the website at www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum

A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see Guidelines). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.

B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.

C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course.

SVP. Effective 5/2/08. Replaces all previous forms, which may no longer be used.
The Introduction to Visual Studies (VIST1300) is designed to implement the defining characteristics of the core across an impressively broad range of topics. The guest lecturers from across the curriculum are asked to bring their work to bear on the production and interpretation of visual experience, with strong emphasis on visual arts and sciences in addition to the use of visual material in the social sciences. When a lecturer from physics or optometry approaches the physical grounds of visual experience, the class is asked to integrate that scientific understanding into the broad human understanding of our creative engagement with making and sharing meaning. The historical and social context is consequently sharpened, as the traditional approaches to historical and social criticism are brought into dialogue with approaches in the natural sciences.

The course immediately provides strong support for all six of the exemplary educational objectives, and with a special emphasis on critical engagement with a broad scope and variety of work (including film, painting, theater, ethnography, photography). The personal response to works in the arts, humanities, and social sciences are supported by three papers, each of five pages, all assigned to be done outside of class and all returned with comments from the principle instructor. Additionally, there will be written material involved in the final production assignment, both in the critical evaluation of others and in the preparation of their own visual presentation.

Finally, because of the way that the lecturers are brought into the process of developing the course and the role it plays in the minor, there is a vigorous built-in evaluation process with many eyes from many disciplines seeing first hand what sort of work is being done and suggesting improvements. We are working, in particular, on articulating the grounds for implementing a shared framework for the approach to visual studies, and thus helping the students see how visual studies allows for a critical engagement with each of their particular fields of study.
Course Description:

Visual Studies is a new minor, bringing together faculty from across disciplines in order to study the broad range of our visual experiences and assess their impacts on our lives. In this course, we will move broadly through three related themes: the science of perception, the creation of visual meaning and the interpretation of images. In other words, we will look at the way we see, the way that images in media are created (and manipulated), and how we can and should understand our visible world as a whole.

Course Objectives:

- Critical thinking, with specific emphasis on visual experience.
- Synthesizing approaches from across disciplines.
- Producing and controlling images as basic units of communication.
- Understanding the interplay of visual experience and culture.
- Understanding the physical and material bases of visual experience.

Texts, Readings and Videos:

The assignments for every week will be available through WebCT. The semester schedule has not been set, and the materials will be assigned as we firm up dates. Please give me a little time to learn the ropes. Additionally, you will find materials for further research, as well as videos of lecturers from the previous two semesters.

Grades:

15% Attendance and participation
60% Writing Assignments
25% Video Project

Writing: Three short papers will all reflect critical assessments of aspects of visual culture.

- a response to the show "Damaged Romanticism" at the Blaffer Gallery.
- an analysis of a scene from a popular film.
- a discussion of different cultural responses to a single image.
**Video Project:** We will all get hands on instruction in how to create a video and you will each make a 30 second video without sound that conveys an argument to the audience. You will be judged by your peers, and by how well everyone responds to your video's quality and its construction.

**Caveats:** All the applicable rules and regulations of the University of Houston regarding the rights and responsibilities of the students and the faculty are in force. The dates and requirements on this syllabus may change, but only in the favor of the students as a whole and with appropriate discussion beforehand. I should have due dates for assignments within the week, and the latest version of the syllabus will be available on WebCT.
VIST 1300 is the foundational course for the minor in Visual Studies. Taught with guest lecturers from across the curriculum and the city, including experts in art history, computer science, cognitive psychology, film and media studies, history, literature, optometry, and visual anthropology and sociology, this exciting, innovative course is designed to ensure a common background for the program's students. The course will contain components on the physical, social, and cognitive aspects of vision, the production and dissemination of visual knowledge, symbolism and semiotics, visual images as signifiers of socio-culture, and the use of visual technologies in research and ethnographic investigations. It will explore the fundamentals of sensing, perceiving, representing, displaying, and analyzing our visual world.

Specifically, VIST 1300 will offer student the opportunity to:

- Employ the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the visual experience.
- Use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories of Visual Knowledge production and dissemination
- Develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary visual social issues.
- Analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on the contemporary visual experience from a variety of disciplines and within a number of approaches to understanding visuality.

VIST 1300 evaluations procedures will include:

- Student assignments
  - Three papers, each of five pages, all assigned to be done outside of class and all returned with comments from the principle instructor.
  - Written supplemental material involved in the final production assignment, both in the critical evaluation of others and in the preparation of their own visual presentation.
- VIST faculty oversight
  - Core advisory faculty will meet yearly to assess the adequacy of the cores and to develop suggestions for improvement.
Visual Studies 1300, Fall 2008  
Section: 35289  
Location: SW 221  

Instructor: Dan Price  
Phone: 713-743-3953  
Office: PGH 483  
e-mail: dr.dan.price@gmail.com  
Hours: 10-2 M-F and by appt.

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Readings for VIST 1300

We utilize articles suggested by our guest lectures as well as choose from a number of articles and books that we have identified as appropriate for the course. The instructor, then, chooses the readings he or she believes works the best with the lectures. This list will be updated on an annual basis. A selected number of readings are included below:

**Selected Articles**


Selected Books
Seward Barry, A.M. SUNY.
Visual Studies is...

Innovative

Visual Studies is an exciting new interdisciplinary field that explores all aspects of our visual experience, from fMRIs and nanotechnology to visual methods of scientific data collection, to the increasing visuality of our world in terms of information portals—technology, visual culture, and our social environment.

We look at how visual images shape our knowledge base, our imagination, and our understanding of gender, race, and social class. We teach you how to use, apply, and critically evaluate visual information in terms of understanding social knowledge, communication mechanisms and research.

Interdisciplinary

Visual Studies draws on faculty from more than a dozen disciplines, from anthropology to art, cognitive science, communication, history, literary and media studies, optometry, philosophy, psychology, and sociology.

Our program is one of only twelve in the United States—and the only one in Texas.

Exciting

Visual Studies will transform our curriculum, enrich our campus and community, and create dynamic online resources.

Our team-taught introductory course explores the science of light and vision; the visual arts as rich cultural texts; and visual media as investigative tools.

Student Centered

Visual Studies emphasizes innovative teaching and active, hands-on learning.

Our faculty are researchers and mentors, not simply teachers, committed to creating a learning community that transcends traditional department and campus boundaries.

From our website: http://www.visualstudies.uh.edu/about_vs.asp
International Board

RICHARD CHALFEN, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Temple University

JOHN GRADY, Hannah Goldberg Professor of Sociology at Wheaton College

CATHY GREENBLAT, Visiting Researcher at the Université Jean Monnet in Saint-Etienne, France, Artist Fellow, Brodsky Center, Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University, Professor Emerita of Sociology at Rutgers University

PATRICIA FACCIOSSI, Professor of Political Sciences at Forli, University of Bologna

DOUGLAS HARPER, Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology at Duquesne University and Co-Director of the Graduate Center for Social and Public Policy

ERIC MARGOLIS, Associate Professor, Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Arizona State University

DARREN NEWBURY, Professor of Photography, Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, Birmingham City University

KENNETH NOLLEY, Professor of English, Willamette University

LUC PAUWELS, Professor of Communication Science and Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences at the University of Antwerp

JON PROSSER, Senior Lecturer in the School of Education, Leeds University

RANDY W. ROBERTS, Professor of History, Purdue University

DONA SCHWARTZ, Associate Professor of Journalism, University of Minnesota and a working photographer

JOHN STAUFFER, Professor of English and American Civilization, Harvard University

From our website: http://www.visualstudies.uh.edu/about_intl_advisoryboard.asp
Our Undergraduate Program

The Visual Studies program’s undergraduate curriculum divides into three sequential stages.

- The first foundational stage consists of the program’s interdisciplinary, team-taught introductory course, VS 1300. This course, which is designed to insure a common background for the program’s students, will include components on Cognitive Science, the Science of Light and Vision, and the Visual Experience; Visual Knowledge Production and Dissemination; Visual Information as Rich Socio-Cultural Texts; and the use of visual sources in ethnographic investigation.
- The second stage will allow students to choose from a series of relevant approved courses taught by affiliated UH faculty that involve the interpretation of visual images, visual methods and analytical approaches, or research employing visual sources.
- The program culminates with a third stage, capstone experience, VS 4300, which will consist either of a substantial research project, under the direction of a faculty mentor, or an internship with community organizations supplemented by an essay or final project exploring the significance of this placement.

The Visual Studies minor is housed in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences and is directed by Dr. Tracy Xavia Karner (Sociology) and Dr. Jerome Crowder (Anthropology and TLC2).

Our Introductory Course

Our Interdisciplinary Introductory Course

This team-taught, interdisciplinary course will provide students with an intensive grounding in the social aspects of vision, our increasingly hyper-visual world and applied fundamentals of perceiving, representing, displaying, and analyzing visual materials. Taught with guest lecturers from across the curriculum and the city, including experts in art history, computer science, cognitive psychology, film and media studies, history, literature, optometry, and visual anthropology and sociology, this exciting, innovative course will explore the nature of vision, the production and dissemination of visual knowledge, symbolism and semiotics, visual images as signifiers of socio-culture, and the use of visual technologies in research investigations. It will explore the fundamentals of sensing, perceiving, representing, displaying, and analyzing our visual world.

The course divides into four major units:

- Cognitive Science, the Science of Light and Vision, and the Visual Experience
- Visual Knowledge Production and Dissemination
- Visual Information as Rich Socio-Cultural Texts
- Visual Media as Investigative and Research Tools
Visual Studies Affiliated Faculty

Kevin E. Bassler, Associate Professor of Physics
Suzanne Bloom, Professor of Art
Carroll Parrott Blue, Visiting Assistant Professor in African American Studies and TLC2
Ward Booth is Adjunct Professor of Video Production
Bruno Breitmeyer, Professor of Psychology
Jerome Crowder, Visiting Assistant Professor in Anthropology and TLC2
Craig Crowe, Clinical Assistant Professor in Communications
William Douglas, Professor of Communications
Cynthia Freeland, Professor of Philosophy
Sandra Frieden, Visiting Instructor in
Caroline Goeser, Associate Professor of Art History
Samuel Hanlon Clinical Assistant Professor at the UH College of Optometry,
Christine Harden, Clinical Assistant Professor at the UH College of Optometry,
Keith Houk, Clinical Assistant Professor in the School of Communication
Stephan Hilerbrand, Assistant Professor of Art
David Jacobs, Professor of Art
Anne Jaap Jacobson, Professor of Philosophy and Engineering and Associate Director of the UH Center for Neuro-Engineering and Cognitive Science
Garth S. Jowett, Professor of Communications
Tracy Xavia Karner, Associate Professor of Sociology
Rex Koontz, Associate Professor of Art History
Mary Magsamen, Visiting Assistant Professor with the CWM Center
Shawn McCombs, Clinical Professor of Media Production and Microsystems Analyst
Sara McNeil, College of Education
Steven Mintz, Professor of History
Delilah Montoya, Associate Professor of Art
J. Thomas Oldham, Professor of Law
Beth Olson, Professor in School of Communication
Bernard Robin, College of Education
Michelangelo Sabatino, Assistant Professor in the College of Architecture
Scott B. Stevenson, Associate Professor in Optometry
Lowell Wood, Associate Professor of Physics,
Lois Parkinson Zamora, Professor of English, History, and Art History
George Zouridakis. Director of the Biomedical Imaging Lab in the Department of Computer Science.
Brief History of Visual Studies

The emerging field of Visual Studies examines the production, reception, and interpretation of the aspects of culture that communicate through visual imagery. These include not only art, photography, and commercial imagery (including advertisements, popular film, and television), but also theatricality and performance and the visual display of information. In addition, the Visual Studies umbrella encompasses the use of visual sources in ethnographic and historical research.

The fields of Visual Studies emerged in the United States during the early 1970s, when such scholars as John Berger (Ways of Seeing, 1972) and Laura Mulvey (Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, 1975), drawing on such thinkers as Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, Louis Althusser, Guy Debord, Luce Irigaray, Emmanuel Levinas, and Jacques Derrida, brought the concepts of the gaze, surveillance, and spectacle into burgeoning fields of cultural, literary, and media studies.

The interdisciplinary study of Visual Studies gained added momentum during the 1980s and 1990s as a result of the work of W. J. T. Mitchell, the art historian and literary critic and author of such influential books as What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images (2005), Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation (1994), and Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology, and Martin Jay, whose Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century French Thought provided an intellectual history of visual culture, examining the ideas not only of the French scholars mentioned above, but also the writings of the Impressionist painters, Georges Bataille and the Surrealists, Roland Barthes's writings on photography, and the film theory of Christian Metz.

Cognitive science, the interdisciplinary study of the human mind, cognition, and the human sensory and perceptual apparatus, carried far-reaching consequences for the study of visual culture. By introducing new ways of thinking about consciousness, perception, emotion, and desire, rooted in neuroscience, perceptual psychology, and other disciplines, cognitive science had a profound influence on aesthetics and interpretation.


The use of visual sources in anthropology, history, and sociology greatly expanded beginning in the 1980s. The Society for Visual Anthropology, founded in 1984, promotes the use of images for the description, analysis, communication and interpretation of behavior. Also founded in the mid-1980s was Visual Studies, the journal of the International Visual Sociology Association.