

Art 6933 Rotating Topics
Graduate Seminar: Academic Arguments & Positionality
Fall 2023

Wednesday 6.15—9pm (periods 11—E2)
Fine Arts Building D, Room 329
Instructor: Anthea Behm
Pronouns: she/her
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Office hours via Zoom: by appointment
Course Delivery: online

Course Description

This course is designed to facilitate students learning to position their individual research within the field/s that they work. This will be achieved by interrogating the kind of “arguments” each student is making in relation to their work’s forms and concepts. The course will start with an overview of the arguments laid out in *Breaking into the Conversation: How Students Can Acquire Authority for Their Writing* by Mark Gaipa. Students will learn about the different types of academic arguments and learn to apply these arguments, first to the work of contemporary artists, and then to their own work and the work of their peers. This will be facilitated through a series of workshops where students will build frameworks for using these arguments to discuss and write about their work, as well as how their work is positioned in relation to other artworks/ texts/ theorists within the field. These workshops will be instrumental to developing the discursive aspect of their work, including their thesis writing, and they will be augmented by talks, presentations and group critiques.

Course Objectives & Goals

The goal of this course is to develop proficiency in using academic arguments/ positions as a framework for understanding, writing about, and discussing their work, as well as contemporary art more broadly. An important part of this learning trajectory is a gaining a working understanding of the semiotic method of reading an artwork. Through learning how to use the semiotic method, students will gain an effective way to describe their work formally and conceptually, which will in turn help students connect their work with arguments to contextualize their work within the field. This method will facilitate students developing a working understanding of the multiple arguments/positions that can be applied to their own work and thesis writing. Students will have their work critiqued during the semester and will be expected to maintain their research and development during this time.

Assessment

Students taking this course will be evaluated through three elements:

- (1) **Studio Practice** [25% of grade]

Students will be expected to maintain their independent research and studio practice throughout the semester and will be graded according to the development of their work during the semester in accordance with class feedback and discussion.

- (2) **Writing Workshop Assignments** [15% of final grade]

This component will be graded on level of engagement in the workshops, as well as development during the workshops.

- (3) **Participation** [60% of final grade]

Participation will be graded according to successful completion of reading assignments, student reading group presentations, as well as community engagement during discussions and group critiques.

Please see assignment sheet for detailed information on assignments. Late assignments will be marked down 5% for each day they are past due. Please note, to receive your final grade you must upload a Portfolio of work completed for all assignments (including written, and documentation of studio work) on the Google drive no later than 5.00pm on Friday, December 8, 2023. Please save videos as compressed .MOV (less than 250 MB) and images as high quality .JPG (less than 10 MB).

Weekly Schedule

Week	Topic	Assignment
Week 1	Course Overview	Intro presentations
Week 2	Introduction to academic arguments	Reading: Gaipa
Week 3	No class—labor day	
Week 4	Introduction to semiotics	Reading: Semiotics
Week 5	Application of theory to practice	Research presentations 1
Week 6	Application of theory to practice	Research presentations 2
Week 7	Application of theory to practice	Research presentations 3
Week 8	Individual research	Individual meetings w professor
Week 9	Individual research	Individual meetings w professor
Week 10	Individual research	Individual meetings w professor
Week 11	Critique	Critique
Week 12	Critique	Critique
Week 13	Research presentations & feedback	Research presentations & feedback
Week 14	Research presentations & feedback	Research presentations & feedback
Week 15	Research presentations & feedback	Research presentations & feedback
Week 16	Course wrap up	Course evaluations

Required Reading

Readings will be provided to students as PDFs. There are no required textbooks for this class.

Class Attendance

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

Students are required to attend every class meeting. Attendance includes arriving on time and with all materials necessary to actively participate in that date’s discussion, lecture, or presentation. Students arriving without assigned materials may be counted absent on that date. Three unexcused late arrivals may be recorded as one absence. At the discretion of the instructor, students who have more than three unexcused absences may receive a failing grade for the course. Additionally, a student’s grade may be effected if they have unexcused absences or do not present work on their designated critique day. Excused absences require documentation such as a doctor’s note.

In the case of an absence, students are asked to communicate this via email and in advance of class unless extenuating circumstances prohibit doing so. Make up work will be made available for all students who have excused absences.

Grading Criteria

A: This grade is awarded for exceptional work that demonstrates critical thinking, a full realization of the ideas put forth in assignment, and outstanding engagement of both form and content; excellent amount of effort given to the class and assignments, with minimum lateness and absences; going beyond the basic course requirements through independent work and research; display a strong commitment to learning, being an active member or the class community, and growth as an artist and student.

B: This grade will be awarded for very good work that demonstrates a sound and competent realization of the ideas put forth in each assignment; excels in many areas but lacks one or more of the outstanding characteristics listed above.

C: This grade will be awarded for well-presented, average work that demonstrates a fairly good attempt at grasping the expectations of each given assignment. This work lacks a competent, comprehensive understanding mentioned in 'B' above.

D: This grade is awarded for inadequate work, extremely poor and/or half-finished work with no care or attention to the assignment. In addition, when someone has missed three or more classes, has failed to completed one or more assignments, or keep up to date with the studio- based syllabus.

E: When someone stops coming to class and stops communicating with instructor. This is a severe grade and is usually given in severe circumstances.

UF grading policies can be reviewed at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Health and Safety

Each student must complete a Health and Safety Student Waiver for this course. These forms will be turned in to the School of Art office. <http://saahhealthandsafety.weebly.com/>

Accommodations for students with disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center: <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/> . It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Class Demeanor Policy

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the

instructor, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to leave class.

Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Online Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

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U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Campus Resources // Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information](#).

On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process](#).