

Art 317: Art and Power

Professor: Guy Jordan

Time: Winter 2021

Office: FAC 413

Email: guy.jordan@wku.edu

Office Hours: TBD (Email me. Happy to schedule a Zoom!)

Summary

This course investigates the ways that the visual arts reinforce and sometimes undermine power structures in human societies. Examples will be drawn from various time periods and geographical areas in order to gain a systemic understanding of and fluency in the visual grammars of style and iconography and how these elements allow art to play a vital and proactive role in larger historical issues that animate human societies.

In order to achieve the outcomes required for the Systems subcategory for Connections courses in the Colonnade Program, students will:

A. Analyze How Systems Evolve

Students will develop fluency in the grammar, iconography, and style of visual art as a tool for political, religious, and cultural communication and analyze how these techniques have evolved over time.

B. Compare the Study of Individual Components to the Analysis of the Entire System

Students will compare and contrast examples of ideologically charged images across a wide range of historical periods in order to induce the nature of the visual sign systems they comprise.

C. Evaluate how system-level thinking informs decision-making, public policy, and/or the sustainability of the system itself

Students will compare individual examples of art made to convey political and/or ideological propaganda and analyze how these works operate to reify and sometimes to undermine and/or change existing visual iconography and sign systems in such a way that leads to a structural understanding of how images have shaped and continue to shape public opinion and public policy.

Readings/Textbook

Links to all class lectures/materials/readings will be posted in the content section of the course blackboard page.

Grading

Ten essays, each worth 10% of your grade (see course schedule below for topics/due dates). Essays must be between 300-400 words in length. Do not go under or over these word count constraints. No research outside of the information found in the course lectures and assigned readings is permitted for these essays. **Points will be deducted for failing to adhere to these guidelines.**

Note:

1. Each essay must be uploaded to blackboard by 11:59PM the day it is due.
2. Please UPLOAD all essays to the course Blackboard site as MS Word or MS Word compatible files (no .PAGES files).

3. Do not simply paste your essays into the text box.
4. Please type your name at the top of all essays you submit.
5. Failure to follow these directions will result in a deduction of points from your grade.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Room A-200, Downing University Center (DSU). The OFSDS telephone number is (270) 745-5004 V and (270) 745-3030 TDD. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services. See WKU Catalog, 2013-2014, p. 356-357 for additional information.

The Learning Center (TLC) (located in the Academic Advising and Retention Center, DSU-A330)

Should you require academic assistance with this course, or any other General Education Course, there are several places that can provide you with help. TLC tutors in most major undergraduate subjects and course levels throughout the week. To make an appointment, or to request a tutor for a specific class, call 745-6254 or stop by DSU A330. Log on to TLC's website at www.wku.edu/tlc to find out more. TLC hours: M-Thur. 8am-9pm, Fri. 8am-4pm, Sat.-Closed, and Sundays 4pm-9pm.

Plagiarism and Cheating

If you plagiarize or cheat in this class, you will receive an **F for the course**, and will be referred to the university administration for further disciplinary action.

According to WKU:

"To represent ideas or interpretations taken from another source as one's own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of students must be their own. Students must give the author(s) credit for any source material used. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage after having changed a few words, even if the source is cited, is also plagiarism." "No student shall receive or give assistance not authorized by the instructor in taking an examination or in the preparation of an essay, laboratory report, problem assignment, or other project that is submitted for purposes of grade determination."

Do not even think about cheating or plagiarizing in this class – I will catch you.

Further Academic/Advising Assistance

As your professor, I am personally invested in your growth as a student. If you are having trouble with any of the concepts or material covered in the course, you are **welcome** and **encouraged** to contact me and make an appointment to chat.

[Note: this is an off-term class, so if you need to chat/meet, please send me an email and I will be happy to schedule a time to Zoom with you!]

Course Schedule

Note: For a full course schedule with assignments, readings, etc., please consult the full version of the syllabus on the course blackboard page.