LANGUAGE OF COLOR – BEAUTY, POWER & MEANING

Department of Art and Art History
ART 3010-090 Online (3 credit hours)

Elizabeth Dewitte MFA
Summer Semester 2013
Phone: 581-8677
E-mail: elizabeth.dewitte@xmission.com
Appointments are best made by email

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Language of Color, Art 3010 Online is a course for non-majors, there is no prerequisite.

This course examines global and regional use of color as a visual language and as a means of transcultural/ transnational communication. Visual vocabulary is introduced at the start of the course through a global study of philosophies of color organization and meaning. Color is explored as a cultural indicator of beauty, status, and group identity. Each topical investigation begins with a comparative study among a group of related cultures and broadens to a relative study between nations from markedly different geographic regions and socio-economic/political environments. Course material takes a discipline-correlated approach where twentieth and twenty-first century visual artworks are used to present examples of color in a cultural context and to begin a dialog of contemporary issues and philosophies to include aesthetics, life style, religion, race, gender, global economics and politics. Collapse of cultural identity is addressed through a review of color as a function of global marketing strategies and Internet communications.

Books we will refer to:

Chromophobia by David Batchelor

Color in Art by John Gage

Colour – Documents of Contemporary Art Edited by David Batchelor

Interaction of Colour by Josef Albers

Colour Codes by Charles Riley

Colour, Environment, & Human Response by Frank H. Mahnke

Colour and Meaning by John Cage

Colour and Culture by John Cage

The Elements of Colour by Johannes Itten
COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to identify the formal visual elements of an artwork and explain the basic principles of design employed in the organization of its composition.

Students will be able to identify situations in which color is used as a cultural indicator of beauty, status, and group identity and be able to discuss similarities and differences among a set of geographically and culturally related countries and as compared to nations from markedly different geographic regions and socio-economic/political environments.

Students will be able to identify issues rooted in cultural identity and group affiliation and be able to discuss how color and visual language function as a vehicle through which attitudes on aesthetics, lifestyle, religion, race, gender, global economics and politics are communicated.

Looking at a broad range of communities and nations throughout the world, students will be able to identify and discuss cultural and nation-based profiles that are promoted largely through visual modes of communication and contemporary artworks.

Students will be able to identify aspects of American use of visual propaganda, visual stereotypes and visual representation of cultural myth building and be able to explain the effects of this on other communities of the world.

Students will be able to identify the contemporary visual imagery of a range of diverse cultures, regions, and nations and to discuss the influence of this imagery on US society. While discussion of American perspective is addressed to some degree in each topic, examples of concentrated comparison might include color as a vehicle for concepts of religion as seen between the United States and countries of the Middle East: Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates; also a concentrated comparison of visual language as a tool for international corporations and marketing strategies might be viewed between the United States and countries of East Asia: China, Japan and Korea; and a concentrated comparison of color as an indicator of gender and ethnicity as seen possibly between the United States and countries of Latin American: Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Venezuela.
Students will be able to identify visual representations originating from the United States and be able to discuss how this has influenced the conception that the people of United States have of other nations and cultures.

Students will be able to identify the collapse of some aspects of regional and national cultural identity and be able to discuss this framed as a response to the rise of global corporations and marketing strategies, and Internet-based communities.

Students will gain a more informed understanding of world communities by studying the art produced by these communities. Through this, students will achieve a broader understanding of the human experience and an expanded awareness of the importance of considering information and issues from multiple viewpoints.

Students will be able to examine and explain the social and formal distinctions of artworks from a range of different nations and cultures. Broadly grouped according to world map regional locations, select countries from multiple regions might include:

Central/Western Europe: *France, Germany*
East Asia: *China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea*
Europe and Northern Asia: *Poland, Russia, Ukraine*
Latin America: *Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela*
Middle East: *Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates*
North America: *United States*
Northern/Western Europe: *Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands*
South Asia: *India, Nepal, Pakistan*
Southeast Asia: *Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, Viet Nam*
Southern Africa: *Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland*
Southern Europe: *Greece, Italy*
Western Europe: *United Kingdom*

**CONTENT OVERVIEW**

To begin, this visual art course presents a discipline-based foundation as students learn how artists and designers orchestrate visual elements, design strategies and aesthetic concepts in the creation of artworks. The visual element of color is used as a vehicle to explore the interrelated structure of art and design, visual language and cultural symbols, and socio-political forces. Students will gain an understanding of art and design as a powerful means of communicating to members of a group and across borders: geographical, cultural, political, economical, and societal.

Through comparative study of design and art from a broad spectrum of nations and geographical regions, students will identify and compare unique qualities that distinguish the art and design of one culture from another, as well as local and more global cross-cultural influences. Compositional strategies, selection of visual elements such as color and form, choice of subject matter and modes of representation, and the affect of societal forces on the development of aesthetic direction are aspects that will be covered. Students will employ critical thinking skills through participation in discussions where diverse perspectives are considered. Artworks will be experienced as digital representations, photographic documentations, and objects in the context of a specific environment through virtual on-site activities.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Web Assignments:** The course work for the semester is divided into 11 lecture units identified as assignments. The 11 web assignments provide a context for assigned readings and images. It provides you with an overview of the information that will be covered in your readings for that lesson and gives additional insight into the topic.

**URL:** Most assignments require you to review information from different web sites. Visiting these sites will expand upon information in the reading and at times require you to research information that will be used in your discussion assignments. Also, these sites will give you access to viewing representations of an extraordinary amount of contemporary and historic artwork.

**Group Online Discussions:** At the end of each of the 11 assignments a related topic(s) will be posted as an online discussion assignment. For discussion participation, the students in the class will be divided into three sections. Each student is required to respond to their group’s topic question (initial response) as well as reviewing posted responses of other members of the class. Students are then required to comment a minimum of two times in their own group on what their fellow classmates have posted as their response to the assigned group topic. In addition, each student will comment one time in each of the other two groups. This adds up to a minimum of five posts per assignment, and creates a discussion amongst fellow students about the content of the assignment. Discussion responses must occur by the deadline date posted at the top of each discussion assignment page.

**Written Papers:** This course requires the completion of one final paper with a minimum of five pages. Successful completion of this course requires that this paper be turned in.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

The primary teaching approach in this course will occur through collaborative learning.

We will all work together to ensure that our online discussions reflect respect for differences of opinions and sensitivity to the needs, opinions and circumstances of our peers.

This online course is divided into 14 assignments. Each assignment presents information to the student in three formats:

1) assigned reading
2) online lesson
3) suggested URLs

Students should approach each unit in that order; first read the assigned document, second read the online lesson, and third read the linked URLs.

Students are required to submit one paper. The written paper is required and needs to be submitted by a specific due date. Due-date for the written paper is listed on your assignment page. Papers
submitted past the due date have points deducted; 4 points per day are deducted for late assignments, with a maximum of 24 points deducted per assignment.

Students are required to respond to 11 online Group Assignments (these are referred to as Online Discussions). Online Discussions are open for student participation for an approximate 7 - 8 days. Each Discussion must be responded to by a specified due dates. Entries posted after the closing date for a discussion will not be read.

Online Discussion Groups: The class is divided into 3 discussion groups.

*If your last name begins with letters A through G you are assigned to discussion group #1*

*If your last name begins with letters H through Q you are assigned to discussion group #2*

*If your last name begins with letters R through Z you are assigned to discussion group #3*

You will remain in your assigned discussion group throughout the semester.

Group online discussions are referred to as Discussion Assignments and are located on the online "Discussions" section. At the start of the semester, each student will be assigned to one of 3 discussion groups. Students will remain in their assigned discussion group throughout the semester. After reading the online materials from a lesson-unit students need to locate the Group Assignment that corresponds with that unit and with their assigned discussion group (group 1, group 2, or group 3).

Locating Group Assignments (group online discussion assignments) - click on "Assignments", read through online lesson, and the bottom of the page are the assigned questions.

To respond to Group Assignments (group online discussion assignments) - go to "Discussions"; scroll down to your group number/corresponding lesson and respond.

To review students’ responses to the Group Assignments (group online discussion assignments) - go to "Discussions"; scroll down and choose the group discussion that you wish to review and respond.

Five points pertaining to online discussions that are important to remember:

1) Remember, this is a group discussion. You will be responsible for responding to the online questions and to the responses posed by the other students in the discussion groups.

2) Review all three discussion questions and the student responses, as you are required to respond once to each different group other than your own. So that means you will initially answer the discussion question from your assigned group, respond a minimum of twice to your own group’s comments and responses, and then respond once to each of the other group’s comments. So that is a total of five posts per lesson, please remember that, and please email me if this is not quite clear.

3) Carefully read the introduction at the beginning of each online Group Assignment. Some of the online group discussion assignments require you to respond to the question in
full. Other online group discussion assignments ask you to answer the question in part; to focus on only some of the points in response to the question, with an answer consisting of approximately 2 to 3 paragraphs. These type of discussion questions are broad and you are not expected to answer the entire question, you are however, expected to provide a thorough response to a portion of the question and to bring up new points of information. DO NOT REPEAT INFORMATION THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN LISTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD. You will not receive credit for repeating information that has already been listed.

4) Grading of Online Group Assignments: A maximum of 25 points can be received for each of the 14 online discussions. Pertinent information regarding grading is as follows: students need to post a minimum of 5 entries per discussion. Possible 9 points for your initial entry/comment and 4 points each for responses to other entries/comments made by fellow classmates. Discussion postings should be thoughtful, well researched, and accurate. As stated above, this information cannot simply be a rephrased version of a previous entry. Generally speaking, I encourage students to pose questions on the bulletin board, present casual responses and to converse as a group. It is a good way to build class rapport and is quite helpful for an online course. However, be aware that comments such as, "Robert, I found your information on Picasso intriguing, it really made me think" or "great post, I agree with what you said", does not count as 1 of your 5 required entries. I simply will not give credit to comments that do not show me that you have a good knowledge of the material you have read.

5) There is a window of time in which responses will be accepted. Participation dates for each online Group Assignment are listed at the top of each unit's discussion questions as well as on your course outline. Note, there is an advantage to responding earlier rather than later: responding earlier gives you wider latitude in your response (remember that you are not allowed to repeat information that has already been posted).

Seven points pertaining to the assigned written paper that is important to remember:

1) Send your paper as either a Microsoft Word document or a Simple Text document - DO NOT SEND A WORD PERFECT DOCUMENT. I am not provided with software for Word Perfect and I will not be able to read your paper.

2) Write your paper in a computer word program and use the spell-check function. Then, proof your paper for word usage that the spell-check will miss, i.e. too, to, two.

3) Structuring the format of your paper: use a traditional paper format, i.e. introduction with topic sentence, essay body, conclusion.

4) You must include the URL showing the visual example(s) of the artwork that is discussed in your paper or your assignment will not be graded.

5) Grading of Papers: A maximum of 100 points each can be received for the final paper. Pertinent information regarding grading is as follows: answer all parts of the assignment. Each portion of the assignment receives a percentage of the total grade so you must address all aspects of the assignment to receive full points. Refer to your text, online lessons & discussions, library and reputable URL sites for solid information. I will expect the majority of your references to be from books as not all websites have been reviewed as solid sources of information. While art has emotive components, our purpose is to explore it as a discipline. Responses that are based merely on your
emotional response or creative imaginings about an artwork are not addressing the assignment appropriately and will result in a poor grade.

6) A paper turned in past its scheduled due date will have 4 points deducted per day for lateness from the final score, with a possible of 24 points maximum deducted for lateness per assignment.

7) Review your final paper assignment well before the due date. This will allow you to read the material with the assignment in mind, and will give you enough time to email me for any clarification on the assignment, and allow time for me to see your email and respond to it.

Double-check your URL links for both your written paper and your group discussion assignments: often when you copy and paste a URL an extra space is added to the end of the address. This can foil the ability of the URL to connect to its site.

Deciding which artworks you use as examples is fundamental to the successful development of your paper and class discussions. Make sure the examples you choose are from the period/style/culture being discussed, and that they are pertinent to the discussion topic. CHOOSE EXAMPLES OTHER THAN THOSE IDENTIFIED IN YOUR ONLINE LESSONS.

One last important note - plagiarism. Plagiarism is the act of copying what someone else has written and passing it off as your own work. This is an illegal action and students who practice it will be dealt with severely. Never use text directly from a source unless you clearly cite your reference and indicate that you are quoting that reference. Your goal is to read information from different sources and to synthesize this information into your own, original response. This pertains to materials from traditional sources such as library and textbook materials as well as online sources. With the ability to copy and paste, plagiarism can be an easy trap in which to fall. This is cheating, however, and illegal. The University deals with these situations quite harshly and it can ruin your academic career and spoil your plans for graduation.

GRADING

Online Group Discussion participation is 77% of final grade: Participation will be evaluated on regular input to the discussions, the relevant content of your comments, the accuracy of the information, how insightful the comments are compared to information that is already posted, and require correct spelling and use of grammar.

Final paper is 23% of final grade: Successful completion of this course requires that both papers be turned in. Due dates are indicated on the Canvas site. Written papers turned in past its scheduled due date will have points deducted for lateness. Papers will be evaluated on content, thoroughness, and require correct spelling and use of grammar.

SUBMITTING PAPERS

Papers are to be submitted electronically through email as an attached document (either a Microsoft Word document, pdf or a Simple Text document: DO NOT SEND WORD PERFECT DOCUMENTS, I am not provided with that software and I am unable to open those documents). Technical problems with your computer or the server will not be a valid reason to submit an assignment past its scheduled due date. If you are unable to submit an assignment because of technical problems you should FAX your assignment by the scheduled due date to 801-585-6171. You are responsible for making sure your assignments; including attachments are received before the deadline.
COMMITMENT

Language of Colour is a course for non-art majors. This course is interesting, informative, and is serious in its goal to provide the student a thorough knowledge of course materials. Be advised that a substantial amount of time and commitment is required from the student to be in a position to acquire this knowledge. To be fully prepared to write excellent posts and papers, students must read assigned documents, discussion board posts entered by other class members, lessons from the online course, and information from numerous web sites. In addition, students are required to research information on the Internet. This can be a time consuming task, depending on your web-searching abilities. **It has been my experience that some students take an on-line course as a time saving measure. I would not recommend you take this course if that is a primary criteria.**

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

This class can be "attended" from anywhere there is an Internet connection. All course work can be submitted electronically. Students must be able to use an Internet browser, send attached files via e-mail and post comments to a web board. A Java and JavaScript-enabled browser are required to obtain the maximum benefit from your online course.

WEEKLY LIST OF TOPICS, CLASS DISCUSSIONS

All discussions will be built on visual examples and comparative discussion of concepts examined through the contemporary artwork and other visual language formats of select cultures and countries.

These topics overlap and blend into each other, but will always be discussed with the aid of images from contemporary art.

- Basic Colour Theory
- Biology of Seeing / Visual Intelligence
- Psychological and Physical Effects of Colour
- Colour and Culture
- Colour and Identity
- Border Art
- Color and Environmental Art
- Color as a Vehicle for Communication
- Visual Language of Globalization
- Color and Marketing Strategies

ACCOMMODATION POLICIES:

1) ADA statement
The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.
All written information in the course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

2) Some of the writings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include materials that conflict with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience.

Faculty and Student Responsibilities

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the online classroom setting, according to the student code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the code. The code specifies prescribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating, plagiarism, and/or collusion. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with written warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

Discussion threads, e-mails, and chat rooms are all considered to be equivalent to classrooms, and student behavior within these environments shall conform to the Student Code. Specifically:

• Posting photos or comments that would be off-topic in a classroom are still off-topic in an online posting.

• Off-color language and photos are never appropriate.

• Using angry or abusive language is called “flaming”, is not acceptable and dealt with according to the Student Code.

• Do not use ALL CAPS, except for titles, since it is the equivalent of shouting online, as is overuse of certain punctuation marks such as exclamation points!!!!!! And question marks?????

Course e-mails, e-journals, and other online course communications are part of the classroom and as such, are University property and subject to GRAMA regulations and the Student Code. Privacy regarding these communications between correspondents must not be assumed and should be mutually agreed upon in advance, in writing.

Note: The syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification.