

# Understanding the Arts (105-091C)

Explore Culture (3 credits)

Not applicable to Art major or minor degree

**Time:** Mon/Wed 1:50PM - 3:20PM

**Location:** Clow S101

**Instructor:** Sarah Dittmann

Email: dittmanns@uwosh.edu

**Office hours:** In-Person, Virtual, or  
By Appointment

Mon 12:30 - 1:30 PM

Wed 12:30 - 1:30 PM

## Course Description:

**Understanding the Arts** is a University Studies Program Explore course providing students with an education that increases their understanding and appreciation of the visual arts. Students will explore concepts central to the **University Studies Program Culture Category**, such as human thought, its intellectual foundations, and/or creative expression in courses in the Humanities and the Fine and Performing Arts Divisions.

Humans have been engaged in Art making for thousands of years, making art to construct, cultivate, and investigate cultural practices spanning vast temporal and spatial distances. In *Understanding the Arts*, we will investigate the nuance, fluidity, and exchange of cultural practices through an exploration of Art. We will examine how artists, as individuals and members of cultural groups, utilize Art to develop a visual language that enables them to augment forms of communication, bridge cultural differences, and forge new cultural connections.

## Use of Canvas Details:

- Course syllabus can be found in the *Syllabus* tab
- The Course Schedule will be located in the *Course Schedule* module.
- *Quiz, Discussion, and Activity* due dates will be posted in the *Course Schedule* module and on the Canvas Calendar
- After lectures, PowerPoints, links to videos, and other course materials will be posted in *Course Meeting Content* module on Canvas by the end of the day on Monday and Wednesday.
- *Activity* descriptions, instructions, and examples will be posted in *Activities* module
- *Discussion Posts* will be announced (*Announcements*) and accessed through *Discussions*.
- I will respond to emails as soon as possible or within 24 hours M-F; emails received Sat/Sun will be answered by end of day Monday or sooner

## Required Text: Understanding Art, Eleventh Edition

**Author-** Lois Fichner-Rathus

**Publisher-** Cengage Learning

**ISBN: 978-1285859293** (Paperback)

**ISBN: 978-1305875531** (Looseleaf)

**ISBN: 978-1285859293** (Ebook)

## University Studies Program:

The *University Studies Program (USP)* is your gateway to a 21st century college education at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. This course is an **Explore** course for the *University Studies Program*. *Explore* classes are designed to provide a solid foundation for the rest of your education here, no matter

which major you choose. For further information about the unique general education at UW Oshkosh and the other USP courses that are available, visit the *University Studies Program* website.

At UW Oshkosh, the foundation to your learning is a liberal arts education. Liberal Education is an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society) as well as in--depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real world settings. (AAC&U; [http://www.aacu.org/leap/What\\_is\\_liberal\\_education.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/leap/What_is_liberal_education.cfm))

### **Course Learning Outcomes and Critical Skills:**

Students will-

- Recognize and Describe the components (Form, Subject, Content) of a work of art
- Analyze and Describe how they interpret the components (Form, Subject, Content) to experience a work of art
- Define visual literacy
- Develop and Demonstrate a procedure for experiencing art
- Analyze and describe artists' creative expression and decision-making process
- Recognize strategies artists employ to bridge cultural differences

### **UWO Essential Learning Outcomes:**

In 2007, UW Oshkosh's Liberal Education Reform Team (LERT) adapted the American Association of Colleges & Universities' list of essential learning outcomes for college students to suit the specific strengths of UW Oshkosh. These UW Oshkosh essential learning outcomes underpin general education on this campus. They are what every UW Oshkosh graduate will have competency in for life.

#### **Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World**

- Through study in fine and performing arts, humanities, mathematics and science, and social science focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

#### **Skills, Both Intellectual and Practical**

- Identification and objective evaluation of theories and assumptions
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Technology and information literacy
- Teamwork, leadership and problem solving practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects and standards for performance

#### **Responsibility, as Individuals and Members of Communities**

- Knowledge of Sustainability and Its Applications
- Civic Learning—local and global
- Intercultural Knowledge and Competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning developed through real-world challenges and active involvement with diverse communities

#### **Learning: Integrated, Synthesized and Advanced**

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

### **Understanding the Arts Grade components:**

**Grade Category/Item**  
**Quizzes**

**Percentage**  
**50%**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Discussion Posts</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Final Grade will be calculated and weighted by the totaled percentages of each category.**

**Grading scale:**

A+ = 97-100	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 67-69	F
A = 94-96	B = 84-86	C = 74-76	D = 64-66	less than 60
A- = 90-93	B- = 80-83	C- = 70-73	D- = 60-63	

**Quizzes** will be weekly and multiple-choice format with questions covering content from the text, supplemental text materials, lectures, and additional content/materials presented in class. If you miss a quiz, you must provide proper documentation in order to be eligible for a makeup quiz. For example, if you are ill enough to miss a quiz, you will need documentation from a medical professional.

**Activities** will demonstrate how Learning Outcomes attained through exploration of course content are relevant to your personal lived experience in tangible ways. Most activities will be in the form of visiting museums. Visiting a work of art in person, within the gallery context, is an important part of understanding and appreciating art.

You will also have a few activities in-class done in groups. On those days I will provide you with a worksheet or what is necessary to complete the activity.

*Activities* submitted late will not be accepted.

Quiz dates and certain *Activities* due dates will be posted in the *Course Schedule* module and on the Canvas Calendar

**Discussion Posts** are an efficient and effective means of concisely articulating your thoughts and ideas on the course content/materials. A substantive post will contain a thoughtful question or comment on the topic that may consist of a couple sentences. Contributions to discussion posts should demonstrate that you have explored the course content/material (text/readings, lectures, videos, in class discussions) and attempted to thoughtfully connect it to your lived experience. Although feedback (“I agree with so and so” or “I also thought that was cool”) on discussion posts is encouraged, comments of that nature are not substantive enough to receive points for *Discussion Posts*.

For our purposes, class discussion should be about ideas, and these ideas may conflict with one another. Please be respectful of each other during online discussions. I suggest reading your comments out loud before posting and err on the side of caution when you feel strongly about (either in favor of or against) ideas presented in discussion posts. Remember, the purpose of *Discussion Posts* is not to “win” or “convince”, but to demonstrate your exploration and understanding of ideas and concepts explored through course content.

At times, the content we explore (and possibly the feelings elicited by Art and Artists) in lecture and discussions may be emotionally or psychologically difficult to process. I will make every effort to prepare you in advance, but please feel free to remove yourself from the discussion if you feel overwhelmed. The University prioritizes your wellbeing and provides a number of resources (see UW Oshkosh Resources below) or contact me with questions or concerns. More detailed information regarding these UW Oshkosh resources can be found in the *Resources* module on Canvas. *Discussion Posts* will be announced (*Announcements*) and accessed through *Discussions*.

**Academic Honesty:**

Please follow the standards stated in the UWO student handbook. ANY instance of academic dishonesty will be reported to appropriate university officials and will result in an F for the course.

**Early Alert:**

*Early Alert* is a program that provides you with an *Early Grade Report* from faculty. *Early Grade Reports* will indicate if you have academic performance or attendance issues and specific steps you can take and resources available to help you improve. It is common for students to be unaware of or over-estimate their academic performance in classes so this will help you be aware early on of your progress and provide strategies for success in the classroom. You will receive an email during the 5th week of classes. It is important to read the entire email carefully.

### **Class Conduct:**

We will be creating an atmosphere of mutual respect for effective learning. Arrive to class on time, be prepared for the day's course content, and make the decision to be engaged both mentally and physically. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to watch that day's lecture recording and other content/materials presented in class and come prepared to the next meeting.

### **Technology Resources:**

[Information Technology- Getting Started for Students](#)

[Ask for IT Help](#) For IT support, email [helpdesk@uwosh.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uwosh.edu)

[Google Chrome](#) The browser most suitable for Collaborate Ultra, the meeting software we will use.

[Quick guide to Collaborate Ultra](#) Videoconferencing software for live meetings and office hours.

[Adobe Acrobat Reader DC](#) May be helpful with some materials used in this course.

[UWO Canvas Student Introduction](#) Canvas course basics by UWO Canvas experts.

For **24/7 Canvas help**, click the "Help" icon at the bottom of the global navigation menu on the left-hand side and select "Chat with Canvas Support (Student)."

### **Accessibility Accommodations:**

It is the policy and practice of UW Oshkosh to create an inclusive learning environment. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion, please notify me as soon as possible. You are also welcome to contact the Accessibility Center at (920) 424-3100 or [accessibilitycenter@uwosh.edu](mailto:accessibilitycenter@uwosh.edu). For more information, visit the [Accessibility Center](#) website.

[UW Oshkosh Resources](#), Everything You Need to Succeed

Your personal and academic wellbeing and success are important to us. The university provides a number of resources to support students.

- [UW Oshkosh Resources](#)
- [UW Oshkosh Titans Return Recovery Plan](#)
- UW Oshkosh Titans Return Recovery Plan [COVID 19 Response](#) and information
- [Polk Library](#)
- [Undergraduate Advising Resource Center](#)
- [The Center for Academic Resources \(CAR\)](#)
- [Writing Center](#)
- [Reading and Study Skills Center](#)
- [The Accessibility Center](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Academic Support of Inclusive Excellence](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Resource Center](#)
- [American Indian Student Services](#)
- [Veterans Resource Center](#)
- [Women's Center](#)

More detailed information regarding these UW Oshkosh resources can be found in the *Resources* module on Canvas.

### **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:**

I share the sentiments of the following statement written by UW Oshkosh Professor Dr. Jordan Landry:

Diversity drives innovation, creativity, and progress. At the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, the culture, identities, life experiences, unique abilities, and talents of every individual contribute to the foundation of our success. Creating and maintaining an inclusive and equitable environment is of paramount importance to us. This pursuit prepares all of us to be global citizens who will contribute to the betterment of the world. We are committed to a university culture that provides everyone with the opportunity to thrive.

Building relationships and community is one of the most important goals of the course. The only way to build community in this course, given the focus, is to honor each person in terms of their identity. Each student in the course will conceive of their identity in different ways; aspects of identity important to students in the course may include ethnicity, ability, sex, sexuality, gender, gender expression, gender identity, religious beliefs, political affiliations, and/or class, to name just a few. Thus, each of us, myself included, must honor each student's identity in all its complexity. We need to work each class period on listening to others, taking up perspectives unlike our own, challenging our assumptions and finding a route toward understanding the similarities and differences between ourselves and others.

I want you to know that I created this course to be inclusive of all students. When striving for inclusion, I find it important to recognize that some communities have been historically marginalized from education. Thus, I want to affirm that I identify as an ally to LGBTQ+ students; Native, Latinx and Hispanic, Asian, Black, and African American students; first generation college students; students with disabilities; women students; students of diverse religious backgrounds; and students facing financial challenges in affording college.

I am committed to creating an anti-discriminatory classroom climate in which all students feel safe, supported, and affirmed. I ask that everyone in the class join me in committing to the creation of a welcoming space free of discrimination, bullying, and harassment in which each student can find a sense of belonging.

I value all my students and want to assist you in finding the support and guidance that you need. So, if any of you face challenges this semester, whether academic or outside of academics, I can help connect you with resources on campus to assist you in addressing these challenges. My goal is to help you to be successful and to ensure that both our classroom and our campus are safe and equitable.

### **Bias Incident Reports:**

The campus community is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where every member of our community is respected and valued. If you witness or experience an incident of bias, you are invited to file a bias incident report so that the situation can be addressed. If you choose to share your name, a UW Oshkosh staff member will follow up with you within one business day. Bias incident reports can be filed here: <https://uwosh.edu/police/bias-incident-report/>

### **Title IX:**

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on sex (gender and gender identity) in educational programs including recruitment, admissions, financial aid, classroom instruction, on campus housing, employment, and other areas. Title IX also protects pregnant and parenting students, and prohibits sexual harassment including sexual violence. To report complaints of sexual harassment or discrimination based on gender, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access at (920) 424-1166 or (920) 424-2021. To report complaints of sexual assault, students can also contact the Dean of Students Office at 424-3100 or University Police at 424-1212.

### **UW Oshkosh Land Acknowledgement Statement:**

We acknowledge the original inhabitants of this area, the Menominee and the Ho-Chunk nations. This land encompasses the three campuses of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in the Lake Winnebago region. Please take a moment to honor these ancestral grounds and celebrate the resilience and strength that all Indigenous people have shown worldwide.

Students are advised to see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Students Right to Know Act of 1990: <https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/>.