

Fall 2015

AADM 6505

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AADM 6505
Visual Arts For The Arts Administrator
Fall 2015

Wednesdays, 6:00 - 8:30
Liberal Arts, Room 262

Instructors:

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Course Overview and Objectives

Arts administrators play a key role in providing artists access to the public at large (and vice versa) through coordinating the efforts of artists, curators, and gallery owners. This course will examine the roles arts administrators play in both for profit and non-profit arts institutions, how those institutions came to exist, and how they can survive and prosper in the future.

We will focus on individual case studies and specific examples as often as possible, and will use selected readings from a variety of sources to guide and supplement class discussion. We will also be meeting outside the classroom to explore various arts institutions in New Orleans.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will gain an understanding of the institutional roles in fostering access to the visual arts, and have a basic knowledge of several of the most important themes and trends in modern and contemporary art. Students will also better understand how artists, curators, gallery owners, and art critics interact with the public and each other in museum, gallery, and public art environments.

Class Schedule

August 19
Course Introduction: The Role of the Arts Administrator (JD + GM)

August 26
Looking at Contemporary Visual Art (JD)

September 2
Culture Collision (details TBA)

September 9
The Economics of Visual Art (GM)

September 16

Forgery and Provenance (GM)

September 23

A Brief History of Museums, Galleries, and Art Events (JD)

September 30

"Forbidden Art": Ethics and Controversy in Visual Arts Exhibitions (JD)

October 7

Mid-term assignments due

Museum Field Trip (JD) - location TBA

October 14

Artist Studio Field Trip (JD) - location TBA

October 21

Public Art and Creative Placemaking (GM)

October 28

Commercial Gallery Field Trip (JD) - location TBA

November 4

The Art Gallery Business/Gallery Wars Exercise (GM)

November 11

Creative Placemaking Presentations (GM)

November 18

The Role of Non-Profits (GM)

November 25

No class - Happy Thanksgiving!

December 2

Wrap-Up Discussion (JD + GM)

NOTE: Final assignments are due on December 2

Required Texts

Note: In addition to the following books, additional articles (usually available online but sometimes on reserve in the library) will be assigned weekly, either in class or via the class Facebook group (see below).

Don Thompson
"The Super Model and the Brillo Box"
Macmillan

Sarah Thornton
"Seven Days in the Art World"
W.W. Norton & Company

Ossian Ward
"Ways of Looking: How to Experience Contemporary Art"
Lawrence King Publishing

The private class Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AADMVisualArts2015/> will also serve as a venue for sharing and discussing news and articles pertinent to the class. You will receive an email invitation to join the group after the first class meeting.

Course Requirements

1. Culture Collision Report (1-2 pages)

10% of final grade

Prepare a brief report on an organization participating in this year's New Orleans Culture Collision on Wednesday, September 2. The organization you choose for this assignment should be one focusing primarily on the visual arts. Performing arts organizations are not suitable, but historical museums and cultural institutions are acceptable as long as they feature visual arts components in their programming. (More details will be provided in a handout.)

2. Midterm Assignment (4-6 pages)

20% of final grade

Prepare an in-depth analysis of a current visual art exhibition in New Orleans. The exhibition may be in a museum, commercial gallery, or non-profit art space, and may feature the work of a single artist or a group of artists. (Note that historical-type exhibitions are not appropriate for this assignment.) Include a description of the layout of the exhibition and describe how the works of art are displayed and labeled. Pay particular attention to the way the exhibition is promoted or marketed, and include a discussion of at least two separate promotional items (e.g. flyers, brochures, catalogues, websites, etc.) in your report, along with copies of these items. Also pay close attention to the following questions: For whom is this exhibition intended? Does it succeed in deepening a visitor's understanding of the artist(s)? Do you think the exhibition portrayed the artist(s) in the best possible context and manner? Did it leave you wanting to see more work by the artist or artists? What do you think could have been improved?

3. Final Assignment (8-10 pages)

40% of final grade

Based on our class discussions, lectures, and reading assignments this semester, select an issue relevant to the current visual arts administrator (whether in museums, galleries, or non-profits) and prepare an in-depth introduction and analysis of the topic. Potential issues to address include arts funding, the role of technology, cultural economy development, increasing access to the visual arts, and censorship - but your own ideas are welcome. You will need to choose your topic and have it approved by one of us at least three weeks before it is due (i.e., by November 12).

4. Class attendance, weekly assignments, and participation

30% of final grade

This is a graduate-level class, and as a professional in training you are expected to participate in all class discussions. Absences are strongly discouraged, and after the first occurrence absences will adversely affect your grade. You must communicate with one or both instructors prior to class if an absence is anticipated. There will be weekly reading and research assignments which you will be expected to discuss in class. Reports, presentations, papers, and projects must be turned in on time unless an exception is obtained before the due date.

5. Extra Credit Assignment

A list of suggested extra credit assignments (in the form of book reports and/or exhibition analyses) will be distributed around the midterm mark of the course. Successful completion of this assignment will raise your final course grade by three points. Please note that this will be an optional assignment.

Grading

Your work will be evaluated numerically on a scale from 1 - 99. On this scale, 90 - 99 will be considered an "A", 80 - 89 is a "B", and so on. At the conclusion of the class, your grades will be added together and converted to a corresponding letter grade.

Notes

- **Be in class on time.** Please do not come five, ten, or twenty minutes late. Distracting interruptions are inconsiderate, disrespectful, and time-wasting. There is no excuse for repeatedly arriving late. Parking is often a hassle, especially when we are meeting offsite; allow enough time for it. Cell phones must be turned off before class begins and instructors reserve the right to limit use of laptops, tablets, and other devices during certain or all classes.
- **Spelling and grammar will count towards your grade in your written assignments.** Part of being an effective arts administrator is knowing how to communicate effectively. Always spell check your assignments before submitting them -- and make sure you know the difference between words like "it's" and "its" if you don't already.
- **Always cite your sources.** If you're in doubt whether a source needs to be cited or not, ask. Please note that while Wikipedia is OK to use as a source to get a general initial overview of a subject, it is NOT acceptable as a cited reference in your work. Use primary sources instead.
- Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. **Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.** Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Student Code of Conduct for further information. The Code is available online at <http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu>.
- It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to <http://www.ods.uno.edu>.
- Some of the artists and exhibitions we will be examine this semester may explore issues like politics, gender, race, sexuality, and other mature themes. **If you find the work of a certain artist to be "offensive", it's probably accomplishing what it set out to do.** Please let us know if you're having problems with a particular artist we're discussing and we'll work together to arrange a satisfactory solution.