

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

NOTE: ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTTPC.

Academic School/Department: Communications, Arts and Social Sciences

Programme: Communications

FHEQ Level: 4

Course Title: Introduction to Visual Culture

Course Code: COM 4200

Course Leader: John Chua

Student Engagement Hours: 120

Lectures: 22.5

Seminar / Tutorials: 22.5

Independent / Guided Learning : 75

Semester: Fall, Spring

Credits: 12 UK CATS credits
6 ECTS credits
3 US credits

Course/Course Description:

This course explores images and representations across cultural and historical contexts: the way meaning and ideologies can be decoded from such cultural artifacts as advertising, photography, cinema, modern art, sculpture, architecture, propaganda and comic books. Through varied examples, it takes an introductory route through some of the most important cultural theories and concepts.

Prerequisites: None

Aims and Objectives:

The course aims to:

- Consider conceptual frameworks for critically assessing issues of cultural production, images and representations.
- Introduce and discuss the major theoretical approaches in this field including semiotics, discourse analysis, feminism and ideology.
- Discuss, understand and develop a critical awareness of the ways in which cultural practices are related to issues of power in society, cultural identities, and the relationship between identity and one's place in society.

- Use a variety of resources (such as presentations, cultural artifacts, practical exercises, books, articles and the Internet) to critically engage with the theoretical approaches.

Programme Outcomes :

4A(iii); 4B(i); 4B(ii); 4B(iii); 4C(i); 4C(iii); 4D(i)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the Departmental/Schools page of the portal.

Learning Outcomes:

- Use theoretical frameworks that will enable them to understand cultural processes and products and begin to identify strengths and weaknesses between these frameworks.
- Understand how conceptions and representations of national, cultural, gendered and sexualized identities may legitimize or subvert dominant power relations.
- Critically engage with theoretical debates in the classroom and relate them to everyday life experiences.
- Develop a range of general intellectual knowledge and transferable skills such as the ability to challenge explanations of topics in social life; understand and evaluate complex arguments; and engage in clear written communication on these topics.
- Act with limited autonomy under direction or supervision and engages in evaluation of own work and capabilities and outputs in key areas of visual culture.

Indicative Content:

- Semiotics and Structures
- Genres, Codes and Conventions
- Narrative
- Ideology
- Discourse
- Nations and Nationalism
- Gender & Images
- Ethnicity, Orientalism and Representing 'Race'

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Council on June 28, 2012.

Teaching Methodology:

The course will combine formal lectures with interactive discussion. The former will introduce the main arguments related to the debate. The latter will be encouraged through tasks, activities and presentations of visual case studies aiming to link the theoretical arguments with the analysis of cultural processes and products.

Bibliography:

