# Writing Course Review Form

## I. General Education Review – Writing Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dept/Program Subject</th>
<th>Course # (i.e. ENEX 200)</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ART</td>
<td>ART 203</td>
<td>Introduction to Art Criticism</td>
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## II. Endorsement/Approvals

Complete the form and obtain signatures before submitting to Faculty Senate Office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please type / print name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Rafael Chacon (for Valerie Hedquist on leave)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone / Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hrafael.chacon@umontana.edu">hrafael.chacon@umontana.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Chair</td>
<td>Julia Galloway</td>
<td></td>
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## III. Overview of the Course Purpose/Description:

ART 203 Introduction to Art Criticism is the Department of Art’s primary writing course for its majors. ART 203 is a survey of artists, art works, critics and theories as well as an introduction to the major art movements and ideas of the Post-modern era. It is an overview of the description, interpretation, and evaluation of visual art as practiced in the discipline of art criticism. Both traditional and postmodern critical approaches to art will be considered with an emphasis on contemporary art criticism. Students will read a range of past and present art critics and write several examples of art criticism based on direct observation of contemporary art works. ART 203 places an emphasis on writing assignments with particular focus on the development of analytical and critical skills through writing.

### Learning Objectives:
- Develop improved observation and analysis of art
- Comprehend and use various interpretive perspectives
- Develop aesthetic evaluative criteria and apply them to contemporary art
- Become familiar with contemporary artists and art works through first-hand viewing and careful reading of art criticism
- Improve communication skills through writing brief responses to weekly questions and three 3-5 page papers

## IV. Learning Outcomes:

**Student learning outcomes:**

Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts

**The focus of the course is on art criticism and contemporary practice. Writing assignments, whether formal or informal, short or longer papers, focus on researching and responding to the ideas of previous and/or contemporary critics or the formulation of the student’s own critical position in relation to contemporary works of art.**
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<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing</td>
<td>The aim is to hone critical skills and language and apply them in written and oral presentations. Writing makes up the largest percentage of a student’s grade in the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience or purpose</td>
<td>Discussions of the nature of the audience and its reception to contemporary art is central to the course content and a part of all writing assignments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revise written work based on constructive feedback</td>
<td>All formal writing assignments receive feedback, both peer and instructor review.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Find, evaluate, and use information effectively</td>
<td>Research on contemporary artists and critics, distilling information about them, making considered value judgments, taking critical stances on ideas and works of art, and conveying that information in written and oral presentation are the central goals of the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions</td>
<td>As stated explicitly in the art history and criticism area COMPETENCIES OR STUDENT-LEARNING GOALS: “The following represent the course objectives of the art history and criticism curriculum. Visual Literacy and Language: to develop knowledge of visual language and the terminology needed for the analysis and discussion of works of art.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate appropriate English language usage</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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## V. Writing Course Requirements Check list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Is enrollment capped at 25 students? If not, list maximum course enrollment. Explain how outcomes will be adequately met for this number of students. Justify the request for variance.</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ NoX Enrollment is currently capped at 30. The course frequently benefits from graduate student assistance in small discussion groups (research teams) and in grading to make up for the larger number of students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are outcomes listed in the course syllabus? If not, how will students be informed of course expectations?</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are expectations for Information Literacy listed in the course syllabus? If not, how will students be informed of course expectations?</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are detailed requirements for all written assignments included in the course syllabus? If not how and when will students be informed of written assignments?</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No</td>
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<tr>
<td>What instructional methods will be used to teach students to write for specific audiences, purposes, and genres?</td>
<td>Yes, this is explicitly discussed in the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will written assignments include an opportunity for revision? If not, then explain how students will receive and use feedback to improve their writing ability.</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No</td>
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## VI. Writing Assignments: Please describe course assignments. Students should be required to individually compose at least 16 pages of writing for assessment. At least 50% of the course grade should be based on students’ performance on writing assignments. Clear expression, quality, and accuracy of content are considered an integral part of the grade on any writing assignment.

### Formal Graded Assignments
570 points of 850 available, or 67%, are formally graded writing assignments. Writing assignments take the form of:
1) papers: regarding visual analysis, interpretation, and judgment.
2) Peer-review reports.
3) Portfolio Writing assignments.
4) Library Assignments involving research and writing.
(See below Pages 8-11 for details)
In all cases writing is judged for the clarity of expression and quality and accuracy of the content.

### Informal Ungraded Assignments
Informal writing assignments in class are used frequently to generate discussion. Likewise, participation in Discussion Groups helps students to hone the selection of
VII. Syllabus: Paste syllabus below or attach and send digital copy with form. The syllabus should clearly describe how the above criteria are satisfied. For assistance on syllabus preparation see: http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/syllabus.html

Art 203, Introduction to Art Criticism, 3 credits
Introduction to writing art criticism
Literary and Artistic Studies and Writing course
On-Line Course Spring 2009
Discussion Groups, T or TH, 10:10-11:00 OR; 12:10-1:00 Fine Arts Building 304

Valerie Hedquist, Associate Professor
Contact information: valerie.hedquist@umontana.edu;
On-line Office Hours: T 9:00-10:00 or communicate via Blackboard
Discussion Instructors:
    T, TH 10:10-11:00, Fine Arts 304, Rebecca Weed, rebecca.weed@umontana.edu
    T, TH 12:10-1:00, Fine Arts 304, Lisa Jarrett, lisa.jarrett@umontana.edu
Discussion Instructors - Office Hours: Rebecca Weed, M 11:00-1:00, Schreiber Gym, SG 127; Lisa Jarrett, T, TH 1:10-2:00, FA 401

Course description: An overview of the description, interpretation, and evaluation of visual art as practiced in the discipline of art criticism. Both traditional and postmodern critical approaches to art will be considered with an emphasis on contemporary art criticism. Students will read a range of past and present art critics and write several examples of art criticism based on direct observation of contemporary art works.

Learning Objectives:
• Develop improved observation and analysis of art
• Comprehend and use various interpretive perspectives
• Develop aesthetic evaluative criteria and apply them to contemporary art
• Become familiar with contemporary artists and art works through first-hand viewing and careful reading of art criticism
• Improve communication skills through writing brief responses to weekly questions and three 3-5 page papers

Requirements for Course: You are expected to read weekly lectures and complete weekly portfolio writing assignments on Blackboard. You will attend and participate in on-campus discussion groups. All additional assigned course work must be completed in order to earn credit for the class. Late work will lose 10%/day. Students are expected to keep copies of all assigned work. Students will utilize Blackboard (http://courseware.umt.edu) for course syllabus, lectures, assignments, other course materials, announcements, and grades. Grades will be calculated as follows:

**Discussion Group Attendance**: 10 points/discussion group session (140 points total)

**Discussion Group Participation**: 10 points/discussion group session (140 points total)

**One library assignment**: 100 points total

**Three papers; visual analysis, interpretation, and judgment**: 100 points each; 300 points total

**Peer-review reports**: 10 points each; (30 points total)

**Portfolio Writing**: 10 points each weekly lecture; 140 points total

Grades are calculated as follows, based on all work completed:

- 850-783, A;
- 782-765, A-
- 764-749, B+;
- 748-680, B-
- 679-664, C+;
- 663-613, C;
- 594-579, D+;
- 578-528, D;
- 527-510, D-
- 509 and lower F

Students with disabilities or special needs should contact the instructor.

**Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code**: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at [www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/Index.cfm/page/1321](http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/Index.cfm/page/1321).

**Weekly Lecture and Discussion Topics and Assignments**

**Lecture Week 1, January 27 and 29: Introduction and What is Art?**
Definitions and changing ideas

**Discussion Week 1, January 27 and 29**
Introduction to On-Line Art 203
Introduction to Art Resource Center and on-campus art venues, including Main Hall, UC Art Gallery, Paxson/Meloy, and Gallery of Visual Art
Receive cases from *Puzzles about Art, An Aesthetics Casebook*

**Lecture Week 2, February 3 and 5, What is Art Criticism?**
Past and Present Critics, Writing about Art
Read: Barrett, Preface, Chapter 1
Discussion Week 2, February 3 and 5

Puzzles about Art, An Aesthetics Casebook discussion
Receive art criticism selections regarding Marlene Dumas

Lecture Week 3, February 10 and 12: Finding Art Criticism
Library Resources and Assignment

Discussion Week 3, February 10 and 12
Library Resources and Assignment with Tammy Ravas
Meet in Mansfield Library

Library Assignment, The Body, due date: February 24

Lecture Week 4, February 17 and 19: The Task of the Critic: Description, Interpretation, and Evaluation
Artist: Marlene Dumas
Receive art criticism selections regarding Tim Hawkinson

Discussion Week 4, February 17 and 19
Discussion of Marlene Dumas articles and what critics do
Visit from Writing Center representative

Lecture Week 5, February 24 and 26: Describing art, what do I see?
Read: Barrett, Chapters 3 and 6
Artist: Tim Hawkinson

Discussion Week 5, February 24 and 26
Description in Dumas and Hawkinson and artists in Barrett
Receive art criticism selections regarding Betty Woodman and Nathalie Djurberg

Paper #1, Description Paper - Visual Analysis
On-Line Peer review due date: March 3
First due date: March 5
Revision due: March 17

Lecture Weeks 6 and 7, March 3, 5, 10, and 12: Interpreting art, what does it mean?
Changing approaches to meaning, past and present, traditional, modern, and postmodern
Read: Barrett, Chapters 2 and 4
Artist: Betty Woodman
Artist: Nathalie Djurberg
Artist: Selected by Rebecca Weed

Discussion Weeks 6 and 7, March 3, 5, 10, and 12
Contemporary artists and what the art means
Interpretation of Woodman and Djurberg, artist selected by Rebecca Weed, and artists in Barrett
Receive art criticism selections regarding Vik Muniz, Pipilotti Rist, and Martin Ramirez

Paper #2, Interpretation of art, The Body
  On-Line Peer review by March 24
  First due date: March 26
  Revision due: April 9

Lecture Weeks 8 and 9, March 17, 19, 24, and 26: Evaluating art, what is good art?
Criteria for evaluating art, past and present
B.F.A. students
Read: Barrett, Chapter 5
Artist: Vik Muniz, Pipilotti Rist, and Martin Ramirez
Artist: Selected by Lisa Jarrett

Discussion Week 8, March 17 and 19
  How is contemporary art any good?
  Meeting in Gallery of Visual Art-Evaluating B.F.A. students
  Evaluation of Muniz, artist selected by Lisa Jarrett, and artists in Barrett
  Establishing Criteria

Discussion Week 9: March 24 and 26
  Meeting in Gallery of Visual Art-Evaluating B.F.A. students
  Receive art criticism sections on two international artists NeoHooDoo and Hiroshi Sugimoto

SPRING BREAK-March 28-April 5

Lecture Week 10, April 7 and 9:
  Global Art, International Directions
  Art beyond New York
  NeoHooDoo and Hiroshi Sugimoto

Discussion Week 10, April 7 and 9
  Discuss international artists and criticism
  NeoHooDoo, Hiroshi Sugimoto
  Description, interpretation, and evaluation
  Receive art criticism selections on current exhibitions

Paper #3, Judgment of art, B.F.A. Student Exhibition
  On-Line Peer review by April 21
  Due date: April 23

Lecture Week 11, April 14 and 16
  Controversial Art
  What topics? Why?
Discussion Week 11, April 14 and 16
What is controversial now?

Lecture Week 12, April 21 and 23
Museums/Galleries and Power
Who determines what you see?

Discussion Week 12, April 21 and 23
Responses to controversial art

Lecture Week 13, April 28 and 30
Current Exhibitions and Art Criticism of Contemporary Art

Discussion Week 13, April 28 and 30
Discuss current exhibitions and criticism
Who, what and where?

Lecture Week 14, May 5 and 7
Ten Artists to Share
Hedquist List

Discussion Week 14, May 5 and 7
Ten artists to share
Jarrett List and Weed List

Example of Paper requirements handout:

Art 203, Introduction to Art Criticism, Fall 2008
Read: Barrett, Chapter 3 and 6
Paper #1, Description Paper - Visual Analysis
Peer review and first due date: September 30
Revision due: October 9

At least five pages, typed, double-spaced paper, 1” margins at edges

This assignment is a description paper based on art works by University of Montana Department of Art studio faculty exhibited in the Gallery of Visual Arts until 1 October. Your paper will consider works that exemplify the use of formal elements. For each of the formal elements, you will find one work that demonstrates that particular characteristic. For example, one work will show the use of line, another work will focus on shape/volumetric form, another work will consider texture/pattern, one work will look at color, one work will demonstrate light/shadow, and finally, you will find one work that highlights the use of space (total number of art works considered is six (6)).

Your paper will begin with an introduction to the exhibit and a thesis statement outlining the goal of identifying works that demonstrate the significant and successful use of specific formal elements. The paper will then consider an exemplary work in the
show for each of the formal elements. By focusing on individual works, consider the primary formal element (line, shape/volumetric form, texture/pattern, color, light/shadow, or space) for each work that communicates the power of the image. Describe thoroughly the way the formal element in each work conveys visual and content information to the viewer. Continue your discussion of art works and formal elements until you have discussed six (6) art works, each associated with one of the primary formal elements.

After considering the primary visual elements, you will also consider the compositional qualities or design principles in the six (6) art works; that is, how does the artist organize the visual elements, in the work of art? Of the six (6) art works you have considered, where do you see the use of balance, contrast, unity/variety, emphasis, repetition and rhythm as methods of organizing the elements of art?

Be sure to identify the artist and medium of each work and describe both the theme and the subject matter of each art work. Read Chapter 3 in Barrett and consider the following questions to assist you in your descriptive analysis.

Formal or Visual Elements

Line is used to define an edge, create a rhythm, or indicate areas of shading. Line can be implied or actual. Implied and gestural lines often organize a composition. Look carefully at the lines in your composition. Consider whether the lines are vertical, horizontal, or diagonal. Are the lines broad or thin, long or short, broken or unbroken? Do lines meander and curve or are they straight? Are the lines used to create an open, expansive figure or object, or do the lines come together to create a closed figure or object? Are the lines sharp or dull? Hard or soft? Flowing or jagged? Continuous or interrupted?

What shapes and/or volumetric forms predominate? How are these shapes/volumetric forms rendered? Where placed? Are the shapes/volumetric forms round or angular? Do you see squares or cubes, triangles or pyramids? Are there circles or spheres? Cylindrical or conical forms? Are the shapes/volumetric forms solid or broken, measured or irregular, concave or convex? Would you say that the shapes and/or volumetric forms are geometric or organic? Do you see positive/negative space?

Real and implied textures contribute to the feel of the work. What is the actual surface like? What are the simulated textures like and how are they realized? How are textures contrasted in the work? Consider what the work would feel like if you could touch the actual surface. Consider what the objects or forms of the work would feel like. Consider whether textures are smooth or rough, hard or soft, dry or wet, coarse or fine, glossy or matte, wrinkled or even, grainy or filmy, porous or sealed, opaque or transparent. Are there repeated motifs that create a pattern in the art work? What are the motifs, the intervals, and where does the repetition occur?

Look very carefully at the use of color in the art work. Identify the various hues and note the arrangement of warm and cool colors, primary and secondary colors, and complementary and analogous colors. What is the degree of saturation or intensity to the colors in the work? Are the colors pure or mixed? Advancing or receding? Does the object have high value colors (tints) or low value colors (shades)? Has the artist arranged colors to create a simultaneous color contrast? Are the colors natural or
artificial? Would you say that the colors have specific meaning in your work? Are the colors related to the subject matter or theme?

How has the artist manipulated light in the artwork? Consider the type of light, the direction of the light, and the intensity of the light. Is it daytime or night? Is the light natural or artificial, clear or shadowy, weak or bright? Is the light a high source or low source? Is it frontal or lateral? Is there light coming from the background? Is the light focused or hazy? Glaring or dim? Is chiaroscuro or tenebrism evident in the artwork? Are contrasts between light and shadow strong or gradual?

How is space handled in the artwork? Is there actual three-dimensional space? Or, is depth suggested by spatial cues such as: overlapping objects, elevated objects, highlights and shadows, foreshortening, or the relative size of objects? Do you see linear or one-point perspective in the artwork? What about atmospheric perspective? Is there shallow, allover, or deep space in the art work?

**Principles of Design**

First, does the composition seem unified? Do the visual elements appear integrated or separate and distinct from each other? Is the composition stable or dynamic? How is this effect achieved?

Second, consider the aspect of balance in your artwork. Is the composition evenly distributed or does one half of the work “weigh” more than the other half? Is the piece symmetrical or asymmetrical? Be specific in identifying the distribution of objects and how you ascribe weight to each object. If your work is balanced, how has your artist manipulated forms and shapes to provide variety while maintaining unity?

Third, consider the rhythms in your artwork. What forms are repeated in the composition? How does the orderly repetition of similar forms create a distinctive rhythm in your piece? Is the rhythm appropriate to the theme and subject matter? Again, consider how the artist has created variety within the repetition of form. Be specific in acknowledging the variations of the repeated forms.

Fourth, what is the focal point of the work? Or, are there multiple points of focus? How does the artist emphasize this feature/these features visually? Through placement, scale, line, color, etc.?

The paper might look like this:

- Introduction
- Line Paragraph
- Principles of Design evident in the Line Paragraph work of art
- Shape/Volumetric Form Paragraph
- Principles of Design evident in the Shape/Volumetric Form Paragraph work of art
- Texture/Pattern Paragraph
- Principles of Design evident in the Texture/Pattern Paragraph work of art
- Color Paragraph
- Principles of Design evident in the Color Paragraph work of art
- Light Paragraph
- Principles of Design evident in the Light Paragraph work of art
- Space Paragraph
Example of Portfolio Writing Questions and Prompts:

Week Two Lecture Questions
Due Date: 13 February 2009
Portfolio Writing, 10 possible points
Answer the following questions:

1. What does Vasari value in the work of Michelangelo as evident in the Pietà? (One paragraph) What expectations might Vasari have about artists during his period which he came to call the Renaissance? (1-2 sentences)

2. What does Vasari value in the work of Leonardo as evident in the Last Supper? (One paragraph) Are Vasari’s expectations what you expect to find in Renaissance art? (One sentence)

3. After reading Diderot’s interpretation of Greuze’s painting, what do you think Diderot values in art? (One paragraph) According to Diderot, what is the ‘real’ story behind the girl crying about a dead bird? (1-2 sentences)

4. Based on his response to the art of M.G., what does Baudelaire believe modern artists should do? (One paragraph)

5. How does a painting by Morris Louis exemplify what Greenberg stated was the goal of modernism? (One paragraph)

6. What does Hilton Kramer dislike about the Gates installation in Central Park? (One paragraph)

7. What extrinsic (outside of the art work) issues does Lucy Lippard consider in her writing? (One paragraph) Is she mostly concerned with the actual VISUAL PRESENTATION or aspects of the MAKER or the VIEWER? (1-2 sentences)