Please attach/submit additional documents as needed to fully complete each section of the form.

I. COURSE INFORMATION

Department: School of Art  
Course Number: ARTH 161  
Course Title: Topics in Art  
Type of Request: x New One-time Only Renew* Change Remove  
Rationale: this is a proposal for a new course

*If course has not changed since the last review and is taught by the same tenure-track faculty member, you may skip sections III-V.

JUSTIFICATION FOR COURSE LEVEL

Normally, general education courses will not carry pre-requisites, will carry at least 3 credits, and will be numbered at the 100-200 level. If the course has more than one pre-requisite, carries fewer than three credits, or is upper division (numbered at the 300 level or above), provide rationale for exception(s).

The course will not carry pre-requisites, will carry 3 credits, and is labeled at the 100 level.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (FOR OCHE DATABASE):

In which MUS Core Category does this course fit?
Does the course include content regarding cultural heritage of American Indians?

II. ENDORSEMENT / APPROVALS

* Instructor: Aja Mujinga Sherrard  
Phone / Email: 406. 546. 8485 /aja.sherrard@umontana.edu  
Signature:  
Date 09.14.16

Program Chair:  
Signature:  
Date 9/28/16

Dean:  
Signature:  
Date 9/28/16

*Form must be completed by the instructor who will be teaching the course. If the instructor of the course changes before the next review, the new instructor must be provided with a copy of the form prior to teaching the course.

III. DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

General Education courses must be introductory and foundational within the offering department or within the General Education Group. They must emphasize breadth, context, and connectedness; and relate course content to students' future lives: See Preamble
Through the lens of this Art History class, students will have the opportunity to explore topics that are intersectional in nature and certainly applicable in throughout other disciplines of study and even within their personal lives. While focusing on the specific Topic in Art (be that the topic of Punk Art or if Conceptual Art) this course nevertheless exposes students to a wide diversity of Artists, each of whom invoke complex and far-reaching ideas about society, history, and human experience.

The class will also have a strong writing and analytical emphasis, with weekly writing assignments that develop their critical responses and integration, making it an ideal introductory course for field of study within the humanities.

IV. CRITERIA

BRIEFLY EXPLAIN HOW THIS COURSE MEETS THE CRITERIA FOR THE GROUP.

1. Present ideas and information with a view to understanding the causes, development, and consequences of historical events.

   There will be a strong emphasis on context throughout the course, emphasizing the way that art develops meaning against the backdrop of common knowledge, culture, and world events. For the Topic of Conceptual Art, our introductory reading By Ellen Dissanayake will frame the notion of art itself in a global historical context, setting the tone for the rest of the course. For example: Understanding the work of Artist James Luna will bring us to readings about Native American genocide and the politics surrounding the display—or return—of human remains. The work of Stacy Tyrell will bring us to the politics and history of Hypodescent, or the one-drop-rule in American Racial politics. Looking at Marcel Duchamp’s infamous piece “Fountain” will bring us to the emergence of DADA in relation to the cultural shifts following WW1, and Discussing Cleve Jones’ famous “Names Project” will evoke the history of the AIDS crisis and early LGBTQ Rights movement.

2. Evaluate texts or artifacts within their historical and/or cultural contexts.

   Through the selection of texts and weekly writing prompts, this class will emphasize context as a significant portion of our approach. Additionally, student’s independent research and writing projects will emphasize parallel research into the context of the artist and works they are presenting.

3. Explain the approach and focus with respect to chronological, geographical, and/or topical content.

   Because this course is driven by a particular topical or critical lens, the course is organized loosely around subcategories in that analysis more so than a strict chronology. For the Topic of Conceptual Art, for instance, the categories include: “Tearing into the Infrastructure,” “Thief of Transgression,” “Vanishing Objects,” “Presence as Medium,” “Identity Play,” “Text Alone,” “New Rituals,” “Radical Presence,” and “Movements / Collaborations,” each provide categorical footholds into the theme of conceptual art, while also unfolding into historical information of their own.

   The introductory lectures, “Defining Conceptual Art” and “The Crisis of the Object,” and to some extent, “What is Art” is where the larger historical frame of the class is established, tracing the emergence of conceptual work in the West and setting it against earlier non-western examples of these same forms.

4. A methodological component (e.g. historiography or ethnography) must be apparent.

   While certainly incorporating and emphasizing historical contexts and contents, the methodology in terms of course structure is more similar to the systems embedded in ethnography: i.e: comparative groupings of specific, in-depth examples. Through the collection of these various artists’ works and the historic framing of each, we will naturally make connections, observe relationships and influences, and develop a sense of the larger patterns within which these specific examples fit.
V. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

BRIEFLY EXPLAIN HOW THIS COURSE WILL MEET THE APPLICABLE LEARNING GOALS.

1. Synthesize ideas and information with a view to understanding the causes and consequences of historical developments and events.

Through weekly writing assignments, students will be asked to synthesize the content of their readings and make connections between the meaning and purpose of the artworks we are discussing and the social and historical context of these works. In evaluating these weekly writing assignments, I will guide and expand these discussions: helping students to develop the habit of linking factors and asking the next question.

2. Evaluate texts or artifacts within their historical and/or cultural contexts.

Early in the semester, we will discuss active note taking and how to treat a text like a discussion. Within that practice, we will emphasize the practice of “plugging back,” or jotting a reference to a historic event, parallel theory, similar essay, similar artwork, or contemporary factor in the margins of the text in order to maintain a sense of the connections available and to create an expansive sense of context within the process of learning.

3. Analyze human behavior, ideas, and institutions within their respective historical and/or cultural contexts.

The nature of the course—dealing with art that directly explores or represents questions of history, society and social institutions, and human nature—will bring us into constant, consistent contact with these themes. Weekly writing discussions, personal research, and forum discussions following student work will help students invest in these themes and practice their engagement and analysis along these terms.

VI. ASSESSMENT

A. HOW ARE THE LEARNING GOALS FOR THE GENERAL EDUCATION GROUP MEASURED?

Describe how you will determine that students have met each of the General Education Learning Goals. This should include specific examples of assignments, rubrics or test questions that directly measure the General Education learning goals. (See Example)

Please attach or provide a web link to relevant assessment materials.

1. Synthesize ideas and information with a view to understanding the causes and consequences of historical developments and events.

Evaluating weekly assignments according their proximity to the goals of synthesis, understanding, and connecting the artworks under consideration to their historical context will give me a clear record of student progress. Long-form written evaluations will allow the instructor to encourage further growth and create a closer, case-by case awareness of student growth as well.
2. Evaluate texts or artifacts within their historical and/or cultural contexts.

Evaluating weekly assignments according their proximity to the goals of synthesis, understanding, and connecting the specific critical texts, documentation, and artworks under consideration to their historical context will give the instructor a clear record of student progress. Long-form written evaluations will allow the instructor to encourage further growth and create a closer, case-by case awareness of student growth as well.

3. Analyze human behavior, ideas, and institutions within their respective historical and/or cultural contexts.

Evaluating weekly assignments according their proximity to the goals of synthesis, understanding, and connecting the artworks under consideration to their social and (social infrastructure) context will give the instructor a clear record of student progress. Long-form written evaluations will allow the instructor to encourage further growth and create a closer, case-by case awareness of student growth as well.

A General Education Assessment Report will be due on a four-year rotating cycle. You will be notified in advance of the due date. This will serve to fulfill the University’s accreditation requirements to assess general education and will provide an opportunity to connect with your colleagues across campus and share teaching strategies. Items VI.B- D will be helpful in compiling the report.

B. ACHIEVEMENT TARGETS
[This section is optional. Achievement or mastery targets can be reported if they have been established.]
Describe the desirable level of performance for your students, and the percentage of students you expected to achieve this:

1.

2.

3.

C. ASSESSMENT FINDINGS
[This section is optional. Assessment findings can be reported if they are available.]
What were the results/findings, and what is your interpretation/analysis of the data? (Please be detailed, using specific numbers/percentages when possible. Qualitative discussion of themes provided in student feedback can also be reported. Do NOT use course grades or overall scores on a test/essay. The most useful data indicates where students’ performance was stronger and where it was weaker. Feel free to attach charts/tables if desired.)

D. ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

Given your students’ performance the last time the course was offered, how will you modify the course to enhance learning? You can also address how the course could be improved, and what changes in the course content or pedagogy you plan to make, based upon on the findings. Please include a timeframe for the changes.

VII. SYLLABUS AND SUBMISSION

Please submit syllabus in a separate file with the completed and signed form to the Faculty Senate Office, UH 221, faculty.senate@mso.umt.edu. The learning goals for the Historical and Cultural Studies Group must be included on the syllabus. An electronic copy of the original signed form is acceptable.
TOPICS IN ART
THE ART OF THE ANECDOTE:
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS AND MAKING MEANING

SYNOPSIS:

What can you get from a performance piece if you weren’t there to see it? Why do we care about ephemeral pieces that disappear as they are made? From work that involves hidden, eased, or destroyed elements? From a symbolic action the artist took alone?

As the world of art continues to expand into conceptual, ephemeral, and relational works, it can be hard to understand what has been created and how we can continue to assign it value.

In this class, we are going to look at the creation of meaning as a new medium, and the anecdote or the fact of it as a means of understanding artwork by such artists as Marina Abramović, Adrian Piper, James Luna, Andy Goldsworthy, Rirkrit Tiaravanija, Ai Weiwei, and many others.

Course Objectives: Upon completing this course, students will have a strong understanding of Conceptual art, and the ability to use the framework of conceptual art to better understand ephemeral, relational, and social practice works. Students will familiarize themselves with the works of innovative and diverse artists as well as performing some of their own research. Students will also develop and improve their skills in observation, description, analysis, and transmission of ideas. In particular: they will become comfortable expressing their ideas through writing.
TOPICS IN ART:

THE ART OF THE ANECDOTE:
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS AND MAKING MEANING

Course Syllabus

Basic Info:

"The Art of the Anecdote: conceptual frameworks and making meaning."

ARTH 161 TOPICS IN ART
Spring 2016. ONLINE.
CRN: --
Level: Undergraduate
Type: Art History/Criticism
Pre-requisites: none
Credits: 3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Aja Mujinga Sherrard
Email: ajasherrard@umontana.edu

Course Description: What can you get from a performance piece if you weren’t there to see it? From an ephemeral piece that disappears as it is made? From work that involves hidden, eased, or destroyed elements? From a symbolic action the artist took alone? As the world of art continues to expand into conceptual, ephemeral, and relational works, it can be hard to understand what has been created and how we can continue to assign it value. In this class, we are going to look at the creation of meaning as a new medium, and the anecdote or the fact of it as a means of understanding artwork by such artists as Marina Abramović, Adrian Piper, James Luna, Andy Goldsworthy, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Ai Weiwei, and many others.

Course Objectives: Upon completing this course, students will have a strong understanding of Conceptual art, and the ability to use the framework of conceptual art to better understand ephemeral, relational, and social practice works. Students will familiarize themselves with the works of innovative and diverse artists as well as performing some of their own research. Students will also develop and improve their skills in observation, description, analysis, and transmission of ideas. In particular: they will become comfortable expressing their ideas through writing.

Required Text: All assigned readings will be made available to students across the website. Readings will include critical reviews of included artists and artworks alongside other relevant essays.

Course Requirements: Students are expected to read all assigned materials, actively participate in discussion forums, and complete all assignments by their due date.
Attendance: There are no excused absences in this class.

Grading: Student grades will be calculated according to their weekly writing assignments (25% of the grade), participation in class forums (25% of their grade), midterm research paper (25% of your grade), and final project (25% of their grade). Students will also receive a short evaluative feedback to each writing assignment, in depth feedback on the midterm and final, and a final written evaluation.

Students With Special Needs: It is not at all out of the ordinary for various students to have unique needs and learning styles. Students with disabilities or unique needs should contact with me as soon as possible to discuss potential strategies or solutions.

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/VPSC/Index.cfm/page/1321.

Withdrawal Policy: Specifics available at this web address: http://www2.umt.edu/catalog/acpolpro.htm

Assignments:

- WEEKLY WRITING ASSIGNMENTS 1-10: Roughly 2-4 paragraphs each, these short written assignments will address your readings or the discussion topic at hand. The description of each specific assignment will be made available the week it is assigned. Each weekly writing assignment must be completed by Monday of the following week and proofread before being handed in.

- MIDTERM RESEARCH PAPER: You must discover an artist that meets the criteria we’ve established as practicing “The Art of the Anecdote.” In 6-10 pages, describe and contextualize their work, focusing in at least one particular piece in detail and citing a minimum of three legitimate sources. Imagery optional.

- FINAL PROJECT: Propose/Record a conceptual piece of your own. Describe the elements and context of the work, addressing the specific details of process, tools, location, audience, duration, media, and documentation alongside any other relevant factors. Establish the necessary background information to give the piece context. 6-10 pages. Include at least one image to support the proposal. Additional materials, such as a short film, short audio file, or transcript may be included in addition to the image.

Course Outline:

WEEK 1 – Introductions/ What is Art?
Essay: “What is Art” by Dissanayake
Weekly Writing #1

WEEK 2 – Defining “Conceptual Art”
Readings on early conceptualism
"Notes on ‘African Conceptualism’" by Okuwi Enwezor
Weekly Writing #2

WEEK 3 – The Crisis of the Object
“The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical reproduction” – Baudrillard
DADA: Duchamp’s “Fountain”
Weekly Writing #3

WEEK 4 – Tearing into the Infrastructure
Fred Wilson, “Mining the Museum”/“My Life as a Dog”
Will Brown, “Illegitimate Business”
Weekly Writing #4

WEEK 5 – Theft and Transgression
Robert Rauschenberg, “Erased de Kooning Drawing”
Weekly Writing #5

WEEK 6 – Vanishing Objects
Andy Goldsworthy: “Rain Shadows” and other works
Allan Kaprow: “Happenings”
Weekly Writing #6

WEEK 7 – Presence as Medium
Marina Abramović, “The Artist is Present”
Rirkrit Tiravanija, “Pad Thai”
Weekly Writing #7

WEEK 8 – Identity play
James Luna, “The Artifact Piece”
Cindy Sherman, “Untitled Film Stills”
RESEARCH PAPER

WEEK 9 – Identity play part 2
Stacy Tyrell, “Bakra Bluid”
Erica Lord, “The Tanning Project”
RESEARCH PAPER

WEEK 10 – POST RESEARCH PAPERS
Read classmate projects

WEEK 11 – FORUM: Peer review of Research Papers
Text Alone
Guerrilla Girls “Posters series”
Adrian Piper “Calling Card”
Weekly Writing #8
WEEK 12 – New Rituals
Beli Liu, “Mending”
John Peña, “Letters to the Ocean”
Weekly Writing #9

WEEK 13 – Radical presence
Coco Fusco, “Two AmerIndians Visit the West”
Ai Weiwei, “Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn”
Weekly Writing #10

WEEK 14 – Movements/ collaborations
Frank Warren, “Post Secret”
Cleve Jones, “The Names Project” (Aids quilt)
(memes)
FINAL PROJECTS

WEEK 15 – Post Final Projects
Read classmate projects

Week 16 – FORUM: Peer review of Final Projects

**This syllabus may be subject to change at any point. Pay attention to classroom announcements and email notices to stay up to date**
The Art of the Anecdote – ARTH 161 / Online
MID-TERM RESEARCH PAPER

DUE: Monday, Week 10
6 - 10 pages. Double-spaced.

DESCRIPTION:

Artists who practice "the art of the anecdote" produce artwork that captures the imagination and lingers there as a story, an idea, or the articulation of some meaning. In this project, you will research an artist that meets those criteria.

In this 6-10 page essay, you will introduce the artist you chose and do the following:
• Make an argument for why they are a good choice (how do they fit in the criteria?)
• Describe at least one relevant piece in detail, including the story or meaning it conveys
• Give the meaning of their work context by describing the social or historical factors that the work addresses or responds to
• Cite a minimum of three legitimate sources.

PRESENTATION DETAILS:

You will submit a PDF typed in a legible 12pt. black font, double spaced, and proofread. Pages must be numbered, and you must include an unnumbered cover page with your full name, Essay Title, year, and class.

All research must be cited according to Chicago Turabian or MLA standards. The inclusion of images is optional, but all included images must be labeled with the following: Artist, Title, medium, year, and permissions.
MID-TERM RESEARCH PAPER: EVALUATION FORM

Student's Name: ___________________________ Grade: __________ / 100

BREAKDOWN

_____ / 10: On time and complete

_____ / 15: PRESENTATION.
  - PDF
  - Essay length requirement met
  - Typed: 12 pt. Legible black font
  - Double-spaced
  - Numbered
  - Cover page (Essay Title, full name, year, class)
  - Citation meets Chicago Turabian or MLA standards: (In line citations and Bibliography)
  - Images (if included) are labeled with Artist, Title, medium, year, and permissions.

_____ /40: CONTENT. Student demonstrated a clear understanding of the assignment and met the assignment’s goals.

_____ /10: Chose an artist that meets the topic’s criteria and adequately represented/defended their choice.

_____ /10: Described at least one relevant artwork in detail, including an analytical reading of the piece.

_____ /10: Addressed the context of the work by describing the social or historical factors that contributed to the work's meaning.

_____ /10: Cited a minimum of three (3) legitimate sources.

_____ /25: WRITING. Student demonstrated a clear, legible writing style.
  - One clear, well-focused topic or argument supported throughout
  - Well organized: with introduction, conclusion, and strong transitions between supporting paragraphs.
  - Word choice: demonstrated appropriate vocabulary for the topic and shows a strong understanding of terms used.
  - Style: Voice remains consistent and professional, and sentences are well constructed
  - Proofread: minimal to no evidence of spelling, grammar, or mechanical errors.

_____ /10: Demonstrates effort and growth.