



SYLLABUS

THE ART OF OBSERVATION

Instructor: Kate Mondloch

Language of Instruction: English

UO Credits: 4

Contact Hours*: 40

SIENA, ITALY

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT HOURS

120

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This interdisciplinary humanities course investigates how we see and experience the visual world, introducing a range of practical strategies for enhancing our observational skills in everyday life. We will approach the topic through hands-on experiences with a range of attentive, close observation techniques as we engage in experiential activities in and around Siena: amateur photography projects, guided journaling, museum visits, neighborhood walks, and more. Students will have the opportunity to create visual experience portfolios to share with the broader GEO community during a final showcase event, inspiring ongoing discussions about the applied value of detailed observation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT OUTCOMES.

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- ❖ Employ visual analysis and research methods in support of cohesive and persuasive arguments
- ❖ Engage with self-inquiry, personal meaning, and creativity through enhanced visual and perceptual awareness
- ❖ Develop oral presentation skills through presenting ideas, readings, and visual analyses to peers during class discussions
- ❖ Develop interdisciplinary thinking and an appreciation for the value of different modes of visual experience in everyday life

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

This course will be conducted through readings, seminar-style discussions, excursions, journaling, photography, and student presentations.

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

15%	Participation
30%	Journal writing assignments (500 words each)
30%	Visual observation activities and assignments
25%	Collaborative visual experience portfolio and class showcase event

COURSE OUTLINE (subject to minor changes)

The course will be organized into three modules. Each module will have its own thematic experiential looking exercises and readings. Journal reflections will be due at the end of each module. Throughout the course, students will create individual visual experience portfolios out of their visual observation assignments. The course culminates in a collaborative final project in which students present their research portfolios to the broader GEO community.

Week 1 The Art of Observing: Color, Boredom **July 25-28: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday**

Read: Horowitz, *On Looking*, "Inanimate City," pp.1-92
Read: Karr and Wood, *Contemplative Photography*, ch.1-8
Write: Journal #1
Present and Discuss: Group 1 presentation of readings
Look: photography, walks, art viewing, etc.

Week 2 The Art of Observing: Texture, Simplicity **August 1-4: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday**

Read: Horowitz, *On Looking*, "Animate City," pp.93-184
Read: Karr and Wood, *Contemplative Photography*, ch.9-12
Write: Journal #2
Present and Discuss: Group 2 presentation of readings
Look: photography, walks, art viewing, etc.

Week 3 The Art of Observing: Light, Space

August 8-11: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Read: Horowitz, *On Looking*, “Sensory City,” pp.185-266
Read: Karr and Wood, *Contemplative Photography*, ch.14 and 16
Write: Journal #3
Present and Discuss: Group 3 presentation of readings
Look: photography, walks, art viewing, etc.

Week 4 The Art of Observing: Final Projects
August 12: Friday

Curate: Final visual experience projects and portfolios
Present: Final visual experience portfolio and class showcase event

COURSE READINGS

Horowitz, Alexandra. *On Looking: a walker’s guide to the art of observation*. Scribner, 2014.

Additional selections from the following texts will be available on Canvas:

Herman, Amy E. *Visual Intelligence: sharpen your perception, change your life*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016.

Karr, Andy and Michael Wood. *The practice of contemplative photography: seeing the world with fresh eyes*. Boston: Shambhala, 2011.

Accessible Education Statement

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Academic Misconduct Statement

The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any

question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism.

Reporting Obligations

I am a designated reporter. For information about my reporting obligations as an employee, please see [Employee Reporting Obligations](#) on the Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance (OICRC) website. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment, including sex or gender-based violence, may seek information and resources at safe.uoregon.edu, respect.uoregon.edu, or investigations.uoregon.edu or contact the non-confidential Title IX office/Office of Civil Rights Compliance (541-346-3123), or Dean of Students offices (541-346-3216), or call the 24-7 hotline 541-346-SAFE for help. I am also a mandatory reporter of child abuse. Please find more information at [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).