MOUNT ROYAL
UNIVERSITY
1910

Mount Royal University is located in the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of the Treaty 7 region in southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikuni, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina and the Iyarhe Nakoda. We are situated on land where the Bow River meets the Elbow River. The traditional Blackfoot name of this place is "Mohkinstsis," which we now call the city of Calgary. The city of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation.

Department of General Education, Values, Beliefs & Identity Cluster

GNED 1201 – *Aesthetic Experience and Ideas*
Section 015 – Fall Session 2022

RECONNECTING WITH THE CITY THROUGH ART

COURSE OUTLINE

This course serves as a cluster two, foundation level General Education requirement**.**

Class time: MW 11:30-12:50
Location: EB1006
Instructor: Randy Connolly   **Office:** B175-L
Telephone: 403-440-6061   **E-mail:** rconnolly@mtroyal.ca
Office Hours: MTW 14-30-15:30

Calendar Description

This course examines human aesthetic responses and our capacities to interpret diverse forms of cultural expression. Students will study some of the following: literary and / or religious texts, paintings, sculpture, architecture, music, film, dance, opera, the decorative arts, as well as other forms of aesthetic expression.

Topic Description for This Section

Foundation level Cluster Two courses are designed to exemplify the spirit of a true liberal education. Each has its own organizing theme, but all entail study of texts from different eras and different cultural traditions.

"Pathways to a different world will not be found by internet search engines."
- Jonathan Crary. *Scorched Earth: Beyond the Digital Age to a Post-Capitalist World*

In contemporary urban life, we have become habituated to crowds of individuals who are all absorbed by the contents of their screens. Former public spaces–the bus, the coffee shop, the shopping mall concourse, the university itself–have become the domain of individuals clinging to their separateness, their privacy, and their freedom from other selves via the armour provided by headphones and cell phones. Our

internet ecosystem seemingly pushes us further and further down the road of solitariness, deters cooperative forms of association, and dissolves possibilities for reciprocity and collective responsibility.

I am interested in art whose subject is, in some form, about individuals and their relationship to their community. As such, I thought it would be beneficial to spend a semester looking for a pathway to a better, more social future by first looking backwards at the visual art of the past, and then finish with possibilities of future civic-oriented creativity. This art will not be examined in isolation, but will require learning about the history, literature, and beliefs of the societies that gave rise to these art works.

Required Readings

I took on this course right at the end of August, so unfortunately, there are no books in the bookstore to purchase. Instead, **I will provide the readings electronically**.

Text (Author / Title): *Gilgamesh*			
Intellectual Tradition:		Period: Classical / Medieval	X
Western (Judeo-Christian Islamic)		Renaissance / Early Modern	
Non-Western	X	Modern / Present	

Text (Author / Title): Dante, *Inferno* (selected portions)			
Intellectual Tradition:		Period: Classical / Medieval	X
Western (Judeo-Christian Islamic)	X	Renaissance / Early Modern	
Non-Western		Modern / Present	

Text (Author / Title): Giogio Vasari, *Lives* (selection from essay on Brunelleschi)			
Intellectual Tradition:		Period: Classical / Medieval	
Western (Judeo-Christian Islamic)	X	Renaissance / Early Modern	X
Non-Western		Modern / Present	

Text (Author / Title): Marcel Proust, *Chardin and Rembrandt*			
Intellectual Tradition:		Period: Classical / Medieval	
Western (Judeo-Christian Islamic)	X	Renaissance / Early Modern	X
Non-Western		Modern / Present	X

Text (Author / Title): Mark Fisher, "Slow Cancellation of the Future"			
Intellectual Tradition:		Period: Classical / Medieval	
Western (Judeo-Christian Islamic)	X	Renaissance / Early Modern	
Non-Western		Modern / Present	X

Course Requirements and Mark Allocation

Paper 1 (about 2-4 pages) . .	.	Date	12%
Paper 2 (about 3-5 pages) .	.	Date	14%
Paper 3 (about 5-7 pages) .	.	Date	16%
In Class Quizzes (2 @ 4% each) .	.	.	8%
Class Participation			5%
Midterm Examination .	.	.	Oct. 19	15%
Final Examination .	.	.	Scheduled by Registrar	30%

Course Plan / Provisional Schedule (Text Version)

One of the most important roles of art throughout history is its ability to represent the good life and posit new alternate visions of communal life. For much of human history, the good life was intimately connected to our social natures, to lives lived with others, whether in hunter and gatherer settlements, agricultural villages, or large urban centres. We will be looking at a *lot* of images this semester (which will be available as Powerpoint slides available via D2L) in order to understand this point.

We will begin with the very first work of written literature—that of *Gilgamesh*—which is very much concerned with the individual's moral relationship to their wider community.

We will then move on to the sculptural art of classic Greece and Rome, and look at how the aesthetics were explicitly connected to a vision of citizenship.

After reading week, we will jump forward a thousand years to the unusual but intense art of the medieval era, art that operates in a very different worldview than ours, but which can also be understood as expressions of the social world.

This will lead us on to the more familiar art of the Italian Renaissance. In particular, we will be focused on the civic art of Florence and how the idea of artistic creativity was intimately connected to politics and communal life.

Our last destination in our journey through the art of the past will be that of the Dutch Golden Age of the 16th and 17th centuries. This more intimate, even personal art, was, in its time, understood to be charged with social and political messages.

The course will conclude by looking at Mark Fisher's influential argument (2010-2017) that creativity has been radically undermined by the contemporary nature of capitalism. As such, for us (i.e., your generation), the idea of a better future has been lost, and we are left instead with endless forms of nostalgia in the area of art.

Course Plan / Provisional Schedule (Summary Version)

	Content	Assessments
Sep 12	Intro,	
Sep 14	Bronze Age context	
Sep 19	Gilgamesh	
Sep 22	Greek context	
Sep 26	Greek Art	
Sep 28	Greek Art	*Paper 1 due*
Oct 3	Roman context	**Quiz 1**
Oct 5	Roman Art	
Oct 10	**Reading Week**	
Oct 12		
Oct 17	Review + Medieval context	
Oct 19	**Midterm**	
Oct 24	Medieval Art	
Oct 26	Dante	
Oct 31	14th + 15th C Florence context	
Nov 2	14th + 15th C Florence context	
Nov 7	Renaissance Art	*Paper 2 due*
Nov 9	Vasari + Brunelleschi	
Nov 14	Renaissance Art	
Nov 16	Renaissance Art	
Nov 21	Dutch Golden Age context	**Quiz 2**
Nov 23	Dutch Art	
Nov 28	Dutch Art	
Nov 30	Future Creativity + Nostalgia	
Dec 5	Mark Fisher	*Paper 3 due*
Dec 7	Review	

General Information

Lectures

This course is designed such that in order to do well on all assignments and the exams, good class attendance is highly recommended.

Quizzes

Quizzes will take place in the first 10 minutes of specific classes. You will be given a few days' notice in class and via D2L announcement for of all quizzes. If you show up late or miss a quiz day, then you will receive a zero. Certain accommodations can be made, however, for emergencies.

Submission and Return of Written Assignments

There are three written essay assignments. The written assignments will provide practice in writing more substantively about texts and allow practice with academic formatting. I don't care which citation style you use, just be consistent.

Assignments must be submitted to the instructor by the due date. In extraordinary circumstances students may request permission for a late submission. In such cases, students must speak to the instructor prior to the due date. Problems with printers, computers, transportation, the demands of paid employment, workload in other courses, romantic problems, etc. are not grounds for special consideration.

Late Submission Penalties

The penalty for late assignments is 5% per day. If you are going to be late, please notify me.

Final Examination
Note: the Registrar's Office schedules the final exam. Students must be available to write the examination on its scheduled date. Rescheduling examinations on account of holidays or paid employment is impossible.

Academic Accommodation

It is a student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a disability or who requires academic accommodation, and have not registered with Accessibility Services, please call that office at 403 440-6868. You must be registered with Accessibility Services to access academic accommodation.

Student Learning Services (SLS)
Room EL2100, Ph: 403 440 6452, mru.ca/SLS

Take charge of your learning by working with Learning Strategists and Learning Peers. Develop stronger studying, writing and math learning skills, work toward a better understanding of course content, and connect with other students to help you succeed at university.

Learning Strategists Services

Learning Strategists can help you with writing, math learning, time management, planning a presentation, academic reading strategies, exam preparation strategies, organizing ideas, editing techniques, referencing and more. Appointments are free of charge and can be booked online (through the Academic Success page on MyMRU) or by phone. Workshops are also offered for a variety of popular topics – find the schedule and registration information at mru.ca/SLSworkshops. Our resource web pages can be accessed at any time.

Peer Learning Program (PLP)

Looking to get help with a challenging course AND make a connection with people in your program? The Peer Learning Program offers support from a student who's "been there" — register today at mru.ca/PLP.

Learn more about the rewarding opportunity of volunteering as a Learning Peer, and add your name to the "send me more information" list at mru.ca/PLP. Training, support, and awards provided.

Grading

University policy states that "percentage grades will be calculated to two decimal places and rounded to the nearest whole number. (example: 49.495 = 49.49 = 49)."

In accordance with University policy, the following grading scheme will be used for final grade assignment.

Percentage	Letter Grade	GPA	Description
95 – 100	A+	4	Excellent. Superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
85 – 94	A	4	
80 – 84	A-	3.7	
77 – 79	B+	3.3	Good. Clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.
73 – 76	B	3	
70 – 72	B-	2.7	
67 – 69	C+	2.3	Satisfactory. Basic understanding of subject matter.
63 – 66	C	2	
60 – 62	C-	1.7	
55 – 59	D+	1.3	Marginal performance. (Generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses.)
50 – 54	D	1	
0 – 49	F	0	Fail. Assigned to students: a) Who do not meet the academic requirements of the course, or b) Who cease to continue in the course, but do not withdraw as per Mount Royal University policy.

Academic Honesty

Students are advised that plagiarism is a serious offence and are urged to refer to section "Academic Status—Integrity of Student Work" in the University Calendar. Ignorance of the requirements of the *Code of Student Conduct* will not excuse plagiarism. If you have any doubts about what constitutes academic dishonesty or you need help with the citation of sources, please contact the instructor.

Text Matching Software

In this course, you will be asked to submit material in electronic form to a text matching service to which MRU subscribes called Turnitin.com. This is a service that checks textual material for originality. MRU authorizes the use of text Matching Software for educational purposes. Limited personal information should be entered into the software. It is recommended that personal information entered be limited to MRU identification number, institutional email address and course work.

By submitting your material, you agree that your paper will be subject to a textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Submitted data resides with the software company outside the University and is used to provide comparisons that promote academic integrity. Once submitted, your materials will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database and used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.

Students have the right to opt-out of using the software and may choose another form of originality checking, subject to the agreement of the instructor. Normally, students must notify their instructor of their intention to opt out no later than ten business days after the add/drop date for their course/term. Inquiries regarding the use of Turnitin.com in your course can be directed to your course instructor. General information about Turnitin.com, including training materials and the University's reasons for using it, can be found on the ADC website (direct link: http://bit.ly/d2l-assignments).

References/Further Reading:
  Matching Software Policy
  Matching Software Procedures (verbiage above taken from this document - Appendix A)

Copyright of course materials

Mount Royal University has contracted Google to provide educational technology software for the course. The instructor may record meetings using Google Meet and make them available to registered students through a link on D2L Brightspace for up until 10 days after the course is completed. Users, including any recorded student participants, are advised that the personal information collected during the recordings will only be used for educational purposes and is collected under the authority of the FOIP Act – section 33(c) and the Post-Secondary Learning Act in the Province of Alberta.

Students are further advised that the downloading of posted videos or other course materials other than for the purposes of student personal learning through the link on D2L Brightspace, may violate the copyright of the course instructor or others.

University Wide Learning Aims

The Academic Plan of 2012 articulates the "aims of an undergraduate education at Mount Royal University." Key elements of these aims are fostered as the goals of Cluster Two (below) are honoured. The liberal education core of General Education, and our Values, Beliefs, and Identity cluster specifically, entail special attention to four of these aims: critical reading, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, and ethical reasoning.

Critical reading and *critical and creative thinking* will be fostered by way of critical engagement with texts (broadly construed). Such engagement will often require the retrieval of ideas from historically remote sources. Students will hone their skills for picking out relevant ideas, identifying critical moves in argument, and reconstructing and assessing arguments for their validity. Students will learn to differentiate forms of criticism and evidence as they wrestle with conceptual claims on one end of the spectrum and empirical claims on the other end. A crucial basic habit fostered should be that of questioning things in general.

Written and oral communication will be fostered by inclusion of a strong written component for evaluation of students in all Cluster Two courses. Students will practice such key composition / articulation skills as:
– stating clearly their purpose and methodological-disciplinary orientation,
– providing explicit summaries of how their conclusion (s) are to be defended,
– debating their own informed views in dialogic fashion with the authors and ideas they encounter,
– rehearsing, in their own words, the arguments they are assessing,
– effectively structuring arguments of their own.

In terms of basic writing skills students will practice, and demonstrate:
– effective grammatical form,
– effective organization of sentences, paragraphs, and essays to achieve unity and coherence,
– effective writing style and organization appropriate to a particular purpose and audience.

In terms of verbal communication, students will receive practice in articulating their thoughts to their peers within the classroom.

Ethical reasoning will emerge as by-product of the above aims. A key habit to be fostered in students is a disposition to question all things, including the values, beliefs, and identities of themselves and others; this questioning entails ethical reasoning. Ethical reasoning also underwrites the skills of articulation and composition emphasized above.

General Education Goals

Three characteristics are common to all General Education Cluster Two courses:

1. A text based approach (texts being broadly construed),
2. A presuppositionless approach to textual analysis, and
3. A strong written component for the evaluation of students.

General Education Cluster Two goals:

These courses provide students with the opportunity to critically explore the values, beliefs, and ideas that shape, and are shaped by, human experience. The understandings and senses of meaning expressed by individuals, communities, and societies through their art, music, literature, philosophy, and critical thought will be explored. Students will also have the opportunity to explore the various media through which cultural expression takes place. They will consider the impact of technology upon both the media and the content of cultural expression.

The goals of study within this cluster are:

1. An understanding of the principal ideas and cultural traditions that have informed modern Canadian society;

2. An appreciation of the diverse cultural traditions found across the world;

3. The study of texts, works of art, and bodies of thought that are of historical significance in the development of Western and non-Western cultures;

4. The study of texts, works of art, and bodies of thought that are significant in contemporary perceptions of the character of both Western and non-Western cultures, and that are significant in the interactions of Western and non-Western cultures;

5. An appreciation of influential religious, philosophical, and ethical perspectives;

6. An appreciation of contemporary understandings of the nature and development of personality, personal identify, and social interaction as expressed in psychology, philosophy, art, and other subjects and practices;

7. An understanding of the principal methods of study in the humanities and social sciences including relevant research and information retrieval skills.

The Course Website

All students will need to access the course "D2l Brightspace" website. This site contains useful information about this course, including this document. Detailed information about the assignments and how to complete them will be on the website.