

**W** UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON | TACOMA  
*Office of Undergraduate Education*

T Core 104C&D Introduction to the Humanities Fall 2013  
Title: From Maus to Mayhem: An Introduction to Visual Culture  
Joanne Clarke Dillman, Ph.D.

<b>Class Times</b>	T/Th 8:00-10:05am (C)	T/Th 10:20-12:25pm (D)
<b>Office Hours</b> (also by appointment)	Tues. 1:30-3:30pm	& by appointment
<b>Contact</b>	Joanne Clarke Dillman	jclarked@u.washington.edu

### **Course Description**

Course: Core 104CD: Introduction to the Humanities, Classroom: TLB 115

Title: From Maus to Mayhem: An Introduction to Visual Culture

This course will examine visual culture by surveying a number of sites across the visual field. These will include subcultural sites like graphic novels and video games, emergent internet zones like the DIY arenas of Pinterest, YouTube, and Facebook, and more dominant cultural forms like art and museum culture, and film and television, which will ground our theorizing and discovery. Also, as much as visual culture is about looking at objects, it is also about the alignment of sight with knowledge and knowledge with power. For this reason, we will also foreground our thinking about looking, and our assumptions about circulations in the visual field as well. Students will develop visual critical skills, close reading/analytical skills, and writing skills during the quarter.

### **Core**

The Core program consists of a coordinated series of courses that represent the various disciplines in the university. This course, along with the others in your cohort, fulfills one of the university's general education requirements in each of the areas of knowledge plus composition. The courses are designed to both support and challenge you to develop the critical thinking, writing, research, and analytical skills you'll need at UWT while introducing you to relevant topics in the social sciences, humanities, and sciences.

### **Learning Objectives**

- **Students will become critical viewers of the visual world around them**
- **Students will develop an awareness of theories of visual culture and its interpretation**

- **Students will familiarize themselves with some of the important works in each site**
- **Students will gain a foundational logic and method for reading works in the visual arena**
- **Students will develop a new vocabulary for discussing and articulating aspects of the visual**

These serve the Core Learning Objectives of Inquiry and Critical Thinking (inquiry & problem solving, research methods & application, and synthesis & context) and Communication and Self-Expression (argumentation, analysis, disciplinary awareness, expression of ideas) and these Introduction to the Humanities learning objectives:

- Demonstrate an ability to situate oneself in relation to a broader human context
- Demonstrate an ability to critically read an artistic, literary, or historical text or artifact
- Demonstrate an ability to analyze a text or artifact by applying a theoretical or aesthetic framework

### **Required Texts and Materials**

**Believing is Seeing: Creating the Culture of Art, Mary Anne Stainiszewski**

**Maus: A Survivor's Tale &**

**Maus: And Here my Troubles Began, by Art Spiegelman**

***Beasts of the Southern Wild* (2013) screenplay (on Canvas)**

**Additional readings will be placed on library electronic reserve (ER) or Canvas (CAN) for this class.**

### **Course Requirements**

- **2 Exams at weeks 5 and 9**
- **A 3-4 page paper submitted early in the term**
- **The outline of a 6-7 page paper & research ideas**
- **The final 6-7 page paper. This will be written work on some aspect of visual culture**
- **A meeting with instructor after the first paper & before the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> week of class**
- **In class participation: in class reflection papers on readings and/or viewings, a found object assignment or sharing a favorite website (Facebook, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, Vine) with the class.**
- **Leading a reading discussion of at least one class reading assignment**

- **Student self-evaluation submitted at the end of the term**

## Grading

<http://www.tacoma.uw.edu/enrollment-services/grading-policies>

<b>Grading Scale:</b>	
A-Range	3.5 to 4.0 (90- & above)
B-Range	2.5 to 3.4 (80-89)
C-Range	1.5 to 2.4 (70-79)
D-Range	0.7 to 1.4 (60-69)
E	(Below .7) (Below 59)

<b>GRADES ARE WORTH:</b>	
3-4 page paper	<b>20%</b>
First Exam	— <b>20%</b>
Second Exam	— <b>20%</b>
Participation	— <b>15%</b>
Final Paper — 6-7 pages	<b>25%</b>

## Late Work

**Late work is accepted but a late penalty will apply.**

## Writing Requirements

- **3-4 page paper completed early in course – assignment handed out first week of class**
- **The outline of a 6-8 page paper**
- **The final 6-8 page paper — this may have a creative segment, such as a sequence of a comic book or graphic novel, or other visual image collage, but will be comprised mostly of written work on some aspect of visual culture. We will discuss this assignment more fully in class.**

## Course Schedule

### Wk 1 — Art History and Introduction to Visual Culture

Sep 26: Introduce course, course practice and syllabus; introduction to studying visual culture. Instructor covers chapter 1 & 2 of Believing is Seeing. Class reads Lloyd Eby, “In the Mind’s Eye: Our Emerging Visual Culture” (ER).

### Wk 2 Art Images

Oct 1: Begin Believing is Seeing discussion, chapters 3, 4, & 5.

Oct 3: Have read Believing is Seeing, chapters 6, 7, & 8.

### **Wk 3 — Art Images to Beginning Comics/Graphic Novel**

Oct 8: Have read Believing is Seeing, chapters 9 & 10.

Oct 10: Have read Scott McCloud, “The Comic Vocabulary,” Chapter 2, Understanding Comics. (ER). Brainstorm and elaborate first paper assignments today.

### **Wk 4 — Graphic Novel: Maus**

Oct 15: **First Paper Due.** Begin discussion of Maus: A Survivor’s Tale. Michael Lantz, “The Close-Up: The Power of the Graphic Novel in Education” (ER).

Oct 17: Continue discussion of Maus: A Survivor’s Tale.

### **Wk 5 — Graphic Novel to Beginning Television**

Oct 22: Discussion of Maus II: And Here My Trouble’s Began. Class discusses Sturken and Cartwright, Practices of Looking Chapter 1, “Practices of Looking: Images, Power and Politics” (ER). **This ends material covered on first exam.**

**Oct 24: First Exam today.** Start to generate ideas for final paper assignment. Begin Television section of course. Screen NBC Time Capsule: *1969 Apollo Moon Landing*.

### **Wk 6 — Television**

Oct 29: Today we will examine the September 11, 2001 television archive at <http://archive.org/details/911>. Mathias Nilges, “The Aesthetics of Destruction: Contemporary US Cinema and TV Culture” (ER).

Oct 31: Have read Todd Gitlin, “Prime Time Ideology: The Hegemonic Process in Television Entertainment” (ER) and Alyssa Quart, “The Thinking Person’s Entertainment” (ER). We will discuss mainstream television: sitcoms, soaps, makeover shows, and Reality TV. Have a link to a clip of your favorite TV show!

### **Wk 7 — Film**

Nov5: Screen *Hugo*.

Nov 7: Discuss *Hugo* in relation to the history of cinema and contemporary film aesthetics. Have read Sturken and Cartwright, Practices of Looking Chapter 7, “Postmodernism and Popular Culture” (ER); discuss in relation to cinema.

## **Wk 8 — Film to Beginning Advertising**

Nov 12: Continue discussion of film with screenwriting discussion. Have read *Beasts of the Southern Wild* screenplay (CAN). We will incorporate clips of *Beasts of the Southern Wild* if time. **Outline of final papers due today in class,**

Nov 14: Have read Sturken and Cartwright, Practices of Looking Chapter 6, “Consumer Culture and the manufacture of Desire” (ER). Students will bring in an advertising image and copy that they find interesting.

## **Wk 9 — Advertising to New Media: the Internet**

Nov 19: Finish discussion of student found objects/ads, desire, and advertising. We will discuss the “Do It Yourself” cultures of Pinterest, Facebook, and YouTube. Have read Sherry Turkle, “Cyberspace and Identity” (ER), Rob White “Treasure Tube” (ER), Carina Chocano, “Being Addicted to Longing for Something” (ER) and Susan Jacoby, “The Dumbing of America” (ER).

**Nov 21: Second Exam (covers material from 10/17-11/12).** We will brainstorm and workshop final papers today.

## **Wk 10 New Media: Internet to Video Games**

Nov 26: Have read Miroslaw Filiciak, “Hyperidentities: Postmodern Identity Patterns in Massively Multiplayer Online Roleplaying Games” (ER) and Mia Conselvo, “Hot Dates and Fairy Tale Romances: Studying Sexuality in Video Games” (ER). Students will choose from *Call of Duty*, *Grand Theft Auto*, *World of Warcraft*, *Elder Scrolls/Skyrim* or *Runescape* to play over the weekend.

**Nov 28: Thanksgiving Holiday — No Class**

## **Wk 11 New Media: Video Games and Course Conclusion**

Dec 2: Discuss video games played over the weekend and the question of violence in relation to video games. Have read Barry Meier and Andrew Martin, “Real and Virtual Firearms Nurture a Marketing Link,” Chris Suellentrop, “The Real World Forces its Way into the Gamers’ Universe,” and Nicole Saidi and Doug Gross, “After Newton, some shoppers think twice about violent video games” (all ER), which ponder the video game/violence link after the Adam Lanza Connecticut shooting.

**Dec 4:** Course summation, closing thoughts. Finish up outstanding readings, student sign-up work. **Final Papers and participation self-evaluation due today. Course evaluations today.**

### **Teaching and Learning Center**

The TLC provides a wide variety of instructional resources and support for teaching and learning at UW Tacoma. Teaching and learning are ongoing processes that take practice, commitment, and time. We are here to assist you in achieving your goals and provide math/quantitative, writing, science, and other tutoring services.

<http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/tlc/>

### **Academic Standards/Plagiarism**

All student work must be free of plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined in the University catalog and in the Student Handbook. Consult your professor if you have any questions.

A major part of your experience in the class will be reading, synthesizing, and using the knowledge and ideas of others. It is the responsibility of the faculty to help you in this process and to be certain you learn to credit the work of others upon which you draw. To plagiarize is to appropriate and to pass off, as one's own ideas, writing or works of another. Plagiarism is no less of a misconduct violation than vandalism or assault. Ignorance of proper documentation procedures is the usual cause of plagiarism. This ignorance does not excuse the act. Students are responsible for learning how and when to document and attribute resources used in preparing a written or oral presentation.

For more information, please refer to the “Student Academic Responsibility” document prepared by the Committee on Academic Conduct in the College of Arts and Sciences, UW Seattle:

<http://depts.washington.edu/grading/pdf/AcademicResponsibility.pdf>

### **Library**

The UWT Library provides resources and services to support students at all levels of expertise. We guide students through the research process, helping them learn how to develop effective research strategies and find and evaluate appropriate resources. For more information about the Library and its services, see:

<http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/library/>

### **Electronic Devices**

Electronic devices (including, but not limited to, cell phones, pagers, laptops, and personal digital assistants) may only be used in the classroom with the permission of the instructor. Activities that are non-relevant to the course, such as checking/sending email, playing games, and surfing the web, are considered disruptive activities when class is in session.

### **E-mail Policy**

[http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/policies\\_procedures/E-mail\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/policies_procedures/E-mail_Policy.pdf)

### **Student Health Services**

Student Health Services (SHS) is committed to providing compassionate, convenient, and affordable health care for University of Washington Tacoma students, from care for illness and minor injury to women’s health and preventative medicine, including vaccination services. Insurance is not required. Funded by UW Tacoma student fees, office visits are provided free of charge. Treatment plans may incur costs, such as medications, labs, or vaccines, most of which are offered at discounted rates. For more information, please visit [www.tacoma.uw.edu/shs](http://www.tacoma.uw.edu/shs) or email at [uwtshs@uw.edu](mailto:uwtshs@uw.edu). If you have questions or would like to schedule an appointment, please call (253) 692-5811 or stop by SHS at the Laborer’s Hall on Market Street.

**Counseling Center (Student Success)**

The Counseling Center offers short-term, problem-focused counseling to UW Tacoma students who may feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities of college, work, family, and relationships. Counselors are available to help students cope with stresses and personal issues that may interfere with their ability to perform in school. The service is provided confidentially and without additional charge to currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students. To schedule an appointment, please call 692-4522 or stop by the Student Counseling Center (SCC), located in MAT 354.

[http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/studentaffairs/SHW/scc\\_about.cfm/](http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/studentaffairs/SHW/scc_about.cfm/)

**Disability Support Services (Student Success)**

The University of Washington Tacoma is committed to making physical facilities and instructional programs accessible to students with disabilities. Disability Support Services (DSS) functions as the focal point for coordination of services for students with disabilities. In compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any enrolled student at UW Tacoma who has an appropriately documented physical, emotional, or mental disability that "substantially limits one or more major life activities [including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working]," is eligible for services from DSS. If you are wondering if you may be eligible for accommodations on our campus, please contact the DSS reception desk at 692-4522.

[http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/studentaffairs/SHW/dss\\_about.cfm/](http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/studentaffairs/SHW/dss_about.cfm/)

**Campus Safety Information**

<http://www.tacoma.uw.edu/administrative-services/campus-safety>

**Safety Escort Program**

For your safety, UW Tacoma encourages students, faculty, staff and visitors to use the Safety Escort Program. Campus Safety Officers are available to walk you to your car or other campus destinations during the following hours: Monday - Thursday — 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Friday — 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. The service is free of charge. During busy periods, the Campus Safety Officer may ask you to meet in a common location as to facilitate escorting multiple people. Dial 253-692-4416 to request a Safety Escort.

**In case of a fire alarm**

Take your valuables and leave the building. Plan to return to class once the alarm has stopped. Do not return until you have received an all clear from somebody "official," the web or email.

**In case of an earthquake**

DROP, COVER, and HOLD. Once the shaking stops, take your valuables and leave the building. Do not plan to return for the rest of the day. Do not return to the building until you have received an all clear from somebody "official," the web, or email.

**Inclement Weather**

Call (253) 383-INFO to determine whether campus operations have been suspended. If not, but driving conditions remain problematic, call the professor's office number. This number should provide information on whether a particular class will be held or not, and/or the status of pending assignments. If the first two numbers have been contacted and the student is still unable to determine whether a class will be held, or the student has a part-time instructor who does not have an office phone or contact number, call the program office number for updated information.