In this course we will examine issues of difference, exclusion, power, privilege, place, and identity—that are socially, historically, politically, and psychologically constructed and practiced.

**Description:** This interdisciplinary course will introduce students to critical understandings of issues of diversity, as they arise in contexts such as the art world, cultural institutions (such as museums and community arts organizations), schools, visual culture, and the culture, educational texts (such as curricula), and history, while developing a theoretical base from educational and cultural theory. By the end of the course, students will understand diversity as broadly defined in relation to visual culture and be able to critically explore the complex dynamics of race, gender, sex, and class, and the pedagogical issues posed by diversity.

This course is a broad-based examination of diversity, visual culture, and pedagogy. We will use an interdisciplinary approach that draws upon research from various disciplines including art education, history, sociology, cultural studies, and gender studies to explore issues of diversity in various contexts: schools, mass media, the art world, and cultural institutions such as museums and community arts organizations.

By the end of this course, you will have a greater understanding of diversity as broadly defined in relationship to visual culture. You will also be able to critically explore issues of race, gender, class, ability, and sexual identity, and the pedagogical challenges and opportunities posed by such diversity.

**Diversity** pertains to culture, race, ethnicity, age, gender, ability, exceptionality, religion, sexual identity, social class, and learning styles. In this course we will examine issues of difference, exclusion, power, privilege, place, and identity—that are socially, historically, politically, and psychologically constructed and practiced.

**Pedagogy** refers to both informal and formal methods of teaching. Formal ways might include how educators teach students in schools and classrooms. Informal ways might include mass media, the arts, and other social practices.

**Visual Culture** is the nexus between visual objects and their cultural contexts. Visual culture study is the pursuit of meaning of imagery to include fine art, folk art, mass media, design, popular culture, architecture, and other constructed categories of visual phenomena in diverse societies and in everyday life. A visual culture approach to imagery in our everyday landscapes and in societal sites of privileged visuals (e.g., in museums, churches, market trade and branding), is not merely a study of images, but a culture’s visual meaning system conveyed in images. It involves exploration of the context of the image’s production and dissemination, and how context alters meaning. Especially significant to an intertextual and multivocal exploration of visual culture is its relevancy to current times and to students’ lives. A visual culture studies approach focuses on the study of the signifying practices of power and privilege.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**
As a consequence of the experiences offered by this course, you will begin:

- To develop theoretical perspectives from diversity and visual cultural studies.
- To focus on aspects of identity development (especially your own identity) and politics of identity.
- To reflect upon your life history so as to become aware of the forces shaping your personal perspectives on various issues.
- To investigate the role of visual culture as a means of communicating and perpetuating cultural values, including the ways in which visual culture affects your perception of self and the world.
- To explore issues of power and privilege and its various forms in visual culture.
To analyze media, advertisements, photographs, alternative media, objects, spaces, places, signs and codes as sources of power.
- To "decode" and "encode" the symbols that dominate society.
- To understand how issues of diversity—culture, ethnicity, gender, and special education needs, etc.—affect learners and learning.
- To develop transformative power with visual culture.
- To critically examine the creative works of persons from cultures different from your own.

READINGS AND OTHER COURSE MATERIALS

Course materials include films, readings, worksheets, and links to websites, which are linked at each of the five "Explorations" in this course at http://cyberhouse.arted.psu.edu/225/.

The course will meet at various locations throughout the semester as designated on the calendar of the course site at http://cyberhouse.arted.psu.edu/225/. We will also use the course ANGEL site for email communications. To log in, go to http://cms.psu.edu/

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

During the semester, there will be five assignments described with resources in each of the five explorations. You will post your explorations in your blog, and you will also post comments on others' explorations. There will also be a final project in which you develop a unit of instruction on diversity and visual culture or, as an alternative project, you apply the concepts from the course to one or more works of art. See the Schedule of Topics and Assignments below for a schedule of the assignments. The due dates for these assignments are also posted in the Calendar section of the course ANGEL site. For more detailed descriptions of each assignment, including assessment criteria for each assignment, see the specific exploration at this coursesite. If you have questions, email me at kk-b@psu.edu as I am glad to help.

GRADING POLICY:

Effective assessment protocols based in discussion of shared readings and explorations of other course material and processes will be developed as a collaborative educational process with the course participants guided by the course facilitator.

There are designated dates specified in the course calendar in ANGEL to indicate when you can expect feedback on and a grade for your work in the course.

Grading is on a 100 point scale (94-100 A, 90-93 A-, 88-90 B+, 83-87 B, 80-82 B-, 77-79 C+, 70-76 C, 60-69 D, below 60 points F)

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, ASSIGNMENTS & DUE DATES

Responses in your 5 blog entries are due each designated date prior to the class meeting at 1:00 PM.

15% Identity Mapping (Blog 1 due Sept. 10),
25% Cultural Artifacts (Blog 2 due Oct. 1)
20% Difference (Blog 3 due Oct. 22)
15% Empower (Blog 4 due Nov. 19)
25% Activism (Blog 5 due Dec. 3-10)

FACILITIES & TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT:

The Patterson Building computer labs are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Software programs have tutorial and "help" functionality to search for directions on specific techniques.

Penn State's Information Technology Services (ITS) provides support for use of technology. Among the services is The Media Commons, which offers consulting and assistance to students who have questions or problems with technology-based assignments and projects. The Media Commons offers students an innovative place to create and edit e-portfolios, record and upload podcasts, and edit clips for video-based assignments. Tutors are available on a convenient drop-in basis (no appointments). Visit their website at http://mediacommons.psu.edu/ for more information about services and to view online and drop-in tutoring schedule.

All technology classrooms are equipped with a telephone. If you experience problems with computers or printers please call the Hotline at 8-777-0035. This number is staffed Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m.-1:00 a.m.; Saturday & Sunday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

ACTIVE CLASS PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Expect a minimum of 10 hours a week for this 3-credit course. In as much as, learning is an active process, and in as much as a fundamental concept of art education theory and practice is the belief that knowledge and understanding are constructed through active engagement and reflection—to be successful in the course you must attend class and actively participate. Location of our class meetings are on the course calendar. This course requires close reading and viewing of videos prior to class meetings, careful preparation, rigorous completion of assignments, and thorough in-class participation. I will take attendance. If you are not in class, you cannot obviously participate in class discussions and activities. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to make arrangements to make up that work.

This course is in accordance with Faculty Senate Policy 42-27 on Attendance: The faculty senate policy, effective Fall 2002, states that students who miss class due to legitimate, unavoidable reasons such as illness, injury or family emergency should have the opportunity to make up evaluative events. While notifying the instructor in a timely manner is a key expectation, the senate policy does not mandate official documentation of student illness or other unavoidable reasons for absence.

ACCESSIBILITY:

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. The Office for Disability Services (ODS) Web site provides contact information for every Penn State campus: http://equity.psu.edu/ods/dcl. For further information, please visit the Office for Disability Services Web site: http://equity.psu.edu/ods.
In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: http://equity.psu.edu/ods/guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

If you need alternate arrangements or modifications to meet course requirements, please contact me during the first week of classes or as soon as possible (see Americans with Disabilities Act, 26 July 1990, Penn State’s Nondiscrimination Policy, and the Office for Disability Services).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

University Policies and Rules Guidelines states that academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University’s Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students’ dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Academic integrity includes a commitment not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others.

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to acts such as cheating on exams or assignments; plagiarizing the words or ideas of another; fabricating information or citations; facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others; claiming authorship of work done by another person; submitting work completed in previous classes; and/or submitting the same work to multiple classes in which a student is enrolled simultaneously.

Plagiarism is the use of more than three consecutive words, ideas, or images of another author without proper citation. Proper citation formats must follow one of the academic writing style manuals such as APA, Chicago, MLA, or Turabian. All images and text from the Internet, journals, or books must have full citation to be used in your work. Linked here is a guide on how to cite social media in APA and MLA.

HEALTH SAFETY INFORMATION

Students in the School of Visual Arts may find themselves working in the shop or in their studios or classrooms using a variety of power and hand held equipment, which may cause injury. Students should use the shop only after having received an orientation in the use of such equipment and when supervised by faculty or shop personnel. Should any injuries occur, in the shop, studios, or classrooms in the School of Visual Arts please report them to Matt Olson, Shop Supervisor, Room 108-A Visual Arts Building, Phone: 814-865-3962, email: mjo5165@psu.edu.

When using a computer the main safety practice is to keep your arm, wrist, and hand in a straight line as you use the keyboard or mouse to avoid muscle stress, inflammation, and injury. Also take breaks, stretch, and look at objects in the distance periodically. Use the browser’s “View menu” and “Text Zoom” to increase the font size of this and any Web page to meet your vision needs. Also, you can set up in your email software for emails to be read to you, which you can take advantage of and paste text from the Web into your email to listen to it rather than straining your eyes.

Click here for a pdf of the syllabus.

If you are having difficulty opening the PDF file, please check to make sure you have the most recent version of Adobe Reader.