

Winter 2023 UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE CODE: VIS420H1

COURSE TITLE: Advanced Readings in Contemporary Art and Culture: The Face PREREQUISITE COURSES: 0.5 credit at the 200-leel in VIS courses. JAV200H1 / VIS200H

CLASSROOM LOCATION: DA315 CLASS HOURS: Tuesdays, 2pm – 5pm INSTRUCTOR NAME: Dr. Zach Blas

INSTRUCTOR EMAIL: zach.blas@daniels.utoronto.ca
OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays, 1pm – 3pm, by appointment OFFICE LOCATION: South Borden, Room 202 and 315

QUERCUS: https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/299068

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The face functions multifariously as a unique nexus between communication and identification, aesthetics and politics. This seminar-style class explores discourses and genealogies of the face in the 20th and 21st centuries, with an emphasis on art, philosophy, science, and critical theory. A particular focus of the module addresses the face as a site of both liberation and oppression, aesthetic beauty and scientific calculation. We will discuss the face as an ethical demand as well as a debated boundary between human and nonhuman. Furthermore, we will attend to the ways in which different modes of representation affect the meaning faces signal, by looking at contemporary art works, portraiture, social media profiles, criminal mug shots, and biometric data. Another core focus centers upon aesthetic and political transformations of the face, through examinations of masks, veils, cosmetics, and activism. Throughout the term, our discussions will be inflected by geopolitics, gender, race, class, and disability. We will read works spanning continental and political philosophy, postcolonial theory, women of color feminism, aesthetic theory, and film and media studies. Readings will be engaged with through considerations of artworks.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students who successfully complete this class will be able to: demonstrate an excellent understanding of theorizations of the face—spanning visual studies, critical theory, art history, and scientific discourse—from the 19th century to the present; produce original ideas in an interdisciplinary context; apply your own evaluative and interpretative skills through close reading, textual and visual analysis, and group presentations; and obtain a proficient ability to practice research, individually and with others, in critical and creative ways. Students will also further develop their academic writings skills.

SCHEDULE:

January 10: Introduction



January 17: Calculating the Face: Anthropometry, Physiognomy, Phrenology Required Readings Before Class:

- Cesare Lombroso, Criminal Man, 5th edition (1896-97), excerpts: "Criminal Craniums (689 Skulls)" pp. 301 - 305, "Anthropometry and Physiognomy of 6,608 Criminals," pp. 306 - 312
- Nicole H. Rafter, "Alphonse Bertillon: The Bertillon system of identification, 1891," *The Origins of Criminology: A Reader* (2009), pp. 220 228
- Nicole H. Rafter, "Francis Galton: Personal identification, 1892," The Origins of Criminology: A Reader (2009), pp. 229 – 233
- Francis Galton, "Composite Portraits," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* (1878), pp. 132 144)

Artworks to Look at Before Class:

- Bruce Connor, PRINTS (1974), http://www.walkerart.org/collections/artworks/prints
- Metahaven, Facestate (2011), https://walkerart.org/magazine/metahavens-facestate

Suggested Readings (not required to read!):

- Alphonse Bertillon, "The Bertillon System of Identification," The Forum (1891), pp. 330 342
- "Bertillon System," *Dead Media Archive*, http://cultureandcommunication.org/deadmedia/index.php/Bertillon System
- "Francis Galton and Composite Portraiture," http://galton.org/composite.htm

January 24: Philosophy of the Face I: Ethics

Required Readings Before Class:

- Emmanuel Levinas, "The Face," Ethics and Infinity (1982), pp. 83 92
- Judith Butler, "Precarious Life," *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (2004), pp. 128 152

Suggested Readings (not required to read!):

 Giorgio Agamben, "The Face," Means without Ends: Notes on Politics (2000), pp. 91 -100

January 31: Cinema and the Face

Required Readings Before Class:

• Béla Balázs, *Theory of the Film: Character and Growth of a New Art* (1952), excerpts: "The Close Up" pp. 52 - 59, "The Face of Man" pp. 60 - 88

Film Clips to View In Class:

- Lev Kuleshow, the Kuleshov Effect (1920s), https://vimeo.com/223039710
- Carl Dreyer, The Passion of Joan of Arc (1928)
- Andy Warhol, Screen Tests (1964 66), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLW_sXv44Uc&ab_channel=SangareMP and https://www.ubu.com/film/warhol screentests.html

Suggested Readings (not required to read!):

Roland Barthes, "The Face of Garbo," Mythologies (1972), pp. 56 - 57



February 7: Philosophy of the Face II: Faciality

Required Readings Before Class:

• Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "Year Zero: Faciality," A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia (1987), pp. 167 - 191

Art Exhibition to View Before Class:

 Faceless (2013), exhibition curated by Bogomir Doringer, https://bogomirdoringer.info/faceless

Suggested Readings (not required to read!):

- Michael Taussig, Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative (1999), excerpts: "Prologue" pp. 1 - 8, "Part Three: The Face is the Evidence That Makes Evidence Possible" pp. 221 – 265
- Metahaven, "A Conversation with Michael Taussig," Uncorporate Identity (2010), pp. 333 338

February 14: Neuroscience and the Face, on Prosopagnosia

Required Reading:

Oliver Sacks, "Face-Blind," The Mind's Eye (2010), pp. 107 - 144

Required Viewing:

 Oliver Sacks, "Face Blindness," The Over Sacks Foundation (2010), https://youtu.be/k5bvnXYIQG8

February 21: No Class, Reading Week

February 28: The Minoritarian Face: Blackface, Gay Face, Making Face Required Readings Before Class:

- Eric Lott, "Blackface and Blackness: The Minstrel Show in American Culture," *Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteeth-Century Blackface Minstrelsy* (1996), pp. 3 32
- Lauren Michele Jackson, "We Need to Talk About Digital Blackface in Reaction GIFs," Teen Vogue, 2017, https://www.teenvogue.com/story/digital-blackface-reaction-gifs
- Joshua A. Tabak and Vivian Zayas, "The Roles of Featural and Configural Face Processing in Snap Judgments of Sexual Orientation," PLoS ONE (2012), pp. 1 – 7
- Joshua A. Tabak and Vivian Zayas, "The Science of 'Gaydar'," New York Times (2012), http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/03/opinion/sunday/the-science-of-gaydar.html?_r=0
- Gloria Anzaldúa, "Haciendo cara, una entrada," Making Face, Making Soul / Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color (1990), pp. xv - xxvii

Artworks to View Before Class:

- Adrian Piper, grey face action (2012), https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pFII5XiufYkidsAgcOnHs6lLaRHJGHJW/view?usp=sharing
- Karol Radziszewski, Fag Fighters (2007 ongoing), http://www.karolradziszewski.com/index.php?/projects/fag-fighters/

Suggested Readings (not required to read!):

- Stephanie Dunson, "Black Misrepresentation in Nineteenth-Century Sheet Music Illustration," *Beyond Blackface: African Americans and the Creation of American Popular Culture, 1890 1930* (2011), pp. 45 65
- Sam Levin, "New AI can guess whether you're gay or straight from a photograph," The Guardian (2017), https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/sep/07/new-artificial-intelligence-can-tell-whether-youre-gay-or-straight-from-a-photograph



• Jack Halberstam, "Queer Faces: Photography and Subcultural Lives," *The Visual Culture Reader*, 3rd edition (2013), pp. 96 - 108

Paper 1 Due

March 7: The Veil

Required Readings Before Class:

• Joan Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* (2007), excerpts: "Introduction" pp. 1 - 20, "Ch. 1: The Headscarf Controversies" pp. 21 - 41

Suggested Readings (not required to read!):

- Frantz Fanon, "Algeria Unveiled," A Dying Colonialism (1965), pp. 35 67
- Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," Feminist Review (1988), pp. 61 - 88

March 14: Digital Faces (in Art and Gaming)

Required Readings Before Class:

- Mark Hansen, "Affect as Interface: Confronting the 'Digital Facial Image'," New Philosophy for New Media (2004), pp. 124 – 159
- Amanda Philips, "Making a Face: Quantizing Reality in Character Animation and Customization," Gamer Trouble: Feminist Confrontations in Digital Culture (2020), pp. 66 – 99

Artworks to View Before Class:

- Mongrel, Colour Separation (1997), https://anthology.rhizome.org/heritage-gold
- Granular Synthesis, Modell 5 (1994 1996), https://vimeo.com/43744967
- Arthur Elsenaar, artifacial (1993 2013), http://artifacial.org/

Suggested Readings (not required to read!):

- Jennifer González, "The Face and the Public: Race, Secrecy, and Digital Art Practice,"
 Camera Obscura (2009), pp. 37 65
- Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker, "The Defacement of Enmity," The Exploit: A Theory of Networks (2007), pp. 63 – 70
- Florian Cramer and Matthew Fuller, "Interface," Software Studies: A Lexicon (2008), pp. 149 153
- Anna Munster, "Interfaciality: From the Friendly Face of Computing to the Alien Terrain
 of Informatic Bodies," *Materializing New Media: Embodiment in Information Aesthetics*(2006), pp. 117 149
- Alexander R. Galloway, "The Unworkable Interface," The Interface Effect (2012), pp. 25

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March 21: The Forensic Skull

Required Readings Before Class:

 Thomas Keenan and Eyal Weizman, Mengele's Skull: The Advent of a Forensic Aesthetics (2012)

Video Essay to Watch In Class:

 Thomas Keenan, Kerstin Schroedinger, and Eyal Weizman, Mengele's Skull (2012), https://vimeo.com/38440394



March 28: Biometric Facial Recognition

Required Readings Before Class:

 Kelly Gates, Our Biometric Future: Facial Recognition Technology and the Culture of Surveillance (2011), excerpts: "Introduction: Experimenting with the Face," pp. 1 - 24, Ch. 5: "Automated Facial Expression Analysis and the Mobilization of Affect," pp. 151 – 190

Artwork to View Before Class:

- Adam Harvey, CV Dazzle (2012), http://cvdazzle.com/
- Trevor Paglen, They Took the Faces... (2019), https://paglen.studio/2020/04/09/they-took-the-faces-from-the-accused-and-the-dead/

Talk to View In Class:

• Joy Buolamwini, "How I'm fighting bias in algorithms," TED Talk, https://www.ted.com/talks/joy buolamwini how i m fighting bias in algorithms

Artwork to View In Class:

Yun Ingrid Lee, On Illegibility, Sonic Acts Festival (2018), https://youtu.be/QCwR4ryhfbk

Suggested Readings:

- Shoshana Amielle Magnet, "Representing Biometrics," When Biometrics Fail: Gender, Race, and the Technology of Identity (2011), pp. 127 157
- Giorgio Agamben, "Identity without the Person," Nudities (2011), pp. 46 54
- Philip E. Agre, "Your Face is not a Bar Code: Arguments Against Automatic Face Recognition in Public Places" (2003), http://polaris.gseis.ucla.edu/pagre/bar-code.html
- Hito Steyerl, "Proxy Politics: Signal and Noise," e-flux (2014)

Suggested Exhibition:

 Face Control (2021-22), exhibition curated by Urs Stahel, Foto Colectania, https://fotocolectania.org/en/exhibition/148/face-control

April 4: Masks

Required Readings Before Class:

- Hans Belting, Face and Mask: A Double History (2017), excepts, TBD
- Jemima Wyman, "Five Videos: The Shared Face of the Collective," Rhizome (2012), http://rhizome.org/editorial/2012/oct/15/five-videos-jemima-wymans-shared-face-collective/

Artworks to View Before Class:

- Kader Attia, Mirrors and Masks series (2013-15)
- Kader Attia, The Scream (2016)

Artworks to View In Class:

- Jemima Wyman, Combat Drag (2008)
- Music videos by Björk

Suggested Exhibition:

- Máscaras (2020), exhibition curated by João Laia, Galeria Municipal do Porto, Porto, https://www.galeriamunicipaldoporto.pt/en/historico/2020/mascaras-masks-2020/
- The Mask New Lies (2021-22), exhibition curated by Servando Rocha and Jordi Costa, CCC Barcelona, https://www.cccb.org/en/exhibitions/file/the-mask-never-lies/234912

April 7: Paper 2 Due



Important Dates:

Winter 2023		
University Re-opens	Monday, January 2, 2023	
First day of S/Y section courses	Monday, January 9, 2023	
Last day of S classes waitlist	Thursday, January 19, 2023	
Last day to enroll in S classes on Acorn	Monday, January 22, 2023	
Last day to cancel Y section courses without academic penalty	Monday, February 20, 2023	
Family Day (University Closed)	Monday, February 20, 2023	
Reading Week (No Classes)	Monday, February 20, 2023 to Friday, February 24, 2023	
Last day to cancel S section courses without academic penalty	Sunday, March 19, 2023	
Last day of S/Y classes	Thursday, April 6, 2023	
Good Friday (University Closed)	Friday, April 7, 2023	
Make-up Day (Optional)/Study Day	Monday, April 10, 2023	
End-of-term Final Exam / review or Assessment Period	Tuesday, April 11, 2023 – Friday, April 28, 2023 (including Saturday and/or Sundays)	

Conflicts with religious observances should be brought to the attention of the course instructor and the Office of the Registrar and Student Services no later than the second week of classes.

For more information, please see the <u>Policy on Scheduling of Classes and Examinations and</u> Other Accommodations for Religious Observances.

EVALUATION:

Evaluation will be carried out in accordance with the University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy. Please refer to the policy located on the governing council website. http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/policies.htm#G

In-Class Participation: 20%

As a seminar, discussion is essential for the success of the course. This includes punctual attendance (being on time as well as staying until the end of class) and participation in all activities.

Weekly Reading Responses (post and comment): 20%

For each week there will be assigned readings and other materials that will require a two-part response, to be posted to the Querus class discussion webpage. The first part of the response is an original post, at least 250 words in length, in the form of crafted questions and/or comments about the required material for the week. The second part of the response is a comment on another student's post, at least 200 words in length, addressing the questions and/or ideas put forward in the initial post.

Part 1 of you weekly reading response (original post of at least 250 words) is due each Monday at 12pm local Toronto time.

Part 2 of you weekly reading response (comment on another student's post, at least 200 words) is due each Tuesday at 10am local Toronto time.



Weekly Presentations: 20%

All students will co-facilitate a 25 - 30 minute presentation on a selected required reading, highlighting core arguments and themes. At the start of the term, students will have an opportunity to choose the week they are most interested in facilitating. A presentation includes a critical overview of 1 assigned reading, as well as fostering class discussion. If multiple texts are listed during your selected week, please notify Dr. Blas 1 week prior to your presentation what text you will be focusing on. To contextualize the text presented, you are encouraged to integrate artwork listed on the syllabus, current events, and/or historical circumstances. In addition, it is advisable to prepare a list of discussion points for engaging the class. On the day of your presentation, bring a PowerPoint, Keynote, or PDF file on a thumb drive, or make other arrangements with Dr. Blas in advance.

Papers: 2 x 20%

You will write two papers in this class. On February 28th and April 7th, you will submit a 1500-word academic essay on a topic related to the face. While there are no set questions or prompts for either of these papers, in each paper, you must substantially engage with material studied in the module. Each paper should engage with a required text from the syllabus and a visual artwork, performing a comparative analysis of text and artwork. For the visual artwork analyzed, you are welcome to select work for the syllabus or something not listed on the syllabus. All essays must have a bibliography and references, which are not included in the word count. Essays should be formatted in the Chicago style.

Paper 1 (20%): due February 28th by 2pm local Toronto time Paper 2 (20%): due April 7th by 2pm local Toronto time

The undergraduate grading scale is listed as a percentage, not a letter grade. The undergraduate grading scale is included below for your reference:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value *	Grade Definition	
90-100	A+	4.0	Excellent	Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence
85-89	Α	4.0		
80-84	A-	3.7		of extensive knowledge base.
77-79	B+	3.3	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.
73-76	В	3.0		
70-72	B-	2.7		
67-69	C+	2.3	Adequate	
63-66	С	2.0		
60-62	C-	1.7		to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.
57-59	D+	1.3	Marginal	Some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and
53-56	D	1.0		some evidence that critical and analytic skills have been
50-52	D-	0.7		developed.

0-49	F 0.0	Inadequate	Little evidence of even superficial understanding of subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; with limited or irrelevant use of literature.
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^{*} The grade point values above apply to marks earned in individual courses; grade point averages are weighted sums of the grade points earned (see below), and thus do not necessarily correspond exactly to the scale above. For example, a B+ average would include include grade point averages from 3.20 to 3.49, while the lowest B- average would be 2.50. Please refer to the University of Toronto Grading Practices Policy for additional information: http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf.

LATE WORK:

All assignments are due in class at the specified time and date. Late submission will result in a 5% deduction (of each assignment's total grade) per day (excluding weekends). In the case of illness or other special circumstance, notification should be given to the Instructors and the Registrar as soon as possible and before the deadline in question. A *Verification of Illness* (Also known as a "doctor's note") is temporarily not required. Students who are absent from academic participation for any reason (e.g., COVID, cold, flu and other illness or injury, family situation) and who require consideration for missed academic work should report their absence through the online absence declaration tool on ACORN. Additional information is available online: http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php

FINAL DUE DATE:

Due dates are set by the Instructor in the schedule and evaluation sections of this outline. All term work must be submitted on or before the deadline date stipulated by the instructor. Students who for reasons beyond their control are unable to submit an assignment by its deadline must obtain approval from their Instructor for an extension within the term. The last date of the term is April 28, 2023. Any work submitted after the stipulated deadline and before the end of term without an approved extension will not be accepted. Students will be required to petition for an extension if they will be unable to submit their work by April 28, 2023. https://www.daniels.utoronto.ca/sites/default/files/petition_instructions_forms.pdf

Students are advised to contact their professors in advance of a deadline, where possible. Those students registered with Accessibility services should provide a letter from their advisor that confirms their registration and indicates their required accommodations. Please speak with Registrar in the ORSS if you have any questions or concerns regarding their letter of accommodation and how to interpret the information. Without any documentation, or where notice was not given, the ultimate decision is at the instructor's discretion.

PREPAREDNESS AT UOFT:

Students are advised to register for UTAlert, the University's alert system, at http://alert.utoronto.ca/. UTAlert sends important messages to registrants via text, email, and phone.

ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS:

The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University's courses and programs.



If you are a student who identifies with one or more of the broad categories below, we encourage you to register with Accessibility Services: https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/.

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Brain Injury and Concussion
- Chronic Health
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Learning Disability
- Mental Health
- Mobility and Functional
- Low Vision / Legally Blind
- Temporary Injuries

For any questions or assistance, please see the staff in the Office of the Registrar and Student Services.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND WRITING SUPPORT:

The University of Toronto expects its students to write well, and it provides resources to help. Please consult the University of Toronto writing site: https://writing.utoronto.ca/ for advice and answers to your questions about writing. Please pay special attention to "Advice on Writing: Academic Writing."

The Writing Centre at the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design (https://www.daniels.utoronto.ca/students/student-services) is a resource for Daniels students seeking assistance with academic writing through tutorials and individual consultations.

Academic writing carries with it certain expectations about properly citing, quoting, and referencing source material. Your research must be conveyed in a language commonly shared by others in the discipline. The style guidelines preferred by the Daniels Faculty are put forth in the Chicago Manual of Style and can be found here:

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/contents.html

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/chicago_style_i ntroduction.html

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. The Code of Behavior on Academic Matters states: "It shall be an offence for a student knowingly [...] to represent as one's own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e., to commit plagiarism." The Code also states: "Wherever in the Code an offence is described as depending on 'knowing,' the offence shall likewise be deemed to have been committed if the person ought reasonably to have known."

Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

1. Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.



- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- 3. Making up sources or facts.
- 4. Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- 1. Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
- 2. Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
- 3. Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

- 1. Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- 2. Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources. For information about academic integrity at the University of Toronto, please see https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation website (https://uoft.me/pdt-faq).

For accepted methods of standard documentation formats, including electronic citation of internet sources please see the U of T writing website at:

http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/documentation.

Please also refer to "Reading and Using Sources: How Not to Plagiarize" on the University of Toronto writing site (http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/).

Student Work - Daniels Publishing Policy

On occasion, the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design (the Faculty) will share, use, exhibit, display, broadcast, and distribute images of student work completed in this course in connection with the activities of the Faculty for promoting, publicizing, or explaining the activities of the school. Should you wish to 'opt out', please contact communications@daniels.utoronto.ca, otherwise, your participation in this course grants the Faculty permission to publish such images in PR/promotional materials such as marketing, advertising, fundraising, and any other Faculty-related publication. These images may appear in a wide variety of formats including but not limited to social media, website and print.

