

University of North Carolina Greensboro
M.A. in Liberal Studies

MLS 610B

Professor

Contact Information

THE ARTS AS HUMAN EXPERIENCE

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Course Description: Down through the ages the arts have soothed and entertained us, memorialized, aroused and inspired us. In today's fast paced, media flooded world, do the arts matter? Can they still inform our humanity? Is opera only for the have's not the have-nots? Does a painting have only investment value? Is Nashville the barometer of national musical taste? Will live theatre survive as it competes with rock concerts and home entertainment centers?

In this course, we will begin by exploring the art impulse as a personal phenomenon – as a sensory experience, a stimulus to the imagination and the impulse to play, and as a search for communion with others. Within this context, we will compare our personal discoveries with the earliest evidence of art in first cultures, moving forward through time to discover how the arts have been valued and described historically by artists and critics. With this background, we will then look at the arts in our own community. Through personal exploration, readings, discussions, guest artists and field trips to local arts events, it is my hope that we will discover a deeper understanding and appreciation of the arts as personal and communal experience.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes:

- To enhance sensory awareness and expand the physical imagination, the creative mind and personal accessibility to the creative process.
- To explore collective creativity and communication through shared experiences of the arts and to develop skills transferable to daily life interactions.
- To trace the earliest creative impulses in first cultures and discover links to arts practices today.
- To participate in a variety of local arts events, exhibits and performances.
- To develop the ability to give clear descriptions and articulate analyses of the arts as process and product through interactions with guest artists, class discussions, readings and written assignments.

Texts:

John Dewey, Art as Experience

Margaret H'Doubler, Dance: A Creative Art Experience

Jamake Highwater, The Primal Mind

Stephen Nachmanovitch, Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art

Rainer Maria Rilke, Letters to a Young Poet

Other reading materials will be handed out in class or retrieved from the internet.

Academic Honor Code:

Please refer to UNCG Graduate Bulletin

Grading:

The final grade will be based on the following percentages:

Class Participation 30%

Attendance is vital.

Thoughtful participation in class discussions and projects expected.

Short Papers 20%

4 at 5% each

Self Portrait 20%

Regular entries before and after each class or attendance at arts event

Term Paper/Presentation 30%

Course Outline:

- Class 1: Course/Class Introductions
The Art Impulse as a Personal Phenomenon
Read: Free Play (Class 1-3)
Paper in response to reading due class 4
- Class 2: Sensing, Imaging, Dreaming, Playing
- Class 3: The Body Imagination
- Class 4: The Life/Art Process
Read Primal Mind (Class 4-7)
Paper in response to reading due class 7
- Class 5: Collective Creativity – Storytelling in Community
- Class 6: Storytelling in Community with Director Alan Cook
Attendance at UNCG theatre rehearsal and production of
Death and the Kings Horseman
- Class 7: Discovering Art in Nature with guest artist Gay Cheney
Read Dance: A Creative Art Experience Class 7-9
Paper in response to reading/concert due class 9
Attend at a UNCG Dance Concert of choice

- Class 8: “Uneasy Nature”
Attend Weatherspoon Art Gallery exhibit with local artist/critic
Keith Buckner
- Class 9: “Renaissance Artist” as Critic -- Dialogue with Keith Buckner
Attend downtown Greenville Gallery “The Elements” exhibit
Read Art As Experience (Class 9-11)
Paper in response to reading due class 12
- Class 10: Opera for Everyone: An Evening with David Holley (opera singer,
director, conductor, librettist)
- Class 11: Attend UNCG Opera performance (TBA) and School of Music
April 1 Clarinet/Voice Recital
- Class 12: “Why, Fredrick, you’re a poet!”
“I know it.”
Read Letters to a Young Poet
- Class 14: Class Presentations: Term Research Project
- Class 15: Term Research Project
- Class 16: Class Presentations: Self Portraits