

### Important Summer Session 2009 Dates

	Session I	7-wk Sess	8-wk Sess	10-wk Sess	Session II
Last day to enroll/add online	June 27 (Sat) (11:59 pm)	June 27 (Sat) (11:59 pm)	June 27 (Sat) (11:59 pm)	July 4 (Sat) (11:59 pm)	Aug 1 (Sat) (11:59 pm)
Last day to drop online	June 28 (Sun) (11:59 pm)	June 28 (Sun) (11:59 pm)	June 28 (Sun) (11:59 pm)	July 5 (Sun) (11:59 pm)	Aug 2 (Sun) (11:59 pm)
Withdrawal Period at Summer Office (no refund)	June 29 – July 10 (8:00-4:00)	June 29 – July 17 (8:00-4:00)	June 29 – July 24 (8:00-4:00)	July 6 – July 31 (8:00-4:00)	August 3 – August 14 (8:00-4:00)
Note that during Summer Session there is no auditing of classes, no "Add by Petition" and no "Administrative Drop by Instructor". Failure to attend class does not constitute a "Drop". All deadlines are final.					

#### Art 170W – Writing for Artists

**Summer Session I:** June 22 – July 24, 2009

M-W-F – 6-8:45pm

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Office hours: TBA

Required texts:

*Writing for the Visual Arts*, Bernstein & Yatchisin, Prentice Hall, 2000

Plus handouts and on-line articles by artists about their artwork.

*New York Times Magazine* - <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/arts/index.html>

Films:

*Rivers & Tides*, Andy Goldsworthy - 2004

*World of Ideas: Maya Lin* – 2003

*Art in the 21st Century*: 2007, PBS series

*The Eye of the Heart*– documentary on video artist Bill Viola, 2008

Artists write about their work for many reasons. They create proposals, exhibition notes, press releases, resumés, scholarly statements about their creative process, and more. This course is meant for students interested in becoming better writers and in writing more effectively about art. It is designed to provide practice and discussion for arts students as they face a variety of situations requiring clear and critical writing skills. It will involve reading text selections by critics, journalists, artists and other students, and writing in response to these texts, as well as to personal experiences in art-making and viewing. These, and intensive peer review and editing, will form the core of engagement for in-class discussion and homework writing assignments.

Students will have opportunities to create written work for a variety of needs and audiences, in a variety of genres including resumé,

autobiography, critical analysis, reviews, artist manifesto, interviews and letters of application.

**Class Participation:** Since everyone is a colleague in the effort to improve writing skills, it is each student's responsibility to contribute for **each class**. Attendance is mandatory and more than 2 absences will affect your grade. In the unlikely event that you must miss class, please take responsibility for your own education. Don't contact me to see what you missed; instead contact a classmate to procure notes. Most hand-outs will also be available electronically.

**Oral Presentation:** Each person is expected to participate in break-out group discussions and tutorials, and will present readings to the class from his/her written assignments. The tutorial sessions will allow students to critique their own writing as well as that of others.

**Written Work:** Students will produce a wide range of written work, including an introductory autobiographical paper, two analytical pieces, a critical review, a resumé and a final paper on a selected art topic. Students will also keep a reading journal of free writing on the required weekly readings. Many of these written assignments will form the basis of in-class reading, group critiques and discussion. There will be occasional reading quizzes, and opportunities to re-write and edit during the classroom period.

**Writing Notebook/Journal:** Please begin keeping a writing notebook immediately. This is for your responses to the readings, writing exercises, research notes, ideas or opinions or questions you want to raise in class, informal writing and anything else you feel is appropriate (drawings, rough drafts, poems, etc.) Bring your writing notebook to class every week — they will be collected at the end of the course.

Get into the habit of reading the "Arts" section of the on-line *New York Times* every day. Here you will find examples of excellent writing about the arts, which can serve as models and inspiration for your own evolving style.

**Grading:** Participation and written assignments will form the basis for final grades. Classroom participation – 20%; in-class writing – 30%; assigned written projects – 50%. If you incur 3 absences (the equivalent of 1/5 of the course) it will not be possible for you to pass the class.

## **Week One:**

Overview and introduction.

### **Monday, June 22: Class 1**

Written questionnaire and short in-class autobiographical essay: In a couple of paragraphs (or a list, if you like), identify (a) some aspect of your writing about which you feel confident, and (b) one or more of your goals in this class or what you would most like to accomplish during this class. In other words, what can you already do well as a writer or already know about writing, and what do you want to be able to do or understand better by the end of the course? You may, if you wish, put this in context of specific successes or problems you've encountered in past situations requiring writing.

- **Reading:** Chapter 2: "How to Write about Your Art" in *Writing for Visual Artists (WVA)*
- **Written assignment:** start your notebooks and bring to class an example of writing about art that you admire

### **Wed, June 24: Class 2**

#### **Writing samples due**

Discussion and critique of samples:

- Why is it important to be able to write about your work?
- Discussion of writing issues specific to the arts:
- Why do you want to be an artist? Learning to articulate.
- What are you good at? Learning to take inventory.
- What are you afraid of? Learning to be candid.
- What artists do you admire – and why?

**Break-out groups:** Practicing thinking and talking about your sets of beliefs and opinions. Interview each other about favorite artworks, artists or artforms, and then write up an **in-class summary** of your interviews.

**Screening: one segment from *Art:21 PBS*.**

**In-class writing** about this segment and discussion

- **Reading:** Chapter 1: "How to Write Academic Art Papers," in *Writing for Visual Artists (WVA)*;
- **Written assignment:** Write a two-page statement about your own artwork, being sure to discuss your work using guidelines from *WVA* Ch. 2.

### **Friday, June 26: Class 3**

**Turn in your descriptive statement about your own artwork**

**Screening: *Rivers & Tides***

**Reading:** • Chapter 3 – "How to Revise & Peer Review, in *WVA*;"  
Self-guided field trip to visit a local gallery exhibition  
*complete this by Monday June 30;*

**Week Two:****Monday, June 29: Class 4**

- Discussion of *Rivers & Tides* – building a critical vocabulary

Break-out groups – discuss revising written work

**Screening: segments from *Art:21: PBS Video*.**

- **Reading:** Chapter 7: “Avoiding Wordiness,” in *A Writer’s Companion* (handout): “Attitudes” and “Art Materials” by Leigh Hyams (hand-out)

- **Written assignment:** re-write your original two-page statement about your artwork, using feedback provided.

Field work: visit a local art exhibition and take notes. These will form the basis for a short review of the show.

**Wed, July 1: Class 5****re-write due**

1) In class discussion of re-writing – break-out groups and exchange of notes on the readings;

2) **Screening: segments from *Art:21: PBS Video*.**

Break-out groups – discuss the screenings.

**In-class writing on the screening segment.**

3) One-on-one selection of critical essay topics for next week’s assignment.

- **Reading for next class:** “How to Begin – and How Not to Begin – an Essay” and “Clichés” – handouts from *A Writer’s Companion*; hand-out, art criticism by *New Yorker*’s Peter Schjeldahl

**Friday, July 3: Class 6**

**Screening: Bill Viola: *The Eye of the Heart***

**Discussion & in-class writing on the screening segment.**

**Week Three:****Monday, July 6: Class 7**

**1st Critical Essay due – 3-page essay on topic TBA**

Discussion of Peter Schjeldahl criticism

Small group discussion of strategies for this essay; then presenting to the entire group on how they approached this paper assignment.

**Class presentation** about the field exhibition – **in-class writing exercise; critiquing work of others**

- Structuring a resumé – group discussion based upon class hand-out resúmes

*Make sure you begin discussing your final paper topics and plans with me – make an appointment during my office hours, before or after class, or by telephone.*

- Reading:** Chapter 5: “Letters of Application” and begin Chapter 4: “How to Write a Resumé,” in *Writing for the Visual Arts*: (also consult - <http://www.collegeart.org/guidelines/resume>)
- Written Assignment:** Carefully look over the email materials on “Artist’s statements.” Looking in art journals, magazines, newsletters, on-line sites, locate a career or MFA opening that interests you, and bring to class relevant guidelines specific to a gallery, art-related position or MFA program

### **Wed, July 8: Class 8**

**Class field trip to Baskin Art Studios** for guest artist presentation.

Discussion about art applications – exchanging concerns with class participants, critiquing and discussion

- Do you believe what you say? Are you convincing?
- Are you being clear?.
- Reading:** handouts – sample press releases; reviews from *New York Times*, *New Yorker*, *Slate* and other print & on-line media.
- Written Assignment:** create a professional **resumé** of your work/career/education.

### **Friday, July 10: Class 9**

#### **Resumé due**

return first essay

Break-out group exchanges and critiques

**Re-write and edit resumes in class.**

**Read Amy Youngs’ artist statement; discuss her essay: write critiques in class**

**Screening: *World of Ideas: Maya Lin***

•**Reading:** Chapters 6: “**Writing Artist’s Manifestoes**,” in *WVA*; “Uses of Photography”; excerpt from *Ways of Seeing*, Berger sent via email; or pp. 83-100 in pdf “On Appearances”

**Written Assignment:** *your choice!!!*

Create **press release** on a local arts event, or on a hypothetical show of your own work, performance, production. (Check out Amy Youngs’ website and digital artwork.

<http://accad.osu.edu/~ayoungs/writing.html>);

or, a **one-two page essay response** to the Berger article

### **Week Four:**

**Monday, July 13:Class 10**

### Press release/Berger essay due

Discussion of Berger

Discussion of Maya Lin film

Break-out group critiques of press releases and essays.

From idea to presentation: in-class practice and tutorials dealing with these key characteristics of polished written work:

- quality (analytical depth) and originality of thought,
- arrangement and support of ideas,
- clarity and economy of writing style, and
- grammatical accuracy.

### 7pm: Guest artist: attracting a gallery – the MFA process

•**Reading:** Artist Statement handouts & email web-links; Maya Lin interview - <http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/lin0int-1>

**Assignment: Bring in draft of your personal artist's statement for in-class group discussion.**

### Wed, July 15: Class 11

Discussion of artistic statements and manifestoes. See Amy Youngs' statement - <http://accad.osu.edu/~ayoungs/statement.html>

Exchange and peer review

Packaging counts: how you say something is often just as important as what you say – in the “real world” and in this class.

Turning papers in unstapled, with obvious misspellings or grammar violations you know how to fix, or with sloppy phrasing and no clear organization disrespects your reader – and yourself.

• Break-out group critiques of each other's work — looking for trouble spots.

#### •Written Assignment:

**Second critical essay:** Your choice: create a 3-page interview with a local artist (it can be someone you already know); or, a critical review of a local art show. See Amy Youngs' artwork for inspiration: <http://accad.osu.edu/%7Eayoungs/art.html>

Bring an example of *your own artwork* to class.

Or bring in prints and examples of artworks you care about – for class discussion

### Friday, July 17: Class 12

#### 2nd Critical essay due

#### Return press release and discuss

- 1) Brief discussion of concerns with second essay
- 2) Show & Tell session: discussion of examples of your own, or another's artwork and be prepared to discuss in class — then engage in written critiques.

#### Screening – *PBS segment on Jenny Holzer and Alfredo Jaar*

•**Assignment: Artist's statement and Artist manifesto** due next class! One page each

Bring in prints and examples of artworks you care about, e.g. Van Gogh, Lucien Freud, William Kentridge, etc.

### **Week Five: FINAL WEEK**

#### **Monday, July 20: Class 13**

##### **Artist's statement and Manifesto due**

return second essay

Oral Presentations of manifestoes – examining clarity and style.

Individual critiques of second major writing assignment.

**In-class writing:** Describe a work of Art (using examples brought to class) : Evaluate critically the same work of art

•**Written Assignment:** Final paper drafts – this will be a draft of a critical paper, 4- 5 pages, on a previously arranged topic.

#### **Wed., July 22: Class 14**

##### **Final paper drafts due, for in-class discussion & revision**

Saying what you mean – making a convincing case for your point of view, opinion or critical analysis.

• Class break-out groups: writing what you mean.

Discussion of expanding vocabulary of arts-related words and examples; what have we learned from the films?

• Turning ideas about art into words, paragraphs, arguments and essays about art.

• Discussion of drafts of final paper; peer critiques on editing, spelling, grammar and clarity.

#### **Friday, July 24 - FINAL CLASS**

**Final Paper due** - Free writing notebooks due

**Final Assignment:** Three short in-class essays on selected topics.