

**VA 420/520 Concepts & Debates in Contemporary Art
Syllabus for Spring 2024**

Course schedule: Tuesdays 9:40-12:30

Room: SUSAM G010 (Speranza)

Instructor: Meltem Işık

Office Hours: By appointment (SUSAM G015)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will explore common themes or significant concepts that contemporary art brings into question, such as identity, gender, race, place, audience, time, ecology, science, money, power, etc. through a selection of publications, interviews, documentaries, exhibitions and other relevant materials. Our class will gather each week with the intention of focusing on one of these themes, in a critical environment suitable for discussion-based learning, that encourages your engagement and active participation.

Contemporary art can be interpreted through layers of information and insights from different perspectives, giving rise to new debates and insights regarding the value, meaning or purpose of art. You are expected to contribute to the discussions in class, and formulate your research for your presentations around the concepts we focus on, utilizing multiple perspectives:

Exhibitions you visit (your own interpretations based on **your individual experience with the work**),
Published work about the artists and their works, the views of various writers and art critics regarding the artist's contributions to the current discussions in contemporary art and their position within the field),
Artist's interviews or writings related to their own creation / process.

As a senior or graduate level student, **your own ongoing academic research and /or studio practice** will also be a very relevant and welcome contribution to the discussions in this course.

EVALUATION

Discussion comments/questions: 40%

There will be a space for posting your thoughts and questions about the exhibitions, screenings, readings and/or concepts we discuss in class, which you can find under "Forum for Discussion" on SuCourse. You are expected to post your ideas in response to the current discussion topic, before the next class.

Presentations: 40%

Each student will prepare a presentation for the class, which will be outlined in detail later on in the term.

Participation and contribution: 20%

Please note that it is not enough to just show up and sign the attendance for the class. In order to earn 20% of your grade, participation and thoughtful contribution to the class discussions are critical.

Students who miss more than 3 classes without a valid excuse, will receive NA as their final grade. In other words, a total of 4 absences will result in a semester grade of NA for this class.