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AVT 371 001 (PSYCHOLOGY 461-04)
VISUAL PERCEPTION AND ART
FALL 2008

<u>WEEK</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>SOLSO</u>	<u>READER</u>
AUG 29	The Visual World	1	Chpt. 1-Bridges
SEP 5	Brain and Vision	2	
SEP 12	Figure and Form	3	Chpt.2-Foundations
SEP 19	EXAM 1-PAPER TOPICS DUE TODAY!		
SEP 26	Content	4	
OCT 3	Cognition, Eye Movement	5	
OCT 10	Eye Movement	6	
OCT 17	EXAM 2		
Oct 24	Color	FIRST DRAFT DUE	Bloomer on Color
OCT 31	Visual Perspective	7, 8	Livingstone on depth
NOV 7	Connections	9	
NOV 14	EXAM 3—REVIEW OF FIRST DRAFT IN CLASS		
NOV 28	Psychoanalysis and Art		Paul Klee's Self Images, Chpt. 4- Faces
DEC 5	Creativity and Perception		Chpt. 12- Creativity
	FINAL PAPER DUE		
DEC 12	TAKE HOME FINAL AND PORTFOLIO ASSIGNMENTS DUE		

Grading Standard: A= 90-100; B= 80-89; C=70-79, D=60-69; F=0-59

Text: Solso, 1994 Cognitive and the Visual Arts. Boston: MIT 1

HONOR POLICY

Course Objectives: To introduce art students and others to the world of visual perception, how the visual system organizes the visual world for artists and enables them to make representations of it. Also the course attempts to provide students with the vocabulary of perception.

Free Writing Quizzes: From time to time, we will be doing some in-class free writing based upon the lecture and reading material. These will be open-book and open-note quizzes and will occur toward the end of each lecture. Additionally, 6 portfolio assignments are required, and these are based upon issues raised in the text.

Research Paper: A research paper of 5-7 pages typed defending one of the perceptual truths presented in class is also required. The paper should reflect your own research understanding of the perceptual principles being defended. All papers are due when assigned, and late papers cost one letter grade per week late.

Rules for Writing Research Papers:

- All papers must be typed, double-spaced and between 5-7 pages long
- Type set should be 12 pt. This memo is written in 12 pt.
- The paper is due on the due date. Drafts are due on the due date.
- Papers require a title page and complete list of references, neither of which is included as part of the 5-7 page requirement. Both original draft and final paper are due on the due date for the final paper and are stapled together.
- Students should make the papers artistically appealing.

Technology Requirement: Students are expected to be competent in word processing skills, internet use, compiling of bibliographic material, literature review searches, and downloading pictorial material from computers.

GRADING POLICY

The mid-term exam counts $\frac{1}{4}$ of your grade. There are no make-ups, and bluebooks are required.

Free writing quizzes and portfolio assignments count $\frac{1}{4}$

The research paper counts $\frac{1}{4}$

The final exam counts $\frac{1}{4}$

PERCEPTUAL TRUTHS

1. The purpose of perception is to achieve stability and coherence within the visual world
2. There is no reality. All there is is the perception of reality or a representation of reality.
3. All sensory systems adapt. Vision adapts the least.
4. Perception is the process of information pick-up Separating events that vary from those that stay the same is a basic perceptual process that enhances information pick-up.
5. The perceptual world is organized.
6. The mind is not a camera.
7. The mind takes it's best shot about what's out there.
8. Why do things look as they do? They look as they do because they are what they are.
9. The image at the eye has two dimensions. Therefore, it has countless interpretations in three dimensions.
12. A picture is worth a thousand words.
13. Beauty is in the mind of the beholder.
14. A sportswriter who asked them how they called balls and strikes interviewed three baseball umpires recently. One umpire said, "I call them as I see them." Another said, "I call them as they are." The third said, "They don't exist until I call them." Who's correct?

Term Paper Selection Topic

Due: _____

Topic Name _____

What do you intend to do in this paper?

Cite three to five references you have already consulted including Internet references.

Your name _____

Date _____

Portfolio Assignment #1
AVT 371

1. Review the area called "optical art" or "op art" on the Internet. What is it? Give examples and print out some illustrative examples. Review Briget Riley's work. Who is she, what are some of her famous works? See pg. 59 of Solso.
2. Based upon your understanding of perceptual mechanisms, explain how op art works.
3. See if you can draw some "op art" yourself.

Portfolio Assignment #2

1. I want you to select a representational work of art that you enjoy and make a copy of it for this assignment. If it is in color, you will need to provide me a color copy.
2. Having selected a favorite work of art, I want you to use the attached checklist to evaluate your EMOTIONAL reaction to this work. These psychological dimensions attempt to objectify your reaction to the work of art.
3. Then analyze the work of art using the more traditional dimensions for art analysis. These include SELECTIVITY (a good work of art is selective; its parts or details are chosen because they fit the purpose of the work); ORGANIZATION (a good work of art generally has its parts organized. It helps direct attention to the main idea and make the purpose clear); CONSISTENCY (a good work of art is usually organized partly be consistency among some of its parts - that is, by a similarity among them); VARIETY (a good work of art uses variety to help create and retain interest); ALIVENESS (a good work of art, in presenting living things, usually tries to make us see their vitality or aliveness).
4. Compare your analysis in #2 with that of #3. What does this tell you about the relation between one's emotional regard for a work of art and its more formal artistic properties?

WRITE YOUR ANALYSIS HERE. USE MORE PAPER IF YOU NEED IT.

DIMENSIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

AVT

Your name _____ Date _____

Painting Title _____

Painter _____

Aesthetic dimensions

Simple.....	.....Complex
Clear .....	.....Indefinite
Disorderly.....	.....Orderly
Ugly.....	.....Beautiful
Uninteresting.....	.....Interesting
Weak .....	.....Powerful
No pleasure.....	.....Extreme Pleasure
No discomfort.....	.....Extreme Discomfort
Relaxed.....	.....Tense
Drowsy.....	.....Alert

Note: The first four dimensions relate to the stimulus properties of the work of art. The following four indicate the hedonic values of the preceding dimensions, and the last four refer to attributes of the viewer's reaction or mood.

Your analysis:
(sketch on back)

Portfolio Assignment # 3
AVT 371

On page 162 of your text, there is a summary chart of all of the major cues to depth perception used in art. Your assignment is to select a picture of your own choosing rich in these cues. Then I want you to identify systematically as many of these cues in the picture as you can, in each case identifying the cue clearly. Attach the picture to this sheet along with your identifications.

Portfolio Assignment #4
AVT 371

On page 192 is a summary of some of the major art periods (you may wish to add to this list African art, Asian art, Byzantine art, for example). Select five of these periods and find one example of art work for each period that illustrates some understanding of perspective, even though it may not be linear perspective. For each example you select, make sure you identify at least one type of perspective (there may be more in each picture). Make of copy of the picture, and attach each of them to this sheet along with your answer.

Portfolio Assignment 5
AVT 371

One of the main purposes of this course is to discover ways the visual system provides perceptual coherence and stability. One of the principal mechanisms that ensures this stability are perceptual constancies. The purpose of this assignment is to make sure you understand what the constancies are (size, brightness, form, color, etc) and how they may appear in art forms. You are asked to select an image of your choice and explain how the artist manipulates constancies in his/her work. Then you are asked to write a brief essay explaining your understanding of the constancy mechanism and how it reflects itself in the artist's work. Remember sometimes constancies break down under very unusual points of view, and this fact is also a valuable artistic feat worth reflecting upon in this assignment.


Portfolio Assignment 6

AVT 371

In this course, we have examined two main methods of art interpretation, namely the cognitive approach presented in 801so's text and the psychoanalytic approach presented in class. Your task here is to identify a representational work and write an analysis of the work using both interpretive modes. Make sure when using 801so's approach, you identify the input, inferences, and hidden units of the work, and when using the psychoanalytic approach, you may need to delve into the background of the artist and the psychodynamics of his/her personality to make your interpretation work. Provide me a copy of the image.


WRITING HINTS

Common proofreading Symbols:

 =omit or delete

 =insert

e =Write in uppercase

 =reverse order.

E =Write in lowercase

1. Write an interesting, brief first paragraph. You want to draw your readers in and make them want to continue reading.
 - State the purpose of your paper in the first paragraph.
 - Explain how you intend to prove your purpose or reach your goal.
2. Use headings and subheadings to make your points and organization clear to the reader.
3. Paragraph! Paragraphs help the reader understand your organization. They should be 6-10 sentences long, no longer.
4. Make sure you include a topic sentence in each paragraph. Every sentence in the paragraph should tell about the topic.
5. Write shorter, not longer sentences.
 - Rule of thumb: If your sentence has two *ands*, a compound sentence, and two clauses, it is probably too long.

EXAMPLE: After they walked to the park, Mary and Bill played ball, and because I don't like sports, I went to the movies.

(Compound sentence: two independent sentences joined by and, but, or or)

EXAMPLE: Mary and Bill played ball, and I went to the movies.

6. Use the thesaurus on your computer. Synonyms add strength, beauty, clarity, and variety. Be as precise with words as you are with colors of paint or size of brushes.
7. Make your written work visually appealing.

- spacing
- white space
- font choice (easy to read)
- black ink (not washed-out gray)
- boldface for emphasis
- headings
- illustrations

Comments on Writing

Reread your final paper not once, but three times before handing it in.

Common errors:

its--the possessive (The dog wags its tail.)
it's--it is

Avoid the following:

he/she thing so then

Watch your pronouns. Avoid using the following forms in the same paragraph or adjacent paragraphs:

He we they our his her their

he-Don't use **he** unless you give equal time to she. Use plural pronouns, the passive voice, or the he or she construction. Don't use he/she as a substitute.

Simple writing is better than long, complicated sentences. Eliminate words that Add length to the sentence, but not meaning. Avoid constructions such as the ones below:

It is the little dog barks first.---The little dog barks first

It depends on how far or how close.....--It depends on the distance.

A good example of this is the herding dogs that have learned to round up sheep.
For example, herding dogs have learned to round up sheep.

There is a painting by Dali which contains extraordinary illusions.---A painting by Dali contains extraordinary illusions.

It is when... It occurs when...

It is because.....It is caused by-or- Because....

It is for this reason that--- I enjoy writing^because.....

In my opinion I believe...---I believe

It is my understanding that.....---I understand that.....

It is due to the fact that....---Because

stet---The editor changed his or her mind. Disregard the revision.

University and AVT Department Policies

As a courtesy to others in the class, and in accordance with George Mason University policy, please turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Commitment to Diversity

This class will be conducted as an *intentionally* inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design

As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the Department of Art and Visual Technology adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours

AVT teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the AVT studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

ArtsBus

The dates for this fall's ArtsBus trips are Sept. 27, October 18 and Nov. 15

If you need ArtsBus credit for this semester, you **MUST** enroll in a section of AVT 300 (CRN # 14195, 14196 or 14197) before September 9. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment. There will be NO exceptions. If you plan to go on multiple ArtsBus trips this term and wish to count them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.

Visual Voices Lecture Series

Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:30- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater. The spring schedule includes four lectures:

September 18, Barry Nemet, *Vision and Fiction: Oigments of Imagination*
October 2, R.G. Brown, *Invisible Forces*
October 23, Karen Kunc, *A Printmaker's Voice, the Art of Karen Kunc*
November 20, Lynell Burnmark, *Visual Literacy*

Important Deadlines

Last Day to Add (Full-Semester Course)	September 9
Last Day to Drop (Full-Semester Course)	September 26
Selective Withdrawal Period (Full-Semester Course)	September 22- October 17
Incomplete work from Fall 2007 due to instructor	October 24

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for *late adds* (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the AVT office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed). Requests for non-elective *withdrawals* and *retroactive adds* (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic

dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences

If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

Official Communications via GMU E-Mail

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Honor Code

Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously.

No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is *plagiarism*, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*.) The exception to this rule is information termed *general knowledge*—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, "When in doubt, cite."

Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

Writing Center

Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

