

Visual Culture Special Subject

VC3004

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

ECTS credits¹	10	Programme	BA in Visual Culture
NQF level	8	School	School of Visual Culture
Stage	3	Module Co-ordinator	Dr Emma Mahony
Trimester	2	Module Team	Denis Kehoe and other School of VC staff
Contact	Neasa Travers, School Secretary: visualculture@staff.ncad.ie		
Responsibility	The NCAD Academic Council and the School of Visual Culture Board have responsibility for this module.		

1. Introduction

This final year Special Subject module presents students with an opportunity to explore current themes in the field of Visual Culture. Particular emphasis will be placed on emerging and changing matters of concern which are the focus of current critical thinking, and the module will, as such, place a strong emphasis on the contemporary even when addressing historical issues.

Students on the module will engage with current and emerging theories of Visual Culture, as well as pressing debates about its effects on society, on the non-human, on the environment, etc.

This module will be offered as a choice of two or more specialist classes which address different aspects of the field. For instance, it might be offered as a choice of a class on Global Cinema (addressing how matters of current concern such as human rights, climate change, diasporic culture, the migrant crisis, post colonialism, inter-generational conflict and economic injustice have been tackled by feature film and documentary film makers in different international settings), and another class on Future Ecology (exploring climate justice activism, sustainable exhibition-making practices, queer landscapes, biodesign, etc).

The choice of topics will change regularly and will benefit from current expertise and research practices of staff in the School.

As final year students, learners will be expected to shape their learning in an active manner, writing and researching a question (assignment) of their own design and making a presentation to their peers. Particular emphasis will be placed on further developing the kinds of research skills required to understand contemporary and changing concerns, such as interviews with key actors, analysis of reports and policy documents, news reports, etc.

Where possible, the special subject classes will connect with external organisations, individuals and partners working in the fields addressed. For instance, scheduled in the spring, the programme will coincide with the annual Dublin International Film Festival (DIFF) and close relations between the

¹ European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, where 60 ECTS credits equate to the workload of a full-time academic year

DIFF programmers and the School of Visual Culture will allow for screening opportunities and talks from film-makers and film industry professionals to be enjoyed by students.

The aims of this module are to:

- Engage in a deep and sustained fashion with contemporary concerns and debates in a field of Visual Culture.
- Support students to extend their command of forms and methods of research of matters of contemporary concern.
- Further develop the skills required to design and then answer a complex research question.

2. What will I learn?

On successful completion of this module students will be able to:

1. UNDERSTAND and ANALYSE pressing issues in a field of contemporary visual culture, testing and applying key concepts and theories.
2. DEVELOP and APPLY appropriate research tools for the study of an issue or matter of the student's own choosing.
3. ANALYSE a diverse range of research materials in a sophisticated manner.

3. How will I learn?

Learning will take the form of weekly seminars, in preparation for which students will be required to read primary and secondary texts in advance and undertake other forms of class preparation. As a seminar, each class will take the form of tutor-led discussion of selected case studies. Students will lead a presentation in the final stages of the programme that will support the writing of a long-form essay.

Learning tool	Hours
Lectures or seminars	30
Specified Learning Activities	70
Autonomous Student Learning	100
Total Workload	200

4. What learning supports are provided?

Students will be provided with key readings and links to films and other sources on a VLE. Students will be encouraged to make use of the extensive film holdings of the NCAD Library as well as the on-demand services to which it subscribes such as Alexander Street.

5. Am I eligible to take this module?

Module Requisites and Incompatibles

Pre-requisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Incompatibles	None
Prior learning	Where a student can demonstrate that they have achieved at least 80% of the learning outcomes of this module, by academic certified achievement, or through quantifiable and documented experience, they can apply to the School for that prior learning to be recognised. Applications must be received prior to the commencement of delivery of the module.
Recommended	None

6. How will I be assessed?

Assessment tool	% of final grade	Timing
4,000 word illustrated essay	100%	Circa week 12 of the trimester
Total	100%	

Assessment tool	Learning outcomes assessed
Illustrated essay	All learning outcomes

7. Feedback, results and grading

Written feedback will be provided. The essay will be assessed according to the [NCAD Grade Descriptors](#).

8. What happens if I fail?

Resit Opportunities

Opportunities will be provided to students who do not complete all assessments in trimester 2, but students will not be able to qualify for the award on completion of this programme until the learning outcomes of this module have been met.

9. When and where is this module offered?

The module is delivered in School of Visual Culture seminar rooms and classrooms, as well as online, during weeks 1-12 of Trimester 2.

10. How will I have the chance to evaluate the module?

It is important to NCAD that students inform the development of teaching and learning at NCAD. We encourage all students to communicate their concerns and their observations about their study to members of staff so that any changes can be made in a timely manner.

About two-thirds of the way through the year, a student forum will be convened to gather students' comments about their study and the delivery of the programme. In addition, at the end of Trimester 2, students have the opportunity to complete an online evaluation of their study and experience at NCAD. Students are also encouraged to complete the Irish Student Survey of Engagement. These evaluation events are important to current and future students, to ensure we can enhance the delivery of programmes at NCAD.

In addition, students are invited to discuss their experience on the module with their lecturers at any point during the year. Students can also relay your comments to the class student representative who will communicate their comments to the staff.

**For further details on the content of your module and teaching arrangements,
consult your Programme or Module Handbook**