

# VPAS 3340

## Writing in the Arts

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### Course Information

**Mondays + Wednesdays**  
**5:30-6:45pm / GR 4.204**

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Office Hours: Weds. 11-12:00  
and by appointment  
Office: JO 4.682



ARTIST. WHO  
SAID THAT?

Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries,  
*Art is a Lie That Just Won't Die*, Video Still, 2014

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### Prerequisites

RHET 1302 or equivalent.

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### Course Description

This course is an advanced investigation of styles, conventions, and techniques integral to research and writing in the visual and performing arts. Whether it is a proposal or a statement, article or an essay, book or a zine, hand-written or typed, longform or short, interactive or not, writing is an essential practice for research and creative scholarship. This course approaches writing from a broad perspective to strengthen the ability to critically think, synthesize meaning, and strategically write with a compelling voice and style that is unique to the author. Through presentations, readings, viewings, discussions, in-class activities, peer-reviews, and feedback, the exercises in this class are designed to challenge students to expand the understanding of the role and function of writing in the arts.

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### Student Learning Objectives / Outcomes

- ⇒ Students build fluency in the types of research and writing essential to working in the arts.
- ⇒ Students comprehend, analyze, and practice reading their work and the work of others to critically think and coherently craft meaning.
- ⇒ Students depart from comfortable ways of thinking to develop new relationships with writing in the context of their desired fields of research.
- ⇒ Students participate in numerous in and out of class exercises to find a writing voice, style, and distribution format that best supports their creative activity and scholarship.

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## Course Requirements & Evaluation

This course is dedicated to developing your research and writing as an ongoing sustainable practice. Whatever context it may be, academic, creative, professional or personal, you are likely writing everyday. This course is a writing-intensive course: you will not only be writing a lot but will be expected to experiment and challenge yourself to find a writing style that allows you to effectively communicate your think-ing.

Evaluation will be determined by the quality of your work, attendance, preparedness, readiness to experiment, respect of others, determination, work ethic, progress and participation in constructive feedback. Your projects will be assessed on timely completion, originality in conceptual approach and evidence of skill development, attention to detail and research.

### 30 % — PARTICIPATION

- Attendance
- Peer-Reviews

### 20 % — ASSIGNMENTS

- Essay
- Profile

### 20 % — PROMPTS

### 30 % — FINAL PROJECT

- Proposal
- Draft
- Final Project
- 3MT Presentation

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**100 %: TOTAL**

### ASSIGNMENT ASSESSMENT:

- (10) Follows Assignment Parameters
  - (20) Research Effort, Coherence
  - (20) Creativity, Ambition, Risk-Taking
  - (20) Editing, Revision
  - (30) Proof-read, Complete, Finalized
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(100) points total

### GRADE SCALE (%)

- 92-100 : A
- 90 - 91 : A-
- 87 - 89 : B+
- 82 - 86 : B
- 80 - 81 : B-
- 77 - 79 : C+
- 72 - 76 : C
- 70 - 71 : C-
- 67 - 69 : D+
- 60 - 66 : D
- 0 – 59, Plagiarism, No work : F

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### IMPORTANT

\*DEADLINES: All works need to be received before or by the deadline.

\*INCOMPLETES: Incompleted works will not be accepted.

\*LATES: The maximum possible grade for late works will be automatically down-scaled per letter-grade every week until submission is received or no points are available.

☉ **HELP?** Email is the best way to contact me to set up individual meetings outside of office hours—happy to provide feedback, advise, or problem-solve with you!

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## Course Expectation Breakdown

### 30% —PARTICIPATION

#### ***(20%) Attendance, attention, and ready for discussion***

You are required to attend every class session and participate. If you are absent for a family emergency or sickness (doctor's note required), religious observance, or any other reason, please communicate with me in a timely manner. All notes need to be received in advance or within 24 hours of absence. I will not provide make-up sessions and repeat course materials.

- More than 15 minutes late constitutes an absence
- 3 lateness = 1 absence
- More than 2 unexcused absences = Lower 1 grade letter

#### ***(10%) Peer-Review / Feedback***

You will be participating in 4 peer-review / feedback sessions.

### 20% — ASSIGNMENTS

The 2 projects (Essay and Article) you complete this semester will be assessed on criticality, quality, originality, experimentation, and execution. Detailed information on the assignment and parameters will be provided in class.

### 20% — PROMPTS x 5

- A total of 5 prompts. Needs to be posted on time.
- A total of 333-444 words. Whatever format the prompt asks you of, your response must meet the minimum word count, proof-read, and complete.
- For certain prompts, physical documents can either be handed in (will be returned after viewing) or documented via photo.

### 30% — FINAL PROJECT

Your final project will be driven by your interests. Whatever style it takes, the material being presented must be new and original in form, in content, research, and/or delivery. As we ramp up towards the final project, you will have the opportunity to consult with me and share your ideas with the class for in-progress feedback. Detailed information on the assignment and parameters will be provided in class.

#### ***(10%) Proposal***

#### ***(5%) Draft #2 (Edited)***

Final draft of your project should clearly reflect feedback from peer-review.

#### ***(10%) Final Project***

#### ***(5%) 3MT Presentation***

In 3-minutes you must be able to explain and give a clear, concise, and articulate presentation of your project.

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## Finalizing and Submitting Assignments

Assignments must be submitted as a .docx or .doc in the **e-learning “To Do” section** unless noted otherwise. If your project requires you to submit in ways other than via e-learning, reach out to me **before** the deadline and consult with me.

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## Extra Credit

Throughout the semester you will have the opportunity to earn extra credit. *I understand that life happens!* If you are concerned about your progress and keeping up with course materials, please do not hesitate and contact me. I will only be able to make arrangements and accommodate if you are in communication with me. You are highly encouraged to schedule at least 1 meeting with me during the semester.

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## Required Course Materials

There are no required course materials except for your personal computer and writing utensils. Reading assignments, links to supplemental multimedia materials in relation to the topic will be provided weekly and as needed.

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## Self-Guided Resources

- ◇ **Internet Archive:** a digital library of Internet other cultural artifacts // <https://archive.org/>
- ◇ **Alt-X:** Alternative avant-garde network, publication, and resource // <http://www.altx.com/>
- ◇ **Open Humanities Press:** an international community with a focus on critical and cultural theory // <http://www.openhumanitiespress.org/>
- ◇ **Media-N: Journal of the New Media Caucus:** a peer-reviewed, open-access journal dedicated to new media art. // <https://iopn.library.illinois.edu/journals/median>
- ◇ **The Digital Review:** an annual journal dedicated to the preservation and publication of innovative, born-digital essays. // <https://thedigitalreview.com/>
- ◇ **Electronic Book Review:** a peer-reviewed journal of critical writing produced and published by the emergent digital literary network. // <https://electronicbookreview.com/>
- ◇ **Electronic Literature Organization:** international organization dedicated to the investigation of literature produced for the digital medium. // <https://eliterature.org/>
- ◇ **Adjacent:** An online journal of emerging media // <https://itp.nyu.edu/adjacent/>
- ◇ **PARTake:** The Journal of Performance as Research // <https://partakejournal.org/index.php/partake>
- ◇ **Hemispheric Institute:** Gathers artists, scholars, writers, learners, and activists from across the Americas. // <https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/>
- ◇ **Fathomers:** Creative research institute // <https://www.fathomers.org/>

## Course Schedule

*\* All matters contained in this schedule are subject to change as needed at the discretion of the professor. Never hesitate to reach out if you have any questions about the schedule. \**

| Wk                          | Date | Focus               | Topics + Course Materials   | Assignment   |
|-----------------------------|------|---------------------|---|--|
| 1                           | 8/23 | Introduction        | <b>EXP &gt;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction</li> <li>Syllabus + Schedule</li> <li>Introduction to Writing in the Arts</li> </ul>  | <b>View:</b><br><i>Art is a Lie That Just Won't Die</i> , Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries, 2014   |
|                             | 8/25 | Writing in the Arts | <b>EXP &gt;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing <i>across</i> disciplines</li> <li>Ways of reading and writing [ ____ ]</li> </ul>   | <b>DUE 8/28:</b><br><b>PROMPT #1:</b><br><i>The Gesture of Writing</i> , Vilém Flusser   |
| 2                           | 8/30 | Writing in the Arts | <b>EXP &gt;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Essay Project</li> <li>The absence / presence of "I"</li> <li>Where does writing happen?</li> <li>Intention, Audience, Expectations</li> </ul>   | <b>DUE 9/4:</b><br><b>PROMPT #2:</b><br><i>Art Which Can't Be Art</i> , Allan Kaprow, 1986<br><br><i>How to do nothing</i> , Jenny Odell, 2017   |
|                             | 9/1  | Writing in the Arts |   |  |
| <b>—NO CLASS—LABOR DAY—</b> |      |                     |   |  |
| 3                           | 9/6  |                     |   |  |
|                             | 9/8  | Essay               | <b>EXP &gt;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crafting outlines</li> <li>Structuring and organizing with cohesion</li> <li>Composition</li> </ul>  | <b>Read / View:</b><br><i>International Art English: On the rise—and the space—of the art-world press release</i> , Alix Rule & David Levine   |
| 4                           | 9/13 | Essay               | <b>EXP &gt;</b><br>"What do our references to writing mean? Do they mean print only?"—Kathleen Blake Yancey, <i>Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key</i> , 2004<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Credits</li> <li>Rethinking references and citations</li> </ul> | <b>Read / View:</b><br><i>Artist forbids any reproduction of his artworks   LIVE ART # 6 - Tino Sehgal, Palais de Tokyo</i> , wocomoCulture<br><br><i>The Question Artist: Tino Sehgal's Provocative Encounters</i> , Lauren Collins |
|                             | 9/15 | Essay               |   | <b>Read / View:</b><br><i>Art at a Time Like This</i> , Curated by Barbara Pollack and Anne Verhallen  |

|   |      |                     |   |   |
|---|------|---------------------|---|---|
| 5 | 9/20 | Profile             | <p><b>EXP &gt;</b></p> <p>“Art denotes a process of doing or making. This is as true of fine as of technological art. Art involves molding of clay, chipping of marble, casting of bronze, laying on of pigments, construction of buildings, singing of songs, playing of instruments, enacting roles on the stage, going through rhythmic movements in the dance.”— <i>Art as Experience</i>, John Dewey, 1987</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pairing for interviews: Create a Q&amp;A topic for your conversation.</li> </ul> | <p><b>DUE:</b><br/><b>FINAL &gt;</b> Essay</p> <p><b>Read / View:</b></p> <p><i>Art, a Test Site, Hito Steyerl in conversation!</i>, 2014</p> <p><i>An Interview with Pamela Z, Tone Åse &amp; Karolina Jawad</i>, 2020</p> <p><i>Meet AI-Da, The world’s first AI artist, who is almost human</i>, Dazed Digital</p> |
|   | 9/22 | Profile             | <p><b>EXP &gt;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recording Interviews</li> <li>Organizing Responses</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Read / View:</b></p> <p><i>Beyond Biography: Jalcoby Satterwhite</i>, Taylor Aldridge</p>   |
| 6 | 9/27 | Profile             | <p><b>EXP &gt;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Image exchange</li> <li>Fact-checking, nuance, and proofing draft with interview partner</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Read / View:</b></p> <p><i>Peter Campus on his most famous work and why he hates it</i>, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2019</p>   |
|   | 9/29 | Peer-Review I       |   | <p><b>DUE:</b><br/><b>DRAFT &gt;</b> Profile</p>  |
| 7 | 10/4 | Manifesto           | <p><b>EXP &gt;</b></p> <p>“I am an artist. I am a woman. I am a wife. I am a mother. (Random order). I do a hell of a lot of washing, cleaning, cooking, renewing, supporting, preserving, etc. Also, (up to now separately I “do” Art.)”— <i>Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969!</i> Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 1959</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you believe in and stand by?</li> </ul>   | <p><b>DUE:</b><br/><b>FINAL &gt;</b> Profile</p> <p><b>Read / View:</b></p> <p><i>Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969!</i>, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 1969</p> <p><i>The Cut Up Method of Brian Gysin</i>, William S. Burroughs</p>  |
|   | 10/6 | Performance writing | <p><b>EXP &gt;</b></p> <p>“Where does a text start? where does it not end?”— Caroline Bervall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do your beliefs influence your everyday?</li> </ul>  | <p><b>10/9 DUE</b><br/><b>PROMPT #3:</b></p> <p><i>The Cut Up Method of Brian Gysin</i>, William S. Burroughs</p> <p><i>What Do We Mean By Performance Writing?, Postscript:</i></p>  |

|    |       |                             |  |  |
|----|-------|-----------------------------|--|--|
|    |       |                             |  | <i>Writing after Conceptual Art</i><br>Caroline Bervall, 2018  |
| 8  | 10/11 | <b>Research</b>             | <b>EXP &gt;</b><br><br>[i]t is important to remember that we are free to make art and poetry out of anything: a loaf of bread, some beans, a hasty jotting on the train.” — Footnotes, Alison Knowles, 2000  | <b>10/16 DUE</b><br><b>PROMPT #4:</b><br><br><i>Building a Feminist Data Set for Feminist AI</i> , Caroline Sindere, 2017<br><br><i>Deep Unlearning</i> , Sascha Pohflepp & Chris Woebken, 2017<br><br><i>The Future of Memory</i> , Xiaowei Wang, 2019                  |
|    | 10/13 | <b>Proposal</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research methods and approaches</li> <li>• Thesis statement</li> <li>• Research outline</li> <li>• Historic and contemporary relevance and key concepts</li> <li>• Speculating outcome</li> </ul>   |  |
| 9  | 10/18 | <b>Perform Research</b>     | <b>EXP &gt;</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does one “perform” research?</li> </ul>  | <b>Read / View:</b><br><br><i>Learning to Love you More</i> , Harrell Fletcher & Miranda July, 2007<br><br><i>Something Else Press</i> , 1983  |
|    | 10/20 | <b>Peer-Review II</b>       |  | <b>DUE:</b><br><b>DRAFT &gt; Proposal</b>  |
| 10 | 10/25 | <b>Proposal to Research</b> | <b>EXP &gt;</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Map: Use your proposal as a guide to visually layout, write and plan your process, string ideas together, gather references, thoughts, quotes, sketches, audiovisual texts etc.</li> <li>• Stream-of-Consciousness Methodology: Explorations may include your choice of creative expression, dreamlike logic, systems of choice, including automatic writing, collage, photos, yarns, sculptural, scribbles and doodles etc.</li> </ul> | <b>DUE:</b><br><b>FINAL &gt; Proposal</b><br><br><b>11/1 DUE</b><br><b>PROMPT #5:</b><br><br>Stream-of-Consciousness Research Map in the form of either a physical or digital document.  |
|    | 10/27 |                             |  |  |
| 11 | 11/1  | <b>Project Development</b>  | <b>EXP &gt;</b><br><br>“[...] in digital culture every image is framed by writing—by advertising, by information about upcoming feeds, and so on. Image and text are much more mixed...”—Hito Steyerl<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Map share</li> <li>• Discussion: How will you “write” your final project and how do you want it to be “read”?</li> </ul>  | <b>Read / View:</b><br><br><i>My Body</i> , Shelly Jackson, 1997<br><br><i>My Boyfriend Came Back from the War</i> , Olia Lialina, 1996<br><br><i>Queers in Love at the End of the World</i> , Anna Anthropy, 2017<br><br><i>Reconstructions</i> , Allison Parrish, 2020 |

|    |                |                              |   |   |
|----|----------------|------------------------------|---|---|
|    |                |                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading, writing, publishing literature for digital media (electronic literature)</li> </ul>           | <i>Electronic Literature: What is it?</i> , N. Katherine Hayles |
|    | 11/3           | <b>Project Development</b>   | <b>EXP &gt;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing workshop: CV/Resume</li> <li>Project development and progress check</li> </ul> |   |
| 12 | 11/8           | <b>Project Development</b>   | <b>EXP &gt;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing workshop: CV/Resume</li> <li>Project development</li> </ul>                    |   |
|    | 11/10          | <b>Peer-Review III</b>       |   | <b>DUE:</b><br><b>Project Draft #1</b>                          |
| 13 | 11/15          | <b>Project</b>               | <b>EXP &gt;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Updates / Revision</li> </ul>  |   |
|    | 11/17          | <b>Project</b>               | <b>EXP &gt;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation preparation</li> <li>Project Updates / Revision</li> </ul>                | <b>DUE:</b><br><b>Project Draft #2 (Edited)</b>                 |
| 14 | 11/22<br>11/24 | <b>—NO CLASS—FALL BREAK—</b> |   |   |
| 15 | 11/29          | <b>3MT Presentation</b>      | <b>Feedback</b>   |   |
|    | 12/1           |                              |   |   |
| 16 | 12/6           | <b>Final Project</b>         | <b>EXP &gt;</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wrap up</li> </ul>   | <b>DUE:</b><br><b>Final Project</b>                             |

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## Course Content

In this course, I reserve the right to share a broad range of course materials, some of which assume the audience to be adult in age and demeanor. Should you feel offended by something you have seen or heard, it would be appreciated, but not required, to stay to be part of the dialogue to offer your perspective. If you feel like you cannot stay, you can notify me and leave the classroom.

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## Classroom Policies

You are expected to act as responsible adults and respect each other, each other's work, and school property. This includes:

- Hands off tech devices unless required for class and integral to a presentation or comprehension: Devices such as cell phones, headphones and handheld internet devices must be off before class begins and remain off throughout the class period. No texting, no direct messaging, no social media, no google maps, no anything, unless for in-class activity.
- Please be attentive to how your spoken comments relate to those made by others in the room. Discriminatory or derogatory jokes or remarks towards any person or persons based on race, religion, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability status, nationality, region of the country people live in, color of their hair, or culture will not be tolerated. Intolerance will not be tolerated.
- In a group setting, such as a lecture, no side conversations, please. And, of course, no reading, sleeping, music, computers or any other activity that pulls your focus away from the speaker.
- Please pace yourself and practice self-care. Take pauses, breaks and be sure to get adequate amounts of sleep. If you are feeling anxious, take a deep breath, step away, and come back to it in 5 minutes.

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## Disabilities & Accommodation

Please never hesitate to contact me with any concerns you may have or as anything arise. I am happy to accommodate as necessary.

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## Classroom Conduct Requirements Related to Public Health Measures

UT Dallas will follow the public health and safety guidelines put forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and local public health agencies that are in effect at that time during the Fall 2021 semester. Public health measures may be required for class participation (e.g., wearing of masks, social distancing) and students who refuse to comply may face disciplinary action for Student Code of Conduct violations.

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## Course Materials

The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course, however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

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## Course Participation

Regular class participation is expected. Students who fail to participate in class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. A portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class. It also includes engaging in group or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on homework assignments, readings, or materials covered in the lectures (and/or labs). Class participation is documented by faculty. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to University requirements, as presented in this syllabus. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

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## Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students. Please see <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

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## UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the catalog sections regarding the credit/no credit or pass/fail grading option and withdrawal from class. Please go to <https://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

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## Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

*“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”*

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**\*Note:** *All matters contained in this syllabus and related to this course are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*