

New Core Component Proposal

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Viewing: **PERF 223-GE : Aesthetics of Activism**

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Changes proposed by: jimball

In Workflow

1. **PRFM Department Head**
2. **LA College Dean UG**
3. **CCC Preparer**
4. CCC Chair
5. Faculty Senate Preparer
6. Faculty Senate
7. Provost II
8. President
9. Curricular Services

Approval Path

1. 10/01/19 4:10 pm
Steve Oberhelman (s-oberhelman): Approved for PRFM Department Head
2. 10/02/19 3:41 pm
Steve Oberhelman (s-oberhelman): Approved for LA College Dean UG

Contact(s)

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Course Prefix PERF Course Number 223

Academic Level UG

Complete Course Title Aesthetics of Activism

Abbreviated Course Title AESTHETICS OF ACTIVISM

Crosslisted With

Semester Credit Hour(s) 3

Proposal for:
Core Curriculum

How frequently will the class be offered? Yearly

Number of class sections per semester 1

Number of students per semester 100

Historic annual enrollment for the last three years

Last year: Previous year: Year before:

Core curriculum

Foundational Component Area Core Creative Arts (KCRA)

TCCN prefix/number

Foundational Component Area: Creative Arts

How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

PERF 223 Aesthetics of Activism teaches students how to use the creative arts to achieve social and political change. This course asks students to investigate, analyze, and interpret a variety of creative arts interventions into civil and political discourse (e.g. political theater, culture jamming, protest songs) and to recognize the aesthetic dimensions of various activist projects (e.g. Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter, The Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong). Students synthesize and interpret historical and contemporary arts activist projects, to better understand their principles, tactics, and efficacy. Students also apply this knowledge in a culminating performance project designed to use the arts to add to civic discourse on campus.

Core Objectives:

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

In weekly Cultural Discourse Journals students must think critically about past and present political uses of art. Students must position themselves in relation to these often-controversial works, and must evaluate the broad contexts in which the works appeared. Specific Journal prompts compel students to think in new ways about social structures, law, the body, and the arts (e.g. "What is the civic responsibility of artists and their works of art? What are our civic responsibilities as Spectators?"). Journal responses prepare students for weekly small group discussions in which new discussion prompts require students elaborate and defend their own positions, and evaluate the arguments of their peers. In regular Quizzes and Exams, short answer prompts ask students to deepen this thinking, applying their innovations to new contexts and questions. Finally, in their culminating Action Project, students must reflect on an issue facing their community, synthesize information about that issue, and innovate a plan of action to respond to the issue using art. Student critical thinking related to the project is captured in 4 written artifacts that require analysis of the issue, elaboration of the planned action, and reflection on the action's efficacy.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

Assignments in this course stress written, oral, and visual communication. Students practice written communication weekly in their Cultural Discourse Journals, and expand on their ideas in written response to Quiz and Exam questions. Students receive substantial feedback on the collaborative written products they produce for their Action Project. These products require students to write in aesthetic (the Manifesto) and technical (the Action Plan) modes. Students practice oral communication weekly in small group discussions in class. Students develop their oral communication skills in the Case Study Presentation required for their Action Project, a ten-minute-long oral presentation to the class interpreting historical arts activism. Finally, students develop visual communication skills in several units throughout the course, especially units on subversive dress (Week 9), and the media strategies of ACT UP (Week 11) and the Yes Men (Week 13). Students may further develop their visual communication skills by applying strategies studied throughout the semester to their Action Projects.

Teamwork (to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal):

Students practice considering different viewpoints and engaging in civil dialogue throughout the course in weekly small group discussions stemming from their Cultural Discourse Journals. These discussions require students to articulate their views on civic discourse, even as they must practice strategies for tolerant discussion of often-divisive issues. Cultural Discourse Journal and discussion prompts are designed to provoke expression of a wide variety of viewpoints (as with questions like "Under what circumstances would it be reasonable for a citizen or activist to disobey the law?"), and require students to develop their ability to respectfully consider that variety of viewpoints. In their Action Project, students are randomly assigned to groups in which they must work effectively with one another to achieve a shared goal, staging an activist performance. Supporting their work in these groups, students are required to read selections from adrienne marie brown's book, "Emergent Strategy," a guidebook for community organizers to develop egalitarian and effective organizations. As students develop their Action Projects, they must also investigate the variety of forms collaboration (creative or otherwise) can take. Teamwork is essential at all stages to completing this Project effectively, including in identifying shared goals, dividing labor among participants, holding one another accountable for their commitments, and delivering final products professionally.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

This course is an extended investigation of activism at national and international scales that emphasizes performance as a privileged site of social discourse. In each class, students are exposed to activist performance practices that expand their understanding of our multicultural and global society, and their civic and social responsibilities as citizens and artists. Particular attention is paid to the ways that performance constructs and expresses individual identity, and the uses of performance to address inequality in a multicultural democracy. Students reflect on their place in a multicultural and global society in weekly Cultural Discourse Journals, responding to prompts such as "What role should activism play in a democratic nation?" and "Why should we change the world? How can we change the world?" On tests and in exams, students answer additional questions about their social and civic responsibility in a global society. Other Cultural Discourse Journal entries ask students to locate themselves in relation to the week's topics and cases, by responding to prompts such as, "What is the civic responsibility of artists and their works of art? What are our civic responsibilities as spectators to performance?" and "Why should we change the world? How can we change the world?" By sharing their reflections with classmates in small and large group discussions, students' biases and prejudices are revealed to them. Students are also asked to reflect on how they relate to wider social and political worlds in their group Action Project. In preparing this final product, students must reflect on the change they would like to see in the world and discuss their perspective on that change with classmates. Required class readings in Emergent Strategy call on students to consider their personal biases and prejudices as the organize within their Action Project groups, and in their written Post Mortem, students must assess the quality of their participation in the event, opening new avenues by which to understand themselves and their personal biases and prejudices. Furthermore, students reflect on tolerance and intolerance, and articulate their own moral and ethical limits, in weekly Cultural Discourse Journals, by responding to prompts such as, "Is violence ever permissible to oppose oppression and promote social change?" and "What new affordances does a digitally networked world provide for pursuing activist projects? How might technologies like the internet require new forms of activism?" Students analyze provocative performances and activist interventions in class and on tests and exams. In small group discussions, they elaborate their positions by responding to prompts such as, "What obligations are incumbent upon us when faced with injustice or oppression in our everyday lives or the experiences of those around us?" Every moment of this course asks students to think rigorously about their own social responsibility, and the use of the arts and performance to engage effectively with local, national, and global communities.

Additional Comments Submitting concurrently for Cultural Discourse (KUCD) designation.

Please ensure that the attached course syllabus sufficiently and specifically details the appropriate core objectives.

Attach Course Syllabus [AoA Syllabus Draft.docx](#)

Reviewer Comments