City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by School of Creative Media
with effect from Semester A 2017/18

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title:	Critical Theory for Contemporary Curators
Course Code:	SM5337
Course Duration:	1 semester
Credit Units:	3 credits
Level:	P5
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Precursors: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Equivalent Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Exclusive Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil

Part II   Course Details

1.   Abstract

This course aims to provide students with foundational knowledge of contemporary theories developed both in Euro-America and in China. Emphasis will be placed on reading closely and critically a number of key texts, understanding their historical contexts and discursive positions, and connecting theoretical insights to actual experiences, individual and collective. Students will be guided to develop analytical and argumentative skills through reading and writing. We will also study recent exhibitions to understand how theories are integrated in the curatorial process. By the end of the course, students should have a firm grasp of the contemporary theoretical landscape, be able to articulate a set of concepts and ideas, and possess the skills to work actively with theory in their curatorial projects.

2.   Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	Identify the most significant issues and concepts in contemporary theories		✓	✓	
2.	Describe key theoretical and methodological concepts in the field		✓	✓	
3.	Conduct critical analyses of theoretical issues in writing		✓	✓	✓
4.^	Integrate theoretical ideas in curatorial projects		✓	✓	✓
		100%			

A1:   Attitude
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.
A2:   Ability
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.
A3:   *Accomplishments*
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.
^ Negotiated Learning Outcome (NLO) explicitly articulating the elements of Discovery oriented learning.

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.				Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	
Lectures, discussions	Explain key concepts, theories, and approaches	✓	✓	✓		
Response papers	Short papers summarizing key ideas in readings	✓	✓	✓		
Research paper and presentation	A substantial research project leading to a paper and presentation				✓	

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.				Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4		
Continuous Assessment: 100%						
Response paper 1	✓	✓	✓		15%	
Response paper 2	✓	✓	✓		15%	
Response paper 3	✓	✓	✓		15%	
Research paper and presentation				✓	55%	
Examination: 0% (duration: ---, if applicable)						
					100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Response Paper	Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, and to construct a well-organized argument and analysis. The threshold of 'discovery' lied in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal experience.	- Excellent grasp of research material, able to explain key concepts, assumptions and debates - Rigorous organization, coherent structure, distinct thesis, properly argued with strong narrative - Insightful interpretation of the subject matter with distinct themes and thesis - Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize - Ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools - Strong bibliography suggesting breadth and depth of coverage and informed insights	- Firm grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts and assumptions - Reasonable organization, balanced structure, adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various resources based on demand - Clear ideas which keep to the point, clear-cut subject, ability to interpret opinions independently - Organized bibliography which can be utilized in accordance with the topic	- Comprehensive grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts - Fair organization, weak structure, adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources based on demand - Relevant points to the subject matter, fair ability to interpret opinions - Unorganized bibliography which can be utilized in accordance with the topic	- Loose grasp of materials, cannot explain key concepts - Poor organization and structure, weak content, limited use of resources - Relevant points to the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret opinions - Insufficient and/or unorganized bibliography	- Poor grasp of materials - No organization and structure, inadequate content, no/ irrelevant use of resources - Irrelevant points to the subject matter, minimal ability to interpret opinions - Irrelevant bibliography

2. Presentation	This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation. Students should show their co-operation to conduct a well-organized presentation with their own argument and evidence from readings and practice. The threshold of 'discovery' lied in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories and practical strategies.	- Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter - Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative - Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management - Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize	- Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter - Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition - Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management	- Adequate content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter - Fair organization, weak structure and composition - Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management	- Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter - Poor organization, structure and composition - Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management	- Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter - No organization, structure or/and composition - Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management
3. Research Paper	Students should demonstrate ability to apply knowledge and skills to undertake independent research, build up argument and analysis. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into	- Excellent grasp of materials, ability to explain key concepts, assumptions, and debates, demonstrating sound knowledge of the field - Rich content, exceptional ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand; - Design and conduct research which is firmly built on thorough	- Firm grasp of materials, ability to explain key concepts and assumptions - Adequate content, strong ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;	- Comprehensive grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts - Adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand - Design and conduct research which is built on	- Loose grasp of materials, cannot explain key concepts - Weak content, with primary and secondary levels - Design and conduct research which is appropriate for the research objective - Marginal judgments about existing research	- Poor grasp of materials - Inadequate content, without primary and secondary levels - Fail to design and conduct research which is appropriate for the research objective - Fail to make reasonable

self-owned authorship.	knowledge of existing theoretical frameworks - Evaluative judgments about existing research and demonstrate application of strong critical thinking skills - Strong ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools - Strong organization of research findings with effective organization and procedural clarity at the same time demonstrating the importance of the process - Insightful suggestion of how the research findings may lead to future research - Creative extrapolation from theory into plausible praxis	- Design and conduct research which is built on thorough knowledge of existing theoretical frameworks - Appropriate judgments about existing research and demonstrate application of critical thinking skills - Ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools	knowledge of theoretical frameworks - Appropriate judgments about existing research - Weak ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools	- Poor ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools	judgments about existing research - Fail to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools

Note: All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.

Part III   Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1. **Keyword Syllabus**
   (An indication of the key topics of the course.)

   Critical theory, curating, Marxism, New Left, postmodernism, feminism, queer theory, globalism, postcolonialism, posthumanism

2. **Reading List**
2.1 **Compulsory Readings**
   (Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	During, S. *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, 2007.

2.2 **Additional Readings**
   (Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

2.	Crimp, D. *Melancholia and Moralism: Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.
3.	Dai, J. *Cinema and Desire: Feminist Marxism and Cultural Politics*. New York: Verso, 2002.
4.	Desai, G. and Nair, S. (eds.). *Postcolonialisms: An Anthology of Cultural Theory and Criticism*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005.
5.	Harvey, D. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990.
6.	Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso, 1985.
7.	Latour, B. *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013.
8.	Marx, K. *Capital*. Moscow: Foreign Languages, 1954-1959.
9.	Nayar, P. *Posthumanism*. Cambridge: Polity, 2014.
10.	Rancière, J. *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*. New York: Continuum, 2010.
11.	Wang, H. *The Politics of Imagining Asia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011.