

**City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus**

**offered by School of Creative Media
with effect from Semester A 2024/25**

Part I Course Overview

Course Title:	Social Media, Aesthetics, and Curation
Course Code:	SM6346
Course Duration:	One semester
Credit Units:	3
Level:	P6
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Precursors: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Equivalent Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Exclusive Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

This course explores the intersection of social media and contemporary art curation, examining how digital platforms have transformed art creation, dissemination, and reception. Students will analyse the impact of social media on curatorial practices, audience engagement, and how art and aesthetics is being circulated, discussed, and even appreciated technologically between curators, artists, and their audience. Students are encouraged to understand Instagram, online videos, VR, and other experimental platforms as curatorial spaces, not only from artists, curators, media theorists, aestheticians but also from influencer-practitioners, algorithms, and human platform administrators. In a semester-long guided student project, the course's knowledge production is through producing an individual or group curatorial work within the existing conventions of social media curation screen ecologies, socio-technics (e.g. editing conventions), and readymade materials on these platforms, utilising both theoretical knowledge and practical know-how.

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.	Account for the medium-specificity of social media curation in the landscape of contemporary art today		✓		
2.	Study evolution of audiovisual-based social media in the sphere of contemporary art and situate social media curation in the broader history of curation		✓	✓	
3.	Describe the influence of social media on our contemporary notions of aesthetics		✓	✓	
4.	Learn new skills in techniques and technologies of curation embedded in the media ecology of social media		✓	✓	✓
5.	Curate a project with both theoretical and practical knowledge		✓	✓	✓
		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 real-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.

3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

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

LTA	Brief Description	CILO No.					Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	
Lectures	Lectures on topics such as various social media platforms as curatorial spaces and the rise of influencer, internet native aesthetics and algorithmically directed curation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
In-class discussions of curatorial cases	Weekly readings and in-class discussions on curatorial cases prepared by presentation groups	✓	✓	✓			
Proposal for the curatorial project	Devise a plan on a social media campaign				✓	✓	
Curatorial project on social media, with a document of reflection	Execute the plan, record the process, write a 1500 words document to reflect on the process.				✓	✓	

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	5		
Continuous Assessment: <u>100</u> %							
In-class discussions	✓	✓	✓			20	
Curatorial plan				✓	✓	30	
Reflection document				✓	✓	50	
Examination: <u>0</u> % (duration: _____, if applicable)							
						100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

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

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Presentation of curatorial cases	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 notes. The threshold of 'discovery' lied in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – below average content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter – below average organization, balanced structure and composition – below average verbal communication: unclear pronunciation, below average expression and diction, below average time- management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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

2. Curatorial plan	The grade will be based on the argument's and the comment's rationality, clarity, and fluency. The ability of a student to negotiate a position that is well-informed, tenable, and based on personal understanding is the criterion for "discovery."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rich content, excellent ability to interpret and integrate various resources - Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition - Precision in argument, well defined and reasoned points of view grounded in insightful interpretation of existing literature - Readiness to respond to peer opinion and other views initiated in class discussion - Discussion shed light on new dimensions of the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various resources based on demand - Reasonable organization with balanced structure and composition - Clear elaboration of ideas that sticks to the point, with clearly differentiated issues, ability to interpret opinions independently - Sufficient responses to peer comments to sustain a discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - below average content, insufficient ability to integrate various resources based on demand - below average organization with balanced structure and composition - below average elaboration of ideas that struggle to stick to the point, with unclearly differentiated issues, inability to interpret opinions independently - Unufficient responses to peer comments to sustain a discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weak content, limited use of resources - Poor organization, structure and composition - Relevant points to the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret opinions - Ability to respond to other comments in simple terms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inadequate content, no/irrelevant use of resources - No organization, structure or/and composition - Irrelevant points to the subject matter, no ability to interpret opinions - Fail to respond to other comments
3. Reflection document	Students should demonstrate knowledge of materials discussed in class and secondary sources identified independently, build up argument and analysis. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience, and communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excellent grasp of research material, able to explain key concepts, assumptions and debates - Rigorous organization, coherent structure, distinct thesis, properly argued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - below average grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts and assumptions - below average organization, unbalanced structure, inadequate content, insufficient ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter - Poor organization, structure and composition - Poor presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter - No organization, structure or/and composition - Poor presentation skills: marginal

	these in their exam script	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	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	to integrate various resources based on demand - Unclear ideas which keep to the point, unclear subject, inability to interpret opinions independently - Disorganized bibliography which in not utilized in accordance with the topic	skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management	pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time- management
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Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
1. Presentation of curatorial cases	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 notes. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lied in a student’s self initiatives to	– 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	– Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter – Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition	– Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter – Poor organization, structure and composition – Poor presentation skills: marginal	– Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter – No organization, structure or/and composition – Poor presentation skills: marginal

	conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.	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	– Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time- management	pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time- management	pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management
2. Curatorial plan	The grade will be based on the argument's and the comment's rationality, clarity, and fluency. The ability of a student to negotiate a position that is well-informed, tenable, and based on personal understanding is the criterion for "discovery."	– Rich content, excellent ability to interpret and integrate various resources – Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition – Precision in argument, well defined and reasoned points of view grounded in insightful interpretation of existing literature – Readiness to respond to peer opinion and other views initiated in class discussion – Discussion shed light on new dimensions of the issue	– Adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various resources based on demand – Reasonable organization with balanced structure and composition – Clear elaboration of ideas that sticks to the point, with clearly differentiated issues, ability to interpret opinions independently – Sufficient responses to peer comments to sustain a discussion	– Weak content, limited use of resources – Poor organization, structure and composition – Relevant points to the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret opinions – Ability to respond to other comments in simple terms	– Inadequate content, no/irrelevant use of resources – No organization, structure or/and composition – Irrelevant points to the subject matter, no ability to interpret opinions – Fail to respond to other comments
3. Reflection document	Students should demonstrate knowledge of materials discussed in class and	– Excellent grasp of research material, able to explain key concepts,	- Firm grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts	– Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some	– Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with

	<p>secondary sources identified independently, build up argument and analysis. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’s self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience, and communicate these in their exam script</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>knowledge of the subject matter – Poor organization, structure and composition – Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time- management</p>	<p>knowledge of the subject matter – No organization, structure or/and composition – Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management</p>
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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.)

curation, social media, digital platforms, aesthetics, influencers, algorithms, readymade materials.

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.	Abidin, C. (2022). <i>TikTok and Youth Cultures</i> . Emerald Publishing.
2.	Burgess, J. & Green, J. (2009). <i>YouTube: online video and participatory culture</i> . Malden, MA: Polity Press.
3.	Manovich, Lev (2020), <i>Cultural Analytics</i> , Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
4.	LESSARD, B. (2017). <i>The Art of Subtraction: Digital Adaptation and the Object Image</i> . University of Toronto Press.
5.	Tim Highfield & Tama Leaver (2016) Instagrammatics and digital methods: studying visual social media, from selfies and GIFs to memes and emoji, <i>Communication Research and Practice</i> , 2:1, 47-62, DOI: 10.1080/22041451.2016.1155332
6.	Manique Hendricks. (2017) The Algorithm as Curator: In Search of a Non-narrated Collection Presentation. <i>Stedelijk Studies</i> . 7. https://stedelijkstudies.com/journal/algorithm-curator-search-non-narrated-collection-presentation/
7.	Christian Nagler & Joseph del Pesco. (2011). Curating in the Time of Algorithms. <i>Fillip</i> (15).

2.2 Additional Readings

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

Nil