

FIMS 9609—Making and Methodology

Winter 2023

Mondays, 9:00 am to 11:50 am
FIMS & Nursing Building, Room 3220
Graduate Studies (Library and Information Science - PhD, Media Studies - MA & PhD)

Professor Nataleah Hunter-Young
Faculty of Information and Media Studies
Western University
FIMS & Nursing Building, Room 4021
nhuntery@uwo.ca

Office hours: Mondays, 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm or by appointment

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in FIMS.

Course Description:

In this course, students will explore the reciprocal relationship between form and content, theory and practice, processes of inquiry and changing states of matter via the study of research-creation. Research-creation—also referred to as multi-modal and artistic research—pursues new knowledge using creative forms of inquiry and (often) arts-based processes. Drawing from multi-scalar examples, global and pan-indigenous perspectives on creative ecologies, students will discuss, critique, and decipher creative works and innovative methodologies toward the production of new methods.

Though research-creation is increasingly becoming a recognized practice within the academy, this course takes theoretical direction beyond the limits of artistic practice or creative dissemination strategies to consider “making” in the context of global social life. That is, the course proceeds with serious consideration given to the structuring conditions of late capitalism, settler colonialism, climate catastrophe, and global anti-Blackness within which creative practitioners activate and amplify toward creative (i.e. generative, world-making, life-giving) inquiry and experiments. Throughout the course, each student will lead a weekly seminar presentation and class discussion on the assigned text(s). Students will also propose and complete a final essay or creative project in which they can apply and analyse the concepts and strategies we have studied together.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon conclusion of the course, students should be able to—

1. Identify meaningful connections across multimedia forms and texts;
2. Articulate the value of creative and experimental methods to scholarly research;
3. Rigorously engage non-written texts as critical sites of knowledge.

Attendance and Class Participation:

Coming to class and participating are vital to the success and integrity of the graduate seminar. Please come to class having read all the materials and prepared for discussion. Your serious engagement is necessary and required for the class to work. Any seminar is only as dynamic as its participants so it is up to us to make a class space in which we can think generatively together.

On how to read for this course—

“Beyond the Abstract: Reading for Meaning in Academia” by Jessica Calarco (2018)
<http://www.jessicacalarco.com/tips-tricks/2018/9/2/beyond-the-abstract-reading-for-meaning-in-academia>

(My thanks to Professor Christina Sharpe for sharing this example.)

Required Materials (*full text available online with UWO library access):

brown, adrienne maree. Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds. AK Press, 2017.*
Hurston, Zora Neale, et al. Barracoon: The Story of the Last “Black Cargo.” Edited by Deborah G. Plant. Amistad, an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers, 2018.
Keeling, Kara. Queer Times, Black Futures. New York University Press, 2019.*
Loveless, Natalie. How to Make Art at the End of the World : a Manifesto for Research-Creation. Duke University Press, 2019.*
Maynard, Robyn, and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. Rehearsals for Living. Knopf Canada, 2022.*
McKittrick, Katherine. Dear Science and Other Stories, Duke University Press, 2021.*
Odell, Jenny. How to do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy. Melville House, 2019.
Robinson, Dylan. Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies. University of Minnesota Press, 2020.*

Methods of Evaluation:

Analytical Reflection Paper — 20% (due February 13th)

In 6 to 8 pages (1,500 to 2,000 words), reflect on one or more of the following four texts we have read together—Loveless, McKittrick, Robinson, or Wynter—by considering their arguments, methodological provocations, and how they may come to influence or inform your individual projects. This assignment gives me an opportunity to assess and engage with your writing and analytical skills, and to see how class discussions are resonating with your pre-existing (and future) project ideas/queries.

Key questions to consider—

1. What are your own epistemological commitments?
2. What are some key strengths and/or experience you bring to the process of doing research?
3. Where within your research practice would you like to see growth?
4. Is there an aspect of your research vision you are hesitant or anxious about?
5. Briefly consider what support you may need from others (supervisors/advisors, family and friends, research collaborators, professors, etc) in order to see the project successfully through.

(Inspired by questions first assigned to me by Professor ME Luka.)

Seminar Presentation and Discussion — 30%

Each week students will (individually or in groups of two) be responsible for presenting the weekly reading(s) and leading the class discussion. The presentation may take creative or experimental form but should include a summary of the reading(s) as well as identification and analysis of its key arguments. From there, presenters and participants may move toward posing questions from and for the text as well as questions for the other participants. It is hoped that the seminar

discussions/presentation might both attend to the text and also move the class into debate about relevant examples, conceptual issues, ideas, practices, actions, interventions, and opportunities.

Proposal (for the final assignment) — 10% (due March 20th)

Write a two-page overview of your proposed final assignment detailing your planned approach. If you are pursuing the creative option, please clarify what the submitted creative output will be.

Final Paper or Creative Project — 40% (due Friday, April 21st by 6 pm)

- Methodology Draft—In 8 to 10 pages (2,000 to 2,500 words), briefly introduce your research concerns, queries, and theoretical direction. Then, using course texts and extra-course materials, design, plan and discuss the methodology and methods you intend to employ toward initial experiments, project development, completion and dissemination.
- Creative Project—Rather than writing an extended methodology draft, you may write a condensed version (6 to 8 pages/1,500 to 2,000 words) that includes a shortened accounting of the above and details what creative work you have done so far. Your initial experiments, artworks, mapping, research ethics documents, and other project developments may constitute your “creative component.” The amount of work completed (including the written component) should be substantial enough to reflect the attention appropriate for a final assignment. The specific creative output that you will submit for assessment should be outlined in your proposal for the final assignment.

Class Schedule:

Class/Date:	Readings:	Class Notes:
Week 1 - January 9	Introduction Tompkins, Kyla Wazana. "Some Notes On How To Ask A Good Question About Theory That Will Provoke Conversation And Further Discussion From Your Colleagues." Avidly, 2016, https://avidly.lareviewofbooks.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Some-Notes-On-How-To-Ask-A-Good-Question-About-Theory-That-Will-Provoke-Conversation-And-Further-Discussion-From-Your-Colleagues-2-2.pdf	We will assign the weekly seminar presentations during this class.
Week 2 - January 16	Loveless, Natalie. How to Make Art at the End of the World : a Manifesto for Research-Creation. (pp. 1-108)	

Class/Date:	Readings:	Class Notes:
Week 3 - January 23	McKittrick, Katherine. <i>Dear Science and Other Stories</i> . (pp. 1-187)	
Week 4 - January 30	Robinson, Dylan. <i>Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies</i> . (Read all but Chapter 3)	
Week 5 - February 6	Wynter, Sylvia. "Rethinking Aesthetics: Notes Toward a Deciphering Practice." In <i>Ex-iles: Essays on Caribbean Cinema</i> , edited by Mbye Cham, Africa World Press, 1992, pp. 237-279.	
Week 6 - February 13	<p>Hartman, Saidiya. "Venus in Two Acts." <i>Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism</i>, vol. 12, no. 2, June 2008, pp. 1-14.</p> <p>Hartman, Saidiya. "An Atlas of the Wayward." <i>Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval</i>. W.W. Norton & Company, 2019, pp. 81-120.</p> <p>Sharpe, Christina. "Chapter One: The Wake." In <i>The Wake: On Blackness and Being</i>. Duke University Press, 2016, pp. 1-24.</p> <p>Fournier, Lauren. "Introduction. Autotheory as Feminist Practice: History, Theory, Art, Life." <i>Autotheory as Feminist Practice in Art, Writing, and Criticism</i>. The MIT Press, 2021, pp. 1-69.</p>	<p>Film: <i>DULCE</i> dir. Guille Isa and Angello Faccini (2018)</p> <p>Analytical Reflection Paper due (submitted online, before the start of class)</p>
	Reading Week	
Week 7 - February 27	brown, adrienne maree. <i>Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds</i> . (pp. 1-165)	

Class/Date:	Readings:	Class Notes:
Week 8 - March 6	Robyn Maynard & Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, <i>Rehearsals for Living</i> . (Foreward, Parts 1, 2, 5, 6, and Afterword)	<p>Film: THE PRISON IN TWELVE LANDSCAPES (2016) dir. Brett Story</p> <p>*Last day to drop a second-term half course without academic penalty.*</p>
Week 9 - March 13	Hurston, Zora Neale, et al. <i>Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo."</i> (Foreward to end)	Film: DESCENDANT (2022) dir. Margaret Brown
Week 10 - March 20	Odell, Jenny. <i>How to do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy</i> . (pp. ix-204)	Proposal (Final Assignment) due (submitted online, before the start of class)
Week 11 - March 27	<p>Akomfrah, John. "Digitopia and the Spectres of Diaspora." <i>Journal of Media Practice</i>, vol. 11, no. 1, 2010, pp. 21–29.</p> <p>McKittrick, Katherine. "Dear April: The Aesthetics of Black Miscellanea." <i>Antipode</i>, vol. 54, no. 1, 2022, pp. 3–18.</p> <p>Springgay, Stephanie. "Feltness: On How to Practice Intimacy." <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i>, vol. 27, no. 2, 2021, pp. 210–14.</p> <p>Campt, Tina M. "Introduction—Listening to Images: An Exercise in Counterintuition" and "Chapter 1—Quiet Soundings: The Grammar of Black Futurity." <i>Listening to Images</i>, Duke University Press, 2017, pp. 1-45.</p>	<p>Film: BLACK TO TECHNO dir. Jenn Nkiru (2019)</p> <p>Proposals returned with comments.</p>

Class/Date:	Readings:	Class Notes:
Week 12 - April 3	Keeling, Kara. <i>Queer Times, Black Futures</i> . New York University Press, 2019, pp. ix-144.	Film: LOOKING FOR LANGSTON dir. Isaac Julien (1989) Final Assignment due <u>Friday, April 21 by 6 pm</u> (submitted online)

Notes from the Dean's Office: graduate course version W2023

SGPS and Senate regulations require graduate course outlines to include the following information:

Health/Wellness Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Accessible Education Western (AEW)

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf