Course title: **Spanish Contemporary Art**  
**Language of instruction:** English  
**Professor:** Julia Poch Figueras  
**Professor’s contact and office hours:** juliapoch@yahoo.es  
**Course contact hours:** 45  
**Recommended credit:** 3 US credits-5 ECTS credits  
**Course prerequisites:** There are no prerequisites for this course.  

**Language requirements:** None

**Course focus and approach:** This course explores the main artistic and cultural Spanish phenomena making use of visual culture critical and analytical devices in the larger framework of cultural studies.

**Course description:** The objective of this course is to offer a survey approach to the history of artistic developments in Spain, from Goya to our days. The course examines the main discourses and artistic practices that have been developed by Spanish artists, including all the political, historical, social, and cultural relevant issues. This course is based on lectures, class debates, and visits to exhibitions in the city. A background on this specific field is not required.

**Learning objectives:** This course encourages the student to develop an independent critical approach to interpreting works of art, to examine changing historical conceptions of art and the artist, and to explore the visual arts in their wider cultural and political contexts.

**Course workload + Teaching methodology:**
The course is based on lectures given by the professor, and are complimented by discussions, readings, screenings, field trips. The student will be assessed on 2 exams, a paper, a collective oral presentation, and class participation.  
**Readings:** This course has a Reader that the students are asked to buy. For every class, the reading of some of the text included will be required and discussed in class.  
**Field Trips:** 3 or 4 guided tours to relevant exhibitions or/and art centers are comprised in the course’s structure.  
**Paper:** A written/visual research on any subject, artists, figure, moment, etc. which engages with the course frame, and provides a personal critical insight of the chosen subject. Length: 8000 characters with no spaces.  
**Collective Oral Presentation:** Oral and collective (2-3 students) presentation of a contemporary Spanish artist other than Goya, Picasso, Mirò, Dalí or Tàpies. Length: 15mins – 20mins
Assessment criteria:
Midterm exam: 35%
Final exam: 35%
Class participation: 10%
Paper: 35%
Collective oral presentation: 20%

Absence policy
Excused absences will only be justified by an official medical report or probable family emergency. Any other reason will not justify an absence to class or changing the date of an exam. The absence policy is the following:
3 absences: 1 point subtracted from the final grade (on a 10 points scale).
4 absences: 2 points subtracted from the final grade (on a 10 points scale).
5 absences or more: Student receives an “Incomplete” for the course

Classroom norms:
- Laptops are permitted only when used for course-related activities, such as taking notes. No e-mail checking or casual websurfing in class.
- Students will have a ten-minute break after one one-hour session

Course schedule
(Required reading will be appointed at the end of each class)

WEEK 1

I. Course Description. An introduction to contemporary art from the perspective of visual cultures and cultural studies.

II. Goya: the dawn of modernity

WEEK 2

III. Goya. Portraying the abject and the social critique.

IV. The construction of the national Spanish discourse through two genres: the historical and the landscape painting.

WEEK 3

V. Modernism: the Catalan splendor.
VI. Field Trip 1.

**WEEK 4**

VII. The Spanish Avant-Gardes (i): Utopia and Confrontation

VIII. The Spanish Avant-Gardes (ii): Surrealism and Subversion

**WEEK 5**

IX. Intermittences: Abstraction, Figuration and Collectivism and the artistic movements under francoism.

X. Field trip 2.

**WEEK 6**

MIDTERM EXAM

**WEEK 7**

XI. Entering the Visual Realm / 1974: advent of the democracy

XII. Becoming moving image

**WEEK 8**

XIII. Politics of the Image

XIV. Sculptural Edeavours: the re-significations of space

**WEEK 9**

XV. Technologies of the Self (i). Performing the subject

XVI. Technologies of the Self (ii). Memorie(s) and Bodies that matter.

**WEEK 10**

XVII. And now what? Society, power and art in the Spanish state.

COLLECTIVE ORAL PRESENTATION.

**WEEK 12**

FIELD TRIP 3.
FINAL EXAM + Paper Due

Last Syllabus Revision: September 2011

**Recommended general bibliography:**

(A more comprehensive bibliography will be provided the first day of class)


*MACBA Collection [Itinerary]*. Barcelona: MACBA, 2003


*XIXth Century at the Prado*. Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2010

**Additional Bibliography in Spanish:**
