1. **Title of the module**

HART6640: The Sublime, the Disgusting and the Laughable: Themes in Art and Visual Culture from the Eighteenth Century to the Present

HART5970: The Sublime, the Disgusting and the Laughable: Themes in Art and Visual Culture from the Eighteenth Century to the Present

1. **School or partner institution which will be responsible for management of the module**

School of Arts

1. **The level of the module (Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 or Level 7)**

HART6640 – Level 5

HART5970 – Level 6

1. **The number of credits and the ECTS value which the module represents**

30 (15 ECTS)

1. **Which term(s) the module is to be taught in (or other teaching pattern)**

Autumn or Spring

1. **Prerequisite and co-requisite modules**

None

1. **The programmes of study to which the module contributes**

BA Art History (SH & JH)

1. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**
2. Understand the art theoretical and philosophical theories of the sublime, disgust and humour, and the broader field of ‘affect studies’;
3. Demonstrate knowledge of aspects of culture – especially visual culture – from the eighteenth century to the present, that are associated with the concept of the sublime; and provide case studies of disgust and humour in visual culture, particularly in the modern and contemporary periods, that show the ability to apply of these concepts in art history and cultural studies;
4. Apply these abilities to investigate and understand artworks and develop their general ‘visual literacy’.

**On successfully completing the module Level 6 students will also be able to:**

1. Demonstrate art history and theory’s interdisciplinary scope, and apply the wide range of concepts and methods that are pursued by art historians and theorists;
2. **The intended generic learning outcomes.  
    On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**
3. Apply skills of visual, critical and historical analysis, together with generic intellectual skills of synthesis, summarisation, critical judgement and problem-solving, that will allow for the construction of original and persuasive arguments;
4. Demonstrate the key skills of communication, improving performance, problem-solving, and working with others, to a level where a substantial degree of autonomy and self-reflexive awareness is achieved in these tasks;
5. Communicate effectively, using appropriate vocabulary and illustrations, ideas and arguments in both a written and oral form;
6. Read critically, analyse and use a range of primary and secondary texts;
7. Locate and use appropriately a range of learning and reference resources (including visual resources) within the Templeman Library and elsewhere, including museums, galleries and the internet;
8. Employ information technologies to research and present their work.
9. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

This module aims to introduce second and third year students to the key aesthetic concepts of the sublime, disgust and humour, and to their application in the analysis of art and visual culture. Through a sustained focus on these key theories and a range of case studies, the module will also facilitate the development of students’ subject-specific and key skills.

The module will be divided into three parts which focus separately on the sublime, disgust and humour; although general issues confronting the study of experience in art history and theory will be discussed throughout. The first part of the module will focus on the historical origins of the concept of the sublime in the works of Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant. Their theories will be discussed in relation to eighteenth and nineteenth century visual culture, and in relation to instances of the sublime in modern and contemporary culture, including representations of nature and the cosmos, religious experiences and ascetic practices. The use of the sublime in promoting political and ideological ends, as in the Nazi propaganda films of Leni Riefenstahl, will also receive attention. The second part of the module will examine theories of disgust, including Charles Darwin’s evolutionary approach and Julia Kristeva’s account of ‘the abject’. The vogue for the disgusting in contemporary art, beginning during the 1990s in the work of artists such as Cindy Sherman, Paul McCarthy, Gilbert & George, Tracey Emin, David Falconer and Jake & Dinos Chapman, will be critically discussed, and the relation of disgust to shock and horror will also be considered. The third part of the module will examine theories of humour, including the ‘incongruity’ and ‘release’ theories, and Sigmund Freud’s theory of jokes. Various uses artists have found for humour, from Marcel Duchamp to postmodern irony, will be discussed. ‘Gross-out’ humour and ‘black’ humour will also be a topic of attention, and examples from contemporary popular culture, including *The League of Gentlemen* and the films of the Farrelly brothers, will be considered. While focusing on the visual arts, the module will also consider case studies from literature and popular visual culture, including film and television, and so should also prove an attractive option to students within the Humanities Faculty as a whole.

1. **Reading list (Indicative list, current at time of publication. Reading lists will be published annually)**

Beckley, Bill (ed.), *Sticky sublime*, New York, 2001.

Bois, Yve-Alain and Rosalind Krauss. *Formless: a user’s guide*, New York, 1997.

Burke, Edmund, *A philosophical enquiry into the origin of our ideas of the sublime and beautiful*, Oxford and New York, 1990 (1757).

Carroll, Noël. *The philosophy of horror, or, paradoxes of the heart*, New York and London, 1990.

Cohen, Ted. *Jokes: philosophical thoughts on joking matters*, Chicago and London, 1999.

Crowther, Paul. *The Kantian sublime: from morality to art*, Oxford, 1991.

Darwin, Charles. *The expression of the emotions in man and animals*, Chicago and London, 1965 (1873).

Freud, Sigmund. *Jokes and their relation to the unconscious*, Harmondsworth and New York, 1976 (1905).

Gilbert-Rolfe, Jeremy. *Beauty and the contemporary sublime*, New York, 1999.

Immanuel Kant, *The critique of judgement*, tr. J. C. Meredith, Oxford, 1952 (1790).

Julia Kristeva, *Powers of horror: an essay on abjection*, New York, 1982.

1. **Learning and teaching methods**

Contact Hours – 36

Private Study – 264

Total Hours – 300

1. **Assessment methods**
   1. Main assessment methods

**HA664**

Essay 1 (1500 words) – 35%

Essay 2 (2500 – 3000 words) – 45%

Seminar Preparation - 20%

**HA597**

Essay 1 (3500 words) – 40%

Essay 2 (3500 words) – 40%

Seminar Presentation – 10%

Seminar Preparation – 10%

13.2 Reassessment methods

Like-for-like

1. ***Map of module learning outcomes (sections 8 & 9) to learning and teaching methods (section12) and methods of assessment (section 13)***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module learning outcome** | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.4 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 9.4 | 9.5 | 9.6 |
| **Learning/ teaching method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Private Study | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
| Lectures | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Seminars | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Assessment method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Essay 1 – HA597 | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |
| Essay 1 – HA664 | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| Essay 2 – HA597 | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |
| Essay 2 – HA664 | **X** | **X** | **X** |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| Seminar Presentation – HA597 | **X** |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| Seminar Preparation | **X** | **X** | **X** |  | **X** |  | **X** |  |  |  |

1. **Inclusive module design**

The School recognises and has embedded the expectations of current equality legislation, by ensuring that the module is as accessible as possible by design. Additional alternative arrangements for students with Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs)/declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the relevant policies and support services.

The inclusive practices in the guidance (see Annex B Appendix A) have been considered in order to support all students in the following areas:

a) Accessible resources and curriculum

b) Learning, teaching and assessment methods

1. **Campus(es) or centre(s) where module will be delivered**

Canterbury

1. **Internationalisation**

The module’s major focus is on European and US art, culture and ideas. Its content is therefore substantially international in character.

**If the module is part of a programme in a Partner College or Validated Institution, please complete sections 18 and 19. If the module is not part of a programme in a Partner College or Validated Institution these sections can be deleted.**

1. **Partner College/Validated Institution**
2. **University School responsible for the programme**

**FACULTIES SUPPORT OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Revision record – all revisions must be recorded in the grid and full details of the change retained in the appropriate committee records.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date approved | Major/minor revision | Start date of delivery of revised version | Section revised | Impacts PLOs (Q6&7 cover sheet) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |