

Western University, Department of Visual Arts  
**Writing for the Art World**

VA 9586B / 9686B Winter 2018  
Tuesdays 11:30 am 2:30 pm  
John Labatt Visual Art Centre, Room 247



Jenny Holzer, *Inflammatory Essays* (detail), 1978-83, National Gallery of Canada

**Professor Sarah Bassnett**

Office VAC 220

Office hours Tuesdays 2:30 3:30 pm and by appointment

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**Course Description:**

This seminar focuses on forms of writing common in the art world. We consider evaluative, expository, and narrative writing, with specific attention to exhibition reviews and catalogue essays. Concentrating on recent exhibitions and other events in the world of visual art, we consider how to write for various kinds of publications and different audiences. Students in the course will apply techniques to improve aspects of writing such as structure, style, and narrative. Suitable for MA, MFA, and PhD students, the seminar includes group activities, discussion, and writing workshops.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- engage in writing as a process
- communicate ideas in writing at a professional level in a variety of forms
- demonstrate an awareness of the way different forms of writing address their audiences
- conduct research using the library catalogue and databases, and use sources effectively
- lead and participate constructively in group discussions and activities by sharing ideas and by listening respectfully to the views of others
- respond with consideration to the work of peers during class discussions and workshops

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

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### **Participation 10%**

The participation portion of your grade will be based on your commitment to the course, which includes attendance, preparedness, your contribution to class discussions, and your in-class writing exercises. The seminar format is dependent upon participation from all students, and at the graduate level, significant participation is expected in each class.

### **Workshop preparation & feedback 20%**

The workshops are a very important part of this course, and in order to receive feedback, you need to circulate a draft of your writing before the workshop. Also, in order to offer constructive feedback to peers, you need to be present and prepared (having read the workshop

**Submission Policies**

All assignments should be submitted through the assignments link on OWL by 11 am on the day they are due.

**Accommodations:**

Please talk to me during the first few weeks of the course if you require accommodation in course requirements or scheduling due to a disability. Students who want to request academic accommodation must register with the Centre, meet with a counselor, and provide appropriate documentation of a disability. For more information, see the Student Development Centre web site: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/paths.html?students>.

**Academic Honesty:**

All work for the course MUST be entirely your own. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and







