

Course Proposal

I. Course Details

a. Course Title: Freedom and Artistic Expression in 20th Century America

b. Sponsors:

Dr. Cynthia L. Line, Law & Justice Studies
Dr. Bertram Greenspan, Music

c. Credit Hours: 3 sh

d. Course Level: Freshman

e. Prerequisites: None

f. Suggested Time and Scale of Implementation:

The course will be initially offered Fall 2005 and as needed thereafter (perhaps once a year) as a part of the Bildner Grant, the Rowan Diversity Initiative, and according to the needs of Rowan Seminar students.

II. Curricular Effect

a. Offerings:

There will be no effect on other course offerings.

b. Adequacy of Staff, Resources, Space, etc.:

Current staff, resources, and space are sufficient. No additional staff or resources are necessary.

c. Recommended Library Resources:

Current holdings are sufficient. A library form has been completed.

III. Rationale

This course is proposed as a part of the Rowan University Campus Diversity Initiative (funded by the Bildner Foundation). The course, as required by the Campus Diversity Initiative, focuses on the concurrent themes of diversity and democracy. The course will be offered as a Rowan Seminar for incoming freshmen and will complement and serve the needs of that program.

IV. Essence of the Course

a. Objectives of the Course:

1. To help students understand what free speech is, legal limits on free speech, and current debates on free speech (particularly as the debates focus on the arts).
2. To help students understand aesthetics, aesthetics as related to the arts, and how aesthetics changed as America moved into and through the 20th century.
3. To help students understand the intersection of free speech and aesthetics as it pertains to art, including an understanding of this intersection in relation to social and political processes.
4. To enable students to see how specific art works comment on current events or are a reaction to the suppression of speech or expression in the United States during the 20th century.
5. To enable students to understand how artists have been subjected to control while pursuing their arts in the United States during the 20th century.
6. To help students appreciate diversity by studying various works of art and various artists, and to help students understand democracy by examining free speech and related issues in art and artistic expression.

b. Topical Outline:

Free Speech as a Civil Liberty

Potential topics include:

What is free speech?

How is free speech a part of American government?

Values? Culture?

To what extent is free speech allowed? How do we determine what constitutes free speech and what should not be allowed?

What role does free speech play in the arts?

Aesthetics

Potential topics include:

What is aesthetics?
How has aesthetics developed? Can aesthetics be taught?
What role does aesthetics play in American values?
Culture? To what extent is aesthetics related to various
types of art?

The Intersection of Free Expression, Aesthetics, and Art

How important are aesthetics and larger social processes
(e.g. political power, moral entrepreneurs) in examining the
legal concept of free speech as it pertains to art?

How do larger social processes affect other types of free
expression (e.g. music)?

Free Expression and Music

Potential topics include:

Censored Music

Censored lyrics

PMRC hearings (1980's)
Obscenity trial re: rap music of 2 Live Crew
(1989-1990)

Censored mediums, styles, etc.

Edgard Varese's *Ionization* (1929-1931)
Krzysztof Penderecki's *Threnody to Victims of
Hiroshima* (1959)

Musicians as targets of control

Paul Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* (1930's)
Aaron Copland's *Rodeo* (1942)
Nina Simone's work (1960's)
Judas Priest trial re: subliminal messaging (1990)

Music as Protest

Paul Robeson's *The House I Live In* (1940's)
Music of the Civil Rights Movement
Anti-War music 1960's & 2000's

Free Expression and the Visual Arts

Potential topics include:

Censored Art

The Armory Exhibit (1913)
The WPA (1930's – 40's)
Picasso's *Guernica* (1937)
Robert Mapplethorpe exhibit in Cincinnati (1990)
NEA and current debates

Art as Protest

Diego Rivera's work in Rockefeller Center
Ben Shahn's *The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti*
(1931-32)

Free Expression and Film

Potential topics include:

The Control of Film

McCarthyism, film, Chaplin
The Cradle will Rock
The film rating system

Film as protest or provocation

Anti-War films
The Deer Hunter, *Apocalypse Now*

Films of the "time"

Gentleman's Agreement (1947)
Look Who's Coming to Dinner (1967)
Looking for Mr. Goodbar (1977)

Films with religious overtones

The Last Temptation of Christ (1988)

Free Expression and Literature

Potential topics include:

Banned Books

Huckleberry Finn (1885)

Ulysses (1922)

Lady Chatterly's Lover (1928)

Catcher in the Rye (1951)

Literature as Protest

The Second Sex (1949)

The Invisible Man (1952)

Biography of Malcom X (1966)

Free Expression and Theatre

Potential topics include:

Censorship and the Theatre

The Children's Hour (1934)

Porgy and Bess (1935)

Corpus Christi (1998)

Theatre as "protest"

The Crucible (1953)

Kiss of the Spiderwoman (1990)

Rent (1996)

c. Potential/Possible Texts/Sources:

Ault, J., Yenawine, P., Weems, M. and Wallis, B. (Editors). 2000. *Art Matters: How the Culture Wars Changed America*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Bolton, R. 1992. *Culture Wars: Documents from the Recent Controversies in the Arts*. New York, NY: The New Press.

Brown, G. 1998. *Show Time: A Chronology of Broadway and the Theatre from Its Beginnings to the Present*. Hoboken, NJ: Hungry Minds, Inc.

Easton, S. M. 1994. *The Problem of Pornography: Regulation and the Right to Free Speech*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Julius, A. 2003. *Transgressions: The Offences of Art*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lasalle, M. 2002. *Complicated Women: Sex and Power in Pre-Code Hollywood*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Meyer, R. 2004. *Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century American Art*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Peter, J. A. and Crosier, L. M. (Editors). 1997. *Cultural Battlefield: Art Censorship and Public Funding*. Gilsum, NH: Avocus Publishing, Incorporated.

Shiffrin, S. 1998. *Dissent, Injustice, and The Meanings of America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Soocher, S. 1998. *They Fought the Law: Rock Music Goes to Court*. New York, NY: Music Sales, Ltd.

Wolfson, N. 1997. *Hate Speech, Sex Speech, Free Speech*. Portsmouth, NH: Praeger Publishers

Zappa, F. 1990. *Real Frank Zappa Book*. Fireside Publishers.

Additional resources/required listening, viewing, and/or reading might include:

The Center for Arts and Culutre
<http://www.culturalpolicy.org>

The Creative Coalition
[http://www.the creativecoalition.org](http://www.thecreativecoalition.org)

The Free Expression Policy Project
<http://www.fepproject.org/issues/artcensorship.html>

The First Amendment Center
<http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/>

d. Pedagogy:

The course will be taught as a seminar with some materials directly presented by faculty. Outside viewings, listening, and readings will be used. Students will take part in seminar style discussions and group projects.

e. Evaluation of Students:

Students will keep journals, will write short reaction papers to various art and/or discussions, will address directed questions/topics, will complete a final group project and presentation, and will complete a take home final exam.

f. Course Evaluation:

Current course evaluation methods used by the department/s of teaching faculty will be used and/or current evaluations used in Rowan Seminar courses will be used.

Freedom and Artistic Expression in 20th Century America

Catalog Description

This course is designed to help students understand what free speech is, the legal limits on free speech, and current debates on free speech. Additionally, students will come to understand aesthetics, aesthetics as related to the arts, and how aesthetics changed as America moved into and through the 20th century. Specifically, this course will enable students to see how specific art works comment on current events or are a reaction to the suppression of speech/expression and how artists have been subjected to control while pursuing their arts in the United States during the 20th century. The course will also help students appreciate diversity by studying various works of art and various artists, and will help students understand democracy by examining free speech and related issues in art and artistic expression.