University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Semiotics of Contemporary Art, PG_00189699		
Field of study	Management of Artistic Institutions		
Date of commencement of studies	October 2026	Academic year of realisation of subject	2026/2027
Education level	Bachelor's studies	Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study
Mode of study	full-time studies	Mode of delivery	at the university
Year of study	1	Language of instruction	English
Semester of study	1	ECTS credits	4.0
Learning profile	practical	Assessment form	exam
Conducting unit	Division of Research into the Performing Arts -> Institute of English and American Studies -> Faculty of Languages -> Rector		
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor	dr hab. Tomasz Wiśniewski	
	Teachers	dr hab. Tomasz Wiśniewski	

Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						

Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan	Participation in consultation hours	Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	30	2.0	68.0	100

Subject objectives	To familiarize the student with the basic theoretical and methodological concepts in the field of semiotics of contemporary art, to develop the ability to apply basic semiotic concepts to describe, analyze and interpret artistic texts and to place them in artistic and cultural contexts. Familiarizing the student with the main methods of analysis and interpretation of the text of art.

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
[ZIAL3_K06] They are prepared to engage in artistic and cultural life as recipients and managers, interacting with its diverse forms. They recognize the importance of the cultural heritage of the region, country, and Europe, and acknowledge their own responsibility in preserving them.	Is ready to participate in artistic and cultural life as a recipient and a manager, using its various forms, especially in the field of contemporary art; is aware of the importance of cultural heritage of the region, the country and Europe, and of his/her own responsibility for preserving it.	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion
[ZIAL3_U04] They are capable of actively participating in debates regarding art, literature, and arts management, presenting, evaluating, and discussing various viewpoints.	Can take part in a debate on the semiotics of contemporary art, presenting, evaluating, and discussing various viewpoints.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion
[ZIAL3_W02] They have an advanced understanding of fundamental theories, methodologies, and terminology in fields of arts studies, management and quality studies, literary studies, as well as auxiliary and related studies.	Has an advanced knowledge of basic theories and methodologies as well as terminology in the field of semiotics of contemporary art.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion
[ZIAL3_W01] They possess an advanced level of general knowledge in fields of arts studies, management and quality studies, literary studies, as well as auxiliary and related studies.	Has an advanced level of basic general knowledge in the field of semiotics contemporary art.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW3] text preparation/written work
[ZIAL3_U03] They are capable of communicating effectively using specialized terminology in arts studies, management and quality studies, literary studies, as well as auxiliary and related studies.	Can communicate using specialist terminology in the field of semiotics contemporary art.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion
[ZIAL3_U02] They are able to select appropriate sources and conduct the selection, evaluation, critical analysis, and synthesis of information drawn from these sources in the fields of arts studies, management and quality studies, and literary studies.	Can make the right selection of sources and make a selection, evaluation, critical analysis and synthesis of information drawn from them in the field of semiotics of contemporary art.	[SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report
[ZIAL3_W03] They possess advanced detailed knowledge of specific topics within arts studies, management and quality studies, literary studies, as well as auxiliary and related studies, with a focus on practical applications in managerial and/or artistic activity.	Has advanced detailed knowledge of selected issues in the field of semiotics of contemporary art, focused on practical applications in managerial activities.	[SW5] implementation of a problem task
[ZIAL3_K01] They are prepared for a critical assessment of their knowledge and skills in the fields of art studies and the management of artistic institutions.	Is ready to critically evaluate his/ her knowledge of semiotics of contemporary art and skills necessary for analysis and interpretation of a work of art.	[SK8] observation of student's independent or team work

Subject contents

The scope and specificity of semiotic research and the concept of art and its relationship with the mechanisms of culture. Basic semiotic concepts: language, code, sign, meaning, text. The concept of a work of art in relation to artistic statements and texts with various functions. The issue of aesthetic communication. Art text description tools. Practical application of semiotic tools to the analysis and interpretation of contemporary art texts.

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Attendance at all classes is mandatory unless the student has obtained the Dean’s approval to follow an individual study plan.

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
attendance and active participation in the discussion	80.0%	15.0%
preparation for classes	51.0%	15.0%
spoken/written exam	51.0%	40.0%
final written paper (project)	51.0%	30.0%

Recommended reading	Basic literature	• David Chandler, *Semiotics: The Basics*, Routledge, 2005. • Umberto Eco, *Nieobecna struktura*, chapter 1: "Świat sygnałów", chapter 2: "Świat sensu", Wydawnictwo KR, 1996. • Jurij Łotman, *Kultura - Historia - Literatura*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2017. • Rachel Lawes, *Using Semiotics in Marketing*, KoganPage, 2020. • Laura S. Oswald, *Marketing Semiotics: Signs, Strategies, and Brand Value*, OUP, 2012.
	Supplementary literature	• Umberto Eco, *Dzieło otwarte*, Czytelnik, 1994. • Yuri Łotman, *The Universe of the Mind*, Indiana UP, 1991. • Jurij Łotman, *Kultura i eksplozja*, PIW, 1999. • Tomasz Wiśniewski, *Complicite, Theatre and Aesthetics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. • Andrzej Zgorzelski, *System i funkcja*, WUG, 1999. • Bogusław Żyłko, *Semiotyka kultury*, słowo/obraz terytoria, WUG, 2011.
	eResources addresses	
Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed		
Work placement	Not applicable	

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