

Short Title:	Critical Theory APPROVED
Full Title:	Critical Theory
Module Code:	DMED H4016
ECTS credits:	5
NFQ Level:	8
Module Delivered in	2 programme(s)
Module Contributor:	Hugh McCabe
Module Description:	The aim of this module is to investigate different models of critical thought and apply them to digital, textual and visual forms of cultural production. We will analyze and question how realities are created through both old and new forms such as film, video, photography, art and digital media. Through this activity the student will develop a critical awareness allowing them to assess examples of such media and situate them within a social, cultural and political landscape that is informed by major theories of 20th and 21st Century thought.
Learning Outcomes:	
<i>On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe and explain a variety of theoretical frameworks for understanding the production and reception of various forms of media. 2. Critically discuss and analyse the construction of human identity, community and society through critical theory and elements of related theories (modernism, postmodernism, structuralism, semiotics, psychoanalysis, marxism, feminism and postcolonialism) 3. Examine and respond to issues such as privacy, censorship, ethnicity and expression across ideas of society, community, and the individual in a digital world 4. Apply theoretical frameworks to the critical evaluation of artefacts of cultural production from fields such digital media, film, art, design, photography and animation. 5. Produce meaningful and well-argued responses to questions raised by critical theory in particular with respect to their relevance to contemporary digital media practice. 	

Module Content & Assessment

Indicative Content
<p>Theoretical Frameworks Key concepts, theories and frameworks: semiotics and linguistics; modernism and postmodernism; structuralism, semiotics and poststructuralism; postcolonialism and orientalism; art theory; feminism; psychoanalysis; marxism and ideology.</p>
<p>Key Writers and Thinkers Important theorists and their key ideas, including Saussure, Marx, Freud, Foucault, Derrida, Said, Barthes, Butler and Zizek.</p>
<p>The Shock Of The New Modern, modernism and modernity. Key concepts of modernism - technology, progress and the 'shock of the new'. Historical context. Modernism in art, design and architecture.</p>
<p>Marxism, Politics and Ideology Key concepts of marxism - historical materialism, the base and the superstructure, the economics of inequality. Ideology and false consciousness. Analysing contemporary cinema as an ideological apparatus.</p>
<p>The Construction Of The Self The origins of psychoanalysis. Freudian concepts of the self, the conscious and the unconscious. Reading film and TV by means of psychoanalytic theory.</p>
<p>Language and Semiotics Semiotics and the science of signs. Mythologies and society. Decoding media. How images generate meaning. Reading photographs and advertising imagery as eyes on society and as ideological apparatuses.</p>
<p>The Construction of Identity The construction of personal reality. Identity and politics. Gender and identity. Colonialism and orientalism. Ethnicity and Globalisation. The construction of the other. Religion, society and identity. Virtual identity. Virtual humans and virtual communities – embodied avatars and the Second Life phenomena</p>
<p>Beyond The Modern The critique of modernism. Key concepts of postmodernism - reappropriation, irony and pastiche, dystopian futures, end of history. Poststructuralism and deconstruction. The death of the author. Postmodernism in film, pop music and contemporary digital culture.</p>
<p>Current issues in Critical theory and digital media To be determined by the lecturer with current events and issues in mind.</p>

Indicative Assessment Breakdown	%
Course Work Assessment %	100.00%

Course Work Assessment %				
<i>Assessment Type</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>Outcome addressed</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>Assessment Date</i>
Exhibition Evaluation	Typically the students attend a number of exhibitions that are running while the module is being delivered and they are asked to provide a review/response to one or more of these. This response may take either written or visual form.	3,4,5	20.00	n/a
Reflective Journal	Students are required to write reflective journals entries based on weekly class discussions.	1,2,3,4,5	40.00	n/a
Other	Students are evaluated on a weekly basis on their participation in in-class discussions.	1,2,3	20.00	n/a
Presentation	Students are required to present in front of their peers at the end of the module. The brief is to choose an artefact of cultural production (e.g. a film, a game, a website, a piece of music) and carry out a critical analysis of this, framing it using one of the theoretical paradigms discussed in the course.	2,3,4,5	20.00	n/a

No Final Exam Assessment %

Indicative Reassessment Requirement

Coursework Only

This module is reassessed solely on the basis of re-submitted coursework. There is no repeat written examination.

ITB reserves the right to alter the nature and timings of assessment

Indicative Module Workload & Resources

Indicative Workload: Full Time	
Frequency	Indicative Average Weekly Learner Workload
Every Week	30.00
Every Week	30.00
Every Week	40.00

Resources

Recommended Book Resources

Barry, Peter. 1995, *Beginning Theory*, Manchester University Press Manchester
Sim, Strart and Borin Van Loon. 2004, *Introducing Critical Theory*, Icon Books Cambridge
Manovich, Lev. 2001, *The Language of New Media*, The MIT Press Mass., USA

Supplementary Book Resources

Barthes, Roland. 1993, *Mythologies*, Vintage New York
Belsey, Catherine. 2002, *Poststructuralism: A very short introduction*, Oxford University Press
Robert Hughes 1980, *The Shock of The New*

This module does not have any article/paper resources

Other Resources

Film: Lars Von Trier 2011, *Melancholia*
Documentary: Adam Curtis 2002, *The Century Of The Self*
Film: Christopher Nolan 2012, *The Dark Knight Rises*
Film: Quentin Tarantino 1994, *Pulp Fiction*

Module Delivered in

Programme Code	Programme	Semester	Delivery
BN_DDMED_8	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Creative Digital Media [240 ECTS credits]	7	Mandatory
BN_DDMED_B	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Creative Digital Media [Add on 60 ECTS credits]	1	Mandatory