

Ramapo College of New Jersey
School of Contemporary Arts, First-Year Seminar, Fall 2009

Course Title: Memoir As Expression
Course Information: CNTP-101, sections 1 through 5
Class Meeting Time: Mondays 9:45 AM-1:00 PM
Location: H-Wing Auditorium and individual section classrooms
Pre-Requisites: First-semester, first-year student status
CA Office: BC-237
College Web Address: <http://www.ramapo.edu>
College Closing/Announcements: (201) 236-2902
Class Website: <http://cafys.blogspot.com/>

Instructor Information:

Section 101-07 (Individual Classroom B-224)

Beba Shamash, Theater
Campus Phone: x7146 Email: hshamash@ramapo.edu
Office Location: BC 148 (office) or BC 201 (costume Shop)
Office Hours: M 11:30-1, R 12-2, or by appointment
Peer Facilitator: Christian D Kratochvil email: ckratch@ramapo.edu

Section 101-04 (Individual Classroom H-129)

Mack Brandon, Music.
Campus Phone: x7653 Email: mbrandon@ramapo.edu
Office Location: BC 237
Office Hours: R 10:30am - 1:30pm
Peer Facilitator: Tracey Pastorini tpastori@ramapo.edu
Keri Flaccomio kflaccom@ramapo.edu

Section 101-05 (Individual Classroom A-103)

Ann LePore, Visual Arts.
Campus Phone: x6288 Email: alepore@ramapo.edu. <http://www.annlepore.com>
Office Location: A 209.
Office Hours: Wed 3-5pm, Thurs 2-3pm
Peer Facilitator: Jenna DiLolle, jdilolle@ramapo.edu

Section 101-01 (Individual Classroom H-204)

Marta Bautis, Communications
Campus Phone: X77120 Email: mbautis@ramapo.edu
Office Location: H-104
Office Hours: m 2-3, Tues by appt only
Peer Facilitator:

Section 101-03 (Individual Classroom BC216 –Rehearsal Hall)

Terra Vandergaw, Theater

Campus Phone: x7145 email: tvanderg@ramapo.edu

Office Location: BC151

Office Hours: Wed 12:30-2

Peer Facilitator: Mary Iannacone miannaco@ramapo.edu

Peer Facilitators

As an added resource for first-year students, each section of FYS will have a Peer Facilitator. These students will attend FYS classes and assist the instructor with the academic topics covered in the seminar. They will also serve as discussion leaders on issues presented at the Personal Development Workshops. Peers will also facilitate weekly discussions on the class readings. Your Peer Facilitator will be your mentor and will be available to you to provide guidance on navigating the different personal and social hurdles that you may encounter in your first year at Ramapo. * If you are in a class without a peer facilitator, and you have an issue that you would like to discuss with a peer facilitator, please email any of the other peer facilitators listed on this syllabus.

Course Description

The Contemporary Arts Interdisciplinary Seminar is a team-taught course designed to introduce students to the four disciplines represented in the School of Contemporary Arts: Communication Arts, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts.

Memoir as Expression

This class will explore and analyze ideas of the memoir across artistic disciplines. This will be accomplished by reviewing the work of a diverse group of artists and the techniques they use in their creative process. We will also explore the nature of human artistic expression. This will include consideration of both how and why human beings create. These studies, and the discussions they inspire, will help us consider a number of questions. The fundamental questions we will ask and attempt to answer are:

- How do artists reflect on and perhaps change the world in which they live?
- How does memory impact our creative impulses and artistic expression?
- How do artists integrate, collapse, or extend the work of scientists, academics, and philosophers?
- What are the moral and political realities facing artists whose work extends toward the personal, social or political spheres?
- How do we situate the work of artists who operate intentionally on the periphery of acceptable conduct?

Using elements that students can observe or experience in their own lives, students will create projects that express their own ideas. Formal concerns common to all the disciplines, such as rhythm, form, interpretation, composition, stylization, etc. will be analyzed as they apply to the different disciplines, and they will be used in the creation of individual and group projects.

Memoir as Expression will be presented in a large lecture/viewing format, providing a common knowledge base for all sections. These will be followed by smaller group sessions where the large presentation will be discussed and analyzed. Collaborative and individual projects will be assigned and graded in the smaller groups. Use of technology (web-based, digital photography, video equipment, etc.) and project realization will be emphasized to enhance group communication, writing and creative skills.

Course Objectives / Assessment

Students will understand the basic concepts, language and processes of the fields of study offered in the disciplines of Contemporary Arts: Communication Arts, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts.

- Students will understand the nature of artistic expression and communication, both as viewer and producer of art.

- Students will learn to think critically and independently by responding to presentations on campus, including theater, music and dance performances, art exhibitions, film screenings and special lectures.
- Students who successfully complete this course will be able to develop informed opinions and express them effectively, thereby creating the ground-work for further study in the Arts and Communications.
- Students will understand the activities, policies and processes that are essential to their success, such as advisement and registration, classroom protocol, and academic integrity.
- Students will be familiar with the mission and structure of the college, the school as well as majors and minors.
- Students will understand the value of a liberal arts education.

The course intends to teach students the following:

- basic vocabularies relating to performance, music, and art as they apply to the creation of these forms.
- the ability to express ideas and opinions through oral, written or other creative means. This will be done through collaborative group projects and individual assignments.
- the capacity to better understand critiques, essays and other written materials that analyze art, music, theater, and other cultural expressions.
- an appreciation for the challenges and rewards of collaborative work through targeted assignments that encourage group work.
- a sense of one's own aesthetic values and the ability to examine, question and potentially broaden how those values are defined.

Texts, Readings, Materials

- Pausch, Randy, and Jeffrey Zaslow. *The Last Lecture*. New York: Hyperion, 2008. ISBN: 978-1401323257
- Hacker, Diana, and Barbara Fister. *Rules for Writers 6e MLA update (tabbed)*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. ISBN 978-0312593406
- There will be an additional required reading in the form of handouts OR electronic articles and downloads from the class webpage: <http://cafys.blogspot.com/>

Course Requirements

Assignment	Due	%
In-class sort answer quiz. Based on summer reading.	During first class	5
2-page paper on summer reading	At the start of class 2	5
11 lecture related assignments	As instructed each week	55
Final Project	At the final class meeting	20
Classroom Participation and Attendance	Your attendance and participation in all classes is required	15

Experiential Component

Attending the mandatory Personal Development Workshops fulfills this requirement. The Peer Facilitators will take attendance. There are additional activities outside of class that require attendance:

- Convocation
- Government Inspector, Adler Theater, Thursday October 15th, 8pm *if you have a conflict, speak with your FYS instructor
- Sarayaku Rivers of Corn, H wing Auditorium, Thursday October 15th, 2pm 8pm *if you have a conflict, speak with your FYS instructor

Attendance Policy

You are expected to attend and participate in every class. The learning environment experienced in the class is impossible to duplicate, so it is in your best interest to be fully present and prepared for every class. Missing more than two classes will lower your grade by one letter. Your individual section leaders will discuss their attendance, lateness and grading policies in your individual sections.

General Education Program Course

This course fulfills the First-Year Seminar category of the general education curriculum. Common to all First-Year Seminar (FYS) courses, you will develop critical thinking skills that are basic to college level study, regardless of your area of interest. You will be reading, writing, and participating in thoughtful group discussions with the aim of developing the skills of a scholar. You will learn to support your arguments using a foundation of knowledge and facts rather than from personal opinions and experiences.”

This course fulfills interdisciplinary studies, intercultural understanding and experiential learning as it is team-taught by professors representing the major disciplines in Contemporary Arts: Communication Arts, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts. These disciplines provide the foundation for the final projects that students will use to collaborate and incorporate in their final presentations of the semester.

Grading Policy

A-Excellent. Work shows exceptional ability, creativity and demonstrates a superior effort.

B-Above average. Work shows excellent ability and interest.

C-Average. Work shows effort.

D-Below average. Work is uninteresting and obviously resulting from little effort.

F-Failure

I-Incomplete. This option is only available at your request before the end of the semester. There must be a compelling reason why you are unable to finish the final class assignments on time. It must be supported by documentation.

W-Withdrawal. This option is only available at your request. The withdrawal form must be brought to me for my signature before the deadline and returned by you to the registrar’s office.

Grade Distribution

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
>95	95-91	90-87	86-84	83-81	80-78	77-75	74-70	69-66	65-61	<60

Electronic Forms of Communication

In accordance with College policy, we will use your Ramapo College email address (your-name@ramapo.edu) to communicate with you about all course-related matters. Instructors will be using a class website and the MyRamapo/Luminis system for additional communication and interaction. Training will be provided in class.

Policy on Academic Integrity

Students are expected to read and understand Ramapo College's Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found in the Ramapo College Catalog. Members of the Ramapo College community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Students who are suspected of violating this policy will be referred to the Office of the Provost.

Students with Disabilities

If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a documented disability, please make an appointment during your instructor's office hours. Please note: Students must be registered with the Office of Specialized Services (OSS) to receive accommodations. For additional information, contact the Office of Specialized Services (OSS) at x7514 or E-mail at oss@ramapo.edu.

Important Dates

Last day for Schedule Adjustments: September 10th

Last day to withdraw with 100% tuition refund: September 10th

Last day to withdraw with 50% tuition and/or housing refund: September 24th

Last day to withdraw from courses with "W" grade: October 27th

Thanksgiving Recess: Nov 25th - 28th

Reading Day: December 15th

Final Exam Week: December 16th – 22nd

Final Exam Snow Make-Up Day: Monday, December 23rd

Schedule of Topics for the semester...

week	date	
1	9.14.09	Course Introduction
		Discussion and In class quiz: <i>The Last Lecture</i>
		Assignment: paper on <i>The Last Lecture</i> due next week (9/21).
***	9.16.09	Opening Convocation, Jeffrey Zaslow – <i>The Last Lecture</i> , Bradley Center (Wednesday)
2	9.21.09	Ann LePore: Memoir and Animation: Persepolis and Waltz With Bashir
3	9.28.09	Mack Brandon

4	10.05.09	Ann LePore : Electronic Art, Art as a Memorial, working with a temporary medium
5	10.12.09	Beba Shamash/guest <i>Government Inspector</i>
6	10.19.09	Terra Vandergaw: <i>Government Inspector: Acting</i>
7	10.26.09	Marta Bautis: The Documentary Film as Memoir, part 1.
8	11.02.09	Mack Brandon
9	11.9.09	Special Session on Advisement and Registration for classes
10	11.16.09	Beba Shamash
11	11.23.09	Terra Vandergaw/ Thanksgiving
12	11.30.09	Marta Bautis: The Documentary Film as Memoir, part 2.
13	12.07.09	Final Projects
14	12.14.09	Final Projects
15	12.21.09	Final Projects/ Final Exam Week