

**AHIS3600 – ASSIGNMENT SHEET:
FINAL PROJECT**

Requirements

General Requirements

- DUE DATE: Dec. 16
- Research:
 - Minimum of 5 sources (minimum 2 outside source)
 - All sources must be academic, scholarly sources (published books or academic journal articles); Khan Academy, Wikipedia, and Course Lectures **will not be accepted** as genuine sources.
 - Each source must be cited within the essay using explicit reference to the relevant page number(s) in the source. If it isn't cited, or isn't cited properly, it will not count.
- Reference and Citation:
 - Complete, correct, consistent references to sources should be made in either Chicago or MLA styles. This includes citation as well as bibliography. In-text citations, as well as footnotes or endnotes are acceptable.
 - Info on Citation and Style can be found here:
 - **MLA:**
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html
 - **Chicago:**
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html
 - Guideline Sheet for Academic Writing and Avoiding Plagiarism

Option 1: Essay

- Essay with research:
 - Length: ~2000 ± 300 words (not counting titles and bibliography)
 - File type: Word doc or PDF. No other file type will be accepted.
- Topic of your choice; must deal substantially with at least one course text (required, optional, recommended), unless approved by the instructor.

Option 2: Creative Work

- One piece of creative work (visual, audio, or textual) that responds substantially and directly way to at least one of the course texts. This could be a painting/2D work, a long

poem or series of poems, short story, a song or songs, sound installation, short film or video work, animation, sculpture/3D work, etc.

- Written explanation/didactic with research:
 - Explains in detail how the piece relates in substantial ways to one or more of the course texts and themes.
 - Length: ~1000 ± 100 words (not counting titles and bibliography)
 - File type: Word doc or PDF. No other file type will be accepted.
- Topic of your choice; must deal substantially with at least one course text (required, optional, recommended), unless approved by the instructor.

Overview (Essay)

The final essay is a scholarly essay on a topic of your choice, so long as it conforms to the range of material appropriate to the course. **Your topic should focus on the one or more of our course texts**, but additional texts, whether primary or secondary are allowed and necessary, respectively. Acceptable topics will include anything that engages with theories of art or aesthetic experience broadly construed, so long as it substantially deals with at least one course text.

Potential topics include: Plato and Aristotle on *mimesis* or form; Western vs. Non-western aesthetics; Politics and art; Language and art, art and theories of signs/symbols; What is the relationship between art and knowledge?; Art under capitalism; Aesthetics and race; Indigeneity and aesthetics; Kant on the difference between the transcendental aesthetic vs. reflective aesthetic judgements; Is art a universal human activity?; Embodiment and art; Does art have a historical essence?; What is the difference between natural beauty and artistic beauty in Kant or others?; What is Benjamin's concept of aura?; How does morality relate to aesthetics in the Chinese, Japanese, or German theoretical traditions?; Is there an Ideal of artistic achievement in contemporary art (using Plato or Kant or Hegel)?; Is art free to express whatever it wants or is it determined by its material, historical, economic conditions, etc. (using Benjamin, Adorno, Horkheimer, etc.)? Is art more than its commodity value? Does our aesthetics/art help construct or express our metaphysics/ontology? Can/should contemporary art still relate to the Absolute? (using Plato, Aristotle, Hegel, Tu We Ming, Benjamin, Saito, Megumi, etc.)?

Parts/Structure of the Essay

The essay should have a clear internal and independent structure. It should be motivated by a claim, a thesis. The structure of the essay is then dictated by the development of the argument for the thesis. This development can take many forms, but a common form is the following: Introduction, Body, and Conclusion.

The purpose of an Introduction is to state the thesis of the paper, to introduce a problem or thematic the thesis deals with, to tell us what the approach to the problem will be, and to briefly summarize the structure of the essay itself. The Introduction should also tell us how the argument of the essay handles the problem or thematic, and therefore should foreshadow the conclusion.

The Body section is the main portion of the work. It elaborates the argument and should be broken down into subsections which each deal with different parts of the argument. The structure of the Body itself can take many forms, but it should include an examination of the problem or thematic where necessary, information about relevant context, relevant analysis of text and artwork, and argument(s) combining the analysis and the context with the premises of the themes and problems

The Conclusion should use the evidence and argument(s) marshalled in the Body to forcefully demonstrate your thesis. It can sometimes be helpful to recapitulate the main features of the body before making your conclusion. However, be aware that there is a danger of redundancy here, so any recapitulation should be given the utmost attention and subjected to editorial criticism. Parsimony is always advisable over prolix.

General advice: If you do not outline your work (both before and as you write), the structure of the essay will be less clear to you and your reader, or the essay will lack real structure of its own.

Do not rely on recapitulating the proceeding of your research as the structure of your essay. This means avoiding ‘walking through’ your research in your own essay by simply summarizing it, and relying on that summary for structure. This is what the *précises* are for, to a degree, but not essays. *Do* look at other essays in relevant fields to see how they tackle the issue of form: how they introduce topics and break up sections, how they start and end paragraphs, etc.

Further Resources on Writing Essays: <https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/essay-structure>.