

HAVC 141P: Networks and Natures: Art, Technology and the Nonhuman

Summer Session 1, 2023

(June 26 to July 28)

Mode of Instruction: Canvas (asynchronous)

Instructor: Matthew Tedford, mtedford@ucsc.edu

Office Hours: Thursday, 9am to 11am (or by appointment)

Schedule: <https://calendly.com/mtedford/officehours>[Links to an external site.](#)

Teaching Assistant: Madalen Claire Benson, mcbenson@ucsc.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1pm to 2pm (week #2: 1pm to 2pm, Wednesday, July 5)

Schedule: <https://calendly.com/mcbensonofficehours/15min>[Links to an external site.](#)

Email Madalen to schedule an alternative time if you are unavailable during the regularly held office hours

Overview

This class explores relationships between art, technology, and nature. We will investigate the ways in which the development of various modern technologies has impacted the natural world and its organisms, as well as our artistic and visual representations of those realities and lives. Of special importance will be the question of how the confluence of technology and nature figures in art and visual culture. After an initial overview of keywords and major historical shifts, we will move to a series of exploratory investigations, starting with topics emerging out of nature-oriented philosophy and art in the mid-twentieth century. We will then follow thinking around art, nature, and technology from the 1980s and 1990s through to the present, addressing topics like land art; images of wilderness; nature, gender and cinema; race and colonization; the visualization of the Anthropocene; and new prospects for multi-species thriving.

Learning Objectives

The following goals will be modeled in lecture, while the discussions and assignments will support students as they apply what they learn:

- Students will understand how the culturally constructed categories of *technology* and *nature*, and their visual production, have informed and shaped one another.
- Students will learn how artists and filmmakers have utilized technology and emerging media to engage with nature, environmentalism, and the nonhuman.
- Students will understand how various theorizations of technology and nature differently frame the relationship between media, viewers, and the nonhuman.
- Students will learn how discourses around technology, nature, the human, and the nonhuman intersect with gender, race, economy, and colonialism.

Course Format

The class comprises 10 thematic modules, with two modules scheduled per week. On the days scheduled for each module, I will release a lecture via Canvas on the assigned readings, visual material, and other content.

Assignments

Successful assignments will engage with visual analysis, close and critical reading of visual artifacts and texts, research, and connections across readings and visual materials. Students are encouraged to bring in outside artworks, readings, and other references but should also demonstrate engagement with the course materials that serve as the basis of a shared classroom experience.

Discussion (30% of overall grade): Engagement among us all is essential in the digital environment, and we will use Canvas to share our thoughts and reactions to the course material. I ask students to make one discussion post for each module and respond to two peer posts per module. I will provide a prompt or multiple prompts to ground the conversation. These posts can take the form of a written response, video or audio files, or other creative responses. Whatever format you choose, please end all posts with a question for your classmates to respond to (this is not necessary for your peer responses). These questions will encourage a richer discussion and keep the conversation lively. In addition to (but not in place of) the above, you can also use the discussion threads to pose other questions you had about the material, bring in outside media or readings, or just throw out random thoughts you've had during the module.

Quiz (15% of overall grade): A short Canvas quiz covering the first two modules of the course.

Small Writing Assignment (25% of overall grade): A 3-4 page writing assignment reflecting on one of the most recent modules due via Canvas on Sunday, July 16. Students will be asked to conduct visual analysis and engage with the themes of the modules' readings. Formal writing and citation conventions are expected in this assignment.

Final Project (30% of overall grade): In place of a final exam, a substantial, rigorous, and well-defended final project is due via Canvas Friday, July 28. Final projects will demonstrate an understanding of key debates on the intersection of visual culture, technology, and the nonhuman. The final project can take a more conventional written form, such as an academic article or a critical essay of 5-8 pages. It can also take a non-conventional or primarily non-written form, such as a short film, an artwork, a grant proposal, or an action plan. Any non-conventional projects will need to include a citation-rich written explanation/justification. Be sure to consult with me if you are interested in doing a non-conventional final project. A project proposal will be due on Tuesday, July 11, and an outline or storyboard will be due on Thursday, July 20.

Late Assignments

Given the fast-paced nature of Summer Session, it is imperative that students stay on top of all readings and assignments. Additionally, it is crucial to complete all discussion posts and responses on time to foster an engaging class experience. Late work will be subject to a lower

grade. Recognizing that unanticipated situations arise that may prevent a student from completing an assignment on time, please contact me as soon as possible if circumstances prevent you from turning in an assignment on time. Discussion posts and responses cannot be submitted late.

Course Materials

The Canvas page for our course has been set up so that all materials (readings, videos, and lectures) are viewable within individual modules on the “Home” page. Modules aren’t made public until it is their time in the course. However, readings are available ahead of time through the “Files” tab so you can read texts before the lectures are released. All required viewing material is also available ahead of time through links on this syllabus. In addition to shorter films/clips, often available on YouTube and Vimeo, there are 3 required feature length films: *Princess Mononoke*, *Aniara*, and *The Pearl Button*. See class schedule for where to access or rent these films.

Course Schedule

Module/Dates	Readings and Media	Assignments Due (all times 11:59 pm Pacific Time)
Module 1: Mon., Jun 26 Nature and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raymond Williams, “Nature” in <i>Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society</i> (1976) ● Stephen Nathan Haymes, “An Africana Studies Critique of Environmental Ethics” in <i>Racial Ecologies</i> (2018) ● Andrew Ross, “Technology” in <i>New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society</i> (2013) ● Robin Wall Kimmerer, “Corn Tastes Better on the Honor System” (2018) in <i>Emergence Magazine</i> (audio version available on website) ● Watch Nanobah Becker (Diné), The 6th World (2011, 15 minutes) 	WEEK 1 Wed., Jun 28: Introduction Post and Module 1 Discussion Post Fri., Jun 30 : Module 2 Discussion Post
Module 2: Wed., Jun 28 The Human and Nonhuman Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sylvia Wynter, “‘No Humans Involved:’ An Open Letter to My Colleagues” in <i>Forum N.H.I. Knowledge for the 21st Century</i> (1994) ● Stacy Alaimo, “Bodily Natures” in <i>Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self</i> (2010) ● Richard Grusin, Introduction to <i>The Nonhuman Turn</i> (2015) ● Watch Donna J. Haraway, Donna Haraway Reads “The National Geographic” On Primates (1987, 28 minutes) 	Sun. Jul 2: All Peer Responses
Module 3: Mon., Jul 3 Ecomedia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sean Cubitt, “An Ecology of Media: Conclusions” in <i>EcoMedia</i> (2005) ● Cajetan Iheka, Introduction to <i>African Ecomedia: Network Forms, Planetary Politics</i> (2021) 	WEEK 2 Mon., Jul 3: Quiz

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch Wanuri Kahiu, Pumzi (2009, 21 minutes) 	<p>Wed., Jul 5: Module 3 Discussion Post</p> <p>Fri., Jul 7: Module 4 Discussion Post</p> <p>Sun., Jul 9: All Peer Responses</p>
<p>Module 4: Wed., Jul 5</p> <p>Animation and Animism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sean Cubitt, “Drawing Animals: Zoomorphism in Princess Mononoke” in <i>EcoMedia</i> (2005) • Matthew Harrison Tedford, “Is a Non-Capitalist World Imaginable? Embodied Practices and Slipstream Potentials in Amanda Strong’s <i>Biidaaban</i>” in <i>Feminist Media Histories</i> (2022) • Edwin Carels, “Biometry and Antibodies: Modernizing Animation/Animating Modernity” in <i>Animism I</i> (2020) • Watch Walt Disney, Silly Symphonies: The Skeleton Dance (1929, 5 minutes) • Watch Amanda Strong (Michif), Biidaaban (The Dawn Comes) (2019, 19 minutes) • Optional: Hayao Miyazaki, <i>Princess Mononoke</i> (1997, 2 hours 13 minutes; available on HBO Max and for rental elsewhere) 	
<p>Module 5: Mon., Jul 10</p> <p>Virtual Nature and Virtual Reality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albert Borgmann, “The Nature of Reality and the Reality of Nature” in <i>Reinventing Nature?: Responses To Postmodern Deconstruction</i> (1995) • María Puig de la Bellacasa, “Touching Visions,” from <i>Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds</i> (2017) • Watch Lisa Jackson (Anishinaabe), trailer for Biidaaban (First Light) (2018, 4 minutes) • Watch Elizabeth LaPensée (Anishinaabe/Métis/Irish), trailer for Along the River of Space Time (2020, 2 minutes) • Optional: Pella Kågerman and Hugo Lilja, <i>Aniara</i> (2018, 1 hours 46 minutes; available on Hulu and for rental elsewhere) 	<p>WEEK 3</p> <p>Tue., Jul 11: Final Project Proposal</p> <p>Wed., Jul 12: Module 5 Discussion Post</p> <p>Fri., Jul 14: Module 6 Discussion Post</p>
<p>Module 6: Wed., Jul 12</p> <p>Botanical Media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch Suzanne Husky, Which plant would you choose to teach ethics to artificial intelligence? (2019, 32 minutes) • Watch Lisa Jackson (Anishinaabe), Lichen (2019, 11 minutes, begins at 1:00:48 in Vimeo video) • Watch Abelardo Gil-Fournier and Jussi Parikka, Seed, Image, Ground (2020, 9 minutes) 	<p>Sun., Jul 16: Small Writing Assignment</p> <p>Sun., Jul 16: All Peer Responses</p>
<p>Module 7: Mon., Jul 17</p> <p>Final Project Workshop</p>	<p>No readings or viewing material for this module. We will use the discussion section to share information and seek advice for final projects.</p>	<p>WEEK 4</p> <p>Wed., Jul 19: Module 7 Discussion Post</p>
<p>Module 8: Wed., Jul 19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alenda Y. Chang, Introduction to <i>Playing Nature: Ecology in Video Games</i> (2019) 	<p>Thu., Jul 20: Final Project</p>

Gaming Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maize Longboat (Kanien'kehá:ka), "Reset and Redefine: <i>Never Alone (Kisima Ingitchuna)</i> and the Rise of Indigenous Games" in <i>Transmotion</i> (2017) ● Watch gameplay of Never Alone (Kisima Ingitchuna) (2014; watch the first 8 minutes, and then feel free to just skip around to get a feel of the game) ● Watch <i>Never Alone</i> "Cultural Insights" (2014; 36 minutes) 	Outline, Storyboard, or Annotated Bibliography Fri., Jul 21: Module 8 Discussion Post Sun., Jul 23: All Peer Responses
Module 9: Mon., Jul 24 Ocean Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Melody Jue, Introduction to <i>Wild Blue Media: Thinking through Seawater</i> (2020) ● Anuradha Vikram, "Underneath the Black Atlantic: Race and Capital in John Akomfrah's Vertigo Sea" in <i>X-TRA</i> (2019) ● Watch John Akomfrah, clip from Vertigo Sea (2015, 4 minutes) ● Watch Patricio Guzmán, <i>The Pearl Button</i> (2015, 82 minutes; available through UCSC Kanopy account) 	Wed, Jul 26: Module 9 Discussion Post Fri., Jul 28: Module 10 Discussion Post Fri., Jul 28: Final Assignment
Module 10: Wed., Jul 26 Visualizing / Indigenizing / Rethinking the Anthropocene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Visualizing the Anthropocene" in <i>Public Culture</i> (2014) ● Zoe Todd (Métis/otipemisiw), "Indigenizing the Anthropocene" in <i>Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environment and Epistemology</i> (2015) 	No Peer Responses Due This Week

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Course Workload

UC Senate Regulation 760 specifies that 1 academic unit corresponds to 6 hours of work per week during Summer Session. Therefore, as a 5-unit course, this class will require 30 hours of work per week. You can anticipate spending about 6 hours a week on lectures and class discussions and 24 hours on the course's other elements. These hours may be broken down further as approximately 12 hours per week reading, engaging with assigned artworks, and taking notes; and 12 hours working on major assignments.

Program Learning Outcomes

The History of Art and Visual Culture department has identified four program learning outcomes (PLOs) for its B.A. program. This class fulfills these PLOs:

- PLO 1: Breadth of Cultural Knowledge: Students will be able to demonstrate an appreciation for, and foundation in, visual studies grounded in a range of historical, social, cultural, and ideological perspectives.

- PLO 2: Critical Thinking: Students will be able to apply critical thinking skills that will enable them to analyze and solve problems through observation, experience, reflection, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and/or explanation of visual, material, and historical cultural forms and values. Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills through oral and/or written communication.
- PLO 3: Research Proficiency: Students will be able to formulate research questions that expand their knowledge of art and visual culture. Students will be able to apply research methods to answer these questions by consulting the current literature and developing independent results through archival, library, or field research.
- PLO 4: Written Communication: Students will be able to present clear visual and historical analysis and interpretation in writing. Students will be able to demonstrate standard writing conventions in visual studies appropriate to purpose and context.

Accessibility

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me by email, preferably within the first week of the course. I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

Academic Integrity

All members of the UCSC community benefit from an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. You are expected to present your own work and acknowledge the work of others in order to preserve the integrity of scholarship.

Academic integrity includes:

- Following exam rules
- Using only permitted materials during an exam
- Viewing exam materials only when permitted by your instructor
- Keeping what you know about an exam to yourself
- Incorporating proper citation of all sources of information
- Submitting your own original work

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Disclosing exam content during or after you have taken an exam
- Accessing exam materials without permission
- Copying/purchasing any material from another student, or from another source, that is submitted for grading as your own
- Plagiarism, including use of Internet material without proper citation
- Using cell phones or other electronics to obtain outside information during an exam without explicit permission from the instructor

- Submitting your own work in one class that was completed for another class (self-plagiarism) without prior permission from the instructor.

Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student's transcript. For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the [Academic Misconduct page](#) at the [Division of Undergraduate Education](#).

Title XI and CARE

UC Santa Cruz is committed to providing a safe learning environment that is free of all forms of gender discrimination and sexual harassment, which are explicitly prohibited under Title IX. If you have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, know that you are not alone. The Title IX Office, the Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education (CARE) office, and Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) are all resources that you can rely on for support.

Please be aware that if you tell me about a situation involving Title IX misconduct, I am required to share this information with the Title IX Coordinator. This reporting responsibility also applies to course TAs and tutors (as well to all UCSC employees who are not designated as "confidential" employees, which is a special designation granted to counselors and CARE advocates). Although I have to make that notification, you will control how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. The goal is to make sure that you are aware of the range of options available to you and that you have access to the resources you need.

Confidential resources are available through [CARE](#). Confidentiality means CARE advocates will not share any information with Title IX, the police, parents, or anyone else without explicit permission. CARE advocates are trained to support you in understanding your rights and options, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. You can contact CARE at (831) 502-2273 or care@ucsc.edu.

In addition to CARE, these resources are available to you:

- If you need help figuring out what resources you or someone else might need, visit the [Sexual Violence Prevention & Response \(SAFE\) website](#), which provides information and resources for different situations.
- [Counseling & Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) can provide confidential counseling support. Call them at (831) 459-2628.
- You can also report gender discrimination and sexual harassment and violence directly to the University's [Title IX Office](#), by calling (831) 459-2462 or by using their [online reporting tool](#).
- Reports to law enforcement can be made to the UC Police Department, (831) 459-2231 ext. 1.
- For emergencies, call 911.

Religious Accommodations

UC Santa Cruz welcomes diversity of religious beliefs and practices, recognizing the contributions differing experiences and viewpoints can bring to the community. There may be times when an academic requirement conflicts with religious observances and practices. If that happens, students may request the reasonable accommodation for religious practices. The instructor will review the situation in an effort to provide a reasonable accommodation without penalty. You should first discuss the conflict and your requested accommodation with your instructor early in the term. You or your instructor may also seek assistance from the [Dean of Students office](#).

Important Student Services

Counseling and Psychological Services

Many students at UCSC face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Student Success and Engagement Hub

The Division of Student Success provides campus-wide coordination and leadership for student success programs and activities across departments, divisions, the colleges, and administrative units.

Tutoring and Learning Support

At Learning Support Services (LSS), undergraduate students build a strong foundation for success and cultivate a sense of belonging in our Community of Learners. LSS partners with faculty and staff to advance educational equity by designing inclusive learning environments in Modified Supplemental Instruction, Small Group Tutoring, and Writing Support. When students fully engage in our programs, they gain transformative experiences that empower them at the university and beyond.

Slug Support Program

College can be a challenging time for students and during times of stress it is not always easy to find the help you need. Slug Support can give help with everything from basic needs (housing, food, or financial insecurity) to getting the technology you need during remote instruction. To get started with SLUG Support, please contact the [Dean of Students](#) Office at 831-459-4446 or you may send us an email at deanofstudents@ucsc.edu.

Slug Help/Technology

The ITS Support Center is your single point of contact for all issues, problems or questions related to technology services and computing at UC Santa Cruz. To get technological help, simply email help@ucsc.edu.

On-Campus Emergency Contacts

Slug Help/[Emergency Services](#). For all other help and support, including the health center and

emergency services, start [here](#). Always dial 9-1-1 in the case of an emergency.