

TERM: Spring 2026

COURSE NUMBER & CATEGORY: ENGL 5000: Seminar: Advanced Studies

COURSE TITLE: Assemblage

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: R 6:00-9:00 pm

INSTRUCTOR: Harris

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

This course examines Los Angeles Assemblage Art, literature, and film through the theoretical lens of assemblage. The specific meanings of assemblage as art practice, philosophical concept, and critical-urban theory will be compared as a means to make sense of the city's cultural history. Like the sculptural constructions that first brought the city cultural attention, Los Angeles itself is similarly complex, diverse, and fractal. The diverse artists to be studied in the course Noah Purifoy, John Outterbridge, Betye Saar, and the Womanhouse/CalArts Feminist Art Program, to name a few. We will examine Watts through the work of Noah Purifoy and the Watts Rebellion and Simon Rodia's Watts Towers of Los Angeles. We will also study literature and theory of The Everyday with special attention to the writings and methods of George Perec.

Please note: This class will meet regularly with another section of the same course taught by Prof. Damon Willick (Art History), an expert in this area of art. We have co-taught this course many times with excellent evaluations and look forward to offering a unique interdisciplinary experience.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students will learn to analyze material in an interdisciplinary, synthetic method.
2. Students will learn the history of Assemblage in relation to Los Angeles's cultural development.
3. Students will attain an understanding of LA Assemblage art in relation to critical theories and histories.
4. Students will understand how the visual arts and critical criticism are interrelated and influence one another.
5. Students will understand and practice site-specific writing as a genre.

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

Graduate

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

N/A

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

- ☐ Critical Methodology
- ☐ Contemporary Critical Theory
- ☐ Major Writer / Genre / Literary Period
- ☐ Literature Elective
- ☒ Theory Elective
- ☐ Creative Writing Seminar
- ☐ Rhetoric / Composition Theory and Practice
- ☐ Linguistics OR Reading Theory