What is the student context?

- Students are preferably juniors and seniors in their course work.
- Students have some prior experience and exposure to K-6 classroom; through guided observation from preliminary course work, summer employment or younger siblings.
- Students can generally identify some visual images/documents from the history of art or contemporary arts; mostly through commercial representation in the media. (ex. Van Gogh on coffee cups, shopping bags, wrapping paper etc.)
- 85% of student’s most recent experience with art is from middle school years; approximately 7 to 10% of students elected to take art classes in high school, and 3 to 5% of students have taken a [gen-ed] elective introductory to art course in college.
- In (2) classes of 20 students, approximately 1 to 4 students have had a college level art history class; and can recall one or two to as many as several images.
- Students have some previous basic, general familiarity with art materials; mostly from a ‘craft’ perspective.
- Students assume that art is all practice and no theory (Shulman: fantasia).
- Students come with preconceived notions of the course structure (Bereiter’s “schoolwork module”).
- Students are not completely clear they want to be teachers.
- Students come from a lecture-based learning environment, unprepared for open-ended problem solving.
- Students attend class expecting to learn what art practice/technique goes with what standard.
- Students are fearful about being judged for their talents and abilities (William Perry).
- Students are predominately of Anglo-European descent; some students are of mixed race, most are from middle class background including urban and rural environments.
- Students are predominately female; there is a gender imbalance. (Teaching AED 303 course 4 times, with 20 students per class, the numbers have typically been 18 females to 2 males; only one course had 3 male students and my first semester there were 19 females and 1 male student who was outside the 18-25 age range.) Last semester I had 2 adult students returning for certification who were between the ages of 35 and 50.

What informs the plan?

The ideas that inform the plan reflect multiple points of view, and pedagogical strategies attempting to address contemporary [global] perspectives. Art education today encourages students to communicate through images and artifacts from many times, places, and people. The instructor’s selection of umbrella content to be examined and the
following art-engaging and art-making practices are intended to guide and reflect students growing and changing understanding and knowledge. (Martin et al.) Student’s choices in selecting and highlighting particular content through quotes and personal connections both reveal, indicate and direct us to ‘see’ additional layers of content to be ‘considered’. (Dewey) Students may be asked to do additional research, choosing an artist, or article that informs and expands the dialogue, building surprising or unexpected relationships to the lesson. (Feminist ‘Participatory’ Pedagogy; see Judy Chicago)

**What is the objective of study (goals)?** Media Literacy and Visual Culture Art Education: Investigations into the influences, impact and implications of [intensive] media saturation and globalization upon the scope and sequence of art education in pre-service teaching for K-8; Subsections: Challenging Gender Assumptions in the Media: how issues of gender are portrayed in the media; Criticizing Media in terms of Representation; Challenging Childhood Notions of Innocence

**What activities can advance the objective of the study?**
The intersection of reading multiple articles, critically viewing educational documentary films, class discussion supported and followed by written reflections and art-making (art production). Documentaries by Media Education Foundation include: What A Girl Wants, Tough Guise and Killing Us Softly III. Mickey Mouse Monopoly is also included in a critical look at how Disney informs and constructs notions of childhood. Notetaking and discussion intersect in classes following the videos. This discussion is intended to lead students into selecting an issue(s) of personal relevance for the construction of a quick intensive 2-D collage 11”x14”. During the (art-making) construction of collages students can informally talk and discuss the content embedded in the assignment(s). This is intended to tease out ideas while deepening student engagement in the materials and broader topic connections to everyday life. These activities are also expected to increase familiarity of subject matter as well as a sense of comfort where discomfort may exist —with art making, with translating verbal/textual ideas into visual representations or where the content itself is challenging on emotional, social and political levels that takes time to adjust to being able to visually articulate ideas about or become familiar with
content that is ambiguous, requiring the formulation of an expressed opinion or requires taking a position on a particular aspect of the media portrayal of gender, childhood, sexuality or identity.

**How will learning be assessed?**

Students will follow and complete a written chapter summary for each article (varies and changes - 3 to 7). (These steps include summarizing chapter content; selecting a quote, restating why that quote is of personal or particular interest connected with philosophical questions; develop a question that is derived from the summary and quote, which addresses, identifies or builds a connection to your personal benefit as a pre-service teacher.) Note-taking during documentary films is strongly suggested - recording thoughts, feelings, and/or reactions, insights, statistics and/or facts conveyed in films are important means to generate self-referential material for the final 3-D dimensional art-making project. The final art project is intended to critically and conceptually (or thematically) reflect the students’ [personal] engagement (insights, findings, and attitudes) with the content, material(s), and verbal/visual interactions emerging from student discussion. Students are also provided with worksheets that function as prompts with leading open-ended questions intended to tap into deeper meaning, bridging new connections and associations or relationships with students lived experiences and the content being critically considered as important (foundational) to pre-service teaching and larger issues surrounding the art education.

**How will follow-up occur?**

Follow-up occurs in numerous ways. The course content synthesized and analyzed by students in the visual culture portion of the contemporary issues course builds momentum as the previous information feeds into laying the groundwork for this final chunk of course material. One-on-one meetings with each student as part of mini-critiques and brainstorming session that touches technical and conceptual aspects of art making. An important part of the follow-up is in a classroom gallery exhibition of art works created in response to the visual culture content. (Ultimately, a few AED graduate students would like to host a public exhibition in Chambers to include a larger audience, which can
inform and instruct a wider constituency) Over a period of time, the student discussions following the documentaries are translated into each student identifying and selecting a single issue or the intersection of multiple issues as the topic for a 3-Dimensional art work. In-class and outside class time is dedicated to developing and working on the idea, selecting the best material(s), shape and form the response will take. The final step is the exhibition where each student is expected to present their art work supported with a short statement about the work and be able to discuss the issues and ideas related to the piece. A revised follow-up assignment is to have students prepare a 2-3 page reflection which articulates synthesis of ideas and sources of inspiration for the art work. This generates yet another [final] layer of potential growth and change, and understanding and meaning to develop. This final exhibition comes just before the very close of the course, and hopefully represents a [literal] shift in student thinking from 1 or 2 dimensional thinking about issues embedded in ‘visual culture’ and ‘art education’ to thinking in more 3-dimensionally about how students construct their own perceptions of worldviews and how this informs and prepares them as pre-service teacher in relation to contemporary visual arts. A bigger final course objective is for students to compose an interdisciplinary unit plan in a group of 4 to 5 student. The visual culture exercises, content and art-making is part of the process of informing and grounding their experiences in pre-service teaching.