

Course TITLE: Empathy, the Arts, and Society

Instructor: Yiru Lim

Title/Position : Lecturer

Institution : Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS)



Course Overview:

This course will introduce students to a variety of ways about thinking about the relationship between art and empathy within society. They will examine how empathy, and the related qualities of compassion and sympathy, enable individuals to better understand individuals and communities, and consider how knowledge of others' experiences and circumstances can enable social and moral decisions and actions. The course will question the relationship between empathy and personal reflection, such as, how individuals can learn to distinguish their feelings from others', and how one is able to take another's perspective while regulating his/her own emotional responses.

Students will critically examine and evaluate the role the arts and empathy have within Asia through (1) a study of the relationship between art, empathy and society in Singapore, and Asia, and (2) a consideration of art, empathy and society within the students' local contexts of origin, in order to ground theoretical discussions in real-world contexts and circumstances. Students will be expected to critically reflect upon the relationship between art and the cultivation of empathy, and the applications of empathy within society.

Students will be expected to actively participate in the seminars and online discussions, critically reflect on theories and issues, and conduct their own research into contemporary issues that are centered within Asian and/or local contexts. For their final project, students are to compose, and evaluate, a creative project (e.g., short film, podcast, music video, literary art, visual art, mixed media) to elicit empathy for a cause they deem important to address within their local context.

Grading:

Participation: 10%

Reflection Journal I: 10%

Reflection Journal II: 15%

Reflection Journal III: 15%

Final Project: 50%