This course will explore the various meanings that have accrued, over the past twenty-five centuries of Western visual culture, around the representation of naked male and female bodies. We will study how these meanings inform current renderings of the nude and the teaching of figure drawing. We will look at the history of modeling as a practice, and how the artist-model relationship has been romanticized in literature and film. We will also investigate the uses to which the naked body has been put in recent performance art and photography, as well as how the internet has transformed our understanding of nudity and privacy. Readings will come from a variety of sources besides art history, including models’ statements, gender theory, and film theory.