

ARTD 1010 Art history and its meaning

Professor's Name
Office, Office hour
Contact information

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class is an introduction to the study of art and its history from ancient times to the present. We will examine art history as a field of cultural production, looking at works from diverse cultures—from ancient Egypt and Renaissance Italy to colonial Mexico and Edo Japan. While there is a historical framework to the course, we will focus on the practice of art history rather than its constructed chronology. Through reading, research, slides, videos, and museum visits, we will consider issues of seeing, text and image, production, art and politics, art and religion, and so on. One of the primary goals is to have you leave this class with a foundation in the main concepts and procedures employed by art historians, as well as a solid grasp of important works and eras. Writing is an important component of this course, as we describe, analyze, and compare works.

COURSE GOALS & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course has several goals:

1. **To develop visual literacy.** Rather than focus solely on visual memory, this course has specific assignments designed to increase your ability to read imagery. You will develop skills in identifying, describing, and analyzing works of art.
2. **To expose you to some of the most important artworks** from a variety of geographic areas and time periods. This is accomplished through lecture, reading, quizzes, and exams. You will learn to identify shared characteristics among diverse artworks based on periods/styles and themes. You will also relate works of art to their cultural and historical origins.
3. **To expose you to some of the most influential ideas and research** that shape Art History as a discipline. Rather than learn facts as if they evolved out of thin air, this course focuses on how our understanding of art and history is constantly changing based on current investigations. In particular, this class encourages the idea that knowledge is constantly changing, and with it our understanding of history.
4. **To discuss the various methods and approaches to understanding art**, including formal analysis, iconography, social history of art, and feminist art history. A basic understanding of *how* scholars make their arguments and select their evidence demonstrates how knowledge is produced, as well as models for students how to craft arguments.
5. **To develop your vocabulary** with which to discuss art-historical issues. Art History has its own disciplinary language, and students will finish the course with a foundation with which to take further courses. Daily, students will be exposed to this vocabulary in their readings and in lecture.
6. **To assist you in writing and thinking more critically** about artworks and art-historical scholarship. **Art History is as much about looking as it is about writing.** Low stakes writing assignments as well as a paper, along with group work and exams, will assist students in accomplishing this learning objective.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

The course involves traditional lecturing and time for discussion. This course requires time outside of lecture to complete readings and written assignments, and to prepare for examinations. **Students are also required to take at least one trip to a museum for their course paper.**

COURSE WEBSITE

The website for our course is on Blackboard, which can be accessed through the WebCentral Portal. Please make sure that the email registered on your Blackboard account is the one you check regularly; I send course emails through the BB portal.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The required textbooks for this course:

1. Amy Tucker, *Visual Literacy: Writing about Art* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2002).
2. In lieu of the traditional textbook (that typically cost \$140), this course will also use the following: Smarthistory: an open access (free!), web-based, art history textbook. You can find it at: smarthistory.org. We will also use the Metropolitan Museum's Heilbrunn Timeline (free) and the Grove Dictionary of Art (free, accessible through the Library's website).
3. Readings posted to Blackboard as links or.pdfs.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES **It is strongly recommended that you have an attendance and lateness policy; this is just one example and not specifically recommended by the Art Department**

- After **three absences**, you should expect a **letter grade lower** as a result. I reserve the right to withdraw students for excessive absences. Every lecture includes material not covered in your textbook, so it is essential that you come to lecture. Borrow another student's notes if you miss lecture. Ask him or her any questions you might have about material you missed.
 - Contact Info for another student:
Contact Name: _____
Email: _____
Telephone: _____
- There will be **NO makeup exams or quizzes**, no exceptions. Only those students who can produce a **documented medical or family emergency** will be afforded the chance to make up a missed exam (no quiz makeups). [Remember: must be documented! And the doctor cannot be a family member.]
- **Punctuality** is a behavior expected of all students. Please be in your seat at the beginning of class and remain until the end. **Students entering class after it has started will be marked as absent.** Unless there is an emergency, you should not leave the classroom prior to the end of class.
- **Lateness & Submission Policy: NO** assignments or papers will be accepted through email. **Lateness, missed trains, broken printers or computers, work schedules, or negligence are not acceptable excuses for late work either.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Grades

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| • Participation | 10% |
| • Midterm Exam | 25% |
| • Final Exam | 25% |
| • Short Writing Assignments | 10% |
| • Museum Paper | 20% |
| • Quizzes | 10% |

Final grades will not be curved or rounded up. Please refer to the scale below for what constitutes a specific letter grade.

Grade Scale

97.00 – 100.00%	A+
94.00 – 96.00%	A
90.00 – 93.00%	A-
87.00 – 89.00%	B+
84.00 – 86.00%	B
80.00 – 83.000%	B- ... etc.

- **Blackboard Discussion Board:** It is critical that students attend class, as the lectures provide important information not found in the readings. Also, you need to attend lecture to participate actively in our discussions. You will continue our discussions on Blackboard by posting questions and comments on the Discussion Board. You need to post at least one question or comment each week. These are meant as a way for you to interact with your peers outside the classroom. ***You will post within your learning community group, so there will be two different discussion groups (you only need post in the one to which you belong). These questions are not to be directed to me, and your postings should not relate questions for which you can receive a *yes* or *no* answer.
 - Blackboard Question Example 1: Not so good: Do you like the site of Angkor Wat? Better: To me Angkor Wat is appealing because [your opinion]. Does anyone else find the site appealing for the same reasons? Why or why not?
 - Blackboard Question Example 2: Not so good: The idea of iconography is weird. I don't get it. Better: Panofsky's idea that you have to match a primary source text to a depicted subject is problematic to me; what if a culture doesn't have written texts? Then how does the theory work?
- **Exams:** There are two exams for this class, a midterm and final exam; the latter is not cumulative. They are based on lecture material, required course readings, discussions, and videos. There will not be in-class reviews. I will distribute study guides. Exams will be composed of slide identifications, multiple choice, short answers and essays (single slide of comparisons). What is a slide i.d.? You identify an image by providing the artist's name, work's title, date, and original location. Images for which you need to know the i.d. information will be posted as .jpeg on Blackboard and marked with a red 'x' on the powerpoints.
- **Quizzes:** There will be several short quizzes scheduled throughout the semester to help you learn material and prepare for the exams. Quizzes could include slide identifications, multiple-choice questions, matching, fill-in-the-blank, or short answers. Your lowest grade will be dropped, so there will be no makeup quizzes, no exceptions. If you miss a quiz due to any type of absence, then this counts as your missed quiz. Quizzes will NOT be cumulative. We will schedule them throughout the semester.
- **Short Writing Assignments:** There are several writing assignments throughout the quarter. They are all related to exercises in your textbook.
 - o Any assignment noted as an informal writing assignment can be handwritten in your notebook, on a separate sheet of paper, etc. However, please be aware that I might collect these assignments so if you write them in your notebook I will need to take it until the following lecture.
 - o All other assignments, unless otherwise noted, should be typed in Times New Roman or Arial, with 12-point font, 1" margins all around, double-spaced.
 - o These assignments are low-stakes writing assignments intended to develop your writing and critical thinking skills. They will be graded on a scale of !+, !, !-.

- **Museum Paper:** Each student will write one short paper on an object of his or her choice from a local museum, such as the Brooklyn Museum, Metropolitan Museum, or Museum of Modern Art. The paper will be 2 full-pages in length. The goals of this assignment are threefold: (1) to look in detail at a work of art, (2) to describe a work of art using art vocabulary, and (3) to analyze the formal qualities of an artwork. A *separate handout* will provide more details.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Last day to add a course: Thursday, Sep. 1
- Last day to file Pass/Fail application: Tuesday, Sep. 13
- Last day to drop a course without a grade of 'W': Thursday, Sep. 15
- Last day to file for Fall 2011 graduation: Friday, Oct. 14
- **Midterm Exam:** Thurs., Oct. 20 (in class)
- **Museum Paper Due:** Thursday, Nov. 1
- Last day to apply for a withdrawal ('W' grade) from courses: Thurs., Nov. 17
- Holiday (No Classes): Thanksgiving Break, Nov. 24-27
- **Final Exam Time:** Thursday, December 15, 8-10AM

COURSE ETIQUETTE NOTE: Some faculty like to have an etiquette section on their syllabi and some do not; there is an example here for your consideration but the Art Department does not specifically recommend such language

- During both lecture and discussion, please be respectful of the instructor and other students. Please refrain from talking, eating, sleeping, browsing the internet, checking email or Facebook, reading the newspaper, text messaging, doodling, and any other action that serves as a distraction to those around you. Please do not leave class early; it is disruptive. And please, KEEP YOUR CELL PHONES OUT OF SIGHT! *I will ask you to leave if you are engaging in distracting actions, including texting or talking.*
- **Emails:** Consider emails a last resort. If you have questions, please come see me in office hours. I am but one person; there are many of you. For this reason, please consider emailing a privilege. Post questions to Blackboard. When you email me, include in the subject heading the course number and reason for your email, and always include your name. The following are not appropriate reasons for communicating with the professor by email: (1) to request extra credit; (2) to attempt to negotiate changes in exam grades or final grade; (3) to find out what you missed during an absence; (4) or to ask what material will be covered on exams or quizzes--this information is announced in class.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

- You are all expected to be students of integrity. If anyone is caught cheating or plagiarizing, there will be serious repercussions; you will be reported to the Dean of Students. If you do not know what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please come talk to me and review the following resources:
 - Plagiarism: What is it and how to recognize it:
<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>
 - Is it Plagiarism Yet?
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>
 - Or consult with someone at the BC Learning Center:
<http://lc.brooklyn.cuny.edu/>
- If a student is found cheating or plagiarizing then no credit will be given for the assignment and the incident will be reported as per Brooklyn's policy, which states:

"The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, **the faculty member MUST report the violation.**" [This means that if you cheat on a test or an assignment, I *will* file a report, which will initiate academic penalties.]

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

- If you require certain accommodations (e.g., additional time on tests), please read this statement from the Center for Student Disability Services: **"In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her."**
- If you qualify, then you need to notify the professor to make arrangements for a quiz/exam in the testing center at least one week before the exam/quiz date.
- ***No special accommodations will be made for anyone unless there is a documented reason.

PLEASE NOTE: The professor reserves the right to change the syllabus as needed over the semester. By remaining enrolled in this class, you accept that this syllabus is a binding contract between the student and professor. **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Note: All readings listed under a given day are to be completed for that days' class.

WEEK 1

Introduction: What is Art? What is the value of art? What is its purpose?

Visual Description

- Reading: (1) Syllabus; (2) Tucker, pp. xii-xiv, 2-3 (end at "Writing Assignment"), 25-58 (chapter two).
- Recommended Reading: Smarthistory: "The Skill of Describing": <http://smarthistory.org/skill-of-describing.html>

WEEK 2

Visual Analysis and Visual Literacy; art from Multiple Perspectives; Methods

- Reading: Tucker, pp. 3-24; chapter 10.

Empire Builders I. Ancient Egypt

- Reading: (1) Tucker, pp. 59-61 (stop at "Case Study"); (2)
- Assignment due: Look to Tucker p. 3 Complete the Writing Assignment described. You can write about any artwork--if you are stuck, browse the Brooklyn Museum or Metropolitan Museum website! The assignment need not be written formally, but can be written in note form with bullet points. Make sure to answer all the questions. Due at the beginning of lecture.

WEEK 3

Empire Builders II. Greeks

- Reading: All from Smarthistory: (1) Ancient Greece and Rome; <http://smarthistory.org/ancient-greece-and-rome.html>; (2) Geometric Krater; <http://smarthistory.org/geometric-greek.html>; (3) New York Kouros; <http://smarthistory.org/new-york-kouros.html>; (4) Polykleitos; <http://smarthistory.org/classical-greek.html>; (5) Dying Gaul: <http://smarthistory.org/dying-gaul.html>

Empire Builders III. Romans

- Reading: Pantheon: <http://smarthistory.org/roman-architecture-the-pantheon.html>
- Augustus of Prima Porta: http://mv.vatican.va/4_ES/pages/z-Patrons/MV_Patrons_04_03.html

- Assignment due: Write a few sentences (it can be handwritten) describing the difference between a formal and contextual analysis of a work of art.

WEEK 4

The Rise of World Faiths I. Rise of Christianity

- Reading: <http://smarthistory.org/early-christian-art.html> & Part 2 <http://smarthistory.org/early-christian-art-in-the-2nd-and-3rd-centuries.html>
- Assignment due: Write a short paragraph describing the composition and color of one object that we have discussed in lecture.

The Rise of World Faiths II. Early Indian Buddhist Art

- Reading: Buddhism and Buddhist Art: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/budd/hd_budd.htm

WEEK 5

Early Islamic Art

- Reading: The Birth of Islam: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/isla/hd_isla.htm & The Umayyad Period: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/umay/hd_umay.htm
- Reading for Museum Paper: In preparation for your museum paper, please read the following: Tucker, Chapter 5, pp. 116-126. Please be aware that not all the information will be relevant to your formal analysis, but many of Tucker's points about structuring an essay are useful.
- Assignment due: Write a short paragraph describing the spatial qualities and line of one object that we have discussed in lecture.

WEEK 6

Interacting with the Gods I. Medieval: Pilgrimage & Relics

- Reading: Relics and Reliquaries: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/relic/hd_relic.htm. Also, read an overview on Church Architecture: <http://smarthistory.org/church-architecture-an-overview.html>
- Recommended Reading: Pilgrimage in Medieval Europe: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/pilg/hd_pilg.htm.
- Recommended Activity: Begin reviewing your notes, readings, and assignments in preparation for the Midterm examination. The Midterm will cover all material from week 1 through week 7.

WEEK 7

Interacting with the Gods II. Maya Art

- Reading: None. Continue to study for Midterm.
- Reading for Museum Paper: Tucker, chapter 6, pp. 132-141 (stop at "Linking"). While you are not writing a comparative formal analysis, these pages are useful in demonstrating how a formal analysis is written.
- Recommended Reading: For anyone interested in sacred Maya Kingship, I recommend browsing the website for the exhibition *Lords of Creation: Origins of Sacred Maya Kingship*

Interacting with the Gods III. Aztec Art

- Reading: (1) Tenochtitlan: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/teno_1/hd_teno_1.htm; (2) Templo Mayor: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/teno_2/hd_teno_2.htm

WEEK 8

The Museum: Case Study of The Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Reading: Tucker, chapter 4 (91-112), then read Tucker pp.73-79 (start at "Historical Context").

*****MIDTERM EXAM*****

WEEK 9

Art and Nature I. Landscape in Chinese Art and Architecture

- Reading: (1) Chinese Painting: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chin/hd_chin.htm; (2) Landscape Painting in Chinese Art: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/clpg/hd_clpg.htm
- Reading for Museum Paper: Tucker, Chapter 6, pp. 141-149. This section is very useful; you should attempt to incorporate these writing strategies into your paper as much as possible. I would also recommend that before turning in your paper, you read over chapter 8 on Editing an Essay.

Art and Nature II. Japanese Art: Zen Arts and Rock Gardens

- Reading: (1) Zen Buddhism: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/zen/hd_zen.htm; (2) Tucker pp. 61-66 (stop at "Subject Matter, Function...").
- Assignment: Tucker p. 66 (informal). Complete Writing Topic 2. This is an informal assignment, so you can handwrite it.

WEEK 10

Art and Nature III. Northern Renaissance

- Reading: (1) Tucker, pp. 66-73; (2) Renaissance in Flanders: <http://smarthistory.org/Flanders.html>; (3) Early Netherlandish Painting: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/enet/hd_enet.htm
- Assignment Due: ***Museum Paper ***

The Body I. Italian Renaissance

- Reading: (1) Florence in the Early Renaissance: <http://smarthistory.org/Florence.html>. For further reading, please look at the links to Brunelleschi, Donatello, Masaccio, and Piero della Francesca; (2) The Nude in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/numr/hd_numr.htm

WEEK 11

The Body II. Visions and Fantasies in the Early Modern Period

- Reading: Bernini's St. Teresa: <http://smarthistory.org/bernini-ecstasy-of-st.-theresa.html>

The First Global Economy I. African Sculpture of Benin

- Reading: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bnch/hd_bnch.htm

WEEK 12

The First Global Economy II. The Hispanic Empire

- Reading: Art of the Mission Schools in Mexico: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mxms/hd_mxms.htm
- Assignment Due: This is an informal writing assignment. Write a few sentences comparing the patronage context of a Benin portrait head and the patronage of an object from Western Europe (your choice). How is the commissioning context similar or different?

The First Global Economy III. Later Islamic Art in India

- Reading: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mugh_2/hd_mugh_2.htm

WEEK 13

Exploration, Exploitation, and Enlightenment I. Romanticism and Enlightenment

- Reading: Age of Enlightenment: <http://smarthistory.org/1700-1800-Age-of-Enlightenment.html>; (2) The Grand Odalisque: <http://smarthistory.org/grand-odalisque.html>

WEEK 14

Exploration, Exploitation, and Enlightenment II. Modernity in Europe

- Reading: Becoming Modern: <http://smarthistory.org/becoming-modern.html>

Exploration, Exploitation, and Enlightenment III. Arts of Mana in Oceania

- Reading: European Exploration of the Pacific, 1600-1800: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/expa/hd_expa.htm

WEEK 15

World of Our Making I. Breaking with Conventions

- Reading: (1) Met Timeline on “Fauvism”: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/fauv/hd_fauv.htm; (2) Met Timeline on Cubism: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cube/hd_cube.htm; (3) Smarthistory: Matisse’s Red Studio: <http://smarthistory.org/Red-Studio.html>

World of Our Making II. Art after 1945

- Reading: Age of Post-colonialism: <http://smarthistory.org/1960-2010-Age-of-Post-Colonialism.html>

WEEK 16

World of Our Making III. Contemporary Art & Wrapping Up

- Reading: None. Study for Final Exam.