

Bergen Community College
Division of Arts and Humanities
Department of Arts & Communication

Course Syllabus

Art 101 Introduction to Art and Visual Culture
Three Credits, Three Contact Hours

- I. Catalogue Description: Introduction to Art and Visual Culture trains students in the analysis of images and aesthetic objects and considers issues regarding art production, viewer response, and art in society. A spectrum of fine art, decorative arts, and commercial design from diverse cultures is presented in a non-chronological format through illustrated lectures, discussions, and independent visits to exhibitions. Techniques of visual and thematic analysis are applied to exemplary works from world cultural history and contemporary life.
- II. Student Learning Objectives: As a result of meeting the requirements of this course, students will be able to:
- A. Define and apply the vocabulary of visual analysis in speech and in writing in regard to works of art viewed in reproduction, to works of art viewed directly (as in an exhibition or outdoor sculpture) and to visual culture at large such as print and internet images.
 - B. Describe the materials and processes utilized in making works of art in a variety of media.
 - C. Identify significant artists and works of art in history in diverse western and non-western cultures, and their varying relations to support and funding by religious and secular institutions, private patronage, and the government
 - D. Demonstrate understanding of the historical development of private and public museums of art and recognize classical sources of traditional museum architecture and modern styles of recent architecture
 - E. Perform elementary creation of original visual art
- III. Course Content:
- A. Course Orientation
 - 1. Procedures and requirements
 - 2. Structure of course
 - 3. Explanation of special features: homework journal and viewing of art away from BCC
 - 4. Evaluation methods
 - B. Visual Literacy: Approaches to making and seeing art (Sayre, *World of Art*, chapters 2-3)
 - 1. Fundamental themes of art: the representation of the world, power of the imagination, the idea of the beautiful
 - 2. Sources toward understanding art: visual analysis; information from the artist and contemporaries; information from historians; historical contexts; personal response
 - C. Formal Elements of Art and their Interaction (*World of Art* chapters 5 - 9)
 - 1. Line
 - 2. Space
 - 3. Light and color
 - 4. Interaction of elements in design
 - D. Preparation for assignment to view art in a museum
 - 1. Museum buildings: Greek and Roman architecture as a source for the design of the Louvre and the Metropolitan Museum; other museums' modern architecture (*World of Art* chapter 16)
 - 2. History of private art collecting, development of museums, museums' relation to its

- audiences (articles on reserve)
- E. The Fine Arts Media (*World of Art* chapters 12 - 15)
 1. Drawing, with graphite, charcoal, pastel, etc.
 2. Painting: with encaustic, fresco, tempera, oil, watercolor, gouache, acrylic
 3. Sculpture: carving, modeling, casting, assemblage
 4. Mixed media, installation, site specific, land art
 5. Photography and video
 - F. Critical Thinking about Art and Visual Culture
 1. Art in Public Places (*World of Art* chapter 4)
 - a. Considerations of Art in relation to politics and the public space (articles on reserve)
 - b. Examples of works of contemporary art in public spaces
 - c. Artists's and Critics's perspectives on public art and memorials in relation to a diverse society
 - d. Issues of public funding of works of art in the public sphere
 - e. Paper assignment requiring an independent viewing of a work of art in a public place
 2. Gender and Identity Construction in art history and visual culture
 - a.: The representation of the female gender in art history by male and female artists
 - b. The representation of the male gender in art history by meal and female artists
 - c. Contemporary representations of gender in magazines (editorial and advertisements)
 - G. Creation of a collage cover of an individual class journal and one other art project.

IV. Instructional Procedures

- A. Lectures/Discussions
- B. Reading Assignments
- C. Class Journal: responses to readings, all other material produced and gathered for class
- D. Students' oral presentations
- E. Evaluation/Assessment: see below chart

Percent	Evaluation/Assessment	Objective as in II
30%	Quizzes/Tests based on lectures, reading, cd-rom exercises	A, B, C, D, E
20%	Paper analyzing of two works of art and/or visual culture at the Metropolitan Museum	A, D, C
10%	Paper analyzing a sculpture or memorial installed in a public place: town square, outdoors, a mall, in a corporate lobby, a park, etc, considering its aesthetics, its siting relative to its environment, funding, etc.	A, B
5%	Oral and written analyses of magazine advertisements	A
5%	Artistic activities: Collage cover of journal, other project requiring creation of a work of visual art	E
15%	Journal compilation of all work done for the class	A, B, C, D, E
15%	Class attendance and participation	

- I. Required Textbook: Henry M. Sayre, *World of Art*, most recent edition
- A. Articles on reserve at the discretion of the instructor, for example:
- Berger, John, *Ways of Seeing*, New York: Penguin Books, 1972 N7430.5 .W39 1972b
- Berger, Maurice, Brian Wallis, and Simon Watson, eds., *Constructing Masculinity*, New York: Routledge, 1995 HQ1090 .C66 1995
- Butler, Judith, *Gender Trouble*, HQ1154 B88, New York: Routledge, 1990
- Bzdak, Meredith Arms, *Public Sculpture in New Jersey*, 1999 NB230.N5 B98 1999
- Doss, Erika, *Spirit Poles and Flying Pigs, Public Art and Cultural Democracy in American Communities* Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1995 N8835 .D67 1995
- Ferguson, Russell, ed., *Out there : Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*. Cambridge: MIT, 1990 NX180.S6 O97 1990b
- Karp, Ivan and Steven D. Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures, The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991 AM151 .E94 1991
- Nelson, Robert S. And Margaret Olin, *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003 CC135 .M647 2003
- Public Art Fund, *Plop: Recent Projects of the Public Art Fund*, London, New York: Merrill, 2004 N8845.N7 P45 2004
- Saslow, James, *Pictures and Passions : a History of Homosexuality in the Visual Arts* New York: Viking, 1999 N8217.H67 S27
- Senie, Harriet F., *Contemporary Public Sculpture : Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy*, New York: Harper Collins, 1992 NB198 .S355 1992
- Staniszewski, Mary Anne, *Believing is Seeing, Creating the Culture of Art* New York: Penguin Books, 1995 N72.5 .S72 1995
- Stephens, Suzanne, *Imagining Ground Zero*, New York: Rizzoli, 2004 on order

II. Sample Course Calendar and Outline

1. **Introduction to the course**

What is “Art”? What is “visual culture”? Why study art and visual culture?

Explain course activities and evaluation methods.

Begin instruction in visual analysis

2. **THE VISUAL WORLD:**

Approaches to Making and Seeing Art

For example, from *World of Art*, chapter 1, four approaches to the relation between art and nature.

3. **Class discussion of “What is ‘Art’?”**

Begin work toward formulating qualities of works of art. For instance, in response to examples they have selected from the textbook, students will discuss in small groups and report to the class as a whole their personal criteria for what makes a work of art and what is lacking in non-art works.

4. **Visual Literacy**

In regard to *World* Chapter 2, basic terms in describing artists’ approaches to rendering the world: representational, abstract, nonobjective; form and content; conventions; iconography

5. <http://www.prenhall.com/sayre>. Continue and complete this chapter’s examples

6. **Themes of Art**

In regard to *World* Chapter 3, the representation of the world; the power of imagination; the idea of the beautiful.

7. **THE FORMAL ELEMENTS AND THEIR DESIGN**

Visual Elements: Line

World Chapter 5

8. **Visual Elements: Space**

World Chapter 6

9. **Visual Elements: Light and Color**

World Chapter 7

10. **The Visual Elements' Interaction: Design**

World Chapters 8 and 9

11. Catch-up and/or review class

12. **Test on chapters 1-3 and 5-9**

13. **THE MUSEUM**

Religious and Museum Architecture

In regard to *World* Chapter 16, the history of architectural forms, and the look of museums classical/historical and contemporary.

14. **The Museum in History and Society**

Assigned readings on the history of collecting and of museums. Discussion of factors in exhibition presentation that affect the perception of works of art. Potential readings: Carol Duncan, "Art Museums and the Ritual of Citizenship," and Susan Vogel, "Always True to the Object, in Our Fashion," in *Exhibiting Cultures*, 88-104 and 191-204.

15. **FINE ARTS MEDIA:**

Drawing

World, Chapter 10

16. **Painting Materials and Supports: Encaustic and Fresco**

World Chapter 12

17. **Painting: Tempera, Oil, Watercolor, Gouache, Synthetic Media**

World Chapter 12

18. <http://www.prenhall.com/sayre>, **Sculpture: Carving, Modeling, Casting, Assemblage**

World Chapter 13

19. **Mixed Media, Installation, Environmental Art**

World Chapter 14

20. **The Camera Arts**

Historical and contemporary photography and video; *World* Chapter 15

21. Catch-up and/or review class

22. **Test on Chapters 10-16**

23 **CRITICAL THINKING ABOUT ART AND VISUAL CULTURE**

Art, Politics and the Public Space

World Chapter 4; possible text: Doss, *Spirit Poles*, introduction

24. **Art in Public Spaces**

Contemporary issues; readings from reserve articles

25. **Public Art, continued; case study**

For example, the World Trade Center monuments and sculpture. Nelson, *Monuments*, "The Rhetoric of Monument Making, The World Trade Center," 305-323 and Stephens, *Imagining Ground Zero*, 12-47.

26. **Gender and Identity Construction in Art History: The Female**

Regarding images of women in *World*, Part V, "The Visual Record" such as # 669, 658, 659, 683, 689, 690, 702, 710, 735. Possible text: *Ways of Seeing* on the representation of women in art

27. **Gender and Identity Construction in Art History: The Male**

Regarding images of men in *World*, Part V, "The Visual Record" such as #85, 617, 650, 660, 686, 696, 699, 749. Possible texts in *Constructing Masculinity*

28. **Discussion of journal photo-essays on gender construction as an "aesthetic" issue.**

Example: Students will show and discuss their assemblage of images of various types of men and women clipped from magazines and newspapers

29. **Students' oral presentation and analysis of a fellow student's art project.** For example, by pre-arrangement, students exchange works of art they have made as per a specific assignment and in front of the class analyze the visual and thematic components as they would a work in a book or gallery.

30. Continue and conclude class.

VII. Rationale for course modification:

- A. Remove the implications in the course title "appreciation" of art-viewer/student passivity
- B. Explicitly integrate visual culture with the study of art history which is non-chronological
- C. Mandate international, multicultural examples in class discussions of visual formal elements
- D. Emphasize the importance of writing through journal responses to the readings and other materials.
- E. Mandate analysis of works of art viewed in a museum, in the public realm, and in advertising.

VIII. Projection of Additional Resources: none

IX Expected Date of Implementation: Fall 2005