



AUF

The American
University of Florence

SYLLABUS

SAS – SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY
COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO ART HISTORY
COURSE CODE: LAAHAH210
3 semester credits

1. DESCRIPTION

This introductory art history course will take students through Italian and European art from the classical Greek and Roman periods up to and including the eighteenth century. Special emphasis will be given to Florentine and Italian art of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and to the “Golden Age” of the Renaissance. The course is aimed at students who have not taken a history of western art course before. Lectures will alternate with on-site teaching in Florence including architectural walking tours and visits to relevant museums, churches, and palaces.

2. OBJECTIVES

This course aims for students to become conversant with the major developments of Western Art and become familiar with many masterpieces of Florentine Renaissance art between 1250 and 1600. Students will also be able to identify works of different styles and techniques and place them in their proper context. The students will learn to analyze, identify, and date paintings, sculptures and works of architecture created by the most important artists from Classical Antiquity to the twentieth century. The main artistic innovations and techniques will be discussed in the context of historical, political, and religious events and ideas affecting the visual arts in Europe. Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

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- Gain general familiarity with artistic production through the ages;
- Become knowledgeable about the historical and political background of artistic production and patronage;
- Develop of visual skills necessary to recognize different styles and periods;
- Gain general familiarity with the language of art, including specific artistic terminology, iconography and symbolism related to the subject matter of this course;
- Gain awareness of the main artistic trends and in particular the artistic and technical innovations from Classical Antiquity to the twentieth century;
- Recognize main artists of Renaissance in Florence and to the extent of their indebtedness to ancient art and architecture;
- Recognize the history of the Medici family and of the importance of Medici art sponsorship as a tool of cultural politics;
- Gain firsthand experience of the works and styles of the main Italian artists through the ages.

3. REQUIREMENTS

There are no prerequisites for this course.

4. METHOD

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

- Stokstad, Marilyn and Cothren, Michael. *Art: A Brief History*. 5th Edition, Pearson, 2008.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

FURTHER READINGS

- Charles Avery, *Florentine Renaissance Sculpture*, John Murray, chaps.1-7;
- Kenneth Clark, *The Nude*, Penguin;
- Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*, Harper & Row; (Essential for those unfamiliar with religious subject matter - Old and New Testament - which constitutes most of the subject matter of early Renaissance art. Also useful for mythological subject matter)
- Frederick Hartt, *A History of Italian Renaissance Art*, Prentice Hall & Abrams, part 2;
- F.W. Kent, *Lorenzo de Medici & the Art of Magnificence*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 2004;
- Lauro Martines, *April Blood*, Jonathan Cape, London 2003;
- Peter Murray, *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, Thames & Hudson, chaps.2-4; Roberta Olson, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, chaps. 1-6;
- John T. Paoletti & Gary H. Radke, *Art in Renaissance Italy*, Laurence King;
- Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, Penguin, vol.1;
- Evelyn. Welch, *Art and Society in Italy 1350-1500*, Oxford University Press;

LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/

BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

www.bibliotecadelleoblade.it

THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This

library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: www.britishinstitute.it/en

6. FIELD LEARNING

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

7. COURSE MATERIALS

No additional course materials are necessary.

8. COURSE FEES

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM

10% Attendance

15% Participation & Assignments

20% Midterm Exam (or Special Project, if applicable)

15% Final Paper

10% Presentation

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

Absences are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

Participation: Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

The **Midterm** exam accounts for 20% and the **Final exam** accounts for 30% of the final course grade. For exam time and date consult the course addendum. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.**

Format: the exams comprises multiple choice, short-answer, and essay-based questions, for a total of 100 points.

The **Final Paper** accounts for 15% of the course grade. This is a scholarly paper with a proper bibliography and in-text citations. The paper should delve deeper into a concept of the course, such as a painting, a technique, a material, or an epoch. Students need to find an appropriate research question and find sources to support their thesis.

The **Presentation** accounts for 10% of the course grade. This is a group project. Each group will analyze an artistic period and find correlations to the city of Florence. They will create a map of an itinerary with at least 3 locations that have not been visited or greatly analyzed during class time. Students should support their argumentations with their own photos.

The **Special Project** (if applicable) is worth 20% of the final course grade. This consists of a stylistic analysis of relevant artworks (paintings, statues, architectures etc.) of choice, where similarities and differences should be carefully assessed using proper terms and notions.

12. LESSONS

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Course overview, content, structure, assessment and expectations. Art of ancient Greece and the Aegean world.
Objectives	Identify how archeology has recovered, reconstructed, and interpreted ancient Aegean material culture. Be able to trace the emergence of a distinctive style and approach to art and architecture during the early centuries of Greek civilization.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 5

Lesson 2	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Etruscan and Roman art.
Objectives	Identify how Etruscan funerary art celebrates the vitality of human existence. Identify the main differences and similarities between Etruscan and Roman art with references to the historical context. Be able to trace the development of portraiture as a major form of artistic expression for the Romans.

Visit	Roman Florence: the intersection of <i>cardo</i> and <i>decumanus</i> in Piazza della Repubblica. Borgo Santi Apostoli 16, focus on ancient thermal baths.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 6

Lesson 3	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Jewish, early Christian, and Byzantine art.
Objectives	Identify how aspects of early Jewish and Early Christian art developed from the artistic traditions of the Roman world. Recognize the ways Early Christian and Byzantine artists used narrative and iconic imagery to convey the foundations of the Christian faith.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 7 Assignment 1: Visit (with peers or independently) and then write a report based on Chiesa di Santa Margherita de' Cerchi, focusing on its layout, history, and religious relevance. Take and incorporate pertinent pictures.

Lesson 4	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Early Medieval and Romanesque art.
Objectives	Identify the variety of styles and subjects used to illustrate medieval manuscripts. Recognize the main narratives of early Medieval artistic endeavors. Gain knowledge about the emergence of Romanesque architecture across Europe.
Visit	Piazza del Limbo, Chiesa Santi Apostoli. Piazza S. Remigio, Chiesa San Remigio.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 10

Lesson 5	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Gothic art and architecture.
Objectives	Investigate the ideas, events, and structural innovations that led to the development of Gothic architecture. Identify how gothic artists communicated complex theological ideas and moralizing religious stories in stained glass, sculpture, and illustrated books.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 11 Assignment 2: Visit (with peers or independently) and then write a report based on Chiesa Santa Trinita, focusing on its layout, history, and religious relevance. Take and incorporate pertinent pictures.

Lesson 6	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Early Renaissance art: Florence as the cradle of the Renaissance.
Objectives	Evaluate the motivation, development, and use of both linear perspective and the Classical past in fifteenth-century Florentine paintings. Identify the effects of patronage on the development of artistic products. Understand the role of the Medici family in fostering artistic mastery.
Visit	Doors of the Battistero di San Giovanni.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 12

Lesson 7	
Meet	In class
Lecture	MIDTERM EXAM

Lesson 8	
NA	ACADEMIC BREAK

Lesson 9	
Meet	In class
Lecture	High Renaissance and Reformation art.
Objectives	Identify the shift in the artistic center of Italy from Florence to Rome during the High Renaissance. Understand the historical, artistic, and symbolic changes emerging during the Reformation. Recognize the efforts of Pope Julius II to create a new “golden age”.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 13 (pp. 325-348) Assignment 3: Visit and compare two Florentine artworks from Early and High Renaissance, focusing on the characteristics that showcase a compositional evolution.

Lesson 10	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Mannerism: reacting to harmonious ideals.
Objectives	Gain knowledge about the meaning and nomenclature of Mannerism. Explore the intentional subversion of Classical style and decorum in the work of Mannerist artist. Gain knowledge about the main qualities of Mannerist art in comparison to High Renaissance canons.
Visit	Chiesa SS. Annunziata. Chiostrino dei Voti.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 13 (pp. 348-365)

Lesson 11	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Baroque: splendor, contrast, motion, and exuberance.
Objectives	Gain knowledge about the work of Bernini and Caravaggio and how it blossomed into Baroque, spreading its influence across Europe. Identify the reasons that led to the spread of Baroque as a contrasting movement to Protestant art. Identify the ways that seventeenth-century artists created works that embodied the power and prestige of the monarchy.
Visit	Piazza San Firenze.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 14 Assignment 4: Visit and analyze the composition of the external layout of Cappelle dei Principi in Piazza di Madonna degli Aldobrandini, writing a report based on their Baroque influence.

Lesson 12	
Meet	In class

Lecture	Neo-classicism and the Age of Enlightenment.
Objectives	Investigate Neoclassicism as a reflection of Enlightenment values with roots in the study of Classical antiquity in Rome. Identify the main characteristics of Neoclassical art, iconography, and values. Understand how neo-classicism in the visual arts is in dialogue with philosophy.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad, Chapter 17, pp. 457-463

Lesson 13	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Romanticism, emotion, and individualism.
Objectives	Identify the many subjects of Romanticism, from the sublime in nature to the turbulent political climate in France. Recognize the common interest of Romantic artists in emotion and feeling. Identify the role of individualism in Romanticism.
Readings/ Assignments	Read: Stokstad and Cothren, Chapter 17, pp. 464-472

Lesson 14	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Art history timeline. Final review and presentations.
Objectives	Be able to envision art as a historical product. Have a clear understanding of the artistic reactions that formed art movements and ideologies.
Readings/ Assignments	Submit Final Paper. Submit Presentation Slides.

Lesson 15	
Meet	In class
Lecture	FINAL EXAM