Spring 2019 Undergraduate Courses in Art History

ARTH 282
Introduction to World Art
Multiple sections, see My NIU Profs. S. Bell, H. Nagata, S. Bentkowski

An introduction to the ways in which human civilization has imagined itself and expressed its vision of the world over time and in different cultural contexts across the globe, this course also considers how these arts continue to be interpreted by contemporary scholars and audiences. Face-to-face (single instructor and team-taught) and online sections offered.

This course satisfies PLUS (Creativity and Critical Analysis) requirements and is included in the Origins and Influences Pathway. This course is required for all students in the School of Art and Design.

ARTH 292
Art and Design Since 1900
Multiple sections, see My NIU Profs. R. Houze, S. Evans, S. Sabau

A wide-ranging survey of artworks and practices that have challenged the artistic status quo while responding to the diverse economic, political, and social contexts of the recent past and present. Face-to-face and online sections offered.

This course satisfies PLUS (Creativity and Critical Analysis) requirements and is included in the Creativity, Innovation and Change Pathway. This course is required for all students in the School of Art and Design.

ARTH 294
Art History Survey: Arts of Asia
Tu 6-8:40pm Prof. C. Raymond

This course presents a chronological and thematic study of six millennia of the arts and architecture in China, Japan, India and Southeast Asia, including burial arts from the neolithic through the T’ang dynasty, and encompassing Buddhist and Taoist ritual arts, painting, calligraphy, sculpture, ceramics, prints, garden
design and architecture. We will study works in a wide variety of media – jade, bronze, wood, lacquer, silk, ceramics and paper – examining their emergence within their historical, religious and cultural contexts, as well as the persistent influence of their creation within the cultural and archeological setting.

This course has no pre-requisites, and no previous exposure to Asian art is necessary.

This course satisfies PLUS (Creativity and Critical Analysis) requirements and is included in the Global Connections Pathway. This course is required for art history majors.

ARTh 310F
Studies in Ancient and Middle Eastern Art: Etruscan and Early Roman Art
TuTh 12:30-1:45pm Prof. S. Bell
The Etruscans were a vibrant, independent people whose distinct civilization flourished in central Italy for most of the first millennium BCE and whose artistic, social and cultural traditions helped shape the ancient Mediterranean, European, and Classical worlds. This course surveys Etruscan art and culture, incorporating the most up-to-date research (e.g., DNA findings) and recent archaeological discoveries. In addition to addressing traditional topics, such as architecture, wall painting, ceramics, and sculpture, this course will look at such topics as Etruscan jewelry as an expression of social identity, the important role of women in its society, the supposed “taste” for violence in Etruscan art, the reception of the Etruscans in Greek and Latin literature, and the afterlife of their civilization.

To these ends, the course is divided into three parts: (1) an historical introduction, in which we will survey the evidence, general trends and historical development of the Etruscans; (2) thematic topics, in which we will look in depth at particular aspects of their art, society and culture; and (3) a look at contemporary issues, including the debate over their origins and the impact of looting and the modern antiquities trade on their heritage.

This course satisfies PLUS (Society and Culture) requirements, is included in the Origins and Influences Pathway, and has been certified as “Writing Infused.”

ARTh 330E
Studies in Early Modern European Art: 17th- and 18th-Century European Art
M 6-8:40pm Prof. A. Culotta
From the bold drama of the Baroque era to the nuanced interpretations of history in the Neoclassical age, European art experienced substantial shifts over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This course examines this transformation through the lens of a broad survey of artists and architects working across the European continent. Lectures, discussions, and assignments incorporating visual and critical analysis will provide the opportunity for students to explore some of the era’s most essential artists from Caravaggio to David. At the same time, students will consider the impacts of key political, religious, cultural, and ideological shifts, including aspects such as the nature of artistic originality, the lasting resonance of the Counter-Reformation, the rationality of the Enlightenment, the arrival of The Grand Tour, and the growing influence of colonial expansion.

This course satisfies PLUS (Society and Culture) requirements, is included in the Origins and Influences Pathway, and has been certified as “Writing Infused.”

ARTh 350C
Studies in Contemporary Art: 1960-present
MW 2-3:15pm Prof. S. Evans
Any artist works within an historically distinct and limited field of possibilities defined by the artworld. Thus, study of the history of art is really a study of ideas about art. The era of contemporary art begins in the mid-1950s, when artists adopt Duchamp’s insight that art is conceptual, not visual. This means that an artwork is
not primarily a visually stimulating object; instead, it is a vehicle for investigation and communication. Rather than focus on individual artists or movements, this course covers significant discourses about the nature and goals of advanced art-practice in an era of increased institutionalization and commodification of art.

ARTH 350C satisfies PLUS (Creativity and Critical Analysis) requirements, is included in the Creativity, Innovation and Change Pathway, and has been certified as “Writing Infused.”

ARTH 362
History of Visual Communication
TuTh 2-3:15pm  Prof. R. Houze
This course examines topics in the world history of graphic design, illustration, and new media from the nineteenth century to the present, with an emphasis on cross-cultural, international, and trans-national exchange. We will examine the relationship between art, design, and history from numerous points of view, including those of contemporary designers, critics, and historians.
This course satisfies PLUS (Creativity and Critical Analysis) requirements and is included in the Global Connections Pathway.

ARTH 370B
Studies in Asian Art: Japanese Art
TuTh 11-12:15pm  Prof. H. Nagata
This course spans the breadth of a traditional survey of Japanese art, from its prehistoric to premodern times, but is quite topical and selective in approach. The aim is to raise for consideration a wide range of media, from sculpture and painting to gardens, architecture, ceramics, textiles, and prints. This approach is meant to promote a greater understanding of a broad range of expressive function in Japan’s arts. It will offer us an opportunity to see the ties that bond works of art to their cultural and historical contexts, as well as the threads that make cultural monuments timeless.
This course satisfies PLUS (Society and Culture) requirements and has been certified as “Writing Infused.”

ARTH 457
Topics in Art History: Asian Art
Religion, Conflict, and Environment in Classical and Contemporary Southeast Asian Art
Th 6-8:40pm  Prof. C. Raymond
The arts of Southeast Asia reflect a great variety of religions inextricably linked with the natural world that surrounded them: whether through traditional themes or contemporary artistic and exhibition practice which utilize materials from the immediate environment. This topic will be elaborated through ways in which the countries of mainland and insular Southeast Asia culture and society have interacted in the past, and respond today to the environment through varied modes of artistic creation and self-expression. This course will explore classical architecture, sculpture, painting, and prints; and more recently, contemporary film and performance pieces: revealing how artists have engaged with nature on issues of religion; reflecting on post-conflict aesthetics, delineating identities towards offering more nuanced and complex expressions of the human condition. Our goal here is to analyze how art embodies the co-evolution of social, cultural, and physical complex landscapes of Southeast Asia.