ART HISTORY (ARTH)

ARTH 1100 Introduction to Art History: Ancient Through Medieval — 4 credits
This course is an introduction to the history of Western art from prehistoric through the Middle Ages. Beginning with the cave paintings of prehistoric France and Spain, this course surveys the visual arts and architecture of ancient Egypt and the ancient Near East, the Classical Greek and Roman worlds, and finally medieval Europe. It considers a variety of media (sculpture, pottery, wall painting, mosaics, and manuscripts as well as architecture) as meaningful expressions of their historical contexts. Questions surrounding how art and architecture function in society are explored throughout, and the basic principles of visual analysis are taught and utilized. Offered in alternate years. Offered in the College for Women.

ARTH 1110 Introduction to Art History: Renaissance through Modern — 4 credits
This course is an introduction to the history of Western art from the early Renaissance in Europe to the present in Europe and the U.S. It surveys the artists, architects, and art movements that constitute the canon of Western art since the Renaissance with an eye to examining how society influences artistic production and vice versa. The role of patronage, individual artistic personalities, religion, war and peace, and attitudes about gender are explored throughout. The basic principles of visual analysis are taught and utilized; students are also introduced to fundamental methods of art history such as iconography, formalism, and social art history. This course also includes a visit to, and analysis of an artwork in, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Offered in alternate years. Offered in the College for Women.

ARTH 1150 Ways of Seeing — 4 credits
The way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe.” John Berger made this claim in 1972, when he published a thin, but hugely influential book called Ways of Seeing. This course intends to bring Berger’s statement — and the insights of his book — to bear on our own experiences of art, history, and visual culture in the early 21st century. An introduction to the history of art and visual culture, this course considers local and global case studies that implicate images, image makers, and viewers. These are explored according to themes that cut across historical and geographical boundaries, themes that include, but are not limited to art and ideology, beauty and art, the female body and the male gaze, iconoclasm, piety and religious spaces, museums, popular and consumer culture, and social change. Offered annually. Offered in the College for Women.

ARTH 2650W Modern Art — 4 credits
This course offers students an introduction to some of the major artists, movements, and ideas of modern art as it flourished in continental Europe in the early 20th century. It also equips students with the skill of close looking and the ability to conduct original research on a single work of art. This writing-intensive course asks each student to conduct a semester-long research project on a work of modern art in the collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Concurrent with their research, students learn about the broader socio-historical context that made modern art possible. Beginning around 1880 and ending in the early 1940s, this course covers phenomena and movements including primitivism and abstraction as well as Cubism, Constructivism, and Surrealism. It also examines how concepts of race and ethnicity, class and gender shaped artistic production while considering the impact of WWI and WWII on modern art. This writing-intensive course is required for students majoring in art history, studio art, and/or art education. Offered annually. Offered in the College for Women.

ARTH 2670 Contemporary Art — 4 credits
This course examines key ideas and select episodes in the art of the past fifty, or so, years. It assumes that artists working today are keenly aware of and engaged with potent cultural mythologies that shape our ways of being in the world. How, then, do contemporary artists respond to such mythologies (or value systems)? How do their modes of visualizing this engagement with society manifest themselves in performance, film, video, installation, and conceptual art as well as in more traditional media such as painting and sculpture? Consideration of primary sources (i.e. artworks, artist’s statements and interviews) and secondary sources (i.e. art criticism and art historical texts) will be central to course content and discussion. Fieldtrips and visits with artists are also integrated into the course schedule and assignments. Offered in alternate years.

ARTH 2994 Art History Topics — 4 credits
The subject matter of the course is announced in the annual schedule of classes. Content varies from year to year but does not duplicate existing courses. Offered in the College for Women.

ARTH 3630 Women in Art — 4 credits
This course considers the artworks, lives, and voices of selected women artists across history, geography, and society. As an art-history course, it is also attentive to the ways in which women artists have been written about – or not – in the history of art. It challenges, however, the conventional narratives that tend to govern the study of women and art (e.g. the overlooked woman artist, the forgotten maverick) by emphasizing, as much as possible, the material realities of their lives and the formal integrity of their work. Organized in three parts – history, theory, practice – this class includes lectures and discussions, individual and group work, films and videos, fieldtrips and visits with practicing artists and feminist scholars. The working definition of feminism that this course endorses comes from art historian Griselda Pollock, who believes: "Feminism signifies a set of positions, not an essence; a critical practice, not a dogma; a dynamic and self-critical response and intervention, not a platform. It is the precarious product of a paradox. Seeming to speak in the name of women, feminist analysis perpetually deconstructs the very term around which it is politically organized." Also offered as WOST 3630. Offered in alternate years. Offered in the College for Women.
ARTH 3700 Renaissance And Baroque — 4 credits
This course traces developments in painting, sculpture and architecture in Italy from the 14th century to the 17th century. The lives and works of Giotto, Donatello, Brunelleschi, Botticelli, da Vinci and Michelangelo are considered in advance of their creative offspring in the Baroque period, artists and architects such as Caravaggio, Gentileschi, Bernini and Borromini. Discussion of these artists and their creations will center on their materials and methods, reception, patronage and functions in society. The impact of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation on the visual and plastic arts of these periods will also figure prominently. Offered in alternate years.

ARTH 4000 Methods in Art History — 4 credits
This course provides students of art history with a toolbox of methodologies that enhance our understanding of art and architecture. It explores object-based methods such as connoisseurship, formalism, and iconography as well as methods that emphasize the various contexts in which artworks and buildings are created and understood: these include social art history (including Marxist and Feminist approaches), structuralism and post-structuralism, psychoanalysis and reception theory. Although methodological theories are the primary objects of study in this seminar-style course, applications of these theories in case studies are emphasized. Offered every three years. Required for art history majors.

ARTH 4684 Directed Study - Art History — 4 credits
Directed study is provided for students whose unusual circumstances prohibit taking a regularly scheduled course but who need the material of that course to satisfy a requirement. Availability of this faculty-directed learning experience depends on faculty time and may be limited in any given term and restricted to certain courses.
Prerequisites: Faculty, department chair and dean approval.

ARTH 4952 Independent Study - Art History — 2 credits
Independent studies presuppose a measure of experience in the area of study and the intent to go beyond the content of scheduled classes.
Prerequisites: Faculty sponsorship and department chair approval.

ARTH 4954 Independent Study - Art History — 4 credits
Independent studies presuppose a measure of experience in the area of study and the intent to go beyond the content of scheduled classes.
Prerequisites: Faculty sponsorship and department chair approval.

ARTH 4994 Art History Topics — 4 credits
The subject matter of the course is announced in the annual schedule of classes. Content varies from year to year but does not duplicate existing courses.