

Introduction to the Visual Arts • ARTH 101-001 • CRN 70602

MW 9:00-10:15, January 23 to May 7 • Arts & Design 2003 Office: Robinson B 373C: M,10:30-11:30

Professor Julie Schauer • additional contact information to be given in class

Course Description: This course provides an introduction to the language of the visual arts and a foundation for individual understanding and enjoyment of art. This class will focus on how art communicates; how to analyze and interpret art; how art is cultural product that reveals something about the society that produced it, how to recognize style and time periods, and techniques. As Art Education is not an integral part of American education primary and secondary education, this class will fill a gap and create an entirely new approach to visiting art museum and seeing art in life in the world surrounding us. The course will cover topics both common and different to various cultures, comparing east and west.

Introduction to Visual Arts courses at the university level, sometimes called Art Appreciation, are often divided into three parts. The goal of first part of the course generally covers the basics of art theory and practice. Another part discusses materials and techniques of art and architecture production. The third section has a brief survey of art, from prehistory to the present, including non-western art. The approach of this particular section, however, is to weave discussion of art history into the sections of art theory and art media for a comprehensive picture. The first few weeks of this class will be about purposes of art, aesthetics, origins of creativity and the philosophy of art. If you do the reading, attend class and complete assignments, you will finish this class with a good general knowledge of the history of art and an excellent preparation for more advanced Art History classes. If you have no interest in the visual arts now, this class will change your mind.

Class sessions will move between lecture and in-class discussions, with an occasional video if time allows. **This course meets the University General Education Fine Arts requirement.**

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Analyze the formal elements of painting, sculpture, printmaking and other 2- and 3-dimensional art forms
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic technique and the expression of a work's underlying concepts and ideas
- Learn the vocabulary and basic techniques of architecture and design
- Learn about the materials and techniques of the visual art forms and how they affect certain formal properties and the style of the art
- Learn to discern different styles of art based on common individual, period or geographical traits
- Analyze and interpret artistic output in reference to social, historical, and/or personal contexts
- Engage in critical analysis in writing using reasoned, well-organized arguments with supporting evidence and a conclusion.

Required Text: *The Power of Art*, by Richard and Susan I. Lewis. Wadsworth Publishing; Second edition ISBN no. 0534641032 Additional readings referred to in the class.

GRADES are based on the following items:

- **Journal and Class Attendance.** You are required to keep a notebook to be written into each week with responses to our class. You must by a notebook that is e at least 8 x 10" and has at least 100 lined pages. What did you learn from class? What works of art impressed you and why? What surprised you? In place of discussing our classes, you are allowed to go to a

gallery or museum and discuss an exhibition or work of art that impressed you. Or you may write a response to an article suggested for reading.

- **A midterm and final exam.** Quizzes before each, the midterm and final, will have practice questions. If you do well, the scores may be added to the 100 point score of the midterm and final. Tests will have short answer, slide comparison, multiple choice and questions based on slides. Study guides will be handed out in class one week prior to the exam. Additionally, the powerpoints posted on Blackboard are will give reinforcement to concepts studied in classes.
- **A non-research paper** based on a observations of a work(s) of art in a Washington Museum (details below and on a separate handout)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The course requires:

- Class attendance (read below)
- A museum visit from which you will write a major paper (details distributed on a separate hand-out)
- Assigned readings as cited above from the required text, *The Power of Art*, by Richard and Susan I. Lewis. Second edition. ISBN no. 0534641032
- A midterm exam
- A final exam
- A Journal to be turn in twice during the semester

GRADING POLICIES:

A = 100% to 93%, or 4.00	B- = 82% to 80 %, or 2.67
A- = 92% to 90%, or 3.67	C+ = 79 to 77 %, or 2.33
B+ = 89% to 87%, or 3.33	C = 76 to 70 %, or 2.00
B = 86% to 83 %, or 3.00	D = 69% to 60 %, or 1.00
F = below 60%	

Grading Criteria may be graded by points, or by the following criteria, as appropriate:

A = Startlingly good, exceeding our expectations, and well-written. Must be truly exceptional and show original thought and keen observation. It will NOT given for simply following directions and writing well.

B = Very Good effort with a very good result.

C = Perfunctory; or, tried but missed the point; or, did something well but it wasn't the assignment; or, good idea but careless or sloppy; Average work but could show better grasp of the work

D = Warning: accepted under protest.

F = Unacceptable as college-level work.

FINAL GRADES will be based on the average of your paper, exam and in-class quiz grades:

Midterm	25%	Museum Paper	25%
Final exam:	25%	Journal and attendance	25%

Final grades are calculated on a 400 point system

Grades on the Paper for failure to follow directions for the assignment, to be distributed separately.

Handing in either the **Journal** or **Final Paper** late will result in 7 points deducted from each day it is late.

Technology: Please check your George Mason e-mail account for class information. All students need to access Blackboard where you will find handouts, paper assignments and study guides. PowerPoint's from the lectures are not posted on Blackboard. If it is found that too many works of art used on the tests are not in the textbook, there may be study images put into Blackboard. However, technology has flaws and you cannot rely on too heavily on having this work done for you. Searching images on your own will help you remember them and most images can be found online.

You may contribute to my blog: <http://artvent-artventures.blogspot.com/> or <http://artcapex.blogspot.com/> Please use it to see how I look at and interpret art. Occasionally I may add topics of interest to the class.

ATTENDANCE will be noted and recorded. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a class mate. Grades may be lowered if you for extensive truancy without a note. **There will be no opportunity to make up a quiz or in-class essay.**

Auditors are welcome to sit and listen as long as there are chairs. Auditors who are keeping up with the class reading are welcome to participate in discussion; otherwise they should kindly remain inaudible.

Tardiness: It is especially important that you are on time for this class or it will be difficult to finish in a timely manner. Please notify me ahead of time if for some reason you need to leave class early.

Exam Dates may not be missed without an original, documented medical excuse: **February 27, March 26 and May 14 Final Exam** Please have someone inform me by email as soon as possible.

Classroom atmosphere. Please practice courtesy at all times. Talking to friends during lectures, wandering in and out, cell phones, and eating food are very distracting, as are chatterers. Turn off cell phones and only use your computers for taking notes, unless otherwise indicated. Please do not go on Facebook or read email during class.

By the final exam, all missing work becomes an F. Medical excuses in order to makeup tests will require verification with a physician's or assistant dean's signature

Field Trips will be to Washington museum(s) at dates announced later in the semester. Unless held in lieu of class, you will not be required to attend.

Art Bus Trips to New York, sponsored by George Mason's Art Department will be held February 25, March 31 and April 21. You are encouraged to go to the museums on your own.

Written work. Proofread. Spelling and grammar count!

Academic honesty is expected in all tests and writing. Please respect the Honor Code, our classroom standards, your fellow students, and yourself.

Museum Paper (Detailed instructions will follow):

This paper is a response/reaction paper based on observation, not research. You will describe how a particular painting at a Washington, DC, museum National Gallery of Art uses the Elements of Art (chapter 2) and the Design Principles of Art (chapter 3) in a work to create meaning and response in the viewer. Sample student paper swill be read in class but not posted on Blackboard. My Art Blogs offer numerous examples of how to analyze and describe works of art to show their meanings.

Hard Copies only are accepted and collected in Class. Do not email your paper.

Late written work: Papers are due in class on the day specified. Plan ahead—last-minute hard-disk and printer failures are your problem, and do not constitute legitimate excuses.

Mechanics: Please type and double-space your papers, using a standard font in 12-point size. Please stick to plain old white paper and standard fonts. **IMPORTANT:** Please be sure to include a photo or Xerox of the art work(s) about which you're writing.

Spelling and grammar are expected to be correct. Use the spell-checker. I will mark down work for sloppy spelling and grammar, lack of proofreading, or if the work does not appear original. If you have trouble writing, take advantage of the on-campus resource: **The Writing Center** in Robinson I, Room A116. Call them at (703) 993-1200, or go to <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>.

Art Journal

There is no correct right or wrong way to write in your Art Journal, but it is suggested that you write each Wednesday night after the two weekly classes have been completed. I will be looking for an honest approach to art and interaction with what you are learning. It is assumed that all students start without any knowledge of art. Your journal is meant to be responsive more than pedantic. You may write about what you like and dislike, don't understand, or have come to understand. You may take topics from our classes and your weekly readings. The journal will be a good learning tool, and it will force you to think. Success in college comes from being able to integrate information from diverse sources: lectures, discussions, readings. If a class discussion prompts you to search a topic on the Internet and find different artists who relate to the topic, you may do this. If you want to learn more about an artist we saw in class, research it, you can share the information in your journal. Our class is slightly more than 2 hours a week and does not allow for the extensive interchange of ideas. This is your chance to share ideas we do not have time for in class.

Mechanics Journals should be handwritten and need not to be as polished and coherent as the paper. Please tear out pages and rewrite your first drafts in the Journal, so that each entry is easily readable.

Your journal will not be graded the first time you hand it in, but it will have comments. The comments can give you ideas for how to improve before turning in the entire assignment.

Likely topics in the journal may be:

- *One or two in-class essays on specific works of art in Washington
- *A response to an exhibition in a museum or gallery, including on-campus exhibits or nearby art venues such as the Torpedo Factory
- *Something you researched on the Internet as a reaction to a discussion in class, such as finding an artist who represents a concept, or deeper research into an artist you like
- *A critic/reaction to one of our readings
- *A disagreement with one of 40 essays in my Art Blogs (you may also comment on the blog)
- *Comments on a Washington monument or memorial you have visited.
- *A response to a trip to New York on the Arts Bus on
- *A reaction to a specific work of art

LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE

All classes will be held Monday and Wednesday at 9:00. Lecture topics are planned on a weekly basis. **Changes, as needed, may arise and will be announced in class or on Blackboard.**

Jan. 23, 25	Chapter 1: <i>The Power of Art</i>
Jan 30, Feb. 1	Chapter 18, <i>The Real World on Trial: The Early 20th Century</i> , to p. 407
Feb. 6, 8	Chapter 19: <i>The Invisible Made Visible: Abstract and Nonrepresentational Art</i>
Feb. 13, 15	Who is the Artist? Folk, Fantasy and Outsider artists; The Darker Side of Art: Renaissance Distortion, Mannerism, read pp. 297-306, Surrealism, pp. 407-417
Feb. 20, 22	Chapter 2: <i>The Primary Elements</i> , to p. 44 Line and Form Chapter 13: <i>The Age of Faith</i>
Feb. 27, 29	Chapter 3: <i>The Principles of Design</i> , and reread Space , p 38 Chapter 14: <i>The Renaissance</i> Quiz on Feb. 27nd
March 5, 7	Chapter 2: <i>The Primary Elements: Light, Shadow, Value, Texture</i> , pp. 44-47 Chapter 15, 16: <i>Drama and Light: The Baroque, Rococo Neoclassicism, Romanticism</i> Chapter 16: <i>The Battle of the Isms, and Realism</i> Turn in Journal, part I To be returned to you after the break with comments.
Spring Break is March 12-18	
Mar 19, 21	Chapter 2: <i>The Primary Elements, Color</i> , pp. 47-53 Chapter 17: <i>Out of the Studio and into the Light: Impressionism and Postimpressionism</i>
Mar 26, 28	Midterm is March 26
April 2, 4	Chapter 4: <i>Drawing</i> Chapter 5: <i>Painting</i>
Apr 9, 11	Chapter 6: <i>Printmaking</i> Chapter 7: <i>Photography</i> In-class Journal writing
Apr 16, 18	Quiz this week Chapter 9: <i>Sculpture</i> Chapter 12: <i>Ancient Empires, Ancient Gods</i> , pp. 208-227
Apr 23, 25	Journal Due, April 23 Chapter 10: <i>Architecture</i> Chapter 12: <i>Ancient Empires, Ancient Gods</i> , pp. 228-237
Apr 30, May 2	Chapter 20: <i>A Storm of Images: Art in the Contemporary World</i> Chapter 8: <i>New Media: Time and Digital Arts</i>
May 7	Review for Final, Paper Due
May 14	FINAL EXAM 7:30 – 10:15

English as a Second Language: If English is not your first language, I will be happy to help you do your best in the writing assignments by previewing papers, offering extra help, or pointing you toward The Writing Center. The final result must be good standard written English. The Writing Center is in Robinson I, Room A116. (703) 993-1200, <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>. You may also want to work with the English Language Institute (ELI) (703) 993-3664. <http://mason.gmu.edu/~eli> .

Learning disabilities will be accommodated as required according to University policies. Learning disabilities must be documented by the Disabilities Support Services. It is the student's responsibility to get tested, present the documentation to me, and request accommodations in a timely way (i.e. not on the day of the test; not after-the-fact). For more information on this, call the GMU Disability Resource Center at (703) 993-2470, or visit their website: <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/>.

Religious holidays. This course follows the George Mason University calendar. If you observe a religious holiday that the University does not, please let me know and I will make accommodations for you.

Academic honesty is expected in all tests and writing. Please respect the Honor Code, our classroom standards, your fellow students, and yourself. The Honor Pledge will be required on all tests. **I report all suspected cheating and plagiarism violations to the Honor Committee.** Your writing assignment is to be the product of your own thinking. **If there is evidence of cheating, I will send you and your work on to the Dean of Students.**

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES

- **First day of classes:** January 23
- **Last day to add classes or drop with no tuition penalty**—Jan 31
- **Art Bus trips:** February 25, March 31, April 21
- **Quiz:** Feb. 27, April 16
- **Last day to drop** with tuition penalty - Fri Feb 24
- **Spring Break:** March 12-18
- **Mid-Term:** March 26
- **Paper due:** May 7
- **Last day of class:** May 7
- Exam period: May 9-16
- **Final Exam:** May 14 7:30-10:15 a.m.