

ARH 2051: Introduction to the Principles and History of Art II

Renaissance to the Present

University of Florida | School of Art + Art History | Spring 2026

General Information

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Office: FAC 119-B

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM + by appointment

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Course Description

This course offers an overview of European and American art and architecture from the Renaissance to the twenty-first century. We will study the historical, social, and cultural circumstances in which works of art and architecture were created and viewed in order to understand their functions and meanings. The course introduces students to key concepts and concerns in art history, enabling them to relate works of art to specific historical, religious, and political contexts. It likewise develops critical thinking skills and visual literacy through verbal and written analysis of images.

Course Objectives

- To identify major forms, actors, and episodes in the history of art from the Renaissance to the present
- To hone the skills of describing and analyzing artworks both formally and historically
- To comprehend different approaches to and definitions of art historical analysis
- To understand artworks as objects that not only reflect, but also produce history
- To develop skills of close reading, active listening, and engaged discussion

Course Requirements / Grades

Lecture Attendance: 15%

Section Participation: 15%

Discussion Posts: 15%

Midterm: 20%

Exhibition Review: 15%

Final Exam: 20%

Important Dates and Deadlines

- March 10: In-Person Midterm
- March 12: Take-Home Component of Midterm Due by 11:59 PM via Canvas
- March 26–27: Discussion Section Visits to the Harn Museum of Art
- April 25: Exhibition Review Paper Due by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- TBA (between April 25 – May 1): In-Person Final Exam
- May 1: Final Exam Take-Home Component Due by 11:59 PM via Canvas

Course Materials

All required readings will be provided as PDF files via Canvas.

Lecture Attendance, Absences, and Lecture Recordings

Lecture attendance is mandatory for this class. If you have a valid reason for needing to be absent, please contact your TA at your earliest convenience. Exceptions will be made according to UF guidelines.

Discussion Posts

Each week, by Wednesday evening at 11:59 PM, students should post a 1-paragraph response to the required reading for that week's discussion section. These posts should not aim to summarize the reading, but should instead raise questions and make connections to ideas, artworks, or contexts that come to mind. The purpose of these posts is to generate ideas in advance of the more involved in-person discussions in the weekly section meetings.

Section Participation

Participation in section meetings is likewise required. Students should come to section meetings having completed the required reading and ready to engage in discussion of the material and close visual analysis of particular images.

Midterm and Final

The midterm and final exams will each have two components. The first is an in-person exam that will require answers to be completed in Blue Books. These will involve image comparisons and definitions of key terms. A separate, take-home component will also be assigned, and will consist of 2–3 short, creative questions and/or prompts.

Exhibition Review

To be graded by the TAs, the final 5–6 page, double-spaced exhibition review will involve employing the skills of visual analysis and art historical contextualization honed throughout the course to interpret and evaluate an exhibition at the University Gallery on campus or the Harn Museum of Art (The exhibition themes and dates are still TBA; I will update this information when it becomes available.)

Schedule

Week 1

January 13: Syllabus + Preview of the Course

January 15: Proto-Renaissance

Section Meetings: Introductions and Section Discussion Expectations

Week 2

January 20: Early Renaissance: Northern Europe

January 22: Early Renaissance: Italy

Section Meetings: Depicting Narrative

Week 3

January 27: High Renaissance, Pt. I

January 29: High Renaissance, Pt. II

Sections: Visual Analysis Tutorial

Week 4

February 3: Mannerism

February 5: The Baroque

Sections: The Dutch Golden Age: The Origins of the Selfie and Cosplay?

Week 5

February 10: Rococo

February 12: Neoclassicism

Sections: Architecture of Power and Precedent

Week 6

February 17: Romanticism

February 19: Realism

Sections: Women Artists and the Canon

Week 7

February 24: Impressionism

February 26: Post-Impressionism

Sections: Gauguin in Tahiti and the Problem of “Primitivism”

Week 8

March 3: Cubism

March 5: New Objectivity + Expressionism

Sections: *Guernica*, 1937

Week 9

March 10: In-Class Midterm

March 12: No Class (Take-Home Component of Midterm Due by 11:59 PM via Canvas)

Week 10

March 17: No Class: Spring Break

March 19: No Class: Spring Break

Week 11

March 24: Futurism

March 26: Suprematism

Sections: Visit to the Harn Museum of Art (Details TBA)

Week 12

March 31: Dada

April 2: Surrealism

Sections: Surrealist Techniques

Week 13

April 7: Abstract Expressionism

April 9: Nouveau Réalisme

Sections: Photography: Transforming Images of Blackness

Week 14

April 14: Pop Art

April 16: Minimalism, Earth Art, and Performance

Sections: *Tilted Arc* and the Question of Site-Specificity

Week 15

April 22: Postmodern Conditions

Additional Information and Resources:

For the latest UF academic policies and resources, as well as campus health and wellness resources, please visit <http://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>