ARH-Art History Courses

Courses

ARH 101. The Art Experience. 3 Hours.
Introduction to the study of visual culture, prehistoric to present. Emphasis on form and context, and acquiring understanding of art materials and techniques. This course meets the Core Curriculum requirements for Area II: Fine Arts.

ARH 203. Ancient and Medieval Art. 3 Hours.
Introduction to Western art from prehistoric cave paintings to Gothic Cathedrals. Focusing on ancient Eurasia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and medieval Europe, this course examines the images, monuments, and ideas that shaped the pre-modern world. This course meets the Core Curriculum requirements for Area II: Fine Arts.

ARH 204. Early Modern-Contemporary Art. 3 Hours.
Introduction to Western art from Renaissance painting to current biosculpture. Focusing on Europe, its colonies, the United States, and global contemporary art, this course examines the images, monuments, and ideas that shaped the modern world. This course meets the Core Curriculum requirements for Area II: Fine Arts.

ARH 205. African/Native American/Oceanic Art. 3 Hours.
Significant monuments and styles of non-western cultures.

ARH 206. Survey of Asian Art. 3 Hours.
Art and culture of India, China, and Japan. This course meets the Core Curriculum requirements for Area II: Fine Arts.

ARH 405. African Art. 3 Hours.
Survey of the arts of Africa, ranging from Ancient Egypt through the contemporary period.
Prerequisites: ARH 203 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 409. Egypt in the Age of the Pyramids. 3 Hours.
This course spans the period 5000 B.C through 1550 B.C. (Predynastic and Dynasties 1-17), which encompasses Egypt’s pyramid building age. It will focus broadly on the art, archaeology, history, architecture, religion, and literature of this period. It is designed to stand independently of its companion course Imperial and Post-Imperial Egypt.
Prerequisites: ARH 203 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 410. Imperial and Post Imperial Egypt. 3 Hours.
This course spans the years of 1550 B.C. to the Ptolemaic-Roman periods, which covers Egypt’s glorious imperial era (New Kingdom: Dynasties 18-10) and its decline in Dynasties 21-31, with the rise of other empires and Macedonian and Roman control of Egypt. It focuses broadly on the art, archaeology, history, architecture, religion, and literature of this time span and is designed to stand independently of its companion course Egypt in the Age of the Pyramids.
Prerequisites: ARH 203 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 419. Arts of Death in the Middle Ages. 3 Hours.
The visual culture of death and the afterlife from the Roman catacombs to cadaver tombs, 300-1500.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 421. Italian Renaissance Art. 3 Hours.
The visual arts of the Italian Renaissance (1300-1550) in their historic context.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 422. The Birth of Painting: Portable Pictures Across Renaissance Europe. 3 Hours.
The emergence of modern easel painting, 1300-1600.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 423. Study Abroad: European Art. 3 Hours.
On-site study of art and architecture in Europe.

ARH 424. Northern Renaissance Art. 3 Hours.
The visual arts of the Northern Renaissance (1300-1600) in their historic context.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 430. Eighteenth-Century Art in Europe. 3 Hours.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 431. Seventeenth-Century Painting, 3 Hours.
Painting in Europe from Italian and Spanish Baroque through the Dutch Golden Age.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 435. Arts of Power in Early Modern Europe. 3 Hours.
The visual arts in service of kings, popes, and the people, 1300-1700.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 440. 19th-Century Art I: Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Realism. 3 Hours.
Painting, sculpture, and graphic arts in Europe, 1780-1860.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 441. 19th-Century Art II: Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. 3 Hours.
Painting, sculpture, and graphic arts in Europe, 1860-1900.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 450. American Art to 1900. 3 Hours.
Painting, sculpture, and architecture in the U.S., with an emphasis on 19th Century.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 460. Twentieth-Century Art to 1945. 3 Hours.
Painting, sculpture, and architecture in Europe and the United States, 1900-1945.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 461. Modern Design. 3 Hours.
History of modern design. Will examine various design disciplines, design theory, along with the relationships between design, fine art, architecture and popular culture.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 464. Art Since 1945. 3 Hours.
Painting, sculpture, and architecture primarily in the United States, 1945 to present.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 465. Aspects of Contemporary Art. 3 Hours.
Topics in contemporary art, ca. 1970 to the present. Course offerings will vary from year to year and will study a specific historical moment, medium, theme, or subject.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 467. Modern Architecture. 3 Hours.
History of modern architecture, covering examples from the late 18th century to the present and emphasizing the United States.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]
ARH 468. Race and Representation. 3 Hours.
History of 20th-Century African American art in context of contemporary theories of identity and issues of diversity, and in relation to African art. Includes study of objects in the Birmingham Museum of Art. Ethics and Civic Responsibility are significant components of this course.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 470. Tomb Art in East Asia. 3 Hours.
What is the purpose of a tomb? How do its structure and décor convey ancient perceptions of death? Who are the occupants, and how did they envision their journey into the afterlife? This course is a survey of the funerary arts of China, Korea, and Japan. By investigating tombs, shrines, sarcophagi, wall paintings, and grave goods throughout East Asia, we will gain a deeper understanding of ancient religions, social structures, ethnic identities, and cross-cultural interactions. Lectures will be supplemented by several visits to the Museum’s Asian collections.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 471. Topics in Asian Cinema. 3 Hours.
This course offers students an introduction to a vital aspect of contemporary Asian culture, recognizing that film can be an important focus of contemporary, cultural commentary and critique. The course presumes no prior knowledge of Asia or cinema and its artistic tradition. The goal of the course is to view and discuss, as a class, approximately ten films, emphasizing an understanding of their cultural background and an appreciation of their aesthetic merits as films and cultural settings in Asia. Attendance at weekly screenings is mandatory. Ethics and Civic Responsibility are significant components of this course.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 472. Buddhist & Hindu Art in India to 1200. 3 Hours.
This course explores the environments of worship and devotion particular to India’s major indigenous religious traditions, from their earliest expressions in approximately the fifth century BCE through to the arrival of Islam in India, ca. 1200. We will examine aesthetic conventions, religious ideals, and urban cultures by focusing on the sculpture and architecture traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 473. Japanese Prints/Printmakers. 3 Hours.
A history of Japanese block prints and printmakers from seventeenth through twentieth centuries.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 474. Landscape and Image in East Asia. 3 Hours.
This course surveys the major traditions of landscape art in East Asia. We will explore the ways in which places and spaces are transformed into famous places and sacred sites and consider the critical role played by visual representation in this process. Major topics include the relationship between landscape and power, cultural memory, literature, mythology, seasonality, travel, and literati culture. We will examine the functions of landscape art in various cultural, geographical, and temporal contexts of East Asia. We will look at landscape painting in China from the Tang through the Ming dynasties and consider the complex processes of cultural dissemination and adaptation by looking at the reception of Chinese landscape painting tradition in Korea and Japan.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 475. Japanese Art. 3 Hours.
Art and culture, Neolithic era through nineteenth century.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 476. Race and Representation. 3 Hours.
History of 20th-Century African American art in context of contemporary theories of identity and issues of diversity, and in relation to African art. Includes study of objects in the Birmingham Museum of Art. Ethics and Civic Responsibility are significant components of this course.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 477. Piety and Power: Art in India after 1200. 3 Hours.
This course looks at the arts of India after 1200, when Indian art and culture was increasingly influenced and altered by religious and secular powers from outside the subcontinent. We will examine Islamic art and architecture under the patronage of various Sultanate traditions, and finally the Mughals, who expressed their power and piety in monumental architecture and extensively illustrated books. We will also consider the influence of Europeans in South Asia, culminating with the colonial project of the British Raj. Ongoing negotiations between these newly-arriving groups and Indians older, indigenous traditions will be studied. Throughout the course we will dissect the categories of knowledge about South Asia and its art that were constructed primarily by the British, considering, for example, the usefulness of dividing India’s art history into categories of “Hindu,” “Islamic,” “European,” and etc.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 478. Buddhist Arts of East Asia. 3 Hours.
Survey of art and architecture created for Buddhist religious purposes in China, Japan, and to a lesser extent Korea and Central Asia. The course will include a brief overview of Buddhist monuments in South Asia, study of the iconography of Buddhist images in graphic and sculptural media, and analysis of a variety of Buddhist styles in painting, sculpture, and architecture.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 479. Study Abroad: Art & Culture of South Asia. 3 Hours.
This course allows students to become immersed in the art and culture of Asia through direct experience in the field. Focus will primarily be on South Asia but may vary with each course offering to include Nepal, Tibet, and Southeast Asia. Preliminary lectures in Birmingham and significant written assignments required.

ARH 480. Art Criticism and Theory. 3 Hours.
A topics course on subjects in art criticism and theory. The specific focus will vary by instructor and may emphasize either non-Western or Western theories, criticisms, and approaches.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 481. Special Topics: Early Modern Art. 3 Hours.
Special topics in the arts of the Early Modern period in the Western art tradition. Subject will vary with each offering.
Prerequisites: ARH 203 [Min Grade: C] or ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 482. Special Topics: Modern Art. 3 Hours.
A special topics course on subjects in the Modern period in the Western art tradition, beginning in the later eighteenth century. Specific course topics will vary by semester.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 483. Special Topics: Gender and the Visual Arts. 3 Hours.
Topic will vary, depending on instructor. This course will address ways in which gender has affected the history of artistic practice and patronage. It will consider such issues as the gendering of pictorial practice and space, strategies of representing gendered subjects, and the impact of women as patrons of art and architecture.

ARH 484. Special Topics: Contemporary Art. 3 Hours.
Special topics in the arts of the Contemporary period in the Western Art tradition. Subject will vary with each offering.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]
ARH 485. Special Topics: Museum Studies. 3 Hours.
Museum operation; organization and preparation of exhibitions; cataloging objects in collection; experience with UAB Institute of Visual Art and Birmingham Museum of Art.
Prerequisites: ARH 203 [Min Grade: C] or ARH 204 [Min Grade: C] or ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 486. Special Topics: South Asia. 3 Hours.
Special topics in the arts of South Asia. Subject will vary with each offering.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 487. Special Topics: Field Study. 3 Hours.
Trips to prominent museums and galleries in United States. Preliminary lectures in Birmingham and significant written assignments required.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 488. Special Topics: East Asian Art. 3 Hours.
Special topics in the arts of East Asia. Subject will vary with each offering.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 489. Art History Senior Capstone. 3 Hours.
This course will assess students' knowledge of art history and assist them in applying what they have learned. Students will explore post-baccalaureate options, prepare professional materials, and hone art historical skills through a variety of activities such as conducting research, writing for different audiences, curating exhibitions, and presenting research at a symposium. Offered each fall. Should be taken at the senior level.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C] or ARH 203 [Min Grade: C] or ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 490. Art Theory: Special Topics. 3 Hours.
Topic of art theory will vary with each offering.
Prerequisites: ARH 203 [Min Grade: D] or ARH 204 [Min Grade: D] or ARH 206 [Min Grade: D]

ARH 491. Independent Study. 3-4 Hours.
Project proposed by student and approved by Art History instructor.

ARH 492. Museum/Gallery Internship. 3 Hours.
Through active participation in the daily operations of a museum, gallery, or art space, students will acquire direct working knowledge of a cooperating art institution. Students will be required to work at the institution a minimum of 10 supervised hours per week during the term.

ARH 493. Seminar: South Asian Art. 3 Hours.
Seminar in the arts of South Asia. Subject will vary with each offering.
Prerequisites: ARH 206 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 494. Seminar: East Asian Art. 3 Hours.
Seminar in the arts of East Asia. Subject will vary with each offering.

ARH 495. Seminar: Early Modern Art. 3 Hours.
Seminar in Early Modern Art. Subject will vary with each offering.
Prerequisites: ARH 203 [Min Grade: C] or ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 496. Seminar: Modern Art. 3 Hours.
Seminar in Modern Art. Subject will vary with each offering.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 497. Seminar: Contemporary Art. 3 Hours.
Seminar in Contemporary Art. Subject will vary with each offering.
Prerequisites: ARH 204 [Min Grade: C]

ARH 498. AEIVA Internship. 3 Hours.
The AEIVA Intern Team will participate in all phases of daily gallery operations, ranging from curatorial practices, exhibition design, video/photographic documentation and production, technical and analytical writing, graphic design, etc. This team will act as a support staff for the AEIVA curatorial/administrative staff in a hands-on museum/gallery work environment. May be repeated to a maximum of 6 semester hours.

ARH 499. Honors Thesis. 3 Hours.
For students accepted into honors program in art history. Directed study in art history, in which student works with a faculty mentor to write an extensive research paper on a topic of the student's choice. Recommended to be taken at the senior level, the semester prior to graduation. Permission of instructor required. ARH 489 recommended.