



South China Normal University International Summer Session

04F05731: Introduction to Western Art:

from Prehistoric to Medieval

Term: July 15th –August 9th, 20

Instructor: Steven J. Cody, Ph.D.

Home Institution: Purdue University

Credit: 4

Course Description

This course focuses on the visual arts produced in the West from prehistory to the end of the Gothic era (c. 1400CE). The course examines the art and architecture of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Medieval Europe. Works are studied in their historical, social, and religious contexts, with particular focus on the role of art in society, the development of style, and the ways that visual culture communicates meaning. Students are introduced to basic principles of visual analysis, as well as the formal elements, significant design principles, and technical developments in artistic production during this period.

Course Goal

A student who satisfactorily completes this course should:

1. have acquired a rich understanding of the major themes in “Western” art history from the ancient and medieval periods.
2. be able to recognize the general characteristics of works of art from particular historical periods.
3. have developed a critical vocabulary for describing and analyzing works of art.
4. have a new appreciation for the visual arts and the role they play in the study of human history.

Course Readings

Kleiner, Fred S. *Gardner's Art through the Ages: A Global History*. Volume I. Fifteenth Edition. Boston: Wadsworth Publishing, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-285-83784-0



E-text available on *Kindle* and *Course smart*.

*2013 and 2009 editions of this text are acceptable. *

Grading Scale

| Percentage | Grade |
|------------|-------|
| 90-100 | A |
| 80-89 | B |
| 70-79 | C |
| 60-69 | D |
| < 60 | F |

Grading

In this course, grading will be based on the following:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Attendance and Participation: | 15% |
| Quizzes: | 15% |
| In Class Visual Analysis Activities: | 10% |
| Midterm Exam: | 30% |
| Final Exam: | 30% |

Course Schedules

WEEK ONE

Mon: Introductions: Art and the Origins of Humanity

Tues: Art and the Origins of Civilization in the Ancient Near East
Read: Kleiner, "Ancient Mesopotamia and Persia," 31-52.

Wed: Egypt 1: Egyptian Art and Kingship
Read: Kleiner, "Egypt from Narmer to Cleopatra," 55-81.

Thurs: Egypt 2: Challenges to Tradition: Hatshepsut and the Amarna Period

Fri: Greece 1: Vessels of the Geometric, Orientalizing, and Archaic Periods

WEEK TWO

Mon: Greece 2: Figurative Sculpture in the Archaic Period
Read: Kleiner, "Ancient Greece," 103-120.



Tues: Greece 3: Figurative Sculpture in the Classical Period
Read: Kleiner, "Ancient Greece," 121-144.

Wed: Greece 4: Art and the Hellenistic World

Thurs: Midterm Review

Fri: Midterm Exam

WEEK THREE

Mon: Rome 1: The Republic

Tues: Rome 2: Augustus and the Idea of Empire
Kleiner, "The Roman Empire, 177-195.

Wed: Rome 3: The Art of Imperial Policy
Kleiner, "The Roman Empire," 218-228.

Thurs: Rome 4: Power Struggles and Constantine the Great

Fri: Early Christian Art

WEEK FOUR

Mon: The Art of Byzantium
Read: Kleiner, "Byzantium," 256-283.

Tues: Early Medieval Art in the West

Wed: Romanesque and Gothic Architecture

Thurs: Final Review

Fri: Final Exam