

MODULE SPECIFICATION

Module Title	Art History
Module Code	ART 221
Module Credits	4
Pre-requisites (including Year 1)	N/A

Description

Course Overview
This course introduces students to major pre-modern artistic traditions across the world, examining how visual expression emerged, transformed, and communicated meaning from early human settlements through the late Medieval period. Students explore visual culture through cultural context, materials, belief systems, political structures, and technological developments. Emphasis is placed on developing skills in visual analysis, critical reading, comparative interpretation, and contextual writing.
Method of Teaching and Learning
This module will be taught using a combination of lectures, tutorials and consultation hours. Learning will also be reinforced by appropriate readings from the course text.
Syllabus
<p>Modules</p> <p>Module 1 – Approaches to Studying World Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is visual analysis? • Fundamentals of describing form, material, and style • Art as cultural evidence • Activity: Comparative description exercise <p>Reading: Textbook introduction</p> <p>Module 2 – Origins of Human Creativity: Prehistoric Worlds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paleolithic images, ritual spaces, and early symbolic systems • Neolithic architecture and communities • Discuss how settled life changed artistic production <p>Reading: Ch. 1</p>

Module 3 - Art and Power in Ancient Mesopotamia

- City-states, kingship, and visual propaganda
- Relationship between religion and political authority
- Monumental forms and narrative reliefs

Reading: Ch. 2

Module 4 - Tradition, Ritual, and Eternity in Ancient Egypt

- Continuity of artistic conventions
- Tombs, temples, funerary beliefs
- Royal image and ideological messaging

Reading: Ch. 3

Module 5 - Artistic Innovations in the Ancient Aegean and Greece

- Humanism and ideal proportions
- Architectural forms and religious practice
- Sculpture as political and civic symbol

Reading: Ch. 5

Module 6 - Research Methods + Museum Context

- How museums shape interpretation
- Locating credible sources for art-historical research
- Preparation for midterm

Reading: Handouts

Module 7 - Early South Asian Traditions

- Rise of Buddhism and early imagery
- Architecture, ritual spaces, and narrative reliefs
- Visual culture along trade networks

Reading: Handouts

Module 8 - Imperial Visions in Early China

- Qin dynasty, political unification, and artistic systems
- Terracotta Army case study: mass production and symbolism

Module 9 - Roman Worlds: Republic to Empire

- Portraiture, imperial architecture, engineering
- Public space, civic identity, propaganda
- Visual culture as social control

Reading: Ch. 7

Module 10 - Mediterranean Transformations: Byzantium and Islam

Part A: Early Christian & Byzantine Art

- Sacred space and light
- Mosaic as theology

Part B: Islamic Architecture & Calligraphy

- Mosque design
- Geometry, pattern, and the written word

Reading: Ch. 9-10

Module 11 - Pilgrimage, Power, and the Romanesque Era

- Relics, routes, and monumental building programs
- Narrative stone reliefs

Reading: Ch. 12

Module 12 - Cathedral Culture and the Gothic Imagination

- Engineering innovation
- Iconography, stained glass, civic pride

Reading: Ch. 13

Module 13 – Narrative Worlds of Japan

- Heian period narrative handscrolls
- Emotion, gesture, and movement in painted storytelling

Reading: Handouts

Module 14 – Toward the Renaissance: Late Medieval Italy

- Human presence, drama, and naturalism
- Shifts in devotional practices

Reading: Ch. 14

Assessment

Assessment Type	% of Final Mark
Visual Analysis Essay	15%
Midterm	15%
Cultural Context Presentation	15%
Homework & Quizzes	20%
Course Participation and Attendance	10%
Final Exam	25%

<i>Range</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>
90% - 100%	A
80% – 89%	B
70% - 79%	C
60% - 69%	D
< 60%	U

Textbooks

Mandatory Textbooks

Title	Editor/Author	ISBN/Publisher
<i>Gardner's Art Through the Ages: A Global History, 16th Edition, Volume I</i>	Kleiner, Fred S., and Helen Gardner	Cengage Learning

Optional Textbooks

Title	Author	ISBN/Publisher
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Reference Textbooks

Title	Author	ISBN/Publisher
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