

## **TITLE: DECODING THE SECRETS OF MODERN MASTERPIECES**

LANGUAGE: English

TOTAL HOURS: 45 hours

CREDITS: 3 credits

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### **DESCRIPTION**

Taking as examples the great masterworks of European modern painting, this course aims to examine the various methodologies used for the analysis of art history. Students will start by learning the predominantly literary approaches based on the Renaissance tradition of art historical scholarship, such as the biographical, the iconographical and the formalist readings. Then, they will proceed to consider the more critical approaches used by the New Art History that emerged in the late 1970s, which embrace elements of Marxism, deconstruction and semiotics. Making sense of the complexity of the meaning of a broad selection of European painting masterpieces students will learn to appreciate the artworks that they experience in the great collections of art in their journeys around Europe and Spain making their cultural experience more rounded.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Enhance visual literacy in order to decode and interpret visual messages and have a meaningful appreciation of art
- Interpret images as a texts that reveal the artist's life experiences and personality
- Analyze the aesthetic value of paintings examining the formal choices made by artists to create certain visual experiences
- Interpret the cultural significance of paintings considering their relationship with the wider socio-historical context
- Evaluate art as a mediated activity assessing the influence of the socio-economic conditions and the ideological interests of its production
- Assess the paintings assumptions regarding gender and race and reveal the underlying power asymmetries

### **METHODOLOGY**

The course will consist of lectures, readings, group discussions and activities, student presentations, and field studies around the city

### **EVALUATION**

The final grade consists of five different parts. The breakdown of grades is made up as follows:

- 20% Class participation
- 20% Quizzes
- 20% Final project

- 20% Midterm exam
- 20% Final exam

#### Quizzes (20%):

There will be four quizzes (5% each) scheduled since the beginning of the course. The quizzes will be multiple-choice questionnaires that will test students on the main ideas and themes studied in the course. These quizzes will assess the knowledge gained and demonstrate the comprehension of the main ideas learned during the course

#### Class participation (20%):

This grade will reflect the active participation of students in class debates and discussions, their ability to use effectively the specific art vocabulary and introduce meaningful ideas. Active class participation includes coming to class prepared, having read the material for that session, answering questions from the professor, asking questions and engaging in group activities and making insightful reflections. Students will be encouraged to express their opinions and will be expected to have a good attitude towards the instructor and classmates, give full attention to the lectures and class activities and be punctual. Class and field studies attendance is mandatory; poor attendance will affect the final grade of the student as well as the everyday participation grade

#### Final project (10% term paper, 10% class presentation)

The final project consists of both a research paper and an oral presentation. Working in pairs or groups of three students will curate their ideal exhibition. They will choose a theme for the exhibition and search for paintings that illustrate it (3 paintings each student). Then they will submit the proposal to the instructor who will give feedback. Next students will write an essay (1,500 words each student) analyzing in detail these artworks using the methodologies of analysis learnt during the course. Students are expected to demonstrate original and critical thinking as well as analytical reflection from scholarly research cited properly. The assignment will end with a class presentation of the paintings analyzed as if it was a guided visit to an art exhibition

#### Midterm & Final Exams (20% + 20%)

The exams will aim to test your full comprehension of facts and ideas discussed in class and the ability to argue your opinions based on class material. Both the midterm and the final exams will contain short questions and essay questions based on images of artworks analyzed in-depth in class

The guidelines for exams are as follows:

- Directly copying another's work without citing sources
- Any student found cheating will automatically fail this examination. Additional sanctions may be imposed.
- Talking or communicating with other students during the examination is forbidden.
- Desks must be cleared of all books, notes and papers. All unauthorized materials must be put away and remain out of sight throughout the examination.
- All telephones and electronic devices must be turned completely off during the exam.
- Students arriving later than 15 minutes will not be allowed into the classroom to take

the examination, subject to the decision of the instructor.

- At the end of the examination students will remain seated until their papers are collected. No one may leave the room until excused.
- Should assistance be required, students will attract the attention of the instructor.
- Failure to follow these rules will automatically lead to failure of this examination.☒

## FIELD STUDIES

Each course will include a minimum of 2 field studies. These field studies will be directly related to the course work, and may include visits to monuments, companies, government buildings, or museums.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

SIS programs foster critical thinking and intellectual development of its students. In doing so, SIS requires that students introduce their original thoughts, opinions, and ideas in all of their assignments with the support of cited sources. Any violations of academic integrity- such as cheating, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, academic misconduct, fabrication, misuse or misrepresentation of research, and noncompliance- may result in an automatic F or immediate dismissal from the program if the student falls below the minimum number of credits required for the term; 12 credits during the semester, or 3 hours during the summer.

**Cheating:** any action that violates the rules and guidelines given by the instructor for submitting assignments or exams.

**Plagiarism:** any action that presents the ideas, opinions, research, etc. of another as your own.

- Directly copying another's work without citing sources
- Submitting another person's work into your own without properly citing the source(s) used.
- Paraphrasing another person's work without providing appropriate citations

**Self-plagiarism:** submitting a piece of one's own work to receive credit for multiple assignments in one or more class.

**Academic Misconduct:** any act that impedes or threatens the open exchange, expression, or flow of information or fair evaluation of students. This includes intimidation and complicity in any acts or attempts to interfere with the ethical and fair submission and evaluation of student work.

**Fabrication:** providing inaccurate or false information, including research findings, quotes, and cited sources, etc.

**Non-compliance:** failure to comply with the values, objectives, and procedures contained in this policy.

As SIS is accredited by Jacksonville University, students are held accountable to JU's [Academic Integrity and Code of Conduct](#). You are expected to read and understand the JU terms and regulations of Academic Misconduct.

(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PyZmNOEAH1o4bKVZdzxVyKw-wdiwXewx/view>)

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Semester:** Students are allowed THREE absences throughout the semester without penalty. Starting with the fourth absence, the student's FINAL GRADE will be lowered by a fraction of a letter (1/3 of a letter grade). For example, if a student has 4 absences and a final grade of B+, the grade will be lowered to a B, if 5 absences the grade is lowered to B-.

**Summer:** Students are allowed TWO absences throughout the summer without penalty. Starting with the third absence, the student's FINAL GRADE will be lowered by a fraction of a letter (1/3 of a letter grade). For example, if a student has 4 absences and a final grade of B+, the grade will be lowered to a B, if 5 absences the grade is lowered to B-.

*\*January Term students are allowed TWO absences as well.*

There are NO excused absences. If a student misses class because s/he is sick, that counts as one of the allowed absences. No excused absences and no excuses.

Quizzes, exams and participation points that are missed because of an absence cannot be recuperated.

Students that arrive late 5 minutes or more will receive a 0 for participation for the day.

## COURSE CONTENT

Date	Content / Class Activity	Students assignment
1	<b>Course Introduction</b> Explanation of the syllabus. Definition of the subject studied	
2	<b>Introduction to the analysis of Painting</b> Different ways of seeing	
3	<b>Biographical Approach I</b> <i>La Vita</i> by Giorgio Vasari & the New Biography	
4	<b>Biographical Approach II</b> Artemisia Gentileschi, Berthe Morisot, Vincent Van Gogh, Edvard Munch, Otto Dix & Ernst Ludwig Kirchner	
5	<b>FIELD STUDY #1</b> Visit to the Picasso Museum	



<b>6</b>	<b>Iconographical Approach I</b> The Warburg Institute & Panofsky <i>Arnolfini and His Wife</i>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Iconographical Approach II</b> The origins of the Academy of Art & the Hierarchy of genres	
<b>8</b>	<b>Formalist Approach I</b> Elements of Visual Design	
<b>9</b>	<b>Formalist Approach II</b> Principles of Composition	
<b>10</b>	<b>FIELD STUDY #2</b> Visit to the MNAC	
<b>11</b>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	
<b>12</b>	<b>Final Project Assignments</b>	
<b>13</b>	<b>Marxist Approach I</b> Traditional role of the artists	
<b>14</b>	<b>Marxist Approach II</b> Modernity. Haussman's Paris and Impressionists and Postimpressionists	



15	<b>Feminist Approach I</b> Female agency	
16	<b>Feminist Approach II</b> Stereotypes Objectification or empowerment	
17	<b>Psychoanalytical Approach I</b> Freudian theories	
18	<b>Psychoanalytical Approach II</b> Surrealists paintings	
19	<b>FIELD STUDY #3</b> Visit to the Fundació Miró	
20	<b>FINAL PROJECTS &amp; ORAL PRESENTATIONS</b>	
21	<b>FINAL PROJECTS &amp; ORAL PRESENTATIONS</b>	
22	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Required readings:

Carroll, Margaret D. "In the Name of God and Profit," *Representations*, 44 (Autumn, 1993): 96-132. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2928641>

D'Alleva, Anne. *Methods and Theories of Art History* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2013), 46-59

Garrard, Mary D. "Self-portrait as the Allegory of Painting;" *The Art Bulletin*, Vol.62, No.1 (March, 1980): 97-112. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3049963>

Goffen, Rona, "Raphael's Designer Labels: From the Virgin Mary to La Fornarina" *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol 24, No. 48 (2003), pp.123-142

Goldstein, Carl. "Towards a Definition of Academic Art;" *The Art Bulletin*, Vol.57, No.1 (March, 1975): 102-109. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3049342>

Gombrich, E.H. "Bosch's Garden of Earthly Delights: A Progress Report," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 32 (1969): 162-170. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/750611>

Nochlin, Linda. "Seurat's Grande Jatte: Anti-Utopian Allegory," *Arts Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*, Vol. 14 No. 2, The Grande Jatte at 100 (1989): 132-153+241-242. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4108747>

Nochlin, Linda "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" *Art News*, 69 (January 1971): 22-39

Pooke, Grant & Newal, Diana, *The Basics. Art History*. (London: Routledge, 2008), 136-163

Rand, Erica. "Depoliticizing Women," in *Reclaiming Female Agency*, ed. Broude, Norma & Garrard, Mary D. (California: University of California Press, 2005), 143-157

Schneider Adams, Laurie. *Art and Psychoanalysis* (New York: Westview Press, 1994), 41-68; 291-311

Schneider Adams, Laurie. *The Methodologies of Art. An Introduction* (New York: Westview Press, 1996), 3-19; 65-96; 97-124; 125-157; 213-248

### **Recommended readings:**

Acton, Mary. *Learning to Look at Paintings*. London: Routledge, 2008. 336pp.

Acton, Mary. *Learning to Look at Modern Art*. London: Routledge, 2004. 334pp.

Baxandall, Michael. *Patterns of Intention*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin Books, 1972.

Burke, Peter. *The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence*. London: Reaktion Books, 2001.

De Rynck, Patrick. *How to Read a Painting: Lesson from the Old Masters*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2004.

Doherty, Tiana, and Woollett, Anne T. *Looking At Paintings: A Guide to Technical Terms*, Revised Edition. Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2009. 100pp.

Kivy, Peter. *The Blackwell Guide to Aesthetics*. London: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Merlin, James. *Engaging Images*. London: Menaje Press, King's College, 1992.

Lynton, Norbert. *Looking into Paintings*. Boston: Faber and Faber, 1985.

Malins, Frederick. *Understanding Paintings: The Elements of Composition*. London: Phaidon, 1981.

Schneider Adams, Laurie. *The Methodologies of Art: An Introduction*. New York: HarperCollins, 2009. 312pp.

Taylor, Joshua. *Learning to Look: A Handbook for the Visual Arts*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 1981.

Arnheim, Rudolf. *The Power of the Center. A Study of Composition in the Visual Arts*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982.

Wölfflin, Heinrich. *Principles of Art History: the Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art*. New York: Dover Publications, 1950.

Woodford, Susan. *Looking at Pictures: Cambridge Introduction to the History of Art*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Zuffi, Stefano. *How to Read Italian Renaissance Painting*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2010.

#### **Online Reference & Research Tools:**

[www.louvre.fr](http://www.louvre.fr) Collection of painting from the thirteenth century to 1848 from French artists, Italian artists and artists from Northern Europe from the Louvre Museum in Paris.

[www.musee-orsay.fr](http://www.musee-orsay.fr) Collection of mainly French painting from 1848 to 1915 with an extensive collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings

[www.uffizi.com](http://www.uffizi.com) Collection of Italian Painting masterpieces from the Uffizi Gallery in Florence.

[www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk) National collection of British art from 1500 and of international modern art from the Tate Britain and Tate Modern in London.

[www.nationalgallery.org.uk](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk) Collection of old European painting masterpieces from the National Gallery in London.

[www.pinakothek.de/alte-pinakothek](http://www.pinakothek.de/alte-pinakothek) Collection of European paintings from the 13th to 18th century especially focused on Early Italian, Old German, Old Dutch and Flemish paintings from the Alte Pinakothek in Munich.

[www.mnac.es](http://www.mnac.es) Collection of Catalan painting from the Romanesque period until the mid-twentieth century from the National Museum of Catalan Art in Barcelona.

[www.museodelprado.es](http://www.museodelprado.es) Collection of Spanish, Italian, Flemish, French, German, Dutch and British painting from Romanesque period to the nineteenth century from the Prado National Museum in Madrid.

[www.museoreinasofia.es](http://www.museoreinasofia.es) Collection of European painting from the Avant-garde, from 1900 to 1968 from Reina Sofía Art Museum in Madrid.

[www.museothyssen.org](http://www.museothyssen.org) Overview of the major periods and pictorial schools of western art such as the Renaissance, Mannerism, the Baroque, Rococo, Romanticism and the art of the 19th and 20th centuries up to Pop Art from the private collection of Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid.