

ART 1: INTRODUCTION TO ART

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4.5
Hours:	4 lecture, 1.5 laboratory per week (66 total per quarter)
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 3: Arts & Humanities
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- A successful student will be able to evaluate and interpret in writing artwork produced in a variety of media (e.g., photography, printmaking, painting, and performance, etc.) by a selection of contemporary artists (e.g., Lorna Simpson, Guillermo Gomez-Pena, Hung Liu, etc.) whose work exemplifies the creativity of multicultural America.
- A successful student will be able to Analyze and describe a single actual work of art in an in-depth essay utilizing specific art historical methodology, which focuses on the role of the viewer in creating meaning in a work of art.

Description

An introduction to new ways of thinking about the visual arts, including examinations of the visual elements and artistic media, particularly as they contribute to the development of visual literacy. Includes analysis of Western and non-Western traditions in the visual arts within a social and historical context.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Analyze and gain knowledge of the style(s) and content(s) of significant visual art works produced throughout the world and the history of art
- Systematically examine, interpret, and develop an appreciation for individual works of art not as isolated phenomena, but as components which have meaning when viewed in relation to the whole history of art and the over-arching human condition
- Evaluate and acquire knowledge of (and discuss in small groups in class or online) the various underlying principles motivating artistic expression and how they reflect broader human ideas and ideals
- Recognize and develop an appreciation for the significance of art production and visual communication within a variety of socio-cultural contexts
- Using critical thinking skills, analyze and reflect in verbal/written form individual responses to a broad range of visual art works
- Recognize and apply critical methodologies (Formalist, Marxist, Feminist, Structuralist, Post-Structuralist, Psychoanalytic, etc.) to

analyze a broad range of visual culture (painting, film, sculpture, architecture, photography etc.)

Course Content

- Introduction to visual arts and visual literacy
 - The ways artists perceive (and recreate) the world
 - Relationships between words and images
 - Art in socio-historical context
 - Considering visual conventions
 - Critical methodologies in the visual arts
 - Analyze Psychoanalytic, Ideological, Structuralist, Post-Structuralist, and Formalist critical methodologies
- Themes and values in art
 - The value of art in society
 - Public art and politics
- Visual elements and design principles
 - Formal elements: line, space, light, color, texture, pattern, time, motion
 - Design: balance, emphasis/focal point, scale and proportion, repetition and rhythm, unity and variety
- Visual arts media
 - Drawing: preparatory sketch to finished art work
 - Printmaking: relief, intaglio, lithography, silkscreen
 - Painting: encaustic, fresco, tempera, oil, watercolor, gouache, mixed-media
 - Photography and time-based media: film, video, computer and internet-based arts
 - Sculpture: carving, modeling, assemblage, installation, earthworks, performance art
- Crafts as fine arts
 - Ceramics, glass, fiber, wood, metal
- Architecture
 - Green architecture and the community
 - Architectural technology and the environment

Lab Content

Lab activities are provided for students to practice visual literacy skills through written responses to weekly prompts related to specific works of art or architecture. Students practice visual literacy skills through observation, description, analysis, and interpretation within the artwork's specific historical and cultural context using the language of visual analysis (formal elements and principles of design), technique, and genre. When appropriate students practice the application of theoretical frameworks (biography, Marxism, Feminism, Psychoanalysis, Modernism, Postmodernism, Post-colonialism, Structuralism, etc.) regarding each topic area.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

- When taught via Foothill Global Access: on-going access to computer with email software and capabilities; email address; JavaScript-enabled internet browsing software.
- When taught on campus: an adequate slide collection and/or access to digital images and projection equipment (e.g., DVD/VCR, slide projector, screen, etc.).

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Required readings in text and related online weekly lesson modules.
Questions posed in lessons to be discussed in online discussion forums or in traditional classroom

Weekly essay assignments based on readings of text and lesson modules online to evaluate ongoing student learning; research paper/ museum report assignment project may be assigned

Two midterms and one final; examinations may include slide identification, term definition and slide comparison essay, short answer, and objective questions

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Reading online lessons/lectures introducing student to art/art history, presented in weekly modules and viewing supporting videos on contemporary artists

Participating in group/individual discussions in response to lesson questions posed in modules (twice weekly posts minimum required)

Writing weekly essays submitted in response to questions based on lessons and readings in textbook (online sections)

Visiting a fine art museum in preparation for viewing and writing an extensive essay analysis of an individual work of art

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Sayre, Henry M.A.. *World of Art*, 8th ed.. 2015.

Lazzari, Margaret, and Dona Schlesier. *Exploring Art: A Global and Thematic Approach*. 2020.

De Witte, Debra J., Ralph M. Larmann, and M. Kathryn Shields. *Gateways to Art: Understanding the Visual Arts*, 3rd ed.. 2018.

Gordon, Pamela. *Art Matters: A Contemporary Approach to Art Appreciation*, preliminary ed.. 2019.

Although the Sayre text is more than 5 years old, it continues to be a seminal text for the subject.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Reading of one or more textbook chapters for each weekly lesson (e.g., Chapter 1-2: Introduction to Visual Arts and Developing Visual Literacy plus online lesson/module). Additional reading and research required for museum report assignment project
2. Writing assignments:
 - a. Weekly writing assignment based on text and lessons such as the following: After viewing the "A WORLD OF ART: WORKS IN PROGRESS" video on Lorna Simpson and reading relevant sections of the Sayre textbook, please answer the following questions. Your answers should be written in proper essay form and each should consist of a minimum of one page of typewritten text. Each answer will, therefore, be at least several fully developed paragraphs in length, using standard font size and single spacing. Please number each of the two answers and use proper grammar and punctuation at all times. You should

attempt to answer each question in as much detail as possible. To view the video, you may use the PBS Videos tab at the left or you may click on a list of videos available for viewing and select Lorna Simpson, which is part of the "A WORLD OF ART: WORKS IN PROGRESS" series

- i. Though Lorna Simpson is usually classified as a "photographer," early in the video she denies being very interested in photography for its own sake. What other sorts of issues interest her? What other labels might be appropriately used to describe her as an artist?
- ii. Consider the relationship of text to image in these works. Which work changes the most dramatically for you when you read the text? Or what text surprises you the most? Explain why
- b. Museum formal analysis
 - i. Visual analysis is the basic unit of art historical writing. Sources as varied as art magazines, scholarly books, and undergraduate research papers rely on concise and detailed visual analyses. Students spend time observing the artwork, changing position to observe from different angles and distances. Write down impressions and observations. It can be helpful to sketch the painting or sculpture in order to experience recording visual language in a visual manner and noticing additional details
 - ii. In a succinct narrative address the material, iconography (if applicable), line/form, composition, use of light and dark, contrast, color and any other expressive qualities. The narrative should aim to enable the reader to imagine the work of art
- c. Public art writing assignment
 - i. According to the Association for Public Art, what distinguishes public art is the unique association of how it is made, where it is, and what it means. Public art can express community values, enhance our environment, transform a landscape, heighten our awareness, or question our assumptions. Placed in public sites, this art is there for everyone, a form of collective community expression. Public art is a reflection of how we see the world—the artist's response to our time and place combined with our own sense of who we are
 - ii. Students choose a work of public art that they have encountered in the community where they live, work, or go to school. They may choose to write about artworks that are installed in public spaces on the college campus
 - iii. Students consider the following questions:
 1. What does it mean to place a work of art in a public space?
 2. Who is the artist?
 3. What is the medium, title, form or material used?
 4. Does the work blend into the environment?
- d. Architectural visual essay assignment: Students demonstrate visual analysis skills using architectural terms in an essay that includes comparisons to historical structures studied in class

Discipline(s)

Art or Art History