

# NCAL 401A: HISTORY OF ART: HISTORY OF WESTERN ART FROM PREHISTORY THROUGH EARLY CHRISTIANITY FOR OLDER ADULTS

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Winter 2026
Units:	0
Hours:	4 lecture, 1.5 laboratory per week (66 total per quarter)
Degree & Credit Status:	Non-Degree-Applicable Non-Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Non-GE
Transferable:	None
Grade Type:	Non-Credit Course (Receives no Grade)
Repeatability:	Unlimited Repeatability

## Student Learning Outcomes

- A successful student will be able to analyze the impact of the environment and social norms on the production of art and formulate specific conclusions based on this interplay of nature and culture.
- The student will be able to identify and name art from the broad variety of cultures covered by the course based on a comprehensive knowledge of style, function, and meaning.

## Description

This noncredit course is targeted towards older adults. History of Western art from Prehistory through Early Christianity. An introductory survey examining images, objects, and architecture produced from the Paleolithic era to the end of the Roman Empire. We will discuss Prehistoric, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Early Christian and Byzantine culture. Illustrated lectures and readings.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Classify a broad variety of art and cultures through a knowledge of the development of visual arts and material culture
- Explain how social, political, and religious traditions affect art
- Recognize and interpret ideas, principles, and techniques that have influenced artistic expression
- Identify and name the style, content, and approximate dates of art works ranging from prehistoric times to approximately 600 CE
- Identify and name the broad variety of cultures/civilizations covered by the course based on a comprehensive knowledge of style, function, and meaning
- Analyze the impact of the environment and social norms on the production of art and formulate specific conclusions based on this interplay of nature and culture

- Discuss and explain the various religious traditions examined in the course
- Assess and explain the iconography of different cultures based on a thorough knowledge of different symbols/forms
- Demonstrate the influence of pagan art and religious belief on the development of Christian art and theology

## Course Content

- Prehistory and Prehistoric Art in Europe
  - Upper Paleolithic
    - Cave painting and sculpture
  - Mesolithic
    - Rock-shelter paintings
  - Neolithic
    - Megalithic monuments
- Art of the Ancient Near East
  - The beginnings: Catal Huyuk and Jericho
  - Sumer
    - Architecture and sculpture
  - Akkad
    - Sculpture
  - Babylonia
    - Sculpture and architecture
  - Assyria
    - Architecture and relief sculpture
  - Neo-Babylonia
  - Ancient Iran: Elam and Achaemenid Persia
- Art of Ancient Egypt
  - Early Dynastic period and Old Kingdom
    - Architecture, sculpture, and painted relief
  - Middle Kingdom
    - Rock-cut tombs, painting, and sculpture
  - New Kingdom
    - Architecture, sculpture, and painting
    - Akhenaton and the Amarna Period
    - Tutankamen and the Late Period
- Aegean Art
  - Early Minoan Period
    - Cycladic sculpture
  - Middle Minoan Period
    - Vase painting - Crete
  - Late Minoan Period
    - Architecture and painting - Knossos, Santorini
    - Pottery and sculpture
  - Mycenaean
    - Architecture and sculpture
- Art of Ancient Greece
  - Geometric Period
    - Vase painting and sculpture
  - Archaic Period
    - Vase painting: black and red figure techniques
    - Sculpture: kouros and kore
    - Architecture
  - Early Classical (Transitional) Period
    - Severe style
  - High (Mature) Classical Period

- i. Architecture
  - ii. Sculpture and painting
- e. Late Classical Period
  - i. Sculpture and architecture
- f. Hellenistic Period
  - i. Sculpture and architecture
  - ii. Mosaics
- 6. Etruscan and Roman Art
  - a. Etruscans
    - i. Architecture and painting
    - ii. Sculpture
  - b. Romans
    - i. Republican Period
      - 1. Portrait sculpture and architecture
      - 2. Painting and mosaic
    - ii. Early Empire
      - 1. Architecture and public works
      - 2. Sculpture and monumental relief
    - iii. Late Empire
      - 1. Architecture
      - 2. Sculpture and monumental architecture
- 7. Early Christian, Jewish, and Byzantine Art
  - a. Early Christian
    - i. Catacombs
    - ii. Architecture
  - iii. Mosaic and painting
    - 1. Illuminated manuscript
  - iv. Sculpture and crafts
  - b. Byzantine
    - i. Ravenna and Mt. Sinai
    - ii. Constantinople
  - c. Later Byzantine
    - i. Architecture
    - ii. Painting and sculpture
    - iii. Introduction to Islam

## Lab Content

Lab activities are provided for students to practice visual literacy and critical thinking skills through the synthesis of content from the lecture, posted videos, and assigned reading 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

1. Slide collection and projection equipment adequate for lectures on the subject.
2. Access to the Artstor online image archive. Classroom must be internet connected and provided with digital projector, DVD player, and VHS player.

3. When taught via Foothill Global Access, ongoing access to a computer with email address, software and hardware, and internet.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

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

Two midterms

Final examination (midterms and final include slide identification, short answer, and essay questions)

A research paper

Research activity assignments based on library research modules

Weekly moderated online discussions

## Method(s) of Instruction

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

Lecture

Discussion

Cooperative learning exercises

Oral presentations

Electronic discussions/chat

Independent study

Field trips

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Kleiner, Mamiya, and Tansey. Gardner's History of Art Vol. I & II, 16th ed.. 2021.

Kleiner, Mamiya, and Tansey. Gardner's History of Art Vol. I, 16th ed.. 2021.

Kleiner, Fred S.. Gardner's Art through the Ages: A Global History, 16th ed.. 2020.

Stokstad, Marilyn, and Michael Cothren. Art History Vol. I & II, 6th ed.. 2018.

Students may use older editions of the textbooks. Some or all of the textbooks are available as e-books (rental or purchase) and are also on reserve in the Foothill College library for student use.

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

1. Approximately one chapter of text (30-60 pages) per week
2. Primary/secondary source reading from handouts
3. 7-8 page paper prepared using the MLA format and researched using primary and secondary sources only
4. Weekly journal responses to the questions based on their lab films
5. Written essay responses on all three exams
6. Short answer responses on all three exams

## Discipline(s)

Art History