



UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA  
del Sacro Cuore



**Franklin University Switzerland  
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore  
Forum-Nexus Program  
Course Syllabus**

**Introduction to European Art and Architecture:  
A Historical Approach**

**Introduction**

From the Greco-Roman period to today, the great capitals of Europe have been the center of different artistic styles. From the Coliseum in Rome to the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, to the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the development of Western Art has been concentrated in Europe. Leading European museums, such as the Louvre, the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan, or the Vatican museums, have amassed over the centuries the most impressive collections of paintings and sculptures.

**Course Description**

This course provides an overview of ancient sites and the pictorial traditions that developed in different countries of Europe. Paintings, sculptures, buildings, and urban planning will be analyzed from a historic point of view. Students will consider the circumstances that helped develop different styles in art and architecture in Europe in general, and in Spain, Italy, France, and the Netherlands in particular, in the old times. A broad range of subjects will be covered, including the study of Roman antiquity and Gothic cathedrals, the ideas that propelled the creative period in Florence and Rome during the Renaissance, the analysis of important artistic movements such as Romanticism, Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, and Art Déco, and the importance of artists such as Da Vinci, Vermeer, Monet, and Gaudi. Students will also engage in thematic and foundational discussions, such as the importance and influence of patronage on art, the construction of museum exhibits, and how art was an integral part in history.

## **Learning Objectives**

At the conclusion of the course, students should understand the major movements in art and architectural history in Europe and be able to identify works of art in these movements. They should understand the circumstances that helped to develop these styles and become familiar with the names and places related to art history and architecture. More generally, students should understand and be able to describe how art and architecture reflect the societies that created them.

1. Understand and reflect upon the construction of museum exhibits
2. Identify characteristics of Greco-Roman art and architecture, and how it influenced art moving forward
3. Classify differences between the Medieval styles and others in art and architecture
4. Develop an understanding of the importance of the Renaissance in Europe
5. Understand the course of events in the long nineteenth century (1789-1914) and how these impacted artistic expression
6. Learn to examine artworks not just for their beauty, but as windows to the past

## **Course Requirements**

The course requires active student participation. Students are expected to read the required articles and material before every class. Punctual attendance is required. There will be a midterm exam, a final exam, two essay assignments, and a final PowerPoint presentation. Each student is required to participate in a minimum of three professional visits and three cultural visits.

## **Pedagogical Approach**

Teaching methods used in this course include lectures, discussions, field activities, and professional visits. Learning in this course requires the student's constructive participation and active involvement in both class discussions and small group discussions. Small group discussions in particular are a key mechanism for facilitating learning from other team members. Thus, it is essential to attend all group activities inside and outside classes. The professional visits will expose the participants to different aspects of the class and will highlight the practical relevance of the concepts learned. The visits will be accompanied by individual or group assignments. Cultural visits enhance the students' understanding of the history and culture of each country.

## **Required Readings**

Dana Arnold, *Art History: A Very Short Introduction* ([kindle amazon US](#))

Timothy Brook, *Vermeer's Hat: The seventeenth century and the dawn of the global world* ([kindle amazon us](#))

## **Course Bibliography**

Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*

Peter Burke, *Fabrication of Louis XIV*

Mary Beard and John Henderson, *Classical Art: From Greece to Rome*

Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*

Penelope J. E. Davies, et al., *Janson's History of Art*

Charles Naurert, *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe*

Michel Pastoureau, *Blue: History of a Color*

Guido Ruggiero, *Renaissance in Italy: Social and Cultural History of the Rinascimento*

## **Assignments & Grading**

As a part of this course, the students will visit museums, cathedrals, buildings, temples, monuments, fountains, and other sites renowned for their artistic value or architectural design.

Active and engaged participation in class is necessary to succeed in this course. This requires solid attendance as well as active participation in class discussions. Students are expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings (they are to be read for the day they are listed), and ready to discuss in a respectful, collegial manner with their peers. Any unexcused absence will lead to -5% to the final overall grade.

During the course, each student will be responsible for submitting an analytical essay, based upon Timothy Brook's *Vermeer's Hat*. The essay will consist of at least 1200 words (~3-4 double-spaced pages, 12-point font) of content, i.e. not counting the cover page, table of contents, list of references, and appendices. References should be written in Chicago format.

Students will be responsible for visiting at least two art museums during the trip. A final PowerPoint presentation will be given at the end of the course based on those visits. An extra credit assignment is also possible based on an analysis of a museum exhibit. Please note that entrance fees to museums and other sites are not included in the price of the program.

### **Assignment 1 - Essay on *Vermeer's Hat: The seventeenth century and the dawn of the global world:***

Students will read the book *Vermeer's Hat* and write an analysis of the book.

- A. What is the argument that Timothy Brook espouses? What is the story he is trying to tell? What evidence does he use?
- B. Do you agree with Brook? Is his argument convincing?
- C. Pick an artwork that Brook analyzes, and explain how it reveals the interconnected, global nature of the 17th century.

- D. Select another work of art that you've seen in a museum, and write an analysis of the piece in the style of Brook. What does this artwork reveal about the society that created it?

### Assignment 2 – PowerPoint Presentation

Based on your visits to at least two art museums, create a PowerPoint presentation based on one masterpiece of your choice from each one of them (choose an artwork not studied in class).

- Analyze, compare and contrast the masterpieces.
- Include a quick summary of your personal experience at the sites.

Presentations must be between 10-15 minutes.

### Participation in “Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar”

All students also attend **Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar**, a daily session conducted by the Academic Director, Dr. Edward Gray, with occasional distinguished guest lectures. In this seminar, students learn about the culture of each country, gain an understanding of essential European geography and current events, discuss their experiences and cross-cultural interactions, get language tips, and identify ways to have an even more immersive study abroad experience. The material covered in the seminar complements the syllabus for this course, and there will be some exam questions based on the seminar. Knowledge from and participation in the International IQ Seminar is factored into the grade for this course.

### Components of the Final Grade

Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	30%
Assignment - <i>Vermeer's Hat</i>	20%
Presentation	20%
Class Participation	10%

### **Grading Scale**

A	93-100 %	B-	80-82.9 %	D+	67-69.9 %
A-	90-92.9 %	C+	77-79.9 %	D	63-66.9 %

B+	87-89.9 %	C	73-76.9 %	D-	60-62.9 %
B	83-86.9 %	C-	70-72.9%	F	Below 60 %

### **Course Outline**

<b>Class</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>
Module 1	What is Art History ? <i>Reading Assignment: VSI, Ch 1, 3</i>
Module 2	Museology: Why do Museums exist, what story do they have to tell, and who decides what goes inside them? <i>Reading Assignment: VSI, Ch 4</i>
Module 3	Greek and Roman Art and Architecture <i>Reading Assignment: VSI, Ch 2</i>
Module 4	Medieval Art & Architecture <i>Reading Assignment: VSI, Ch 6, 7</i>
Module 5	The Italian Renaissance
Module 6	Northern Renaissance & the influence of the Religious Reformations on Art <i>Reading Assignment: Vermeer's Hat must be read for next class</i>
Module 7	Globalization and Art in the Dutch Golden Age & Discussion on Vermeer's Hat <i>Reading Assignment: Teju Cole, Seeing Beyond the Beauty of a Vermeer (<a href="#">link</a>)</i>
Module 8	Patronage in Renaissance and Absolutist Europe <i>Reading Assignment: Wilkinson, Louis XIV, 98-108 (<a href="#">link</a>)</i>
Module 9	19th Century Art: Nationalism and Romantic Art Movement
Module 10	19th Century Art: Industrial Revolution and Impressionism
Module 11	The Influence of the First World War on Art
Module 12	Art and Architecture in Interwar Europe <i>Reading Assignment: Fascist Architecture in Rome (<a href="#">link</a>)</i>
Module 13	Contemporary and Digital Art <i>Reading Assignment: David G. Stork, How AI is Expanding Art History (<a href="#">link</a>) &amp; Nageen Shaikh, Can AI Be Better at Art History Than Us? (<a href="#">link</a>)</i>

## **Academic Integrity**

The Forum-Nexus program places a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.