

ARTH 401

**ART HISTORY METHODOLOGY:
READINGS IN ART HISTORY**

Course outline



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Art History
School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies
Victoria University of Wellington

Trimester 1 and 2
2 March–14 November 2009

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course co-ordinator:	Tina Barton OK 315, ph 463 5254, tina.barton@vuw.ac.nz
Where:	OK 301
When:	2.00-4.00pm Thursdays

ARTH 401 investigates the approaches art historians have developed from art history's beginnings as a recognised academic discipline to the present.

It is organised around a number of key foci for art historical thinking, research and writing. Within these fields of inquiry, key art historians who have been instrumental in the development and application of art history methodology are introduced and their work assessed.

The course is delivered by means of 17 seminar sessions. Each session is structured around the discussion of a group of readings. These include important texts by art historians and theorists, as well as critical commentaries on their writings and methods. As part of the formal assessment students will introduce readings and lead discussion on two occasions and you are expected to actively contribute to every seminar as your input is crucial to the success of the course.

This course is not a comprehensive survey, but rather an intensive and critical examination of key approaches within the field of art history, which will give students a solid understanding of the discipline and a greater self-consciousness about its application. Sessions conclude in mid September. This is designed so that you have time to complete your internal assessment and so you can review the course and prepare for your exam.

In line with Art History's learning objectives, ARTH 401:

- 1. encourages you to apply your skills of analysis to critically examine visual and textual material;**
- 2. develops your capacity for independent work, including the formulation, analysis and refinement of topics;**
- 3. ensures the consistent application of the conventions of academic writing and art historical research;**
- 4. ensures the full use of library resources;**
- 5. refines your skills in presenting and debating ideas in oral situations;**
- 6. prepares you for post-graduate research in art history;**
- 7. introduces you to the standards required of scholarly articles and papers.**

SEMINAR PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

1. What is art history methodology? 5 March

ART AND HISTORY

2. Vasari and the foundations of art history 12 March
3. Humanism and historical consciousness 19 March

ARTIST AS SUBJECT

4. The artist as subject 2 April
5. The subject at stake 9 April

Mid trimester break (no classes until 14 May)
ASSIGNMENT DUE 8 MAY

STYLE

6. Wölfflin's principles: art history as the history of style 14 May
7. Style as 'will to form': the meaning of style 21 May

MEANING

8. Iconography: Panofsky and his critics 28 May
9. Semiology and art history 4 June

Mid year break

10. Deconstruction and the limits of interpretation 16 July

VISUAL THEORY

11. Theories of representation 23 July

12. Art history or visual culture? 30 July

CONTEXT

13. The social history of art 6 August

14. Feminist art history 13 August

15. The geography of art history 20 August

Mid trimester break

ART HISTORY AFTER MODERNISM

16. Art history in the era of mechanical reproduction 10 September

17. Art history after the end of art 17 September

End of course
ESSAY DUE 21 SEPTEMBER

ASSESSMENT

ARTH 401 is assessed by means of one ASSIGNMENT (20%), one 4,000-word ESSAY (40%), SEMINAR CONTRIBUTIONS (10%) and a three-hour examination (30%).

The assignment is due on **8 May**. It is designed to enable you to test and apply your preliminary understanding of art history methodology in relation to an actual case study. Further instructions for your assignment follow.

Your essay is due on **21 September**. Instructions for the essay follow. The essay should be thought of as a major piece of writing providing an opportunity for you to canvas the work of a key art historian and to critically explore their work. This is designed to enable you to investigate the work of a key art historian in detail. You will be expected to select your subject early in the year then prepare an annotated bibliography and a working thesis for your essay (by 31 July). It is wise to discuss your essay as it develops with your course coordinator up to the due date.

The exam will be held during the exam period at the end of the year (27 October–14 November). You are required to answer two questions. The examination is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your critical and analytical grasp of topics covered throughout the course.

You will also be expected to actively contribute to the seminar discussions at all times. In addition, over the duration of the course, you will be invited to introduce **two readings** and lead discussion of them. This is an opportunity for you to develop your critical reading skills and to demonstrate your ability to present an argument and lead discussion. You will be invited to select these readings in the second seminar, from a list provided.

Mandatory course requirements are defined in the University Calendar. You are expected to come to **all** seminar sessions and you should notify the course co-ordinator if you cannot attend, (due to illness or other pressing reasons). In addition:

- One assignment must be presented by the due date
- One essay must be presented by the due date, preceded by the submission of a bibliography and thesis statement (by 31 July).
- You must sit the end of year exam to pass the course.

If you are in any doubt about your ability to meet these deadlines you must see the course co-ordinator immediately. Extensions are not generally granted unless under exceptional circumstances. Aegrotat passes can only be considered on the provision of a medical certificate.

Marking: The course co-ordinator is responsible for marking all assessment. You may request a second opinion of the assessment of any piece of written work, from another lecturer in Art History. Coursework and the exam will be reviewed by an external assessor in order to ensure that academic standards at honours level are met. Your final grade for the course may be adjusted both to reflect your overall contribution to and achievement in the course and in response to the feedback from the external assessor.

Workload: The University recommends that approximately 12 hours per paper per week, inclusive of lectures and seminars, be given to a full-year, 4-paper graduate programme in order to maintain satisfactory progress.

General university requirements: Information about the University's general requirements can be found at the end of this course outline. This includes information about the University's policy on plagiarism, grievance procedures and facilities to assist students.

ASSIGNMENT

20% of your final grade

Due 8 May 2009

Maximum 2,000 words

Criteria for assessment:

These criteria are in line with the learning outcomes numbered 1 to 4 listed on page 2 of this course outline.

- **ability to select a suitable publication/exhibition and analyse its contents**
- **ability to apply your understanding of the seminar readings to the subject you have chosen**
- **clarity of your argument, quality of close reading and ability to draw conclusions**
- **attention to mechanics of writing, referencing and presentation**

ESSAY

40% of your final grade

Due Monday 21 September

Maximum 4,000 words

This essay should be considered a major piece of work. It is worth 40% of your final grade. The preparation of a substantial annotated bibliography is an important component of this assessment and is designed to support your essay preparation. It must be submitted with a working thesis for your essay by 31 July.

The purpose of this essay is to enable students to develop their knowledge and understanding of a particular art historian in depth. This is designed to complement the approach taken in the seminar programme. It also serves to familiarise you with the literature of art history and to enable you to develop a critical approach to the subject.

GENERAL INFORMATION

General university statutes and policies

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

This website also provides information for students in a number of areas including academic grievances, student and staff conduct, meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates.

Taping of Lectures

All students in the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies are welcome to use their own audio-tapes to record lectures. If you want to do this, please see your lecturer, tutor or the relevant programme administrator and complete a disclaimer form, which advises of copyright and other relevant issues.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

ENJOY THE COURSE!
