

Art at the Prado Museum

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: MADR 3021

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction:

Contact Hours: 45

Course Description

The aim of this course is to make students familiar with the most relevant and internationally outstanding Spanish and European artists within the Prado Museum Permanent Collections. The course will help students to fully understand and assimilate art history fundamental concepts and movements such as Renaissance, Baroque, and Neoclassicism, with a specific concentration on Spanish masters such as El Greco, Velázquez, and Goya. Simultaneously, it will help students confront Spain's and Europe most controversial history: from the dark Medieval Ages to the beginning of the 19th Century. Two observations will be fundamental to our investigations.

The first is that art history involves the study not simply of formal concepts. A work of art has a physical presence that is offered by the artist but his/her ideas, convictions, and claims are shaped in large measure by specific social circumstances. The relevance of the latter are those that turn an artwork into a masterpiece. Thus, techniques and styles of representation are just the beginning of art history research.

The second observation has to do with the relationship between art and culture: Art does not simply (or passively) reflect a given culture, but rather actively participates in its formation and development. A work of art, then, is the deepest expression of a social, religious, political, as well as intellectual context. Thus, thorough the artworks' analysis, students will develop critical and intellectual thinking by the means of observation, research, and interpretation.

Course Objectives

- To learn to identify, analyze and appraise works of art
- To learn to research and write about art and familiarize oneself with basic bibliography about art history
- To develop criteria for the evaluation of works of art through visual memory, critical thinking, and experienced aesthetic sensibility
- To expand one's knowledge of the European and Western culture (and in particular Spanish culture) through the visual arts

Required Reading / Materials

1. BROWN, J., Paintings in Spain, 1500-1700, Yale University Press 1998 Arts at the Prado 8
2. BROWN et alt., Figures of Thought: El Greco as interpreter of History, Tradition and Ideas, Washington 1982
3. El Greco of Toledo, Exhibition Catalogue, Meadows Museum, Dallas 1982
4. BROWN, J., Images and Ideas in Seventeenth century Spanish Painting, Princeton University Press 1978
5. BROWN, J., Velazquez, painter and courtier, Yale University Press 1986
6. ARMER, D.H., Oxford Dictionary of Saints, Oxford Press 1992 COURSE DESIGNATOR: MADR 3021 NUMBER OF CREDITS: 3 LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: CONTACT HOURS: 45 PAGE 2
7. GASSIER, P. WILSON, J., The life and complete work of Francisco Goya, New York 1981
8. GOMBRICH, E.H., The History of Art, New York 1966 (First Edition)
9. HALL, J., Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art, New York 1979.
10. HONOUR, H., Neo-Classicism, Harmondsworth, UK 1977
11. KUBLER, George, Art and Architecture in Spain and Portugal and Their American Dominions 1500 to 1800. Harmondsworth, Penguin, UK 1959 (The first!)
12. LICHT, G., Goya. The Origins of the Modern Temper in Art, New York 1979
13. MOFFIT, J., The Arts of Spain, Thames and Hudson, London 1998
14. ORTEGA Y GASSET, J., Velázquez, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid 1999
15. STOICHITA, Victor, Visionary Experience in the Golden Age of Spanish Art. Reaktion, London 1995
16. TOMLINSON, Janis, Arts in Spain Perspectives, Harry N.Abrams Inc Publishers, New York, 1997
17. TRUSTED, Marjorie, The Arts of Spain: Iberia and Latin America 1450–1700. V&A, London 2007
18. WOLFFLIN, H., Classic art. An introduction to the Italian Renaissance, London-New York 1988

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	
C	73–76	
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
Participations (including assignments and random quizzes and homework)	15%
Midterm exam	20%
Individual project (work of art analysis and presentation)	20%
Group project (essay and presentation)	20%
Final exam	25%
Overall grade	100%

Assessment Details

- **INDIVIDUAL PROJECT:** Study of an artwork and presentation: Following given instructions at the beginning of the semester. Description; Interpretation; Artistic and Historical Context; Comparisons; Conclusion (2000 words). Presentations are held either at the classroom or the museum galleries. Artworks and dates assigned by professor at the beginning of the semester.
 - Art works assignments:
 - BOSCH “The Haywain”
 - TITIAN Selfportrait
 - EL GRECO “Saint Sebastian”; “The Adoration of the Shepherds”
 - RUBENS “The three graces”
 - ZURBARAN “Agnus Dei”
 - VELAZQUEZ “The Count Duke of Olivares on a horse”; “Bufón Sebastián de Morra”
 - GOYA “Maja desnuda”; “May 3rd”; “Saturn Devouring His Son”
- **GROUP PROJECT:** Essay and Presentation: Title (statement), Introduction (intentions and plan of development), Development or Supporting paragraphs (2/3), Conclusions (4500 words). Bibliography and Sources. Topics and dates assigned by professor at the beginning of the semester. If you have preferences or suggestions, please talk to your instructor during the first week of classes. Each group will be assigned one topic **RELATED TO A ROYAL PALACE OR ROYAL FACTORY.**
 - Films & Documentaries. Artists biographies and work as well as fictional stories will be screened and discussed or worked through different exercises in class

- Course components
 - Attendance: It is very important that you attend every class meeting. Missing more than two classes will lower your final grade in this course. For each additional absence, your grade will be lowered one step on the grading scale (e.g., from a B to a PAGE 4 B-). In the event that you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what material you have missed and any homework assignments.
 - Participation & Attitude: Participation is essential to knowledge acquisition. In order for you to participate actively in class, you should review the appropriate material ahead of time. Every class period you will receive a 0, a 0.5, or a 1. At the end of the semester, these points will be used to calculate your attendance, participation, and attitude grade.
 - 0
 - Absent
 - Poor participation and attitude
 - Seldom spoke in class
 - Not prepared for class
 - 0.5
 - Late to class/left early
 - Average participation and adequate attitude
 - Spoke occasionally
 - Not always well prepared for class
 - 1
 - Present and on time
 - Excellent participation and attitude
 - Spoke in class frequently
 - Always very prepared for class
 - Homework: Must be completed by the due date. No late homework will be accepted. Workbook assignments are due on the scheduled dates.
 - Museum field trips: Every student is expected to visit museums on his/her own as part of their individual research and study. EVERY WEEK, THURSDAY classes (your professor will let you know about exceptions at the beginning of the semester, such as for museum reservations), from the second week on, will be held at the Prado Museum as an integral part of the course. On the scheduled class time, students will meet the instructor at the Prado Museum, Goya, OR Murillo entrance depending on given instructions. Students are expected to take notes. NEVER TAKE BAC PACKS or BIG BAGS and always CARRY YOUR STUDENT CARD with you.
 - Midterm & final exams. One analysis of a work of art. Please check the dates. The final exam is cumulative and will evaluate all skills, including linguistic and cultural knowledge.
 - Required assignments: Both relate and involve the research and study of original works of art, based on a specific bibliography as well as visits to museums, galleries and/or monuments.
 - INDIVIDUAL PROJECT: One analysis of a work of art
 - GROUP RESEARCH PROJECT: One essay on a class-related topic
- Important dates, deadlines, & calendar
 - Midterm Exam: FEBRUARY 27

- Individual project deadline: MARCH 22
- Group Project deadline: APRIL 10
- Final Exam: TBD (week of finals: APRIL 23–26) PAGE 5
- Prado Museum field trips: every week, Tuesday or Thursday (see the schedule given to you at the beginning of the semester), meeting point at Goya or Murillo entrance

Course Content

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Unit 1

A Methodology to the Analysis of Art Works. Art Research and Art Criticism

- Reading: “The role of artistic development. The role of visual thinking” IN Journal of Aesthetic Education, Vol 22, Number4, Special Issue, Winter 1993, pp 31-44, by Ellen Winner, 1993.

Unit 2

The Iberian Peninsula Under the Catholic Monarchs. Philip II’s “Masterpiece” of El Escorial

- Reading: “Church and state: The reign of Philip II” IN Painting in Spain. 1500-1700 by Jonathan Brown, 1991
- Recommended visit: Monastery of El Escorial.

Unit 3

El Greco

- Readings: “Variations on El Greco” by Aldous Huxley IN Writers on artists, edited by Daniel Halpern, 1988 AND “Caravaggio” by Walter Friedlander IN Readings in Art History edited by Harold Spencer, 1976.
- Suggested reading: “An El Greco ‘Entombment’ Eyed Awry” by Leo Steinberg IN The Burlington Magazine, August 1974, 474-77.
- Suggested reading: “Was El Greco Astigmatic?” by Stuart Anstis IN Leonardo, MIT Press, 2002, 208.
- Screening: “El Greco,” by Smaragdis, 2007.
- Recommended visit: El Greco’s paintings at Toledo

Unit 4

17th C. Genre Versus Religious Painting. Velázquez

- Reading: “The Greatest Amateur of Paintings among the Princes of the World” IN Kings and Connoisseurs collecting Art in the Seventeenth Century Europe by Jonathan Brown, 1995. AND Reading: “Velázquez and Philip IV” and “From Painter of Princes to the Prince of Painters” IN PAGE 6 Velázquez Painter and Courtier by Jonathan Brown, 1986.

- Suggested reading: “Velazquez’s ‘Las Meninas’ by Leo Steinberg, October, Winter 1981, 45-54.
- Screening: “El rey pasmado” by Imanol Uribe, 1991.
- Recommended visit: Royal Palace and Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales, Madrid.

Unit 5

From Hapsburgs to Bourbons Aesthetics

- Readings: “Distinctions between Renaissance and Baroque” by Heinrich Wölfflin IN Readings in Arts at the Prado 7 Art History Edited by Harold Spencer, 1976. AND “The baroque in Italy, Flanders and Spain” IN A Basic History of Art by Janson and Janson, 1987.
- Suggested reading: “Rubens’s France: Gender and Personification in the Marie de Medicis Cycle” by Sarah Cohen IN The Art Bulletin, September 2003, 490-522.

Unit 6

An “Enlightened” New Life Style. Goya

- Reading: “Goya” by André Malraux and “On the prints of Francisco Goya” by Robert Pinsky IN Writers on artists, edited by Daniel Halpern, 1988.
- Suggested reading: “Goya: The Origins of the Modern Temper in Art by Fred Licht,” reviewed by Nicholas Orsini IN Leonardo, MIT Press, Winter 1982, 77.
- Suggested reading: “Moors and the Bullfight: History and National Identity in Goya’s Tauromaquia” by Andrew Schulz IN The Art Bulletin, June 2008, 195-217.
- Screening: “Goya’s ghosts” by Milos Forman, 2006.
- Recommended visits: Real Fábrica de Tapices de Santa Bárbara, Madrid; Royal Palace of Aranjuez, Madrid, and Royal Palace of La Granja, Segovia

Unit 7

What Is Modernity?

- Reading: “The State of Psychoanalytic Research in Art History” IN The Art Bulletin, Vol. 70, Number 1, March 1988, pp 48-76. AND “Modernity versus Postmodernity,” Jürgen Habermas and Sheila Ben-Habib IN New German Critique num 22, 1981 https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/sociology/staff/robertfine/home/teachingmaterial/sociology/modernity/readings/modernity_versus_postmodernity_habermas.pdf PAGE 7
- Suggested reading: “The Arnheim Connection: ‘Guernica’ and ‘Las Meninas’ ” by Susan Grace Gallassi IN Journal of Aesthetic Education, Winter 1993, 45-56.
- Recommended visit: Museo Thyssen, Madrid.

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).