Art History

Art history is an inherently interdisciplinary field and an integral part of a liberal arts education. Art history majors explore and analyze the production, collection, display and reception of visual art, media and culture within relevant political, social and historical contexts. The art history curriculum emphasizes visual literacy, cross-cultural study, critical thinking and object-based inquiry, skills essential for success in a variety of careers and engaged, socially responsible citizenship an increasingly global, interconnected and visual world.

Introductory and lower-level art history courses provide broad overviews of art and architecture from around the world and develop fundamental skills in visual analysis, critical interpretation, public presentation and written communication. Upper-level art history courses focus on the discussion of specific periods, cultures, media, or topics with an emphasis on close looking, comparative analysis, research and writing skills. Advanced coursework enhances student understanding of the philosophical constructs, intellectual ideas and professional practices that influence artistic production and critical interpretation. Art history students must also complete courses in studio art in order to gain experience with creative processes.

The art history curriculum includes courses on the art and architecture of America, Europe and Latin America, as well as topics courses that focus on the politics of representation, race, gender and sexuality and curatorial studies. Majors are encouraged to supplement their art history coursework with hands-on experience through study abroad, museum or community arts practice, internships, volunteer work and civic engagement. Students also have the opportunity to pursue independent research that involves close study of artwork from the Fine Art Collection or a curatorial project through Boyden Gallery. Ultimately, the study of art history at St. Mary’s College lays a solid foundation for pursuing a wide range of careers, including museum professions, arts and non-profit administration, information science, collections management, education, architecture and urban planning, public policy, law, foreign service, international affairs and historic preservation.
Learning Outcomes

- Understand shared and diverse techniques, methods and theories of artistic practice and art historical interpretation, with an emphasis on visual, media, and spatial literacy.
- Know representative objects, structures and concepts from the global history of artistic production, reception and theory.
- Use critical thinking and effective oral and written communication to interpret and present visual art and media in its cultural context.
- Apply a comparative framework for understanding global artistic production and use interdisciplinary methodology and knowledge in object-based research.
- Acquire a life-long enthusiasm and curiosity about visual art, media and culture beyond the classroom.
- Develop a familiarity with the professional practices of Art History, either as preparation for graduate programs, employment in an arts or museum-related field, or other professions.

Degree Requirements for the Major

General College Requirements
General College Requirements (see Curriculum section), including the following requirements to satisfy the major

Course Requirements
At least 13 courses carrying art history or studio art credit and a minimum of 48 credit hours, in all of which the student must earn a grade of C- or better and a cumulative grade-point average of at least 2.00, including the following:

- Two core courses:
  - ARTH 100: Introduction to Art History
  - ART 205: Introduction to Visual Thinking
- One 200-level Art History course
- One of the following courses:
  - ARTH 316: Modern Art, 1850-1970
  - ARTH 317: Contemporary Art, 1970 to Present
• One of the following courses:
  ◦ ARTH 321: Art and Architecture of the Ancient Maya
  ◦ ARTH 322: Native North American Art and Architecture
  ◦ ARTH 331: Topics in Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art
  ◦ ARTH 355: Advanced Topics in Global Art History
• Two additional 300-level Art History courses
• One of the following:
  ◦ ARTH 440: Advanced Topics in Practice-Based Art History
  ◦ ARTH 450: Advanced Seminar in Art History
• ARTH 470: Critical Approaches to the Analysis of Art
• One additional studio art course

**Senior Experience**
This requirement may be satisfied in one of two ways:

• ARTH 493/494: St. Mary’s Project in Art History. With the approval of the department, and in consultation with an art history faculty adviser, the student completes eight credit hours of the St. Mary’s Project in art history, or in any other discipline or cross-disciplinary study area.

• ARTH 490: Senior Experience in Art History. With the approval of the department, and in consultation with an art history faculty adviser, the student completes Senior Experience in Art History (ARTH 490).

**Additional Requirements**
Additional art history elective courses to bring the courses taken for the major to a minimum of 13 courses and a minimum of 48 credit hours. These electives may include courses listed in (c), (d), and (g) beyond the one selected to fulfill that requirement. Electives should be chosen in consultation with an art history faculty adviser and approved by the art history faculty as a plan of study. With art history faculty approval, electives may include courses in other departments.

NOTE: with the exception of ARTH 100 and ART 205, courses taken in Studio Art or Art History as part of the requirements for a degree in Art History will not count for a major or minor in Art.
Degree Requirements for the Minor

Course Requirements

- ARTH 100: Introduction to Art History
- One 200-level art history course
- One of the following courses:
  - ARTH 321: Art and Architecture of the Ancient Maya
  - ARTH 322: Native North American Art and Architecture
  - ARTH 331: Topics in Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art
  - ARTH 355: Adv Topics in Global Art History
- One of the following courses:
  - ARTH 316: Modern Art, 1850-1945
  - ARTH 317: Contemporary Art, 1970 to Present
- One additional art history course
- One studio art course

Note: With the exception of ARTH 100, courses taken as part of the degree requirements for the art history minor will not count for a major or minor in Art.

Faculty

Cristin Cash (department chair), Billy Friebele, Sue Johnson, Joe Lucchesi, Carrie Patterson, Lisa Scheer