

Art History (ARTH)

Course information contained within the Bulletin is accurate at the time of publication in June 2025 but is subject to change. For the most up-to-date course information, please refer to the Course Catalog.

ARTH 5097. Graduate Design: Graphic Design Theory. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will introduce students to contemporary design theories and discourse. It will examine the theoretical aspects of artifacts through their making, reading, and dissemination. Graphic design and communication theories will be compared to those in literature and architecture. Students will use discussion, writing, presentations, and design to investigate contemporary design issues. Emphasis will be placed on forming and articulating an individual point of view in discussion and writing. Based on the semester-long discussion about how we visually communicate, all students will draw a revised diagram of the Communication Model developed by Meredith Davis in 2012. Students will also write a 1000-word reflection on the factors that have influenced this eight-year evolution.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 5101. History of Illustration. 3 Credit Hours.

Embark on an exploration of the historical tapestry of illustrated communication. This journey traces the roots of visual storytelling from ancient civilizations to the contemporary landscape. Uncover the diverse forms and functions of illustration, discovering its pivotal role in shaping cultural narratives, political discourse, and the visual aesthetics of various epochs. Engage with illustration's varied formats, analyze influential works, and participate in discussions exploring themes such as the intersection of illustration with gender, race, and socio-political movements. By the end of this study, participants will gain a nuanced understanding of how illustration has mirrored and shaped the ever-changing dynamics of human civilization. Graduate students will either conduct an in-depth annotated research project relevant to the course themes, embracing advanced research methods and documentation, or curate a comprehensive course portfolio that includes detailed annotations and reflections on their work for future professional use.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5105. Thinking Digitally: Digital Tools and Methods in the Arts and Humanities. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is a survey of the major and emerging digital technologies that are reshaping art history, archaeology, and architectural history and preservation in the 21st century. Explore introductions to the major tools used to analyze relationships, mapping, modeling and digital display.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 5350. Topics in Arts Administration. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in arts administration, focusing on contemporary arts of interest, such as mission, values and community; philanthropy in arts administration.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5351. Introduction to Arts Management Practice: Mission, Values and Community. 3 Credit Hours.

Arts Administration describes a vibrant scope of thought and activity that kindles and advances creativity, connects artists and audiences, and creates programs and policies that enhance intellectual and civic life. This course provides an introduction to institutional (and anti-institutional) models, and skills that support creation, exhibition, public education and community building through art including: museums, exhibition spaces, collectives, philanthropies, community arts centers and residencies. The aesthetic, demographic and political dynamics shaping the current cultural moment challenge the field to reexamine its history, practices, foundational assumptions, operations and programs and the ways in which leadership is expressed. Therefore, our exploration of the fundamentals of budgeting, finance, governance, policy, the role of philanthropy, management and operations will be framed by current questions of mission, institutional ethics, cultural equity, access and service. The focus will be on non-profit cultural models, both traditional and emerging, but the course will also touch on characteristics shared with "for-profit" creative enterprises and how cultural trends influence relationships between the commercial and non-profit sectors.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 5360. Topics in Latin American Art. 3 Credit Hours.

A selected topic on Latin American, Caribbean, and U.S. Latinx art and visual culture will be examined. Topics can range from colonial and post-Independence to modern and contemporary art with a focus on the intersections of race, gender, ethnicity, and class.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5370. Topics in Contemporary Art. 3 Credit Hours.

A selected topic on contemporary art and visual culture will be examined.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5380. Topics in Global Art. 3 Credit Hours.

A selected topic on global art and visual culture will be examined.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5390. Topics in Islamic Art. 3 Credit Hours.

This course provides students with an introduction to the art and architecture of the Mediterranean and Middle East during the first centuries of Islam, ca. 650-1250 - a vibrant period that witnessed the emergence of one of the world's most wide-spread and enduring faith traditions. Through the investigation of key objects and architectural monuments, students will be trained to analyze how aspects of visual culture and the built environment relate to the social and political contexts in which they were produced. Particular emphasis will be placed on the establishment of new spatial and visual vocabularies, the legacies of earlier artistic traditions in the formation of Islamic art, as well as cross-cultural exchange between the Islamic world and its neighbors (particularly Western Europe and East Asia). We will also address the importance of modern interpretations of early Islamic art, especially the politics of collecting and museum display. In addition to lectures, students will meet with the instructor for an additional hour every week to discuss advanced readings. They will also be asked to take a midterm and final exam, which will account for 30% of their final grade. The remaining portion of their grade will be dedicated to developing a research paper (ca. 20 pages), the topic of which will be determined in consultation with the instructor.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5400. Topics in Art History. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in art history. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5403. History of Modern Crafts and Design. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will examine the interwoven histories of craft and design in the 20th and 21st centuries, looking in particular at how craft and design both mirror the various artistic, cultural, political, social, and technological contexts in which they are created, and have the capacity to critique and change those contexts. Taking a thematic approach, students will not only gain familiarity with influential objects, makers, materials, and movements from around the world, but also explore relevant topics and frameworks including production and consumerism, sustainability, popular culture, activism and reform, intersectionality, and accessibility via craft and design.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 5405. History of Photography. 3 Credit Hours.

Examination of key developments in the history of modern photography.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 5408. The History of Printmaking and Print Culture. 3 Credit Hours.

The invention of the printing press in western Europe in the 1400s contributed to important and lasting changes about how people thought about images and image-making. In addition to gaining an understanding of the technical processes involved in the production of books, woodcuts, engravings, etchings, and lithographs, students will focus on the social and economic facets of print communication as an aesthetic and as a compelling component of visual culture. The course is designed chronologically but also according to themes and major artists, with the aim of relating the history of print and book culture to some of the broader cultural and artistic concerns of the period. Some of the central issues we shall discuss are the relationship between manuscript and early book production; the nature of the 'original' vs. the 'copy'; the space of prints as a realm for experimentation and new subject matter; the role of collaboration and also individual graphic virtuosity; and the modern 'print revivals' of the 19th and 20th centuries. We also shall reevaluate certain myths about the so-called printing revolution, poised as we are in a new digital age defined as another kind of explosion of images. Major figures we will study in terms of graphic virtuosity are Andrea Mantegna, Albrecht Dürer, Jacques Callot, Hendrick Goltzius, Rembrandt van Rijn, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Francisco Goya, Edouard Manet, James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Mary Cassatt, Edvard Munch, and Käthe Kollwitz.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 5410. Topics in Art History. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in art history. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 5460. Topics in Contemporary Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in contemporary art will be examined.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5470. Topics in the Arts of the African Diaspora. 3 Credit Hours.

A selected topic in the arts of the African diaspora. Topics can range from the early modern period to contemporary art.

ARTH 5500. Topics in Art History II. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in art history. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5510. Topics in Ancient Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in ancient art. Recent topics have included Greek Vase Painting, Greek Architecture, Minoan and Mycenaean Art, Hellenistic and Roman Sculpture, Greek and Roman Monumental Painting, and Curating an Exhibition on the History of Archaeological Illustration. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5520. Topics in Medieval Art. 3 Credit Hours.

A select specialized topic in the visual culture of the Middle Ages will be explored. Field Trips are mandatory for this class.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5530. Topics in Renaissance Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Recent or planned topics include Artistic Exchange between Italy and Northern Europe; Mannerism Redefined; Color and Meaning in Painting; Renaissance Architecture; Bernini, Caravaggio, and Velasquez; Michelangelo; and The Sacred Image in the Renaissance: Crisis and Resolution. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5540. Topics in Early Modern Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in the art of the early modern period. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 5550. Topics in 19th-Century Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Recent and planned topics include Manet and 19th century French Criticism; Impressionism and Post-Impressionism; Pre-Raphaelite Painting; Symbolism; Depicting Race; and American Cosmopolitans: Art and Modernity in the Gilded Age, 1870-1913. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5560. Topics in 20th-Century Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Recent and planned topics include Art since 1945; Dada and Surrealism; Futurist Art and Theory; and Picasso, Matisse, Duchamp, and Brancusi. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5601. Historiography of Art History. 3 Credit Hours.

Study of key methods and critical approaches in art history.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 5621. Archeological Program. 3 Credit Hours.

Study in Ancient Art and Archaeology.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5630. Topics in Renaissance Art II. 3 Credit Hours.

Recent or planned topics include Artistic Exchange between Italy and Northern Europe; Mannerism Redefined; Color and Meaning in Painting; Renaissance Architecture; Bernini, Caravaggio, and Velasquez; Michelangelo; and The Sacred Image in the Renaissance: Crisis and Resolution. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5660. Topics in Modern and Contemporary Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in modern and contemporary art will be examined.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 5665. Modern and Contemporary Art in Latin America. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines art in Latin America from 1900 to the present. Covering a period of tumultuous societal change in the region, from revolutions to economic booms and military dictatorships, discussions will focus on understanding the distinct contexts of artistic production in various Latin American centers, with particular attention to the artists and artistic movements of Brazil and Mexico and including consideration of major architectural projects. We will examine how artists conceived of their work in relationship to local and international aesthetic and political debates. Students will read criticism and artists' writing from the period as well as recent theory and historical analysis and attention will be placed on developing skills to analyze a range of media and styles, including figurative and abstract practices.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 5670. Topics in Contemporary Art. 3 Credit Hours.

A selected topic on contemporary art and visual culture will be examined.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 8401. Text + Image: Framing the Modern Illustrated Book. 3 Credit Hours.

Text or Image? Art or Craft? Page or Book? Essential or Ancillary? As these pairings propose, illustration engages the viewer in complex interrelated processes and hence functions very differently than other art forms. Image and text operate both independently and in combination as signifiers. Perhaps that is partially why we lack a critical framework with which to assess illustrated books. In this online course, we will use digital tools and collaborative technologies to develop evaluative criteria for the illustrated book and then apply this critical framework to an individually-selected case study. The seminar will also assess relevant factors impacting the development of illustrated books, such as cultural diffusion and interchange; patterns of literacy and education; production markets and aesthetic value of craft. Additionally, in the last part of the course, the focus will shift to book illustration in the period after 1850, addressing publishing technologies as well as noteworthy avant-garde exemplars. This has been created as an online course, which allows for a greater flexibility in the student's schedule; it may be adjusted for full classroom or hybrid. NOTE: Designed especially for current students enrolled in the MFA programs, in particular students of Graphic Design.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 8402. Introduction to Critical Thinking and Practice. 3 Credit Hours.

Students will explore major critical theories in the context of globalism, ethics, race/class, environment, and history of art. Students will obtain a basic familiarity with major critical theorists, authors, and thinkers, learning how to put the ideas from these thinkers in historical, economic, and political contexts. They will apply critical theory to creative practices, including their own. The course is partly lecture-based and partly discussion-based, and is intended to be taken by all first-year MFA students in order to provide them with a strong base for their own work and their evaluation of the work of other artists, both past and present. This class will only be offered in the Fall semester.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 8404. The History, Theory, and Practice of Printmaking. 3 Credit Hours.

In this course we will examine the proliferation of printed images, particularly in western Europe and the Americas, beginning around 1450. Note that we will hold at least half of our weekly classes in the Print Study Room of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and on site at other collections, spending time studying the objects themselves. In addition to gaining an understanding of the processes involved in the making of woodcuts, engravings, etchings, and lithography, students will focus on the conceptual, social, political, and economic aspects of the art of the print. The course is designed chronologically but also according to themes and major artists, with the aim of showing that printmaking has its own history and at the same time relates to the broader cultural and artistic concerns of the period. Major figures we will study in terms of graphic virtuosity include Albrecht Dürer, Marcantonio Raimondi, Jacques Callot, Hendrick Goltzius, Rembrandt van Rijn, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Francisco Goya, Mary Cassatt, James Abbott McNeil Whistler, and Otto Dix, among others. Students will have the opportunity to develop papers that dovetail with their own fields and interests, as well as with additional strengths of the museum collection, including Japanese, and modern American and Mexican prints.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 8450. Special Projects. 3 to 6 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in art theory and criticism. Content varies.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 8460. Seminar in Contemporary Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in contemporary art. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8470. Seminar in Modern Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in modern art. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8475. Seminar in 19th-Century Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in 19th-century art will be examined. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8480. Seminar in Early Modern Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in the early modern period will be examined. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8500. Seminar in Arts Management. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will explore a variety of topics in Arts Management.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 8560. Seminar in Modern and Contemporary Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in modern and contemporary art will be examined.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 8610. Seminar in Ancient Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in ancient art. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8620. Seminar in Medieval Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in medieval art. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8630. Problems in Renaissance Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Recent or planned topics include Michelangelo and His Times; After Raphael: Painting in Central Italy; Michelangelo's Last Judgment; Beyond Florence: Artistic Centers in the 15th Century; Palladio and His Legacy; and Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 8635. Problems in Northern Renaissance Art. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is a focused graduate seminar on a topic relating to an aspect of Northern Renaissance Art, ca. 1400-1575. Recent or planned topics include Reconsidering the German Renaissance; Dürer and His World; The Disintegration of the Northern Altarpiece; The Renaissance Print; Northern Realisms; Pieter Bruegel and the Invention of Painted Genres; Art, the Reformation, and Iconoclasms; and Early Modern Trade and the Global Renaissance. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8640. Seminar in Global Baroque Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in Baroque art. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8660. Seminar in 20th-Century Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in the art of the 20th century will be examined.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 8665. Seminar in 21st-Century Art. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is a focused graduate seminar on a topic relating to an aspect of contemporary and/or 21st-century art. Note: This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8675. Seminar: Arts of the African Diaspora. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is a focused graduate seminar on a topic related to an aspect of the arts of the African diaspora within the early modern to contemporary period. This course can only be taken twice for credit.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credit.

ARTH 8690. Problems in Islamic Art. 3 Credit Hours.

Selected topics in Islamic art. Future topics include Orientalism/Occidentalism.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 8872. Arts Management Capstone. 3 Credit Hours.

This is the capstone course for students in the MA in Art History Arts Management Track.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

ARTH 9183. Archaeological Program. 3 Credit Hours.

Seminar study in Ancient Art and Archaeology as directed by advisor.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9585. Internship Seminar. 3 to 6 Credit Hours.

For students in the fine arts administration track. Placement in a local museum or gallery (e.g., Temple University Gallery in Center City, Philadelphia) or other appropriate institutions. To be arranged with the graduate director.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9586. Internship Seminar. 3 to 6 Credit Hours.

For students in the fine arts administration track. Placement in a local museum or gallery (e.g., Temple University Gallery in Center City, Philadelphia) or other appropriate institutions. To be arranged with the graduate director.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9891. Directed Research. 1 to 3 Credit Hour.

Faculty-directed research on a specific topic. To be arranged with faculty sponsor and graduate director.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9991. Directed Research. 1 to 3 Credit Hour.

Faculty-directed research on a specific topic. Directed Research while still in the coursework phase of the program.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9993. Comps Study. 1 to 3 Credit Hour.

Preparation for comprehensive examinations. Masters students only.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9994. Preliminary Examination Preparation. 1 to 6 Credit Hour.

Preparation for preliminary examinations. Doctoral students only.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9995. Research for Qualifying Paper. 1 to 3 Credit Hour.

Research and writing of the qualifying paper. Restricted to Master's-level students only, after course work has been completed. Enrollment in this course will qualify the student for full-time status.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9996. Thesis Research. 1 to 3 Credit Hour.

Research and writing of the master's thesis. Masters students only.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9998. Pre-Dissertation Research. 1 to 6 Credit Hour.

Research of dissertation proposal. Doctoral students only.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

ARTH 9999. Dissertation Research. 1 to 6 Credit Hour.

Restricted to Doctoral students elevated to candidacy writing the dissertation.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.