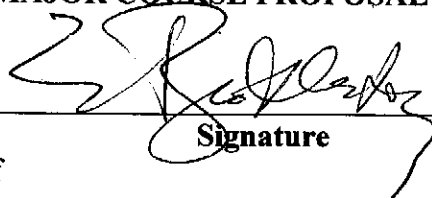


HONORS-DESIGNATED MAJOR COURSE PROPOSAL FORM

DEPARTMENT CHAIR:

 9/12/2012
Signature Date

INSTRUCTOR: Reva Wolf

COURSE TITLE AND NUMBER: Art History: Theories and Approaches (ARH456)

DEPARTMENT: Art History

SCHOOL OR DIVISION: School of Fine & Performing Arts

CATALOG DESCRIPTION (include existing catalog description):

What is art history? This question is explored through reading selected passages from the history of art history and from recent theoretical writings that question traditional approaches to the discipline. We look at diverse approaches that have been used to interpret art, including biography, style, periodization, iconography and iconology, psychoanalysis, patronage, feminism, Marxism, reception theory, social history, and semiotics.

HONORS DESIGNATED DESCRIPTION (E.G., PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES, ENHANCED THEORETICAL COMPONENTS):

This is a discussion-based, Writing Intensive course, in which in-class writing assignments and PowerPoint presentations serve as springboards for analyses of a wide range of required readings that date from Roman times to the present. A research paper, developed in stages, is a central project for the course, and will hone students' critical thinking, research skills, and writing.

-Attach a brief narrative to (not to exceed one page) describe how the course fits the criteria for an Honors-Designated Major Course (i.e., is not taught in lecture format, incorporates pedagogy that promotes active learning [e.g., discussion, problem-solving]), and has enhanced theoretical components). Attached.

-Attach a syllabus. Attached.

-Attach a sample assignment or project. Attached (research paper assignment and sample handouts on how to do research and how to properly document it).

-Provide your chairperson with the above documents so she or he can submit the proposal to the Honors Advisory Council. Submitted to Art History Department Chair, Elizabeth Brotherton.

Submit to Pat Sullivan, The Honors Program, CHH-111

Brief Narrative

Art History: Theories and Approaches (ARH456) is an advanced capstone seminar with the Writing Intensive designation. Following are descriptions of (1) the non-lecture format of the course, (2) the incorporation into the course of pedagogy that promotes active learning, and (3) the enhanced theoretical components of the course.

Non-lecture format

Art History: Theories and Approaches is a discussion-based course. Each week, students are required to complete a number of assigned readings—many of them, primary sources—that are then analyzed in class. Through ongoing discussion, students develop skills of critical thinking and judgment while the history of the discipline of Art History unfolds in its many forms over the course of the semester. The discussions build upon each other, as students learn to make connections and distinctions between various approaches to interpreting art. Students are encouraged to make their own judgments through a critical assessment of the required readings.

Pedagogy that promotes active learning

In addition to the intensive in-class analyses of assigned writings, active learning occurs in several other ways in this course. Students write in-class assignments that are analyses of specific readings and that are designed to encourage critical thinking as well as to enrich in-class discussion. The PowerPoints shown in each class are designed to contribute to this discussion as well. Students are regularly presented with challenging questions about either a particular reading or else about distinctions between, say, two readings on the same topic. The PowerPoint images are designed expressly to enhance these discussions while adding to the knowledge the students gain from their own reading of a particular text.

Enhanced theoretical components

While the course is historically grounded, the readings are largely theoretical. Often, students will read publications that are part of a debate on a particular subject. For example, when reading about the history of psychoanalytical approaches to Art History, they read Sigmund Freud's 1910 book on Leonardo da Vinci, but also learn of Meyer Schapiro's two mid-1950s essays that criticize Freud's approach.

Another enhanced theoretical component is the interdisciplinary dimension of the course, which is a history of ideas as seen through the microcosm of the discipline of Art History. Often students consider theoretical connections or parallels between distinct disciplines. A case in point is the exploration of how in the late nineteenth century the Italian scientist and politician Giovanni Morelli developed the method known as connoisseurship, precisely at the time when similar approaches to seeking knowledge by looking at the details emerged in Freud's psychoanalysis, Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, and in the police officer Alphonse Bertillon's system of "anthropometry," used to identify criminals.

More generally, students in this course are taught by action and through example to make distinctions between ways of understanding art. They are taught, in addition, to consider the underlying assumptions and judgments that lead thinkers to certain types of approaches over others.