Final Course Proposal

1.
School: SOLA
Department: Art and Art History
Course Number: AH190
Course Title: Research and Writing Methods in Art History

2. Justification for the Course:
This methodology course teaches students to conduct research using basic art historical research methods. Through these skills they can develop art historical research topics, identify primary and secondary sources and conduct research using these sources. They will also be able to compare and contrast basic art historical research practices conducted with library, archival and online resources.

3. Student Population:
This course is for departmental art history majors and interested minors. The enrollment will vary from 4-6 students depending on the year.

4. Relationship to present College curriculum:
This course is a companion course to the existing AH192 Capstone/ Senior Thesis course for art history majors. It will be a graduation requirement for the major.

5. Any extraordinary implementation costs:
none

6. (See Attached Report)
Library Resources: See attached report

7.
**Course credit and grading options:**
.25 course units (academic)
1 hour of lecture and discussion per week
15 week course

8.
**Prerequisites:**
At least one art history course, English 5 and junior or senior standing.

9.
**Course description wording for the appropriate College catalogue:**
This course is intended primarily for majors and minors in the History of Art. Students will be introduced to some of the major methodologies that have shaped the field: formalism, biographical analysis, connoisseurship, technical analysis, iconographical analysis, psychoanalysis, Marxism and the social history of art, feminism, post-colonialism and semiotics.

10.
**Course content: (See attached syllabus)**
**Assessment Methods:**
Students will be required to focus on a specific work of art for intense study and research over the entire semester, concluding with the preparation of a short lecture to be presented to the class. Weekly writing exercises, posted on a [http://wordpress.com](http://wordpress.com) blog, will utilize different methodologies to approach a single subject matter. Weekly class discussions will be based on the examination of various research techniques and the evaluation of resources in connection with each students’ specific topic.

**Samples:**
The Artist

Jan van Eyck was a Flemish painter born in the fourteenth century. The dates of his birth and death are unknown, but are believed to be sometime between 1380/90-1441. As a painter in the 15th century, van Eyck is often credited as the inventor of oil as a medium; however, it is more accurate that he is called the "master of oil painting" rather than its discoverer. Van Eyck began working with oil sometime in the early 1420s, utilizing the medium's ability to capture intricate detail and creating even brighter colors by mixing the oil with linseed and other natural oils. As a result, intense and naturalistic details mixed with rich pigments became a trademark of van Eyck's painting style as seen in his Ghent Altarpiece of 1432 and his St. Servatius in 1435. This artistic development continued into 1454 when he painted his masterpiece, The Arnolfini Wedding. His rendering of textiles, naturalistic portraits, and the mirror in the background are evidence of the van Eyck's mastery of the medium and ability to illustrate textures, especially on the smallest scale, as the mirror reflects back the image in addition to highlighting scenes from the Passion of Christ. His use of the bath of rich reds and intense greens are showcased in Giovanni Cenami's bright green dress and the lady's red petticoats of her bedroom furnishings. The Arnolfini Wedding also illustrates further development in van Eyck's subject matter. Previously, his works focused on either portraiture or religious imagery. Here, however, van Eyck begins to express his subject matter of both the portraits of Giovanni Arnolfini and his bride Giovanna Cenami with the religious subject matter found in the images of Jesus and other ecclesiastic symbols throughout the painting. The combination of religious imagery with domestic scenes would later come to dominate the paintings of Northern Europe.

As one of the premier painters in Northern Europe during the fifteenth century, van Eyck worked for the Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, for most of his career. Philip was one of, if not the most, important patrons of the arts in Flanders, as was common for the Duke of Burgundy throughout the years. By working for Philip the Good, van Eyck grew familiar with the illuminated manuscripts created by the Limbourg Brothers in the early fifteenth century, including the Book of Hours for the Duke of Berry. These highly influential artists worked frequently within the Burgundian court and their naturalistic style marked the beginning of the transition out of the Gothic era in Northern Europe. As a result of his contact with the Duke of Burgundy and his familiarity with the Limbourg brothers, van Eyck began to incorporate the acute naturalism that is now a key feature of Northern European painting into his work, including his later painting, The Arnolfini Wedding.

About

The Art Critic's Corner - A look at Velázquez's work

Biography

Diego Velázquez was born in Seville, Spain in 1599. While it is clear from a young age that Velázquez would be artistic, revealed through his time spent as a student at the local Grammar School; instead of taking notes his pages were covered in sketches. His father, encouraging of his son's potential, enrolled Velázquez at age thirteen in Francesco Merischi's studio. Unfortunately, Merischi's temper took a toll on Velázquez and he left a year later to pursue the teachings of Francisco Pacheco, with whom he stayed for the next five years. It has been said that Velázquez has Pacheco to thank for "the delicacy and accuracy of his draughtsmanship." Pacheco was so fond of Velázquez that he offered his own daughter, Juana de Miranda, in marriage to his pupil.
Grading:
Weekly writing exercises: 50%
Participation in weekly class discussions: 50%

Reading List:
Course Reader which includes the following essays:
Alois Riegl, “Problems of Style” (1893)
Gertrude Stein, “Prose Portraits” (1912)
Erwin Panofsky, “Jan Van Eyck’s Arnolfini Portrait” (1934)
Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch” (1939)
Harold Rosenberg, “The American Action Painters” (1952)
Michael Fried, “Art and Objecthood” (1967)
Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?” (1969)
Leo Steinberg, “The Philosophical Brothel” (1972)

11.
**Review of experimental offering:**
The course was offered experimentally during the Spring 2013 semester. At that point it was offered during the same semester as the Senior Thesis course. This scheduling seems to have worked well for the students. I intend to continue this schedule for the 2013-2014 academic year.

The experimental (Spring 2013) course used *The Methodologies of Art: An Introduction*, Second edition by Laurie Schneider Adams (2009). The book references primary texts in its description of various methodological approaches. For the final (Spring 2014) course, I have switched to a course reader that uses original texts. I believe that this direct access to the texts will be more suitable to the course structure and individual student’s ability to critically engage the materials.