

St. Francis College
Department of Foreign Languages, Fine Arts,
and International Cultural Studies

Fall 2011 FA 1420 sec. 02 American Art (3 credits)

Tuesday/Thursday 1:20 – 2:45 a.m.

Office Hours: Tues. 11:10 – 12:10

Wed. 4:00 – 5:00

Thurs. 3:00 – 4:00 (or by appointment) E-mail: jwingate@stfranciscollege.edu

Prof. Jennifer Wingate

Room 7213

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Course Objectives: To introduce students to the arts of the United States by studying painting, photography, sculpture, and architecture in the context of major social, cultural, and political developments in U.S. history. (Other art forms covered may include mixed media, film, performance, etc.) To examine how the meaning of American art is not only a function of its subject or content, but also of where it is produced, where it is displayed, and the identity of the artist.

1. To learn the major genres, styles, artists, and themes of U.S. art history
2. To discover what (if anything) is “American” about American art
3. To become familiar with the process of visual analysis and to begin to think critically about art historical methodologies
4. To become familiar with different kinds of primary research sources by working with archival materials at the Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) as part of the “Students and Faculty in the Archives” (SAFA) project. To conduct archival research to enhance understanding of 19th- and early 20th-century visual culture.

Required Texts:

Frances K. Pohl, Framing America: A Social History of America, 2nd Edition

(Thames & Hudson, 2008) (for purchase at bookstore)

Miles Orvell, American Photography (NY: Oxford, 2003) (complimentary copy)

Course Requirements:

1. Regular class attendance and class participation including 3 in-class trips to the BHS and one in-class trip to the Brooklyn Museum. A maximum of three hours of absence is allowed per semester for reasons of illness or other necessity.
2. Assigned readings in textbooks and posted on Angel, written responses to questions about readings, and ability to discuss readings in class
3. Two exams (one on Oct. 18 and one during Finals period). Make-up exams may only be given at the professor’s discretion for serious and documented reasons (e.g. certified doctor’s note on letterhead for serious illnesses), and only then if you contact the professor within a week of the exam. Please make every effort to contact the professor as soon as possible.
4. One final project: a web site page (or online “mini-exhibition”) incorporating images and text from the BHS collections (using a provided WordPress template). Assignment and list of possible topics to be distributed and discussed in class on Nov. 8. Soon, you will be able to visit our course website at <http://safa.brooklynhistory.org/>.
5. Accessing class information on Angel: slide presentations from class (to be posted as the semester progresses), reading questions, announcements, and other course materials as they become available. Occasional e-mail reminders and announcements also will be sent to your Angel accounts.

Basis for the Grade and Grading Standards:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|-------------|----|
| midterm exam | 25% | 100 – 93 | A |
| final exam | 25% | 92 – 90 | A- |
| final project | 30% | 89 – 88 | B+ |
| class participation | 10% | 87 – 83 | B |
| assignments | 10% | 82 – 80 | B- |
| | | 79 – 78 | C+ |
| | | 77 – 73 | C |
| | | 72– 70 | C- |
| | | 69 – 60 | D |
| | | 59 or lower | F |

Exams: Exams may include slide IDs, slide ID discussions, term discussions, multiple choice questions and one or more essay.

Slides: For **straight slide IDs**, identify slides by artist, title, and period (see study list). For **slide ID discussions**, identify the work and then discuss how it is important within the context of the course. The slides you are responsible for are the study images listed with each reading assignment. They are also listed on the attached study list. The figure numbers correspond to images in your textbook. A second study list will be distributed for the final exam.

Terms: Multiple choice and/or short answers for which you will define and describe the terms (choosing 4, for example, from a list of 6 to 8) as they pertain to the history of American Art, discussing their significance within the context of the course and providing examples of art works to illustrate your answer.

Short Answers/Essays: These may include slide comparisons or may ask you to address a particular theme covered in the course.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty (cheating or plagiarism) on exams or papers is a very serious matter and will be dealt with as such. Such conduct may incur very severe penalties. Consultation of electronic devices during an exam will result in automatic failure for the exam.

Lecture Schedule, Reading Assignments*, and Study Images:**

*all reading assignments unless otherwise noted are in Frances Pohl's Framing America, 2nd Edition.

**all study images correspond to figure numbers in Framing America, 2nd Edition (see also the attached study list)

Thurs. Sept. 8: Introduction: What is American Art? What is visual analysis?

Tues. Sept. 13: Early Portraiture

Read in Pohl 58-60 [see especially section on John White]; pp. 62-72 [read parts about portraiture not architecture]; section on p. 74 [Doors to Eternal Peace]; pp. 82-86 [through Watson and the Shark]; pp.131-135

Reading Questions re: White and Copley (download from Angel)

Study images: 1.60, 1.66, 1.77, 1.82, 2.5, 2.64, 2.67

Thurs. Sept. 15: Commemoration and Nationhood

Read pp. 91-97 [through Posthumous Portraits]; pp. 101-104; pp. 112-117 [through Narratives of Captivity]; plus p. 258 [see paragraph about Crawford's Dying Indian Chief]

Study images: 2.9, 2.24, 2.48, 2.54, 5.5

Tues. Sept. 20: Landscape

pp. 144-153; pp. 156 [bottom]-163 [through Bierstadt]

Reading Question re: the picturesque & the sublime (download from Angel)

Study images: 3.11, 3.14, 3.17, 3.28, 3.32

Thurs. Sept. 21: Genre Painting
pp. 176-185 [up to Raphaelle Peale]; pp. 200-202 [Life on the Home Front—section on Woodville]; pp. 209-211 [Prelude to the Civil War—section on Krimmel]; pp. 277-279 [Domestic Servant]; pp. 294-296 [Trompe l’Oeil]
Study Images: 3.49, 3.54, 4.4, 4.18, 5.48

Tues. Sept. 27: the Civil War
Read in **Orvell**, pp. 62-67; read in **Pohl**, pp. 211-228; begin 229-236 [through The Victorious Soldier]
Reading Questions re: art of the Civil War era (download from Angel)
Study Images: 4.23, 4.27, 4.33, 4.39, 4.42, 4.44

Thurs. Sept. 29: Sculpture and Visual Culture
Complete pp. 229-236; pp. 272-274 [through section on the sculpture the Greek Slave]; pp. 274-277 [“Cheap and Popular Pictures” for the Home]; pp. 301-302 [Public Art Museums] and p. 302 [second column Columbian Expo] and pp. 305-08 [section on the World’s Fair/Columbian Expo. continued]; read in **Orvell**, p. 70 [Photography and the Popular Press]
Reading Question re: sculpture (download from Angel)
Study Images: 5.16, 5.18, 5.55, 5.62

Tues. Oct. 4: **BHS VISIT early photography**
Read in **Orvell**, pp. 19-37 [Introduction and Chapter 2, Presenting the Self]
Reading Question re: early photographic techniques daguerreotype and tintypes (download from Angel)

Thurs. Oct. 6: Trends in Late 19th-Century Art
pp. 259-272 [through Celebrating the New Male Professionals]; pp. 283-296
Study Images: 5.6, 5.8, 5.11, 5.13, 5.34, 5.43, 5.48

Tues. Oct. 11: Site visit: Henry Ward Beecher Memorial and Brooklyn Historical Society landscape collection
Reading Question pertaining to Beecher Memorial (download articles and questions from Angel)

Thurs. Oct. 13: Review for Exam

Tues. Oct. 18: Midterm Exam

Thurs. Oct. 21: No class (Prof. Wingate at conference)

Tues. Oct. 25: The 20th-Century City, Early Skyscrapers and the Ashcan School
Read in **Pohl**, pp. 300-301 [Riis]; pp. 302-304 [sections on the Chicago School of Architecture]; pp. 322-336 [Ashcan school]; Read in **Orvell**, pp. 71-79 [Riis, et al.] *Study images:* 5.60, 6.2, 6.4, 6.9, 6.15, 6.19, 6.20

Thurs. Oct. 27: Modernism and the Impact of the Armory Show, World War I, and Dada
Read in Pohl, pp. 337-350 [through section on Demuth]; pp. 417-419 [Sheeler]
Study images: 6.1, 6.28, 6.42, 6.46, 7.17

Tues. Nov. 1: Early 20th Century American Art and Identity
Read pp. 350-355 (section on Hartley and O’Keeffe); pp. 370-379; 424-428;
Compare and Contrast exercise (download from Angel)
Study Images: 6.47, 6.78, 6.86, 7.16, 7.56, 7.58, 7.61

Thurs. Nov. 3: Art of the New Deal [movie: Documenting the Face of America]
pp. 398-401 [Photography and the FSA]; pp. 415-417 [Rivera]; pp. 429-435 [through section on Lawrence]
Study Images: 7.19, 7.40, 7.68

Tues. Nov. 8 discussion of writing exercise and distribution of final project assignment; ***choose topics in class***
Writing Exercise: download the images and writing exercise from Angel (writing exercise is related to the final project)

Thurs. Nov. 11 Brooklyn Museum *meet promptly at 1:20 in the SFC lobby*

Tues. Nov. 15 Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism

Skim pp. 447-452; Read pp. 456-471; also read Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters" *Art News* (Dec. 1952) (download from Angel) **Answer question:** How does Rosenberg define action painting?

Study Images: 8.2, 8.12, 8.19, 8.21, 8.22

Thurs. Nov. 17: No Class (Prof. Wingate at conference)

Tues. Nov. 22: Brooklyn Historical Society research visit

- introduction to Past Perfect, the BHS on-site photograph database
- small groups will cycle through "research stations" where they will look at Brooklyn newspaper scrapbooks, photographs, and periodicals to gather images and other archival materials for their websites

Thurs. Nov. 24: No Class (Thanksgiving)

Tues. Nov. 29: Responses to Ab Ex including Pop Art

pp. 471-476 [through Nevelson]; 498-505 [Pop Art];

Watch excerpts from movie, "Seductive Subversion: Women Pop Artists, 1858-1968"

Study Images: 8.27, 8.29, 8.33, 8.47, 8.70, 8.78

Thurs. Dec. 1 Drafts of website content with images and text due to Prof. Wingate; in class discussion of ideas, time for feedback and constructive criticism

Tues. Dec. 6 Minimalism, Conceptual Art

pp. 482-486 [Minimalism]; 494-497; 515-522

Study Images: 8.63, 8.67, 8.94, 8.95, 8.96

Thurs. Dec. 8 Review for Final; ***FINAL PROJECTS ARE DUE***

Date of Final TBA