

ART HISTORY 510

Historiography of the Visual Arts

Professor Ellen T. Baird
Fall 2008
303 Henry Hall ↻ Weds. 5:30-8:30
4 credit hours
CRN10246

This course is an intensive introduction to the philosophical and historical underpinnings of art history, theory, and criticism; in addition, it serves to present basic research methods in the discipline, including the use of archival and secondary material, the development of a research strategy, and the organization and presentation of research. Students will read extensively: as much as one or two major works a week in some cases and explore ways of doing research and making arguments in art history. Shorter analytic papers addressing the underlying issues of the week's readings are expected for 12 of the 15 weeks. Students will be responsible for presenting each week's materials and guiding the discussion. Over the course of the semester, students will devise an original research project, develop a research strategy, compile a bibliography and catalogue of relevant primary sources, and present their results, in a classroom setting and in the form of an abstract, outline, and bibliographic essay. Attendance is mandatory and late papers are not accepted.

This course is a rigorous and challenging intellectual adventure with many peaks and a few valleys. Your brain will buzz with the excitement of old and new ideas and complex thought as you wend your way through Plato, Alberti, Kant, Hegel, Wölfflin, Warburg, Panofsky, and Kubler among others. Over the course of the semester, a community of art historians develops; reading, writing and analytic skills improve dramatically; and most graduate students discover the area, the method or the theoretical basis for the work they will do over their graduate careers. The final project is an opportunity to delve into an area that's significant to the individual and usually provides the template for a later and larger project in another class.