ART HISTORY AND VISUAL CULTURE

Departmental Guidelines

We strongly urge students to declare their intention to major in Art History and Visual Culture before the end of their sophomore year. We also urge students to choose an academic advisor from among AHVC faculty. Requirements for Art History and Visual Culture Major: 10 four-credit courses, 1 one-credit course (AHVC 409 - Art History and Visual Culture Senior Seminar: Writing), participation in Junior Day, completion of the Senior Thesis (25-30 pages) and presentation of the Senior Thesis at the Annual Senior Symposium (AHVC 409 - Art History and Visual Culture Senior Seminar: Writing). The Senior Thesis must be submitted to the Art History and Visual Culture faculty in order to graduate.

Professor Joy Sperling; Chair.

Associate Professor Karl Sandin; Assistant Professor Catherine Stuer; Visual Resource Specialist Jacqueline Pelasky, Academic Administrative Assistant Dyan Couden.

View faculty profiles and contact information (https://denison.edu/academics/art-history-visual-culture/contacts)

Art History and Visual Culture Major

1. Requirements for Art History and Visual Culture Major:
   a. 10 four-credit courses,
   b. 1 one-credit course (AHVC 409 - Art History and Visual Culture Senior Seminar: Writing),
   c. participation in Junior Day,
   d. completion of Senior Thesis (25-30 pages) and Presentation of Senior Thesis at the Annual Senior Symposium (AHVC 409 - Art History and Visual Culture Senior Seminar: Writing). The Senior Thesis must be submitted to the Art History and Visual Culture faculty in order to graduate.

2. Required Core Courses Include: One 100-level course of student’s choice:
   a. AHVC 101 - The Western World: Ancient to Baroque,
   b. AHVC 111 - Modern Art and Visual Culture,
   c. AHVC 121 - African Art and Visual Culture,
   d. AHVC 131 - Asian Art and Visual Culture.

   e. Three Required Core Courses for Juniors/Seniors:
      i. AHVC 380 - Methods of Art History and Visual Culture, this course to be taken in the junior year (4 credits).
      ii. AHVC 408 - Art History and Visual Culture Senior Seminar: Research-01, this course to be taken in the senior year (4 credits).
      iii. AHVC 409 - Art History and Visual Culture Senior Seminar: Writing-01(1 credit).

3. Seven courses from the following 200 and 300-level courses: at least three must be at the 300-level (excluding AHVC 380 - Methods of Art History and Visual Culture). You MUST take at least one course in each area at either the 100, 200, or 300 level.

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4. A limit of two courses towards the major may be taken from institutions other than Denison (including off-campus programs). It is strongly recommended that only one course be taken in each of the above areas off-campus. At least eight Art History and Visual Culture courses must be taken at Denison.

Art History and Visual Culture Minor

A minimum of six courses in Art History and Visual Culture of the student’s choice.

Additional Points of Interest

All juniors in Art History and Visual Culture participate in Junior Day. They are required to make a formal presentation of current work or research. The presentation is made to the faculty and to the student’s peers as part of the AHVC Symposium annually. Art History and Visual Culture seniors also make a formal presentation of their research to an invited audience at the AHVC Symposium. Art History and Visual Culture: Students in Art History and Visual Culture learn writing skills that are integral to the discipline and the liberal arts. Working closely with faculty, students learn to translate visual observation and evaluation into written language; articulate questions for research; communicate the results of their research discoveries in writing; and develop an informed, critical, and independent written voice. Our courses emphasize the sequential, graduated development of writing skills. These culminate in our required senior thesis and symposium. Denison University works to make study abroad possible for all students. In Art History and Visual Culture, we encourage students to study abroad during their junior year. Most students who major in Art History and Visual Culture and study
off-campus transfer two classes for the major, satisfy GE requirements, and/or gain general credits towards graduation. Quite a few students also do independent research or internships as part of their study abroad experience. We encourage students to visit the Off-Campus Study office to explore their options.

Courses

AHVC 096 - Senior Symposium (0 Credit Hours)

AHVC 101 - The Western World: Ancient to Baroque (4 Credit Hours)
This course is an introduction to selected themes, periods, and sites of visual production and built practice in Europe, the Mediterranean, and the New World. It focuses on a selected series of ‘case studies’ that integrate sites/monuments significant to the flow of Western art with period-specific and general critical issues. The relation of systems of visual and architectural representation to period-specific and current understandings of power, ritual, and the human body, as suggested through the disciplines of Art History and Visual Culture, will be key.

AHVC 111 - Modern Art and Visual Culture (4 Credit Hours)
An introduction to the Art and Visual Culture of the Modern Age. This course examines the wide range of visual production of the Modern Age primarily in Europe and North America. It examines the concepts of the Modern, Modernity and Modernism. The class is taught through the lenses and using the methodologies of both Art History and Visual Culture, operating on the assumption that the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries are the age of visual culture. Thus, the class discusses both elite art and the rising popular culture.

AHVC 121 - African Art and Visual Culture (4 Credit Hours)
This course examines the diverse arts and visual culture of Africa. The scope of this course ranges from pre-colonial to contemporary times, considering a selection of objects, concepts, and practices from across the continent. The subjects we learn about in this class take a variety of forms – masks, sculptures, architecture, body decoration, painting, photography, film, and exhibitions – all of which are important resources used by people to shape their lives and social worlds. The course is designed to provide you with an introduction to these art forms and the various socio-cultural, historical, critical, and aesthetic platforms from which they operate. For instance, selected objects, concepts, and practices will be discussed in the context of power relationships, constructions of gender, and the negotiation of tradition and modernity. Additionally, we will explore some of the key theoretical issues in the portrayal and interpretation of art and visual culture from this world area. This course is a Writing Intensive Seminar and students will complete three formal writing assignments and participate in writing workshops to develop their skills as writers.

AHVC 131 - Asian Art and Visual Culture (4 Credit Hours)
An introduction to the art and visual culture of India, China, Japan and Southeast Asia focusing on historical, religious and social issues and the function of both art and visual culture.

AHVC 199 - Introductory Topics in Art (1-4 Credit Hours)
A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

AHVC 201 - Classical Art and Architecture (4 Credit Hours)
This course is an introduction to the art and architecture of Greece and Rome. Visual and spatial practices of religion and politics will be examined, focusing on Classical Athens and on Rome during the Late Republic and Early Empire. Selected works of art and architecture, and specific urban and exurban sites will be considered. Issues surrounding ‘classical’ forms and their subsequent role in Western art and architecture will be investigated.

AHVC 203 - Early Renaissance Art and Architecture (4 Credit Hours)
This course is an introduction to the art, architecture, and selected patterns of urban development in Italy during the Early Renaissance and the Quattrocento. Focus will be on developments in Siena, Rome, and especially Florence. Issues surrounding ‘classicism’ and the development of new representational systems, new scales and materials in sculpture, new spatial and structural forms in architecture, and new relations to urbanism and centers of power and global expansion will be explored.

AHVC 204 - High Renaissance and Baroque Art & Architecture (4 Credit Hours)
This course provides an introduction to the art, architecture, and selected patterns of urban development Rome during the High Renaissance, Mannerism, and the Baroque era through the papacy of Alexander VII (1655-67). Developments from ca. 1450 on in Rome leading to Julius II and the Roman High Renaissance will be a prime focus. Consideration of Mannerism, the Council of Trent and early Baroque visual and architectural forms (later 16th century) will lead to the second focus on 17th century visual and spatial practices in Counter-Reformation Rome and beyond.

AHVC 210 - Special Topics in Ancient to Baroque Art History (4 Credit Hours)

AHVC 211 - History of Photography (4 Credit Hours)
An introduction to the history of photography from its inception in 1839 to the present day. The class focuses specifically on the multivalent functions of photography in society globally, the theoretical and conceptual bases of its production, consumption and on the critical analysis of photography as a field of art production.

AHVC 212 - American Art (4 Credit Hours)
An introduction to American Art and Visual Culture of the American colonies and the United States from the Early-Colonial Period to the beginning of World War II. The class focuses specifically on how Art, Popular Culture and Mass Culture function in the visual culture of the United States until 1939.

AHVC 220 - Special Topics in Modern Art History (4 Credit Hours)

AHVC 222 - Representing Africa on Film (4 Credit Hours)
An examination of ethnographic/documentary film dealing with Africa as well as contemporary cinema produced by African filmmakers. This class accords particular attention to the perspectives of African filmmakers as agents in the representation of cultures, social realities and histories in Africa.

AHVC 223 - Arts of Oceania (4 Credit Hours)
An examination of the diverse arts and cultures of the South Pacific. This course focuses on objects, concepts and practices from Polynesia, Melanesia, Micronesia and Australia as well as the portrayal and interpretation of arts from this geographical region in other areas of the world.

AHVC 225 - Arts of Post-Colonial Africa (4 Credit Hours)
This course examines selected issues and debates related to the production, interpretation and collection of visual arts in post-colonial Africa. By way of a series of case studies, we will consider both the individual voices of artists and perspectives from art world information brokers.

AHVC 230 - Special Topics in African Art History (4 Credit Hours)

AHVC 231 - Art of Japan (4 Credit Hours)
An introduction to Japanese architecture, sculpture, painting and the decorative arts from prehistoric times to the 20th century, with an emphasis on the works in their cultural and religious context.
AHVC 232 - Art of China (4 Credit Hours)
This course is an introduction to Chinese visual culture from prehistoric times through the Mao era. Organized around a selection of key objects and images, this course explores a variety of art forms from China through diverse contexts such as ritual, gender, imperial patronage, literati ideals, and political icons.

Crosslisting: EAST 232.

AHVC 240 - Special Topics in Art History and Visual Culture (4 Credit Hours)

AHVC 262 - Special Topics in Art History and Museum Studies (4 Credit Hours)

AHVC 263 - World Views: Spatial Imagination in East Asia (4 Credit Hours)
This course engages the question: ‘How are images used to imagine our place in the world?’ Students are invited to study fascinating practices of spatial image-making in East Asia from the inside out, by exploring these world-views from the perspective of their makers. You will be asked to pay special attention to how social and economic power structures inflect these representations: to envision and decode spatial imagery as a site of imagination, control and resistance. Artists and patrons in China, Japan, and Korea have for centuries produced elaborate maps and landscape imagery, photographs and film to imagine the world in a variety of ways. This course invites you to approach modern and contemporary representations of space in East Asia both in theoretically and historically informed ways. In the first part of the course, students build a frame of reference for their analysis of post-war case studies, by reading core texts in spatial theory, and exploring important visual representations of space from pre-modern East Asia. In the second part of the course, students apply these theoretical and historical approaches to select cases that exemplify more recent struggles over space and its imagination in East Asia.

AHVC 281 - 19th Century Art History and Visual Culture (4 Credit Hours)
This class explores the nature, character, implications and power of the avant-garde and academic art theory and practice in art societies. It analyzes the many layers of political, cultural and social meanings of art in the nineteenth century, as well as its artistic meanings, purposes, effects and agendas. Some topics to be examined include the neoclassical, the romantic, the ideal, Realism, Impressionism, and Post-Impressionism.

AHVC 299 - Intermediate Topics in Art (1-4 Credit Hours)

AHVC 302 - Medieval Art and Architecture (4 Credit Hours)
This course is an advanced investigation of art and architectural developments in the Latin West and Byzantine East during the medieval period. Selective foci include western monastic art, building, and lay patronage in Spain, France, and Burgundy during the Romanesque and early Gothic periods, as well as eastern monasticism in Constantinople, Greece, and Asia Minor in the Middle Byzantine period. Issues unique to each cultural sphere will be considered, such as feudalism in the West, and the icon and the role of the Imperial family and Constantinopolitan aristocracy in the East.

AHVC 313 - New Art (Late 20th/21st Century) (4 Credit Hours)
This advanced-level class examines Art and Visual Culture since 1980, mostly in the western world, but increasingly globally after 2000. The class explores the intellectually complex, multivalent and frequently socially and politically engaged art of today, focusing on its conceptual platforms, agendas, meanings, purposes, and effects. The course examines an increasingly pluralistic and global art world through the lenses of both Art History and Visual Culture, and it explores the museum as a contested site.

AHVC 324 - Visual Life in African Cities (4 Credit Hours)
An advanced level course. Cities in Africa, like their counterparts elsewhere in the world, are intensely -- perhaps even unrelentingly - artistic environments. In Dakar as in Nairobi, in Johannesburg as in Lagos, the urban terrain's unparallelled resources enable myriad artistic phenomena including paintings and sculptures, modernist architecture and public monuments, sartorial expression, as well as print and electronic media such as cartoons, advertisements, video, television, the internet, and popular music. In this seminar style course, students will investigate the artistic propositions and creative resources constituting the urban environment in Africa by way of a series of case studies.

AHVC 333 - Art and Revolution in 20th Century China (4 Credit Hours)
This advanced-level course examines the complicated relationship between art and politics in China through key debates and developments in Chinese visual culture during the 20th century. The class explores competing narratives that negotiate the tensions between ”tradition and modernity,” ”East and West,””local and global” and their implications for revolutions in art. Particular attention will be paid to interrogating the ideological underpinnings of artistic mediums and formats, the historiographical stakes of modernity, and the assertion of cultural memory in art and text.

Crosslisting: EAST 333.

AHVC 361 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)
For the student of marked creative ability who wishes to pursue advanced subjects not otherwise listed, such as design, drawing, graphics, ceramics or history and criticism.

AHVC 362 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)
For the student of marked creative ability who wishes to pursue advanced subjects not otherwise listed, such as design, drawing, graphics, ceramics or history and criticism.

AHVC 363 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

AHVC 364 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

AHVC 380 - Methods of Art History and Visual Culture (4 Credit Hours)
This class is required for Art History and Visual Culture majors. This class is the first of the three-part capstone experience for the Art History and Visual Culture major. It introduces students to the theoretical and methodological platforms of Art History and Visual Culture and examines the historical development of the fields of both Art History and Visual Culture. It introduces students to the methods and theoretical approaches of practicing scholars in the field and asks students to formulate their own platforms, which they will translate into active research in the second and third capstone courses (AHVC 408 and AHVC 409).

AHVC 399 - Advanced Topics in Art (1-4 Credit Hours)
A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

AHVC 408 - Art History and Visual Culture Senior Seminar: Research (4 Credit Hours)
In this required course, senior majors will research and prepare the senior thesis.

AHVC 409 - Art History and Visual Culture Senior Seminar: Writing (1 Credit Hour)
In this required course, senior majors will present their senior thesis during our annual senior symposium.

AHVC 451 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)

AHVC 452 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)