

# Measuring College Learning in Art History

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Social Science Research Council  
Measuring College Learning Project  
February 2018



***The MCL in Art History panel***

*The MCL in Art History panel was made up of nine scholars with expertise on teaching, learning, and assessment in the introductory course in Art History.*

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## Introduction

This document adds explanation and context to the Measuring College Learning in Art History (MCL-AH) learning outcomes framework detailed below, a part of the Measuring College Learning Project, an initiative of the Social Science Research Council's (SSRC) Education Research program. It reflects the process of the MCL-AH panel to identify core learning goals in introductory art history courses toward essential concepts and competencies that demonstrate foundational knowledge of the discipline.<sup>1</sup> Based on a review of relevant literature and existing models, we situate this framework within ongoing conversations about teaching and learning in art history and other efforts to define standards for the introductory survey experience. We conclude with suggestions for assessment tools aligned to the proposed framework.

## Background and Goals of the MCL-AH Project

While art historians have long discussed questions about the content and pedagogical approaches in introductory surveys of art, no commonly agreed-upon standards exist to guide instructors as to what students should actually learn in these courses. The topic receives perennial attention at academic conferences; yet, the discipline lacks clear consensus as to what constitutes foundational learning in art history. Although more than fifteen papers or panels on “the art history survey” have been presented before the College Art Association (CAA) in the past decade, little has been done to capture this ongoing dialogue, and the scholarly literature interrogating pedagogical concerns in art history is sparse.<sup>2</sup> One notable exception is a special 1995 issue of *Art Journal* on “Re-

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<sup>1</sup> This process took place through two convenings of the MCL-AH panel at the SSRC. The first on July 21, 2018 included Richard Arum, Christine Havice, Jim Hopfensperger, Richard Lubben, Elisa Mandell, Walter Meyer, Andy Schulz, Stephanie Smith, and Virginia Spivey. Participants brainstormed initial ideas for the framework, which the co-chairs developed as a preliminary draft and returned for review of the entire panel. The next convening on December 8, 2018 included Richard Arum, Cole Edick, Christine Havice, Jim Hopfensperger, Richard Lubben, Walter Meyer, Chika Okeke-Agulu, Andy Schulz, Stephanie Smith, and Virginia Spivey. The present document reflects this group's comments, revisions, and subsequent discussion around the goals and interests of the project.

<sup>2</sup> Since 1985, there have been approximately 33 articles in *The Art Bulletin* and *Art Journal* addressing pedagogical topics in art history. Typical of the writing about the discipline's pedagogy, this literature is characterized by brief notes, personal reflections, roundtable discussions, and anecdotes about classroom experiments that lack rigorous investigation, evidence-based findings, or grounding in the existing scholarship of teaching and learning. See Virginia B. Spivey, et al., “White Paper on the Need for a Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Art History,” *ArtHistoryTeachingResources.org*, November 1, 2015 (November 13, 2017). <http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/AHTR-White-Paper-2.pdf>.

thinking the Art History Introductory Survey,” which provides genuine insight into these questions; however, many of its contributions now seem dated given changes of the last 20 years.<sup>3</sup>

These conditions in art history stand in stark contrast to extensive research on teaching and learning produced in art education and museum education. This difference underscores the distance of academic art history from these allied fields of study, and its limited presence in the K-12 curriculum where mandated standards are common. Because museum educators, similar to faculty teaching introductory surveys, serve novice viewers with limited or no art historical knowledge, scholarship on object-based learning, close looking, visual analysis, and meaning-making is applicable to most introductory art history courses; but, this literature rarely addresses art history taught in higher education classrooms.<sup>4</sup>

In drafting the proposed learning objectives, our group assumed a forward-looking approach that acknowledges the ongoing debates and emerging developments that will likely shape the future of art historical practice, which should be addressed when developing new curriculum.<sup>5</sup> The recent uptick in scholarly publications on art historical pedagogy has informed the proposed framework in addition to the resources mentioned above.

We believe the MCL-AH framework can best serve the discipline as a living document, designed to encourage reflective pedagogical practice, productive discourse, and to build greater consensus around goals for teaching and learning in art history. Articulating the core concepts and competencies gained through art historical study provides an essential first step in developing tools of assessment that might explore the full complexity of learning in the discipline. We hope this process will spur more art historians to produce rigorous research on pedagogy, and will support advocacy efforts to demonstrate art history’s value, not only to engage students in discipline-based inquiry, but also to develop transferable skills needed in the world today.

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<sup>3</sup> Bradford Collins, ed. “Re-thinking the Art History Introductory Survey,” *Art Journal*, 54.3 (1995).

<sup>4</sup> Research in museum education, based in the learning sciences, focuses largely on student learning in museums’ school/community outreach programs in relationship to K-12 curricula. Recent initiatives to increase the role of academic art museums to support curriculum at their parent institutions suggest potential for cross-sector research on teaching and learning in art history in higher education. See CAA’s RAAMP project website for bibliography and a growing repository of resources supporting academic museum professionals. <https://raamp.hcommons.org/>

<sup>5</sup> Two key issues are the shift from a fixed canon informed by Western constructs of art and art history and widespread advancements in digital technology, affecting both research and pedagogical practices in the discipline.

## **NASAD and AP Art History**

Among existing models of learning objectives in art history, two are similar to the MCL-AH's framework in their effort to reach broadly across the field. As a national accrediting body, the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) provides program-level concepts and competencies within its standards and guidelines for accreditation. For completion of an art history undergraduate major, NASAD suggests graduates must have attained the following:

1. A general knowledge of the monuments and principal artists of all major art periods of the past, including a broad understanding of the art of the twentieth century and acquaintance with the art history of non-Western cultures. This knowledge should be augmented by study in greater depth and precision of several cultures and periods in the history of art and concentration in at least one area to the advanced seminar level. Study at the advanced level should include theory, analysis, and criticism.
2. A general knowledge of world history.
3. Knowledge of the tools and techniques of scholarship. Active research and the writing of analytical and critical essays should continue throughout the program.
4. Functional knowledge of the creative process. Normally, this is accomplished through one or more foundation or other studio courses; however, there are many methods of ensuring this competence.
5. The student should also achieve adequate mastery of at least one foreign language to support research through the reading of primary source materials.<sup>6</sup>

Although reviewed annually by its member institutions and appropriately developed for purposes of accreditation, NASAD's standards underscore the organization's primary mission to support institutions offering studio art and design degree programs. These competencies feature a requirement that students attain a "functional understanding of the creative process," which seems most relevant to institutions where art, design, and art history programs are housed within a single academic unit. By contrast, the MCL-AH framework seeks to identify core learning objectives in introductory art history courses regardless of institutional mission. While NASAD's standards certainly include ideas that are important to art historical learning, their purpose remains very different than those

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<sup>6</sup> See National Association of Schools of Arts and Design, "Standards and Guidelines," <https://nasad.arts-accredit.org/accreditation/standards-guidelines/> (November 13, 2017)

of the MCL-AH project.

The College Board's recently revised curriculum for Advanced Placement Art History offers another national model for comparison. The curriculum, which took effect in 2015, takes a global approach to art historical content and emphasizes critical analysis over memorization of objects and rehearsal of established facts. Drawing on a backward design instructional model and reflecting the importance of the AP Art History exam to students taking the course, the framework takes an integrated approach to curriculum, assessment, and instruction.<sup>7</sup> It is based on the following three big ideas and essential questions, "intended to encourage investigation of art throughout time and place and to foster students' understanding of the discipline of art history."<sup>8</sup>

**Big Idea 1:** Artists manipulate materials and ideas to create an aesthetic object, act, or event.

**Essential Question:** What is art and how is it made?

**Big Idea 2:** Art making is shaped by tradition and change.

**Essential Question:** Why and how does art change?

**Big Idea 3:** Interpretations of art are variable.

**Essential Question:** How do we describe our thinking about art?

Twelve learning objectives, which are linked to these overarching ideas, encompass foundational art historical skills and are aligned to statements describing evidence of student achievement. "Enduring understanding statements" and "essential knowledges" identify the key concepts students should learn related to the cultural practices, historical context, and formal characteristics of art from each of the curriculum's ten global content areas.<sup>9</sup>

In contrast to NASAD's role in accreditation, the College Board's curricular framework provides standards for high school courses intended to prepare students for its advanced placement exams for colleges. Resulting from a three-year process that

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<sup>7</sup> See Grant P. Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> See "AP Art History Course and Exam Description," NY: The College Board (2015): 11-21. <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-art-history-course-and-exam-description.pdf> (Nov. 15, 2017)

<sup>9</sup> Foundational skills relate to visual analysis and making inferences regarding meaning, and are scaffolded within the curricular framework. Ibid.

included input from advisors in K-12 and higher education, the revised curriculum attempts to ensure academic rigor similar to a college-level introductory survey in art history; thus, teachers must adhere to its guidelines in course development and submit syllabi to the College Board for approval in order to receive the AP designation. The MCL-AH framework lacks the AP Art History curriculum's level of detail, especially in its designation of specific objects and content areas for study. Although we recognize the benefit of integrating curriculum, assessment, and instructional guidelines, the MCL-AH framework is intended as a model that institutions and instructors may voluntarily adapt to meet the needs their students.

### **Art History and Assessment in Higher Education**

The increased demand for accountability in higher education has led most institutions to require art history (and other) departments to establish learning objectives in accord with program, institutional, and governmental guidelines. Developed by faculty committees, such individualized efforts have many features in common while still reflecting the varied missions, demographics, and governance systems in place at the different institutions where they originate. The process of creating these standards and methods of institutional assessment likewise vary and are not distributed broadly throughout the field. Nascent work in the scholarship of teaching and learning in art history (SoTL-AH) has begun to examine these issues. While much of this literature looks at pedagogical methods and evidence of student learning, it also suggests common learning objectives in the discipline.

The current thinking among scholars holds that introductory courses should demonstrate the global breadth of art and its history, but debates linger around how much art historical content should be included in the survey.<sup>10</sup> Some practitioners stress that the purpose of a "survey" is to expose students, most of whom arrive with little knowledge of the discipline, to the full spectrum of artworks and cultures that art historians study. Others posit that the compulsion for broad coverage has reduced learning in introductory courses to rote memorization instead of engaging higher order

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<sup>10</sup> This topic was most recently addressed in a 2015 CAA session sponsored by CAA's Education Committee and published in Aditi Chandra et al. "Looking Beyond the Canon: Localized and Globalized Perspectives in Art History Pedagogy." *Art History Pedagogy & Practice* 1.1 (2016) <https://academicworks.cuny.edu/ahpp/vol1/iss1/2>. Also relevant is the instructional model of multiple regional surveys discussed in Melissa R. Kerrin and Andrea Lepage, "De-Centering "The" Survey: The Value of Multiple Introductory Surveys to Art History." *Art History Pedagogy & Practice*. 1.1 (2016) <https://academicworks.cuny.edu/ahpp/vol1/iss1/3> (November 16, 2017)

thinking processes of visual analysis, evaluation, and application.<sup>11</sup> A recent dissertation on the introductory art history survey in higher education finds that among the study's participants, visual analysis ranks highest among course learning objectives, and moreover, the findings suggest its importance as both a skill *and* a concept, inherent to art historical thinking, that supersedes learning objectives related to specific areas of content.<sup>12</sup>

### The MCL-AH Framework

The MCL-AH project provides a learning objective framework for the introductory art history survey course, intended to demonstrate the complexity of the discipline and its intellectual value within undergraduate education. Developed by a panel of current and past art history faculty and studio artists, with support from Measuring College Learning project leaders at the SSRC's Education Research program, this framework offers instructors and institutions a model to look to when developing new curriculum, and can be adapted and refined to meet ongoing changes in art historical practice and the broader educational landscape.

The framework identifies essential concepts and competencies that are foundational to art historical study.<sup>13</sup> Our goal is not that students might gain comprehensive knowledge through the survey experience. We believe that learning essential concepts will help students begin to internalize the fundamental assumptions, methods, and ways of thinking that distinguish art history as a unique field of study. Rooted in art historical practice, essential competencies further encompass transferable skills that prepare students for advanced academic study and professional life in the future.

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<sup>11</sup> See Julia A. Sienkewicz, "Against the "Coverage" Mentality: Rethinking Learning Outcomes and the Core Curriculum." *Art History Pedagogy & Practice* 1.1 (2016).

<http://academicworks.cuny.edu/ahpp/vol1/iss1/5> (November 15, 2017)

<sup>12</sup> Josh Yavelberg, "Discovering the Pedagogical Paradigm Inherent in Art History Survey Courses: A Delphi Study," (Ph.D. dissertation, George Mason University, 2016) See complete data at

<http://arthistorysurvey.com/AHSDelphi/reports.html> (November 16, 2017)

<sup>13</sup> This project makes clear distinction between its focus on the Introductory Art History survey course, typically taught in a two-semester sequence, addressing global or predominantly western content, and covering the chronological period from prehistoric times to the contemporary period, and Art Appreciation courses which sometimes include a generalized discussion of the discipline. As developed, the framework can also apply to introductory-level surveys of particular regions, periods, or topics in art history that offered at many institutions. While the MCL-AH framework does not make recommendations around specific areas of content in survey art history courses, it identifies a goal for survey students to gain understanding of art history's aim toward inclusivity through studying objects produced by the full range of artists and cultures.



Clearly articulated learning objectives are important to assess student learning, and they can ensure curriculum and instructional practice effectively ground students in disciplinary knowledge.<sup>14</sup> Since 2012, the Humanities and Liberal Arts Assessment (HULA) Project at Harvard's Project Zero have explored ways to evaluate effective learning in the humanities. Foundational learning in fields like art history requires students to recognize diverse ways of thinking, and to embrace ambiguity and the need to look deeply beyond apparent "facts." This requires measuring not only specific performance outcomes, but also looking for signs of the developmental pathways associated with learning in art history.<sup>15</sup>

Given this complexity of learning in art history, we recommend a range of assessment tools and mechanisms be used to measure student learning in introductory survey courses. These would involve a combination of low and high-stakes assessments, and developing scaffolded assignments to assess for the development of ideas, and create opportunities to provide formative feedback and encourage students to reflect on their own learning processes. Object-based assignments are also crucial since they require students to engage directly with works of art as the primary source of study. While this suggests the need to utilize regional cultural institutions, and art museums or galleries on campus, such assignments may alternatively focus on nearby buildings, everyday objects, and works by local artists and craftspeople when study collections are not readily accessible.

Art historians must work collectively to improve and expand upon existing tools of slide-based exams and writing assignments, and create innovative new assessments to embed within established practices in the field. Slide-based exams might focus more on identifying objects of unknown attribution, or ask students to select their own examples of artworks to create comparisons, recognize relationships, support interpretation, or to analyze conflicting interpretations or meaning. Traditional writing assignments in art history might be expanded to include oral, written, creative, interactive, or digital presentations addressing academic, peer, or general audiences. Although requiring research and formal analysis, writing projects may diverge from the traditional term paper if framed as artist's statements, interviews, exhibition reviews, or museum labels.

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<sup>14</sup> Josipa Roksa, Richard Arum, and Amanda Cook, "Defining and Assessing Learning in Higher Education," in *Improving Quality in American Higher Education*, ed. Richard Arum, et al. (Jossey-Bass, 2016): 5-6.

<sup>15</sup> The HULA Project Research Team. "Understanding the Contributions of the Humanities to Human Development: A Methodological White Paper." Accessed November 10, 2017. <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/HULAWhitepaper.pdf>.

Digital technology offers myriad opportunities to demonstrate students' learning in creative and public ways. Digital tools can be used to develop interactive timelines, oral interviews, videos, podcasts, and audioguides; and, public-facing platforms allow students to build collections, websites, exhibitions, or catalogues. Such student-directed projects, which often demand extensive research, synthetic thinking, iterative design, and creative modes of presentation, provide a rich mine of information that demonstrates developmental progress and can offer insight into how the experience affects students' understanding of key course content.<sup>16</sup>

Many art historians have already begun this important work, sharing their experiments within their institutions, at conferences, and through online communities of practice.<sup>17</sup> We hope the MCL-AH project will encourage more collaborative innovation and we invite faculty to share their ideas for effective assessment tools. More broadly, we welcome feedback on the proposed framework and look forward to opportunities to build on the MCL-AH project through ongoing discussion and new research on art history's pedagogy in the coming months.

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<sup>16</sup> For one example, see Ellery E. Foutch, "Bringing Students into the Picture: Teaching with Tableaux Vivants." *Art History Pedagogy & Practice* 2.2 (2017). <https://academicworks.cuny.edu/ahpp/vol2/iss2/3>

<sup>17</sup> For a recent discussion of writing assignment ideas presented at SECAC, see Mary Slavkin, "Rationales and Realities in Assigning Research Papers at SECAC" *AHTR Weekly*, Oct. 28, 2016 <http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/2016/10/rationales-and-realities-in-assigning-research-papers-at-secac/>. Innovative assessments are also shared informally through ArtHistoryTeachingResources.org and other online communities of practice such as The Material Collective Public Facebook Group. See examples at <http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/page/1/?s=assessment> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/361590540565696/889298337794911/>

**Overview: Essential Concepts and Competencies**

<b>Essential Concepts (Students should understand...)</b>	<b>Essential Competencies (Students should be able to...)</b>
<b>The 'object' is primary to art historical inquiry.</b>	<b>Demonstrate visual literacy</b>
<b>Art History is a discipline with a diverse set of practices devoted to the interpretation of objects.</b>	<b>Effectively communicate visual phenomena</b>
<b>Art History is a global discipline.</b>	<b>Evaluate sources and evidence</b>
<b>Art historical interpretation must consider an object's context.</b>	<b>Demonstrate relational thinking</b>
<b>The art historical 'canon' is contested and changing.</b>	<b>Demonstrate digital literacy</b>

**Essential Concepts, Learning Outcomes, and Enabling Objectives**

Essential Concepts	Learning Outcomes and Enabling Objectives
<p><b>The 'object' is primary to art historical inquiry.</b></p>	<p><b>Demonstrate an ability to conduct formal analysis</b>                      (EO) Students engage directly with material works of art as a primary source for analysis</p>
	<p><b>Recognize the variety of objects studied in art history and the varied materials, techniques, and practices used to create them</b>                      (EO) Art historians study architecture; decorative, functional, and craft-based objects, sculpture, painting, performance, design, as well as a variety of new and emerging media.                      (EO) Artists manipulate different materials, techniques, practices and ideas to create works of art                      (EO) First-hand engagement with material works of art as a primary source for analysis                      (EO) Art historians study objects in varied conditions (ie: destroyed, defaced, deteriorated, altered, ephemeral) sometimes through archives, photographic artifacts, and archaeological excavations</p>
	<p><b>Understand objects in relationship to one another</b>                      (EO) Students compare, contrast and classify objects</p>
<p><b>Art History is a discipline with a diverse set of practices devoted to the interpretation of objects.</b></p>	<p><b>Distinguish a variety of interpretive perspectives</b>                      (EO) Students are introduced to multiple interpretive approaches and distinguish different perspectives used to interpret works of art</p>
	<p><b>Demonstrate an understanding that specific works of art can be interpreted in different ways</b>                      (EO) Students identify at least two methodologies (ie: Social art history, formalism, Marxist theory, psychoanalysis, feminist theory, queer theory, critical race theory, postcolonial theory) and apply them to a single monument or object.</p>

<p><b>Art History is a global discipline.</b></p>	<p><b>Examine art produced in a broad range of cultures... as something that cuts across time, space and geography</b>                  (EO) Students explore distinctions and characteristics of objects produced across a broad range of cultures from different regions and periods</p>
	<p><b>Understand the historical circulation, exchange, and interconnection across boundaries.</b>                  (EO) Students recognize how the circulation of materials objects transmits of artistic styles, techniques, ideas, and beliefs across different regions and time periods.</p>
<p><b>Art historical interpretation must consider an object's context.</b></p>	<p><b>Distinguish between personal response to works of art and interpretations grounded in historical evidence.</b>                  (EO) Students understand what constitutes evidence of historical context, and how it is used to support an argument or interpretation of a work of art.</p>
	<p><b>Demonstrate how both objects and interpretations may change through time.</b>                  (EO) Students identify different mechanisms to collect, interpret, and preserve art objects.                  (EO) Students recognize understanding of an object may be undetermined, lost, destroyed, changed, or revised.</p>
<p><b>The art historical 'canon' is contested and changing.</b></p>	<p><b>Recognize the relative value of art objects is fluid</b>                  (EO) Students understand the historical, social, institutional, and ideological mechanisms that establish how and why objects of art hold value                  (EO) Students recognize different kinds of value assigned to art objects. (ie: cultural, economic, aesthetic, etc.)</p>
	<p><b>Historiography of the canon</b>                  (EO) Students understand art history is dynamic and will continue to evolve and change.                  (EO) Student recognize scholarly study produces literature to account for new findings.</p>

Essential Competencies
Demonstrate visual literacy
Effectively communicate visual phenomena
Evaluate sources and evidence
Demonstrate relational thinking
Demonstrate digital literacy

**Description of the Essential Concepts:**

**The ‘object’ is primary to art historical inquiry.**

Cultural artefacts—commonly referred to as ‘objects’ by art historians—are ‘primary sources’ that serve as a point of departure for art historical analysis. ‘Close looking’ and careful attention to the formal and material aspects of the object are foundational disciplinary practices. Art objects may assume material, ephemeral, or intangible form. In many instances, works of art no longer exist in their original form, location, or condition. Over time, art objects are preserved, classified, collected, exchanged, altered, interpreted, valued, and sometimes destroyed, and these histories are important elements of art historical analysis. In some cases, there is no object at all, but rather an ‘act’ or ‘event’ that constitutes the work of art. Finally, art objects are fundamentally different from the reproductive surrogates through which they are disseminated, and this distinction is increasingly important in our digital age.

**Art History is a discipline with a diverse set of practices devoted to the interpretation of objects.**

The interpretive models of art history are closely aligned with those of other humanities disciplines, including history, literary studies, philosophy, and cultural studies. In addition, art historians rely on a range of methodologies drawn from the social sciences, including anthropology, economics, sociology, geography, and psychology. Finally, scientific analysis of the materials and techniques of art objects often plays an important role in art historical interpretation. In many instances, art historians draw on a range of methodologies, with interpretive lenses shaping the variable and at times divergent meanings ascribed to works of art. In this way, art historical interpretation is never definitive, but rather contingent and constantly evolving.

**Art History is a global discipline.**

The foundational methods of art history were developed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in relation to European art (and, more particularly, painting and sculpture) of the Renaissance and Baroque. Over the past century, the purview of art history has extended to encompass objects and practices that span temporally from prehistory to the present, and spatially across all geographic regions of the globe. All cultures produce objects that convey meaning; and in this way, art is a global phenomenon. The breadth of cultural artefacts that are subjected to art historical interpretation serves to highlight the constructed and historically situated nature of the term 'art.'

**Art historical interpretation must consider the object's context.**

Art objects exist through time and into the present, thus art historians must consider how a particular historical, socio-political, and economic context might influence an object's meaning, use, or cultural significance. This requires contextualizing an object through research into the conditions surrounding its production and its reception or display. These might involve artistic techniques and materials, original function, iconographical meaning, details about the artist, the patron, place, and historical period, and other circumstances extrinsic to the object itself.

**The art historical 'canon' is contested and changing.**

As is the case in other humanistic disciplines, art history relies on a canon, i.e. a set of exemplary objects (or actions/events) that are privileged above others. The canon is codified in introductory textbooks, art history curricula, scholarly journals, and other disciplinary structures. Art historians acknowledge that the canon is constructed and contested. It reflects the subjective and ideological values of the discipline, its practitioners, and broader cultural forces. The canon will continue to change, and to be contested.

**Description of the Essential Competencies**

**Demonstrate visual literacy**

Visual analysis of a work of art is foundational to art historical thinking. Students must be able to look closely at a work of art to discern how particular meanings, contexts, and functions are conveyed through formal and material elements. They should be able to use this method as the basis for inference and interpretation of individual objects and when comparing multiple objects. Students should further recognize that visual analysis may be critically applied to the full range of visual culture, and they should be able to use it broadly in order to deepen their understanding of images and objects encountered every day, as well as those seen in art museums, cultural institutions, or academic contexts.

**Effectively communicate about visual phenomena**

Because viewers rely on visual and other senses to experience a work of art, students should be able to translate these perceptions into clear, specific language that effectively communicates their observations and ideas to others. Students must be able to correctly apply specialized vocabulary used to describe artistic techniques, effects, and concepts, and to construct written and oral arguments that cite visual and/or scholarly evidence to support interpretations of a work of art.

**Evaluate sources and evidence**

Students must be prepared to conduct art historical research appropriate to the undergraduate level. They should be able to assemble primary and secondary sources and evaluate their academic credibility. In addition to applying visual analysis to interpret works of art, students should be able to distinguish common methodologies used in art historical scholarship, to critically examine the evidence used to support an author's thesis, and to identify strengths and weaknesses of an art historical argument.

**Engage in interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and relational thinking**

Art historical study benefits from critical analysis that explores connections between works of art and a range of human innovations and cultural ideas throughout history. Students should be able to compare objects produced in different cultures, time periods, or geographic regions and make inferences regarding relationships of style, technique, function, and meaning. Students should further recognize relationships that may exist between art and other fields of study, and suggest how these might contribute to our understanding of art's broader significance as a form of human expression.

**Demonstrate digital literacy**

Students should demonstrate digital literacy skills essential to art historical practice in the 21st century. Throughout its history, the discipline of art history has relied on technology for access to distant and destroyed objects, to create reproductions and circulate images, and for methods of scholarly communication. Students today should be able to recognize and critically examine distinctions between a material work of art, its digital reproduction, digital or multi-media objects, and artworks experienced through augmented or virtual reality technologies. They should be able to locate, employ, evaluate, and produce digital resources appropriate for study and communication of academic research, and recognize ways they can use emerging technologies to contribute to scholarly knowledge, engage the public in art historical discourse, and demonstrate the discipline's social and cultural value in a contemporary world.



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