

ARTH 0155 - HISTORY OF ISLAMIC ART

Catalog Description

Formerly known as ARHI 0155

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: Survey of the art and architecture produced by the wide and varied cultures that can be considered Islamic. Fourteen hundred years of visual culture from Spain to North Africa to the Middle East to South and South East are covered. In addition, special attention paid to the Islamic diaspora and the role of Islamic artists in the contemporary world today. (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Correlate the direct impact of the principles of the Islamic faith on specific examples of art and architecture.
- CSLO #2: Critique images and scholarship in terms of western cultural relativism, paying attention to the ways in which social class, gender, racism, and the history of western colonialism influences the study and interpretation of Islamic art.
- CSLO #3: Demonstrate visual literacy by analyzing artworks using proper historical terminology and formal elements in both written and verbal form.
- CSLO #4: Identify and differentiate various types of craft produced in the Islamic lands, discuss their technical aspects, and analyze stylistic similarities and differences geographically and over time.
- CSLO #5: Locate, describe, and distinguish the major elements of Islamic architecture in terms of style and function.

Effective Term

Fall 2026

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Describe and recognize the influential elements in the formation of Islamic Art.
2. Identify the principles of the Islamic faith and explain their direct impact on specific examples of the art and architecture (e.g., the creation of Mihrab or the prayer niche).
3. Discuss the history of various dynastic Islamic rules and their contribution to Islamic art and culture.

4. Discuss various religious schools of thought within the Islamic faith and their influence on the development of Islamic Art and Architecture
5. Recognize and analyze the most common types of secular and religious architecture, and identify the different components of the building, decoration, and function of each.
6. Identify and explain the stylistic differences and similarities found in the architecture of different regions as well as different periods.
7. Discuss the patronage of art and architecture within the Islamic lands, and explain issues such as religious endowments, and formation of the artistic guilds.
8. Identify, describe, and analyze development of painting as an art form in Islamic lands including materials, influences, regional styles, and major artists.
9. Identify various types of craft produced in the Islamic lands, discuss their technical aspects, and analyze stylistic similarities and differences from one region to another as well as from one period to the next.
10. Discuss western vision of the Islamic east, explain the role of colonialism in the production of the "Oriental" art by the European artists of the nineteenth century, and analyze theories of "Orientalism."
11. Discuss Islamic Art at present time by studying the social, political, and religious trends affecting the production of the arts from the 19th century to the present globally.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Arts and Humanities
 - AA/AS - Fine Arts
 - AA/AS - Multicultural Studies
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
 - CSUGE - C1 Arts
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
 - Cal-GETC 3A - Arts
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)
 - IGETC - 3A Arts

Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable
- UC Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: Class discussions can be used as continual assessments of students' abilities to verbally analyze artworks and use proper terminology. For example, students may be asked to discuss how a work of art on the screen is typical of a specific historical style (such as Mughal painting)
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: Essays exams may test students on application of knowledge and comparison of style, content, function, and context of works. Such as, an in class timed essay where the student is given two monuments or paintings to compare in terms of style, content, function, and historical context. Students would be assessed in terms of ability to make connections between works, both in terms of similarities and differences, tying those similarities and differences to media, technique, and historical context. They would also have to demonstrate ability to use required terms and correctly identify style, media, and techniques in the images.
- Objective Examinations

- Example: Objective exams may test students on basics of terminology and recognition of major artists and artworks/monuments. Such as, a fill in the blank quiz where students must identify major elements in floor plans, and image identifications (artist, title, and date).
- Reports
 - Example: Reports in the form of assigned formal papers can be used to address specific themes in the course, such as asking each student to choose one major contemporary artist to research and in a paper analyze their connections to the past, involvement in international art scene, and ways in which they challenge orientalist bias. The final paper would be assessed for research methods and citing, ability to clearly organize and state information, and application of historical and aesthetic approaches to an artist and their products.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. Instructor presents A. Visually oriented lectures, such as PowerPoint presentations, about artworks and their historical contexts. For example, a lecture on the Great Mosque of Cordoba discussing how the layout adheres to the tenets of Islamic faith, consciously uses architectural elements to reference earlier Umayyad Dynasty and Medina, demonstrates the political power of the Caliph patrons, as well as how the mosque has been modified and exotified in the 'Reconquista' period of Catholic Spain. Students will build their ability to identify major elements of Islamic architecture (CLSO 5: Locate, describe, and distinguish the major elements of Islamic architecture in terms of style and function), correlate elements to their theological function (CLSO 1: Correlate the direct impact of the principles of the Islamic faith on specific examples of art and architecture), use proper terminology (CSLO 3: Demonstrate visual literacy by analyzing artworks using proper historical terminology and formal elements), and critique analysis for western bias (CSLO 2: Critique images and scholarship in terms of western cultural relativism and how it influences the study and interpretation of Islamic art).

Distance Learning

1. The instructor also creates B. Class and small group discussions (online and on ground) such as:
2. Compare and contrast the floor plan of an Ottoman mosque and a Safavid mosque. What elements do they have in common and what elements are different? What accounts for these similarities and differences?
3. Analyze a primary document relating to social and cultural context of art making (contracts, artistic biography, historical art criticism)
4. Work together to analyze an unknown object in terms of subject and style as if coming across an image in a museum or gallery setting. In these types of activities, students will actively apply their knowledge and skills to new situations, engaging with visual literacy and analysis skills, including CSLO 3 (Demonstrate visual literacy by

analyzing artworks using proper historical terminology and formal elements) as well as the before mentioned CSLOs 1, 2, 4, and 5)

Typical Out of Class Assignments Reading Assignments

1. Read chapter in your text and select one object produced during the Fatimid era. In a class discussion, describe the object in terms of medium, process, style, function, and who the most likely patron of the object would be. 2. Read provided primary document from instructor (such as reading on Postcolonial theory) and be prepared to discuss in class.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. Select two different articles of Islamic art that reflect similar design but use different mediums. Identify each article (title, date/period, medium) and discuss how they might or might not be associated in terms of the underlying principles that may have inspired both. 2. Islamic art uses geometry as one of the methods of visually expressing variety within unity. In a hands-on project (drawing, painting, collage, etc.), design your own composition that shows unity and variety in the same work. Write a one-page paper to explain your composition.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

1. From the list of Web sites provided in your syllabus, find an example of contemporary Islamic religious architecture (Mosque, Madrasa, or Mausoleum). In a two-page paper analyze the characteristics that are consistent with its medieval counterparts as well as elements that are different and more modern. 2. Through web search and/or library research find a controversial work of Islamic art. Write about the elements that cause the controversy, the socio-economical background and what in your opinion can be done about it, or if anything needs to be done about it.

Required Materials

- Introduction to Islamic Art
 - Author: Shadih Mirmobiny
 - Publisher: XanEdu Publishing Inc
 - Publication Date: 2015
 - Text Edition: 2nd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Islam: Art and Architecture
 - Author: Hattstein, Markus and Delius, Peter
 - Publisher: h.f.ullmann publishing
 - Publication Date: 2015
 - Text Edition: 1st
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Islamic Art: Architecture, Painting, Calligraphy, Ceramics, Glass, Carpets
 - Author: Luca Mozzati
 - Publisher: Prestel

- Publication Date: 2019
- Text Edition: 1st
- Classic Textbook?:
- OER Link:
- OER:
- Islamic Art and Architecture
 - Author: Robert Hillenbrand
 - Publisher: Thames&Hudson
 - Publication Date: 2021
 - Text Edition: 1st
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Reframing Art History: A New Kind of Textbook
 - Author: Dr. Lauren Kilroy-Ewbank
 - Publisher: Smarthistory
 - Publication Date: 2024
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER: yes

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.