

ART HISTORY

Bachelor's Degree & Minor

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Discover world cultures through classical to contemporary art.



“Understanding art enlivens one’s life in significant ways. Art History studies provide the best means possible of understanding the visual past and the present.”

Dr. Leslie Ross
Chair and Professor,
Art History

Find Your Inspiration

The Art History Program provides an understanding of the visual arts and illuminates the development of world cultures. Coursework equips students with training in art history as a humanistic discipline through the visual analysis and interpretation of works of art.

As a place to study art, the vibrant San Francisco Bay Area offers students an exceptional selection of galleries and museums, including the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Museum of Craft and Folk Art, and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

Imagine Career Possibilities

The rich, interdisciplinary Art History curriculum leads to an array of career directions, including museum and gallery work, the areas of art appraisal and criticism, and advanced graduate training as professional historians of art.

Envision the Process

Beginning survey coursework provides basic introductions to chronology, cultural study, and visual analysis of the history of Western and Eastern art. Upper division surveys broaden the scope by focusing on particular periods, such as Classical, Medieval, Renaissance, Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, and Modern and Contemporary Art. Students with special interests and an adequate general background may arrange an individualized interdisciplinary or double major. Art History Majors also take at least two courses in studio art to gain direct experience with artistic techniques and the creative process.

Advanced students participate in semester-long seminars in methodology and research, as well as the completion of a senior thesis or comprehensive exam. Students planning graduate work in art history are encouraged to learn an international language (e.g., French and/or German).

Internships in art history are encouraged and are arranged to provide students with direct and practical experience, especially in the fields of museum and gallery work. The Bay Area’s museums, galleries, advertising agencies, design firms, and artist studios offer a wealth of internship and employment opportunities.

Minors in art history complete introductory survey courses plus the methodology or research seminars. Two upper division elective art history courses plus one course in studio art complete the minor in art history.

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Explore the challenges and rewards of this degree program.

For more information, or to arrange for a visit, contact the Office of Admissions.

Toll Free: 888-323-6763 or 415-485-3204

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Students may complete an emphasis in Arts Management with a combination of Art History and Business courses.

Achieve Success

Students will demonstrate:

1. Fundamental skills and appropriate vocabulary for analysis and interpretation of works of art in their historical contexts.
2. Competency in the use of library resources, critical and original thinking, writing and oral skills, the preparation and presentation of short and long papers which describe and/or compare works of art, or exhibit knowledge in development of a theme or thesis.
3. An understanding and appreciation of art and architecture directly through visits to museums, churches, galleries, studios, and historical sites, through internships, participatory and career-oriented courses, and through courses in studio art.
4. The ability to identify and compare the values (social, political, religious, artistic, intellectual) of different cultures through their chronological study of the arts produced by different societies.

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