ART 403L.01: Renaissance Theory and Criticism

H. Rafael Chacon

University of Montana - Missoula, hrafael.chacon@umontana.edu

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ART 403  
Renaissance Theory and Criticism  
Spring 2006  
Professor H. Rafael Chacón, Ph.D.  
Fine Arts, Room 302  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:40-12 AM

Office Hours: Mon. & Wed., 9-10, Tues. & Thurs., 12-1 (FA 202, x.2735, hrafael.chacon@umontana.edu). Messages can also be left in my box in the Art Department Office (FA 305). This 3-credit course satisfies the L and W General Education requirements. Art 150 or 151 are pre-requisites for this class.

COURSE AIM: This course is designed as an exploration of the writings of major thinkers of the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries, the period known as the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance in western Europe. We shall discuss a broad range of texts such as theoretical treatises, works of literature, and personal diaries in order to gain a greater understanding of the intellectual life of the artist and the development of critical writing about art and society in a period of great change for western civilization.

FORMAT: The success of this course rests with the quality of our discussions and your research. I will teach it as a seminar in which we primarily discuss readings and ideas with occasional demonstrations and presentations. We shall take part in sharing information, opinions, and insights. When discussions develop lives of their own, unfinished work will spill over into the next session.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES:
Good performance in this class rests on how well prepared you are in advance of the discussions. You will be expected to stay abreast of the readings and to share your thoughts and ideas with the class.

Readings: The readings are mostly articles and portions of books, are on reserve at the Mansfield Library. A copy of each reading is filed separately under the author's last name. You may copy these readings or check them out for use in the library (two-hour reserve). In the syllabus the readings are grouped on a weekly basis. I shall always let you know where we are on the syllabus, but stay on top of the readings because you will be called upon in class and the texts will inevitably show up in your examination. Readings are also available on-line through the Mansfield’s electronic reserve system http://eres.lib.umt.edu. Our password is RENART.

Participation: 25 % of your grade is determined by attendance and participation in class discussion. Attendance Policy: I expect at least 85 % attendance and occasional participation to earn a "C" and 95-100 % participation with frequent and thoughtful contribution to class discussion for an "A". Attendance is taken at the start of class. If you are not present at roll call, you will be marked absent regardless of when you show up. Participation may count for more of the final grade if it has been exceptionally good or less if exceedingly
poor. Improvement over the course of the quarter will be registered in the final grade.

Midterm: There will be a take-home written examination during mid-semester worth 25 % of your grade. It will be a series of essay questions.

Final Research Paper and Presentation: This project is worth 50 % of your grade. For this project, you will research a topic, write a research paper, and give a class presentation. You may also create a hands-on project to apply the idea or theories you explore. See attached handouts for my paper-grading criteria. The research paper will be due at the end of the semester and will be revised and resubmitted for the final grade. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Grades: Participation 25 % 100 points
Mid-term exam 25 % 100 pts.
Research Paper 50 % 200 pts.

Disabilities:
If you suspect or know that you have any disabilities that may impede the successful completion of this course, please contact the Disability Services for Students (DSS) office and speak with me as soon as possible.

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/Index.cfm/page/1321.

Syllabus

Week 1
The Scholastic Tradition of the Late Middle Ages
Readings:
Theophilus, 1-8.
St. Francis of Assisi, 173-4.
Ceninno Cennini, 136-50.

Week 2
Antiquity: Rebirth or Reinvention?
Benedictus Canonicus, 62-73.
Baldesar Castiglione, A Report to Pope Leo X..., 289-96.
Man, the Measure of All Things
Gregorio Dati, 107-141

Week 3
No Class on Tuesday, February 7, 2006
The Rise of Individualism
Leonardo Bruni, 1-4.
Giannozo Manetti, 31-33.
Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, 178-84.
Vespasiano da Bisticci, 179-98.
Week 4
The Changing Status of the Artist
Antonio Manetti, 167-79.
Lorenzo Ghiberti, 151-66.
Anthony Blunt, Chapter 4, 48-57.
No Class on Thursday, February 16, 2006

Week 5
The Artist as Thinker
Leon Battista Alberti, On Painting, 43-98.
Blunt, Chapter 1, 1-22.

Week 6
The Renaissance Man: Leonardo da Vinci
Blunt, Chapter 2, 23-38.

Week 7
The Divine One: Michelangelo
Michelangelo Buonarroti, 5-24.
Blunt, Chapter 5, 58-81.
Midsemester Examinations distributed on Thursday, March 9, 2006.

Week 8
Vasari and the Mannerists
Giorgio Vasari, 24-31.
Blunt, Chapter 7, 86-102.
Midsemester Examinations due in class on Thursday, March 16, 2006. PLEASE NOTE THAT I ACCEPT NO LATE PAPERS.

Week 9
The Courtier
Baldesar Castiglione, 197-257.
Niccolò Machiavelli, 258-97.

Week 10
Spring Break–NO CLASSES

Week 11
The Artist, Nonconformity, Scandal, and Controversy
Benvenuto Cellini, 306-74.
Rudolf and Margot Wittkower, 150-80, 187-90.

Week 12
The Counter-Reformation and Church Censorship
The Council of Trent, 62-65.
Paolo Veronese, 65-70.
Blunt, Chapter 8, 103-36.

Week 13
Academism
Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, 74-86.
Federigo Zuccaro, 87-92.
Blunt, Chapter 9, 137-59.

Week 14
Research Papers due in class on Tuesday, April 25, 2006. PLEASE NOTE THAT I SHALL ACCEPT NO LATE PAPERS.
Presentations begin.

Week 15
Presentations continue.

Finals Week
Presentations continue.