Michelangelo
MLART 6395 N, Section 2080
Department of Fine Arts and Drama, University of St. Thomas
Spring 2015, Monday 5:30-8:15 pm, Cullen 204

Professor: Dr. Jessica Basciano
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 9:00-12:30, and by appointment
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Course Description
Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564) is a pre-eminent figure in Western art history and was acclaimed in his own lifetime as divinely inspired. An Italian painter, sculptor, architect, and poet, Michelangelo worked for over seventy years and was one of the most important artists of the Renaissance. This course is an examination of the key works of art and architecture of Michelangelo and his main contemporaries in late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy. In addition, the course investigates Michelangelo’s biography and the myth of the artist as a heroic genius. Students will read the Renaissance biographies of Michelangelo of Ascanio Condivi and Giorgio Vasari in order to gain a deeper understanding of the artist’s art and life, as well as of his critical reception.

Class meetings will consist of lectures illustrated by PowerPoint presentations, and discussions. These will be supplemented by two special events: a presentation on research skills by Joseph Goetz, Information Literacy Librarian Assistant Professor at the University of St. Thomas during class on January 26, and a required fieldtrip to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, at 5:30 pm on Thursday, April 9.
The goals of the course are:
1) to learn to recognize and identify well-known works of art produced by Michelangelo and his contemporaries;
2) to learn to describe and evaluate the formal characteristics of works of art using specialized vocabulary;
3) to learn to analyze and interpret works of art in their historical contexts;
4) to gain familiarity with research tools in art history;
5) and to develop skills of critical reading and oral and written communication, particularly the ability to deliver a research presentation and to write a research essay that advances an original argument.

Online Resources
The Blackboard website will be an essential component of the course: https://blackboard.stthom.edu/

I will use Blackboard to make accessible readings, PowerPoints, and other course documents. If you have any difficulty finding these resources on the site, please let me know right away. In addition, I will use your UST e-mail address to contact you outside of class time. Therefore, I ask that you check it regularly.

Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work required</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Percentage of final grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading and Presentation</td>
<td>throughout the term</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses (5)</td>
<td>(see schedule below)</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Presentation</td>
<td>March 23-April 20</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay</td>
<td>2 weeks after presentation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>throughout the term</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Course Requirements
The textbooks for the course are:


All three are available for purchase at the campus bookstore and are on reserve at Doherty Library. Hibbard’s *Michelangelo* offers a chronological narrative and illustrates many of the works we will study. Condivi’s and Vasari’s texts are essential primary sources that provide the basis for our class discussion.
Reading and presentation responses (1-1 ½ pages) are due five times during the semester. The class before a reading response is due, I will ask specific questions for you to answer. Two responses will be on Vasari, one will be on Condivi, and two will be on your classmates’ presentations. Your responses must be typed, double-spaced, and printed: I do not accept e-mailed work. They must be done on time.

Note: Regardless of whether a reading response is assigned, students are expected to read all required readings by the due date and to come to class ready to discuss them. Please bring the assigned readings to class with you.

The research proposal (1 ½-2 pages, not including bibliography) will present your preliminary research on your essay topic. It will consist of a statement in paragraph form outlining your methodological approach, your argument, the problems inherent to the topic, and the direction of your research, complemented by a bibliography of at least ten scholarly sources, at least five of which must be printed only—not on the web. Online sources must be scholarly too, such as academic journals or e-books. Students may choose from among the suggested areas of research listed below, or devise their own topic dealing with an aspect of Michelangelo’s art and architecture, in consultation with me. We will discuss topic ideas and the research and writing of essays in class. A good starting point is the Art History Resources at Doherty Library webpage: [http://campusguides.stthom.edu/arthistory](http://campusguides.stthom.edu/arthistory).

The research presentation (45 minutes) will be an in-depth, formal report on your research, illustrated using PowerPoint. One week before their presentation, students will provide me with a short reading (approximately 20 pages) to make available to the class, preferably in the form of a pdf. At the start of their presentation, students will hand out to the class a revised version of their research proposal and bibliography. Graduate students must distribute an annotated bibliography. An annotated bibliography is one with comments added to the entries. The comments should summarize the sources and explain their usefulness for your project. Students should provide a brief paragraph for each source. After each presentation, students will have the opportunity to answer questions from the class.

The final research essay (6-8 pages for undergraduates, 12-15 pages for graduates, not including illustrations) will develop the ideas explored in your proposal and presentation. The essay must be complete with footnotes, a bibliography, and illustrations, and must conform to a style guide such as the Chicago Manual of Style. Photocopies or scans of images must be included as illustrations at the end of the text, with figure references in the text. All illustrations must be numbered and identified with captions.

The midterm exam will consist of slide identifications with short-answer questions, a vocabulary section, and comparative essays.

The final exam will consist of a comprehensive essay only. Questions for the essay will be distributed beforehand.

The fieldtrip to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston is required, because the examination of original art objects is fundamental to the teaching of art history.
Suggested Areas of Research
1. Michelangelo’s *David* (1501-04), in comparison with the earlier Florentine statues of David of Donatello and Verrocchio.

2. Michelangelo’s Madonnas of 1503 to 1505. This topic incorporates sculpture, drawing, and the painting entitled the *Doni Madonna* (1503-04).

3. Michelangelo’s sculpted pietás: the Vatican *Pietà* (1497-1500), Florence *Pièta* (1547-55), and *Rondanini Pietà* (1555-64).

4. The Tomb of Julius II: Michelangelo’s multiple designs and sculptures, including the *Captives* (also called *Slaves*) and *Moses* (ca. 1511, 1513-16, and 1542-45?).

5. The Medici Chapel, also known as the New Sacristy, at the Church of San Lorenzo, Florence (1520-34): Michelangelo’s architectural design and sculpture.

6. The Sistine Chapel ceiling frescos (1508-12) in the Vatican: iconographical meaning, painting technique, and restoration.

7. The Sistine Chapel *Last Judgment* frescos (1536-41) in the Vatican: iconographical meaning, painting technique, and restoration.

8. The Pauline Chapel frescos (1542-50) in the Vatican: iconographical meaning and painting technique.

9. Michelangelo’s drawings: a study of drawings from various stages of his career, including an assessment of their function in Michelangelo’s practice.

10. The Biblioteca Laurenziana (Laurentian Library) (1524-26, 1533-34, 1549-50, 1559): architectural designs and sculptures, including for the entrance hall, staircase, and reading room.

11. The Piazza del Campidoglio on the Capitoline Hill in Rome (1538-64): Michelangelo’s architectural and urban planning designs for the civic square.

12. Michelangelo’s work at Saint Peter’s, Rome (1546-64): his architectural designs as chief architect of the basilica.

Course Policies
Attendance: Students are expected to attend every class meeting. The only acceptable reasons for missing class are: religious observance, illness, family emergency, and co-curricular activities such as intercollegiate athletics. In the case of absence for religious reasons, please let me know in advance. In the case of a medical or family emergency, provide a note from a doctor or counselor. In the case of co-curricular activities, a coach or other leader must submit an excused absence form. Students who miss more than one class without permission will have their participation grade lowered by one point (out of ten) for each absence. Students who arrive late will likewise have their participation grade lowered.
Participation: The success of the course depends on the active participation of all class members. Therefore, it is essential that students keep up with the readings and writing assignments, contribute to discussions, and respond constructively to their classmates’ presentations with questions and observations.

Food: Please do not eat in class.

Laptops and Cellphones: Please turn off and put away your laptops and phones.

Late Work: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the specified date. Reading responses will not be accepted late. If you fail to submit a response on time, your grade for the work will be zero. Essays submitted later on the day they are due will be considered one day late. A student will lose a grade step for each day an essay is late. (An example of a grade step is the difference between a B and a B-.)

Academic Integrity: The UST Student Handbook states that “every offense against academic honesty seriously undermines the teaching-learning process for which the University exists”. In keeping with this view, students are expected to be honest when taking their exams, to cite sources in their essays, and to submit their own work. Students may not submit work for one course that has already been used for another course. Cheating, plagiarizing, or any other form of academic dishonesty will lead either to a mark of zero for the work in question or to the grade of ‘F’ for the course, and to a formal University procedure.

You must cite all sources used, whether printed or online. If you are unsure about what to cite or how to cite it, please see me during my office hours. You can also find links to citation style guides on the Doherty Library Research Guide webpage: http://campusguides.stthom.edu/cat.php?cid=866.

Disability Services: Students with a suspected or documented disability may be eligible to receive academic accommodations. Faculty must be notified that exam accommodations have been approved well before the exam. For more information, see the Disability Services FAQ on the UST website or contact the Coordinator, Tiffany Devereux. She may be reached by e-mail at deveret@stthom.edu or by phone at 713-525-2169 or 6953.

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Schedule of Classes and Assignments (Subject to Revision)

* No class January 19: Martin Luther King Jr. Day.*

Reading

3. February 2. Giorgione and Titian  
*Reading Response 1 Due*  

*Research Proposal Due*  
Hibbard. pp. 11-84.

*Reading Response 2 Due*  
Hibbard. pp. 85-175.

6. February 23. Michelangelo in Florence: 1513-34  
Hibbard. pp. 177-237.

*Reading Response 3 Due*  

*No class March 9: SPRING BREAK.*

8. March 16. MIDTERM EXAM. Discussion of presentations, research, and writing.

9. March 23. Student Presentations 1 and 2

10. March 30. Student Presentations 3 and 4

11. April 6. Student Presentations 5 and 6

12. April 13. Student Presentations 7 and 8


14. April 27. Course Conclusion. FINAL EXAM DISCUSSION.

*Students’ Research Essays are due two weeks after their Presentations.*

*The final exam will be at 6:00 pm on Monday, May 11, 2015.*