

Proposal to add an art history major to the Westmont college catalogue

Background Information 1999-2009:

Westmont has offered alternative majors in art history since 1999 when Lisa DeBoer was hired to teach art history within the art department.

Given the fact that until recently, Westmont had only one professor in this area, it was not thought appropriate to list a major in the catalogue. Additionally, Lisa DeBoer's regular commitment to lead Europe Semester once every three years meant that it was less than a sure thing that a student could count on being able to take the requisite number of art history classes to constitute a major. The alternative major process allowed students who wished to pursue a concentration in art history the ability to do so, building in a certain amount of flexibility to accommodate both their own interests and Professor DeBoer's teaching schedule. Using a template to give some regularity to these alternative majors, 15 students have used or are using this process to declare a concentration in art history. Of those, the seven who wished to pursue studies at the graduate level were admitted into the programs of their choice.

Now that Westmont has hired Dr. Judy Larson, it is possible to list a major in the catalogue and regularize the requirements for the study of art history at Westmont. Dr. Larson holds a Ph.D. in art history and will be teaching one class a semester. The addition of these two courses makes it possible for us to always offer enough classes in the discipline to allow a student to complete a standardized course of study in spite of Lisa's occasional absences from campus for Europe Semester or course releases granted for other responsibilities. While the alternative major process has not been overly onerous, it is the art department's opinion that it would be good for both students and for the department to have a regular major outlined in the catalogue.

Rationale for the content of the proposed major in art history:

Our art department strives for integration across areas that are all too often divided from one another in the modern academy. Typically the study of art's history and its current practice are entirely divided. On many campuses they are often housed in different departments or divisions. We at Westmont, by way of contrast, are committed to the importance of history and theory for studio students, and the importance of studio experience and skills for art historians. Building on the template we have been using, and continuing our commitment to an integrated course of study which combines historical methods with technical, critical and studio learning—this proposed art history major includes our departmental studio core, prepare our art history students with a wider range of skills, practical exposure to processes and media, and kinds of knowledge and sensitivity beyond conventional art history programs that emphasize only traditional, historical learning.

All our students, studio and art history alike, will share a 17 unit departmental core consisting of Art 001 Principles of Art; Art 010 Design I; Art 015 Drawing I; Art 093 Sophomore Project; Art 131 Theory and Criticism in the Arts. Additionally, art history students will take Hist 198 Historical Method/Research to give them the opportunity for sustained engagement with an original research question.

Students majoring in art history will augment that core with at least two broad survey courses and five more specialized upper division courses. At least four of these five must be upper division Art History courses; one may come from a list of approved cognate courses. The total unit count for the proposed major is **49 units**.

Requirements for an Art History Major

Major Core:

21 units from

Art 1—Principles of Art
Art 10—Design I
Art 15—Drawing I
Art 93—Sophomore Project (1 credit)
Art 131—Theory and Criticism in the Arts
Hist 198—Historical Method/Research

Lower Division Electives:

8 units from

Art 21—Survey I (Western: prehistoric-gothic)
Art 22—Survey II (Western: renaissance-modern)
Art 23—Survey III (World Art)
IS 123—Europe Semester (GE: Perf. & Interp the Arts)

Upper Division Electives:

At least 16 units from

Art 122—Medieval Art
Art 124—Italian Renaissance Art
Art 125—Northern Renaissance Art
Art 126—Seventeenth Century Art
Art 127—Nineteenth Century Art
Art 128—Modern and Contemporary Art
Art 129—Special Topics in the History of Art
Art 131—Theory and Criticism in the Arts
Art 132—Museum Studies (New Course)
Art 133—Art, Theology and Worship (New Course)
Art 139—Survey of American Art (New Course)
Art 190/App 190—Practicum/Internship

4 units from

ENG 101—Film Studies
PHI 189—Aesthetics
AN 145—Culture Theory

Total = 49 Units