Course Title
Ancient Art in Berlin: Discovering the Collections of Museum Island

Course Number
ARTH-UA.915002

SAMPLE SYLLABUS – ACTUAL SYLLABUS MAY VARY

Instructor Contact Information
Stephanie Pearson
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Course Details
Wednesdays, 10:00am to 12:45pm
Location of class: NYUB Room "Charlottenburg" and museums on Museum Island.

Prerequisites
None

Units earned
4

Course Description
This course provides an overview of Egyptian, Near Eastern, Greek, and Roman art as represented in the world-class collections of antiquities on Berlin's Museum Island. Classroom sessions give students a foundation of knowledge of ancient art, while numerous site visits allow them to understand these principles “in action” within Berlin's internationally renowned collections of ancient art housed on Museum Island. The sites visited include the Egyptian collection in the Neues Museum, the ancient Near Eastern collection in the Pergamon Museum (which remains on view, unaffected by the closure of the Pergamon Altar gallery), and the Greek and Roman collections in the Altes Museum.

A special component of this course in Fall 2015 is the workshop "Where is the Pergamon Altar? Visitor Orientation and Expectations in the Pergamon Museum." With the help of renowned museum and visitor orientation experts, students will create a plan for optimizing communication about the temporary closure of the famous Pergamon Altar to the 1 million annual visitors to the museum. They will then present their plans to the Director of the ancient art collection and the Head of Education and Communication of the Berlin museums.

Course Objective
By the end of this course, students will be able to perform a visual analysis of an ancient art object and present a historically accurate interpretation of it. They will be able to locate the resources to research an ancient object, evaluate the integrity of these sources, summarize their arguments and relevance, and incorporate them into their interpretations. They will be
able to present their ideas and arguments to their peers in a cogent, comprehensible way. They will be able to enumerate the major points of scholarly texts and put them in dialogue with other concepts discussed in class. They will be able to apply the knowledge they gain from reading and writing to actual museum objects, and in turn use these objects to reinforce their understanding of broad historical, cultural, and artistic concepts. In conjunction with the Visitor Orientation workshop, they will be able to evaluate the display, web presence, and event program of a museum from both the institutional and visitor perspectives.

Assessment Components
Class Participation: 15%. Because field trips to Museum Island are an essential component of this class, attendance and active participation constitute a substantial portion of the grade.

10 Short Writing Assignments: Each 2 pages, double-spaced; 30%. Each week the instructor will detail the assignment that is due in class the following week. The assignment will be either an art-historical writing exercise or a response to the assigned reading for the coming week. These must be printed and ready to hand in at the beginning of each class session.

Visitor Orientation Workshop: 35%. For the special workshop “Where is the Pergamon Altar? Visitor Orientation and Expectations in the Pergamon Museum,” students work in groups to create a plan for optimizing communication with museum visitors about the temporary closure of the famous Pergamon Altar. After analyzing the present situation in the museum galleries, the groups have one week to create a polished presentation of their plans. They then work with invited international experts to refine their plans in a workshop setting. In two Friday morning sessions, students present their final plans to peers and invited guests (20 Nov) and then to the museum direction (11 Dec). These sessions are mandatory; students who enroll in the class commit to participating on these dates. To offset the Friday sessions, there is no class on Wednesday 30 Sep.

Final Paper: 5 pages, double-spaced; 20%. The final paper consists of a catalog entry with two or more photographs of the selected object and a bibliography of four appropriate scholarly sources apart from the required readings (neither images nor bibliography count toward the 5-page length). Each student will choose an object of ancient art on display on Museum Island, research it using appropriate methods and sources, and write a catalog entry for it. How to research and write a catalog entry will be discussed in class; no prior knowledge is needed.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

Assessment Expectations
Grade A: The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well-structured arguments in his/her work. The student writes comprehensive essays / exam questions and his/her work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading.

Grade B: The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy.

Grade C: The work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement.
**Grade D:** The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, poor research.

**Grade F:** The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible

**Grade Conversion**

NYU Berlin uses the following scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

- $B^+ = 87-89$
- $C^+ = 77-79$
- $D^+ = 67-69$
- $F = below 65$
- $A = 94-100$
- $B = 84-86$
- $C = 74-76$
- $D = 65-66$
- $A^- = 90-93$
- $B^- = 80-83$
- $C^- = 70-73$

Alternatively, your professor may give your grades in the scale of 0 to 4:

- $A = 4.0$
- $A^- = 3.7$
- $B^+ = 3.3$
- $B = 3.0$
- $B^- = 2.7$
- $C^+ = 2.3$
- $C = 2.0$
- $C^- = 1.7$
- $D^+ = 1.3$
- $D = 1.0$
- $F = 0.0$

**Attendance Policy**

Participation in all classes is essential for your academic success, especially in NYU Berlin’s content courses that, unlike most courses at NYU NY, meet only once per week in a double-session for three hours. Your attendance in both content and language courses is required and will be checked at each class meeting. As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor by e-mail immediately. Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, religious observance or emergencies. If you want the reasons for your absence to be treated confidentially and not shared with your professor, please approach NYUB's Director or Wellness Counselor. Your professor or NYUB's administration may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from the Director or Wellness Counselor.

Unexcused absences affect students' grades: In content courses each unexcused absence (equaling one week's worth of classes) leads to a deduction of 2% of the overall grade and may negatively affect your class participation grade. Three unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. In German Language classes three (consecutive or non-consecutive) unexcused absences (equaling one week's worth of classes) lead to a 2% deduction of the overall grade. Five unexcused absences in your German language course may lead to a Fail in that course. Furthermore, faculty is also entitled to deduct points for frequent late arrival to class or late arrival back from in-class breaks. Being more than 15 minutes late for class counts as an unexcused absence. Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Exams, tests, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.
Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays
Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent because of any religious observance should notify the Director or Assistant Director for Academics in advance of the anticipated absence. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Director or Assistant Director will re-schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments.

Late Submission of Work
(1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.

(2) Late work should be submitted in person to the instructor or to the Assistant Director for Academics, who will write on the essay or other work the date and time of submission, in the presence of the student. Another member of the administrative staff may also personally accept the work, and will write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.

(3) Unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of the Director or Assistant Director), work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late.

(4) Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 weekdays following the session date fails and is given a zero.

(5) End of semester essays must be submitted on time.

(6) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.

(7) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

Plagiarism Policy
The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. Proper referencing of your sources avoids plagiarism (see as one possible help the NYU library guide to referencing styles: http://nyu.libguides.com/citations).

NYUB takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the instructor. Your instructor may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form. All assignments in this course will be checked for plagiarism using TurnItIn.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.
Required Text(s)

All required reading for this course is available on NYU Classes.

Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)

Internet Research Guidelines
To be discussed in class.

Additional Required Equipment
Entrance passes for the museums on Museum Island will be provided by NYU Berlin.

Session 1 – 2 Sep 2015
Approaching Ancient Art on Museum Island
Meet in NYUB Room “Charlottenburg” at 10am.
The goals of this session are twofold. The first is to introduce students of all backgrounds to the basics of looking at and writing about ancient art. By highlighting the special principles of ancient art history, this session lays the groundwork for students who are entirely new to the study of visual culture as well as students who are already familiar with the art history of other periods or with art practice (which differ substantially from the study of ancient art). Throughout this course, students will practice these methods in the extraordinary collections on Museum Island; so the second part of this session is devoted to a brief history of the island, its museum landscape, and its art collections.
Reading: None.

Session 2 – 9 Sep 2015
Egyptian Art: Akhenaten’s Revolution (Neues Museum)
Meet at coat check in Neues Museum at 10:15am. Check bags and coats before this time so that you are ready to start class promptly.
The art of the Amarna Period of Egyptian history must be understood in relation to the art that came before it, for the kings of the later Eighteenth Dynasty both leveraged and reacted against it. In preparation for our visit to Berlin’s Neues Museum, where one of the best-represented sets of Egyptian material comes from this period, the art of the Eighteenth Dynasty is introduced within its historical context to give students an understanding of earlier Egyptian artistic tradition as well as a detailed view of its transformation in the New Kingdom.
Reading: Kleiner 54–83; Robins 12–29, 122–165 (NYU Classes).
Due: Writing Assignment 1.
Session 3 – 16 Sep 2015
  Egyptian Art: Cleopatra and the Ptolemies (Neues Museum)
  Meet at coat check in Neues Museum at 10:15am. Check bags and coats before this time so that you are ready to start class promptly.
  In the Late Period and Greco-Roman Period of Egyptian art, the artistic formulae used for millennia underwent strong shifts in two opposing directions: on the one hand, a hyper-traditional revival of older forms; on the other, an expansion catalyzed by forms and styles brought into Egypt from other cultures — including the Assyrian, Persian, Greek, and Roman. Egyptologist Veit Vaelske illuminates these trends using the superlative Egyptian collections in the Neues Museum.
  Reading: Robins 210–255; Stanwick 33–53; Smith 203–213 (NYU Classes).
  Due: Writing Assignment 2.

4 – 23 Sep 2015
  Babylonian to Neo-Babylonian Art (Pergamon Museum)
  This is an independent project. Instead of meeting at the Pergamon Museum as a group, you will visit it on your own. The total time you spend analyzing the objects in the museum and composing your observations in a polished written response (further details will be handed out in advance) should be equivalent to the time of a normal class session.
  Focusing on another great dynasty of the second millennium BC, we turn from Egypt to the Near East to explore the Babylonian Empire and its successor states. The collections in the Pergamon Museum offer the perfect starting point to discuss the ideal of kingship initiated by Hammurabi, imitated by Neo-Babylonian rulers (most notably in the Ishtar Gate, a highlight of the museum), and sustained in the art of the Persian kings who invaded Greece c. 500 BC.
  Reading: Kleiner 30–53; Slanski 95–114; Mieroop 257–275 (NYU Classes).
  Due: Writing Assignment 3.

Session 5 – 30 Sep 2015 – No Class
  To offset the upcoming Friday sessions, there is no class on this date.

Session 6 – 7 Oct 2015
  Greek Art: Grave Goods (Altes Museum)
  Meet at coat check in Altes Museum at 10:15am. Check bags and coats before this time so that you are ready to start class promptly.
  This session introduces Greek art by way of the assemblages of objects dedicated at gravesites. Not only does this corpus comprise a variety of media (from terracotta vessels to marble sculpture) and depictions (from mythology to daily life), but it also gives insight into the values and social dynamics of ancient Greece. What’s more, the stunning display of grave goods in Berlin’s Altes Museum allows us to closely examine individual objects as well as to learn how they were deployed in ensembles.
  Reading: Neer 9–16, 148–171, 300–307; Maischberger et al. 1–12; Osborne 189–203 (NYU Classes).
  Due: Writing Assignment 4.

Session 7 – 14 Oct 2015
Greek Art: Vase Painting (Altes Museum)

Meet at coat check in Altes Museum at 10:15am. Check bags and coats before this time so that you are ready to start class promptly.

Painted clay vessels not only preserve some of the finest artistry known from the ancient world but also offer valuable testament to social practices, as many of these impressive vessels were used in the symposium, an institutionalized drinking party that played a crucial role in Greek male life. The world-class collection of Greek vases in the Altes Museum offers the chance to appreciate the extraordinary craftsmanship that went into making these pieces and to simultaneously study the culture of drinking and entertainment in ancient Greece.

Reading: Osborne 87–116, 133–156; Maischberger et al. 13–22 (NYU Classes).
Due: Writing Assignment 5.

Session 8 – 21 Oct 2015 – Fall Break – No Class

Session 9 – 28 Oct 2015

Etruscan Art (Altes Museum)

Meet at coat check in Altes Museum at 10:15am. Check bags and coats before this time so that you are ready to start class promptly.

In the eighth and seventh centuries BC, Etruscan art — like Greek art — adopted and modified many features of Egyptian and Near Eastern art. Beginning with this period thus allows us to draw together the material discussed in previous sessions. Afterwards, we will proceed to another momentous point of contact, one that strongly characterized Etruscan art in the following centuries: the Etruscan response to Greek art. The Altes Museum’s beautiful Etruscan collection illustrates these intercultural exchanges as well as the Etruscans' unique contributions to the art of ancient Italy.

Reading: Kleiner 164–177; Maischberger et al. 23–35; Haynes 47–78, 287–326 (NYU Classes).
Due: Writing Assignment 6.

Session 10 – 4 Nov 2015

Technique in Ancient Art (Bode Museum, Altes Museum)

Knowing how artists created these masterful works of art is necessary to appreciate and understand the objects and, through them, the ancient cultures they represent. So, although the subject of artistic technique is omnipresent in this course, in this session it stands at the center of the discussion. The collections on Museum Island feature a rare array of objects in various states of finish, from rough “sketches” to highly polished end products. Studying these pieces reveals not only the process by which they were made, but also the ideas that drove the ancient artists’ choice of material.

Meet at lockers in Bode Museum (at right of main entrance) at 10:15am. Check bags and coats before this time so that you are ready to start class promptly.

Reading: Allen 1–32; Wootton et al. 1–27 (please carefully study the color photos; NYU Classes).
Due: Writing Assignment 7.
Session 11 – 11 Nov 2015
Visitor Orientation Workshop Part 1: Pergamon Museum Visit
Meet at coat check in Pergamon Museum at 10:15am. Check bags and coats before this time so that you are ready to start class promptly.

In a joint session with the NYUB course “Shaping an Educational Landscape: Museum Island,” we visit the Pergamon Museum to address both the collection and the museological aspects of the exhibition before then discussing how to optimize communication with the visitors about the temporary closure of the Pergamon Altar. After this class session, in preparation for the next session, students work in groups (mixed between the two courses) to develop concepts for improving communication within the galleries themselves as well as on the museum website and social media. They prepare presentations to present and discuss with the two classes and, eventually, the museum direction.

Reading: TBA (NYU Classes).

Session 12 – 18 Nov 2015
Visitor Orientation Workshop Part 2: Projects with Invited Experts
Meet in NYUB Room "Prenzlauer Berg" at 10am.

To sharpen the students’ plans for optimizing visitor orientation in the Pergamon Museum, this session comprises a three-part workshop program with invited specialists in the field of visitor orientation and museology. It begins with a conversation on “Challenges for Museums in Berlin and Abroad” led by Sharon Macdonald, recently appointed a prestigious Humboldt Professorship to establish a Centre for Cultural Heritage and Museum Research in Berlin. Following this are short workshops led by Jane Masséglia (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford) on “Social Media Strategies in Museums” and by Katharina Lorenz (University of Nottingham) on “Effectively Communicating with Groups of Museum Visitors.”

Reading: TBA (NYU Classes).
Due: Group presentation.

Session 13 – FRIDAY SESSION – 20 Nov 2015
Visitor Orientation Workshop Part 3: Presentations to Peers and Guests
Meet in NYUB Room "Prenzlauer Berg" at 10am.

Student groups present their visitor orientation plans to their peers and the workshop leaders for feedback.

Reading: TBA (NYU Classes).
Due: Revised group presentation.

Session 14 – 25 Nov 2015
Roman Art: Luxurious Living from Republic to Empire
Meet at coat check in Altes Museum at 10:15am. Check bags and coats before this time so that you are ready to start class promptly.

The Romans were masters of appropriation and adaptation. Beginning in the Republican period, Romans imported vast quantities of Greek material to Rome for both political and private purposes. Focusing on this aspect of the first centuries BC and AD, and particularly what it meant for the Roman ideal of a luxurious home life, affords a glimpse of several fundamental aspects of Roman art and society as a whole.

Reading: Kleiner 139–151; Ancient Rome 48–49, 54–55, 64–93; excerpt of the Satyricon by Petronius 1–10 (NYU Classes).
Due: Writing Assignment 8.

Session 15 – 2 Dec 2015
Roman Art in the Altes Museum: Death and the Late Empire
Meet at coat check in Altes Museum at 10:15am. Check bags and coats before this time so that you are ready to start class promptly.

The second century AD saw two innovations in Roman funerary art, each of which embodied a critical element of Roman art and life in this period. The first was the birth of marble coffins carved with elaborate figural scenes, a new genre that underscores the key role of Greek myth in Roman culture. The second was the invention of mummy portraits: these lifelike paintings of deceased Romans in Egypt were fastened to the deceased’s mummy case. The stunning combination of Egyptian mummification with Greco-Roman portrait likenesses is a testament to the extreme breadth of the Roman Empire at its height, as well as to the intense intercultural exchanges that shaped Roman art.

Reading: Kleiner 79–87, 217–229; Zanker 21–49; Euripides 31–63 (NYU Classes).
Due: Writing Assignment 9.

Session 16 – 9 Dec 2015
Ancient Art in Berlin’s Historic Plaster Cast Collection
Meet in front of the Plaster Cast Collection (Abgußsammlung) at 10:15am. Address: Schloßstr. 69b, 14059 Berlin. Please note that there are multiple Schloßstr. in Berlin; this one is in CHARLOTTENBURG. The Abgußsammlung is just south of Schloss Charlottenburg, next door to the Sammlung Scharf-Gerstenberg. See transit suggestions here: http://www.abguss-sammlung-berlin.de/index.php/anfahrt

Beginning as early as the fifteenth century, plaster casts were made of an enormous number of ancient sculptures in order to teach artists and classical scholars about the famous artworks in collections worldwide. Berlin’s contribution to this industry is huge, its own Royal Workshop producing thousands of plaster casts from 1819 onward — and still to this day. In this session we visit the illustrious collection of plaster casts of ancient art to discuss how scholars used these copies to better understand not only ancient material culture but the ancient world as a whole.

Reading: Miller 13–20; Borbein 29–43; Bradley 426–457 (NYU Classes).
Due: Writing Assignment 10.

Session 17 – FRIDAY SESSION – 11 Dec 2015
Visitor Orientation Workshop Part 4: Presentations to Museum Direction
Meet in NYUB Room "Prenzlauer Berg" at 10am.

As the culmination of this special workshop, students meet with the museum direction to present their plans for optimizing visitor orientation in the Pergamon Museum during the temporary closure of the Pergamon Altar. The groups present their concepts to Andreas Scholl (Director, Antikensammlung), Heike Kropff (Head of Education and Communication, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin), and their colleagues. This is an invaluable opportunity for the students to engage the responsible museum leaders in a dialogue about visitor orientation in the Berlin museums. This meeting also emphasizes the far-reaching, real-world utility of visitor and museum studies.

Reading: TBA (NYU Classes).
Due: Final group presentation.
Final Exam Week – 16 Dec 2015
Not a normal class session. Turn in Final Paper by 10am.
Due: Final Paper.

Classroom Etiquette
In the classroom, laptops should only be used for taking notes. It will be most practical to take notes during our museum sessions with pencil (pens are not allowed), paper, and clipboard; there will be no space for laptop use. Please note that no food or drink is allowed in the museums.

Required Co-Curricular Activities
To be discussed in class.

Suggested Co-Curricular Activities
A visit to the collection of plaster casts of ancient sculpture, housed in Charlottenburg directly across from the palace, is strongly recommended.

Your Instructor
Stephanie Pearson completed her M.A. at UC Berkeley on the sculptural technique of ancient Gandhara (modern-day Pakistan) and is currently writing her doctoral dissertation on Hellenistic and Egyptian motifs in Roman wall painting. Questions of cross-cultural interaction and artistic technique count among her main research interests, as do issues of museum display. Stephanie has conducted fieldwork around the Mediterranean—most importantly at Pompeii, where she worked with the Via Consolare Project for four years. For over two years she has been working in the Berlin Antikensammlung, where she translated the catalog of the permanent collection and leads tours in the Pergamon Museum and Altes Museum.