

CAH4507: CRITICAL APPROACHES TO ART AND HISTORY

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Critical Approaches to Art and History

Subject Code

CAH - Chinese and History

Course Number

4507

Academic Unit

Chinese and History (CAH)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

CTL4507 Critical Approaches to Art and History

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

Base on the aesthetic and theoretical concepts (such as intention and expectation or meaning and truth) this course aims to introduce research methodologies and approaches to art history to critically study and analyze art pieces, architecture, and cultural artifacts. The course seeks to introduce to students how to formulate a significant research question, how to select the right research approaches, how to select their evidence, how to prove their claims with valid evidence, and how to present their findings logically. The course will prepare students for their final year projects.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Apply different theoretical concepts in analyzing paintings, objects, architecture, and cultural artifacts.	25	x	x	
2	Formulate significant research questions and select the most appropriate methodologies for their studies.	25	x	x	
3	Demonstrate their critical judgment of studying and analyzing researches by others.	25		x	x
4	Articulate valid evidence to support their claims.	25		x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Students will prepare weekly assigned readings and actively engage in course discussions regarding the authors' arguments and their reflections on these arguments.	Book chapters and articles related to the topic(s) of each course session	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	Students will attend the course lectures and the teacher-facilitated analysis and discussion.	Theories and concepts of arts and aesthetic criticism, synthesis of readings, case studies	1, 2, 3, 4	

3	Students will attend the guided field trips or museum visits and engage actively in critical discussion in front of the artworks and architecture.	Guided visits to museums or art markets; report on these visits	1, 2, 3, 4	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Attendance in In-class and Canvas Discussions: Students are expected to participate actively in in-class discussions and other course-related activities.	1, 2, 3, 4	10	-	Yes
2	Book Review: Students will write short reports and review a recent publication in the field of East Asian Art History. The review should be presented in both written form (approximately 800 words) and orally (approximately 5 minutes). Students will summarize the main content of the selected publication and critically discuss the author's viewpoint(s).	1, 2, 3, 4	30	-	Yes

3	Oral Presentation: Students will participate in group or individual presentations, explaining and critically analyzing any concepts introduced in the course. They will also apply the chosen concepts to other cultural artworks and heritage artifacts. These presentations are conducted under the guidance of the course instructor and will serve as preparation for the final written assignment.	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	Yes
4	Final Paper: In consultation with the course instructor, students will write a final written assignment on selected objects. There is no word limit, but students should write sufficiently to thoroughly discuss their topic, present their ideas logically, and develop a coherent argument.	1, 2, 3, 4	40	-	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Attendance in In-class and Canvas Discussions

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

1. Excellent command of knowledge of different schools of aesthetic criticisms.
2. Excellent capacity to critically analyze the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.

3. Excellent linguistic competence to present the aesthetic features of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Excellent presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

Good (B+, B, B-)

1. Good grasp of the features of different schools of aesthetic criticisms.
2. Some evidence of critical ability in analyzing the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
3. Good linguistic competence to present the aesthetic features of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Good presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

1. Adequate command of the course content.
2. A certain degree of understanding of different schools of aesthetic criticisms.
3. Fair linguistic competence to present the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Acceptable presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of concepts covered in the course.

Marginal (D)

1. Familiarity with the concepts covered in the course.
2. Marginal command of course materials, with the ability to describe some important features of different schools of aesthetic criticisms.
3. Marginal ability and skills to analyze the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Marginal presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

Failure (F)

1. Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter covered in the course.
2. Weakness in critical and analytic skills.
3. Weakness in demonstrating an understanding or an appreciation of the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Weakness in presentation skills.

Assessment Task

Book Review

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

1. Excellent command of knowledge of different schools of aesthetic criticisms.
2. Excellent capacity to critically analyze the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
3. Excellent linguistic competence to present the aesthetic features of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Excellent presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

Good (B+, B, B-)

1. Good grasp of the features of different schools of aesthetic criticisms.
2. Some evidence of critical ability in analyzing the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
3. Good linguistic competence to present the aesthetic features of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Good presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

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3. Fair linguistic competence to present the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Acceptable presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of concepts covered in the course.

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3. Marginal ability and skills to analyze the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Marginal presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

Failure (F)

1. Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter covered in the course.
 2. Weakness in critical and analytic skills.
 3. Weakness in demonstrating an understanding or an appreciation of the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
 4. Weakness in presentation skills.
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Assessment Task

Oral Presentation

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2. Excellent capacity to critically analyze the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
3. Excellent linguistic competence to present the aesthetic features of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
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4. Marginal presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

Failure (F)

1. Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter covered in the course.
 2. Weakness in critical and analytic skills.
 3. Weakness in demonstrating an understanding or an appreciation of the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
 4. Weakness in presentation skills.
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Assessment Task

Final Paper

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

1. Excellent command of knowledge of different schools of aesthetic criticisms.
2. Excellent capacity to critically analyze the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
3. Excellent linguistic competence to present the aesthetic features of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.

4. Excellent presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

Good (B+, B, B-)

1. Good grasp of the features of different schools of aesthetic criticisms.
2. Some evidence of critical ability in analyzing the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
3. Good linguistic competence to present the aesthetic features of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Good presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

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4. Marginal presentation skills to demonstrate an understanding and an application of the concepts covered in the course.

Failure (F)

1. Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter covered in the course.
2. Weakness in critical and analytic skills.
3. Weakness in demonstrating an understanding or an appreciation of the aesthetic values of various cultural artworks and heritage artifacts.
4. Weakness in presentation skills.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Topics may include but are not restricted to the following:

Art, aesthetic criticism, art as experience, intentions and expectations, meaning and truth, historical and ethnic influences, commercialization, schools of criticism.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Booth, Colomb and Williams. The Craft of Research. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago press)
2	Barrett, Terry. Criticizing art: understanding the contemporary, 2nd ed. (Mountain View, Calif.: Mayfield Pub. Co., 2000)
3	Collingwood, R. G. The Principles of Art (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958)
4	Cooper, David E. Aesthetics: The Classic Readings (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997)
5	Feagin, Susan, & Maynard, Patrick (ed). Aesthetics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)
6	Gombrich, E. H. Art and illusion: a study in the psychology of pictorial representation (London: Phaidon, 1977)
7	Gombrich, E. H. The Story of Art (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1995); Hertz, Richard (ed.). Theories of contemporary art (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1993)
8	Jin Yong, Arts in China (Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2007)
9	Lynton, Norbert The Story of Modern Art (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1989)
10	Lou Qingxi, Traditional Architectural Culture of China, trans. Su Guang (Beijing: China Travel & Tourism Press, 2008)

11	Rader, Melvin (ed.). A Modern Book of Esthetics, 5th ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1979)
12	Ratner, Leonard G. Music, the listener's art, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. 1977)
13	Sheppard, Anne. Aesthetics: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987)
14	Smagula, Howard (ed.). Re-visions: new perspectives of art criticism (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1991)
15	李書源, 圖說中國文化 – 建築工程卷 (長春: 吉林人民出版社, 2007)
16	陳靜、燕泥, 圖說中國文化 – 藝術卷 (長春: 吉林人民出版社, 2007)
17	任道斌, 中國繪畫 (香港: 三聯, 2004)
18	劉昌元, 西方美學導論 (台北: 聯經, 1999)
19	侯幼彬, 中國建築美學 (哈爾濱: 黑龍江科學技術出版社, 1997)
20	樓慶西, 中國傳統建築文化 (北京: 中國旅遊出版社, 2008)

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Aesthetics (The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy) http://www.iep.utm.edu/a/aestheti.htm
2	Olga's Gallery http://www.abcgallery.com/
3	Dewey's Aesthetics (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy) http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dewey-aesthetics/