

GPH-205: A concise overview of how this class works

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In this one-page introduction I explain to you how GPH-205 works and what you can expect.

This is a fully online class. All the class materials and lectures are immediately accessible in an open web site you can reach at <http://bit.ly/gph205-info>. You can also reach this page from D2L, but the course does not use D2L for work submission or grades. You submit work via e-mail to a dedicated gmail address and you receive your grades and feedback on a form which accumulates all scores, feedback, and computations. I update and e-mail your grade and feedback listing to you every time I grade your submissions.

In this class you learn about the purpose, rules for formation, and technology used to create images, sculpture, and architecture from the Lascaux civilization of 30,000 BC through the Impressionist Era that ended about AD 1890. We also look at the modern impact, if any, of each of the 28 civilizations or eras we briefly examine.

The class relies on *The Story of Art* by Sir Ernst Gombrich, a classic in the field of art history. Any edition of this text works fine for the class; a used copy costs less than \$10. You read the first 25 chapters in this book, much of which consists of 400 full-color images discussed in class video lectures. The images are “source documents”.

Supplemental readings on technology and all assignments are contained in a published workbook entitled *The History of Visual Technology, 4th edition*. This is a **free download** from the course web site startup page. (Print editions formerly used are no longer applicable to the class; don't use an older print edition.)

The class is divided into four “units” (“modules”) each about two weeks long, although you set your own schedule for completion of these within guidelines described in the Confirmation of Participation form you download, complete, and upload in the first week of the term. You can submit assignments in advance if you wish.

Each of the four units has two assignments:

- Written homework called a “Unit Summary Form” (USF)
- A hands-on project related to the subject matter of the unit.

The Unit Summary Forms really are forms that you download from the class web site and complete using a word processor of your choice. These help you accumulate concise factual notes. You enter your notes in the forms in the spaces provided and submit each USF for grading as an electronic document (.docx or .pdf).

Your USF submissions and project submissions are scored and detailed feedback provided within a day or two. You then have the opportunity to revise your work and resubmit it for re-grading. This is a form of “mentoring”, a teaching approach that helps you learn and helps you accumulate the intended facts.

There are no quizzes, midterm, or group work in this class. Your grade depends solely on your own work. There are also no discussion boards. “Discussion” takes place between the student and the instructor and centers on the detailed feedback provided on each submission.

The final exam consists of two parts:

- A reflective essay first-person “oral history” you begin in the first two weeks of class, and (it is strongly suggested!) continue to develop all term. This is fully described on workbook pages 50-54.
- “Conclusions work” assigned in the last 12 days of the term; this serves as a take-home final.

The Unit Summary Forms are integrated with the reflective essay and final exam: **the USFs help you accumulate facts that you need to weave into your reflective essay**. The feedback and ability to revise and resubmit your USFs helps you amass the facts you need to do well on the conclusions work. **The conclusions work depends on your essay which serves as an “oral history” factual source that covers 12 civilizations/eras**. You will cite facts from your essay (only) to support logical arguments you make concerning the truth or falsity of three conclusions statements that I (the instructor) provide, each of which may be true or false.

If they are submitted no later than five days before the ultimate work submission deadline the essay and your conclusions work also receive an initial score and feedback, and you have the ability to revise and resubmit them for re-grading. This is not a requirement, but it is very foolish to ignore this opportunity!

Everyone can earn an “A” in this class. But that has never happened because some students procrastinate.

Typically, two-thirds of the students earn A's or B's, a few earn C's and D's, and a few manage to fail. Go figure.