LATIN AMERICAN ART  
ARTH 561/681  
SPRING 2015  
Mon. & Weds. 5-6:15 p.m.  

Professor Heidi Nickisher  
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COURSE OBJECTIVE:  
This is a survey course of the historical development of art from colonial times to the present. Included will be a consideration of painting, sculpture, graphic and photographic arts. Potential themes to be addressed:  
• the dependence on the European neo-classical academic model  
• indigenism ("indigenismo")  
• nationalism and the resurgence of ‘popular’ art  
• the role of visual artists in the construction of history  
• the conflicts and tensions involved in the search for identity

COURSE OUTCOMES:  
• Develop new modes of thinking to broaden attitudes, sharpen critical analysis, and discover new relationships between past and present.  
• Develop a spirit of inquiry and investigation.  
• Comprehend the visual environment and discover ways to expand upon that environment through the use of art principles and forms.  
• Demonstrate an understanding of the history and development of an aesthetic philosophy.  
• Articulate the nature of the relationship between Latin American Art history and ideas in the general society.  
• Understand the basis for aesthetic valuations regarding the production of ‘fine’ art.

METHODOLOGY:  
• Lectures and the presentation of visual materials (slides, videos)  
• Readings and in-class discussions

REQUIRED TEXTS (for both grads and undergrads):  
• Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Art of Colonial Latin America* (Phaidon, 2005) – NOTE: Bailey is recommended for background and context. I have assigned chapters as relevant but will not follow its narrative directly. Nevertheless, I suggest you read along as indicated.  
• Jacqueline Barnitz, *Twentieth-Century Art of Latin America* (Univ. of Texas at Austin, 2001)  

Read assignments carefully BEFORE coming to class to orient yourself toward the lecture material. What you see and hear in class will make a deeper impression if it is already familiar – however vaguely. Classroom lectures will cover similar material – either from a different perspective or perhaps covering something that is not in the reading. It is therefore important to attend class regularly and take good notes. Your notes will be your best preparation for exams.

Additional readings also may be assigned and will be available either online (MyCourses) or as hand-outs given in class. Please bring print-outs to class. Consult schedule for specifics.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**
There are two essays – or Visual Analysis papers – a midterm exam and a final exam. The final exam will consist of a typed, double-spaced five (5) page minimum paper in response to one of two questions. The format of the midterm exam will be a combination of any or all of the following: slide identification; multiple choice; and/or essay question(s). Both midterm and final exam questions will be drawn from lectures and course readings. And now for a little bit on “Exam Etiquette”...

• Please be in your seat and ready to begin on time. Latecomers will not have access to any images they may have missed.

• Take-home essays are to be written in your own words. Original wording and ideas taken from sources other than lectures must be cited. Using someone’s idea or original wording and passing it off as your own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is not tolerated in this course nor at this university, and I as the instructor have the right to assign an "F" for the assignment, or to assign an "F" for the entire course. Moreover, you may be brought before the Academic Conduct Committee of the College in which the alleged offense occurred, and may face academic suspension or dismissal from the Institute. (See D17.0, Academic Conduct and Appeals Procedures," and D18.0, "RIT Student Conduct Process.")

• **GRADS:** in addition to keeping up with the undergrad requirements of this course, you will also be expected to write reviews (4-5 pages, typed and double-spaced) of each of the three parts of the Gruzinski text. (Due dates TBA.)

**PLEASE NOTE** (also known as “the things professors don’t like to say and students don’t like to hear”): Attendance is mandatory. RIT’s official policy on attendance in part reads:

“Absences, for whatever reason, do not relieve students of their responsibility for fulfilling normal requirements in any course. **In particular it is the student’s responsibility** to make individual arrangements in advance of missing class due to personal obligations such as religious holidays, job interviews, athletic contests, etc., in order that he or she may meet his or her obligations without penalty for missing class.” [RIT Governance Policy D4.0].
Section I.B) Understandably, if one is not present, one is not participating!

I feel very strongly that a university is a community of learners. Poor attendance thus undermines the work of the whole classroom. Students who fail to attend regularly should not have unreasonable expectations about their final grade. It is hard to get to know you and each other and continue a line of thought if you are not here and I will take attendance. Everyone starts with an A and two personal days you can take with no penalty. Three to four absences and you are in the B range. Five to six absences and you are now getting a C. Seven to eight absences is a D; more than that is an F. I am not excusing any absences – that is why you have the two days – so do not email me to tell me that you cannot make it to class or to explain to me why you were not in class. Nor am I going to answer emails that ask what we covered in class today. If you miss a class, get notes from another class member. However, please feel free to email me with questions or if you want to share news or images of relevance.

Class attendance does not mean simply bodily presence. It does mean (1) being there at the beginning of class and remaining there until the end; (2) being alive as to what is taking place instead of sleeping, checking email, or even working on assignments for other classes; and/or (3) contributing to discussions, asking intelligent questions, sharing one's knowledge of the topic, listening to and respecting the opinions and contributions of others, and generally promoting a healthy atmosphere conducive to learning.

That said, laptops are NOT permitted in class, UNLESS you have or are in need of academic accommodations that recommend the ability to use a laptop or tablet, then, of course, that use is permissible. RIT is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request accommodations such as special seating or testing modifications due to a disability, please contact the Disability Services Office. It is located in the Student Alumni Union, Room 1150; the Web site is www.rit.edu/dso. After you receive accommodation approval, it is imperative that you see me during office hours so that we can work out whatever arrangements are necessary.

And before you start thinking that I am being unreasonable with a no-laptop policy, it really is designed to help you. Read on: http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/05/to-remember-a-lecture-better-take-notes-by-hand/361478/. Additionally, all other electronic devices must be turned OFF – and just to be clear, that includes cell phones, Blackberries, I-pods, I-pads, etc. Keep in mind that just because you might attend class everyday but are instead absorbed in texting rather than listening to lecture, may mean you could miss a lot of class content and your grade may end up reflecting that. Please carefully consider how you really spend your time on this course!

VIDEOS/DVDs/Wikis
Videos/DVDs are a fully integrated part of this course, sometimes condensing what I might say, other times augmenting and/or reinforcing material from lecture and your text, as well as providing a more complete sense of the physical appearance of sites and monuments. Sure, some documentaries can be dull, but I have tried to make thoughtful and appropriate selections, so watching a movie in class in not an excuse to take a nap, leave early, or i-chat. YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWLEDGE OF ISSUES, IDEAS, AND TRENDS, etc. presented. And, thanks to one of my art history colleagues, the following is a
collection of links that can be useful to one’s general interest and future research:

https://wiki.rit.edu/display/arthistory/Home

**GRADING**

Grading is based on individual progress. That progress will be based on the following:

- Class participation and improvement (15%)
- Visual Analysis Essay (15%) – due Wed., 2/25; to be handed-in at the start of class
- Midterm (25%) – on Wed., 3/18
- Essay #2 (20%) – due Mon., 4/27; to be handed-in at the start of class
- Final Exam (take-home essay) (25%) – due in my office by no later than 6 p.m., Monday, 5/18/15. THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM WHAT IS POSTED ON SIS. PLEASE NOTE: I reserve the right to move the final exam back to the officially scheduled exam time should scheduling adjustments need to be made due to unforeseen circumstances.

In order to receive a grade in this course, students must complete all assigned work; grades will not be calculated on the basis of a percentage of work completed. Often there are questions about grading and evaluation policies, especially for those who have never taken an art history class before and are concerned about how their work will be evaluated. Grade ranges are as follows. All grades are calculated using percentages and converted into letter grades according to the following scale:

A  94-100
A- 90-93
B+  87-89
B  84-86
B-  80-83
C+  77-79
C  74-76
C-  70-73
D+  68-69
D  60-67
D-  58-59
F   57 and below

Typically, there are NO EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS AND NO MAKE-UP EXAMS – unless you have a serious written medical excuse (e.g., hospitalization) or family emergency, and I will require documentation. Thus, with this writing, you have been given advance notification of your obligations in this course. And if you have to leave early, please have the courtesy to notify me before class.