

# Course Expectation Resource Sheet - ART 271

*“What can students expect if they choose this course?”*

**Course:** ART 271 - History of Western Art I

**Department:** Art & Design

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Prerequisite:** None

**Catalog Description:** A survey of Western art and the cultures that produced it from Prehistory through the Gothic period.

**Catalog:** 2025-2026 **Last Updated:** 9/19/2025

**Gen Ed Course:** Yes

**Gen Ed Area:** HUMAN CULTURES

**Gen Ed Requirement:** Humanities (GEC 111)

**CORE-42 Course:** Yes

**CORE-42 Area:** Humanities & Fine Arts

**MOTR Code - MOTR Title:** ARTS 101 - Art History  
I

**Is credit also available through:**

**Advanced Placement (AP)?:** Yes

**College Level Exam Program (CLEP)?:** No

**International Baccalaureate (IB)?:** No

*(click link for more information and required scores)*

## Responses and Advice from Department Representatives

*Last Updated: 2/6/2026*

**The following responses apply to:** Both seated and online courses

### What expectations do you have for students in this course?

Students are expected to have reading comprehension, writing, research, and time-management abilities and skills commensurate with the completion of a secondary education certification (e.g., a high school diploma).

Students are expected to attend the classes and to participate in class (e.g., respond to questions, engage in discussion). Students are also expected to read the assigned readings, to complete the assigned writing assignments, and to attend and take the quizzes and tests.

### What types of study skills do you expect students to use in this course?

Students are expected to listen to class lectures and participate in discussion and to take notes during the lectures and discussions. Students are also expected to complete the reading assignments and to review and study the material on the provided study guides (which include important vocabulary, important concepts to learn, and a list of the Slide IDs). In addition, students are expected to follow the course calendar on the syllabus, which lists the reading assignments, quizzes, tests, and writing assignment due dates.

### What study techniques seem to work best for students who do well in this course?

The most consistently successful students are those who attend class, participate in class, take notes in class, complete the assigned readings, use the study guides, and follow the course calendar. Successful students also review and study the vocabulary, Slide IDs, and other material on the study guides, often using flashcards (handmade or digital). Struggling students often find joining study groups and requesting tutoring through the BearCLAW to be helpful.

**What behaviors or habits seem to cause students to struggle in this course?**

Behaviors/habits that result in students struggling include poor attendance, poor notetaking and lack of participation in class, not completing the assigned readings, and not reviewing and studying the material on the study guides. Students who do not follow the course calendar and miss quizzes, tests, and assignment due-dates also struggle in the course.

**What types of struggles do you see most often? What recommendations do you give to students who struggle in this course? What other advice do you offer to students for success in this course?**

The most common struggles are those described in the previous question. The best remedies for these struggles are to attend class, take notes and participate in class, complete the assigned readings, use the study guides to study for quizzes and tests, make sure to take the quizzes and tests, and make sure to complete the writing assignments.

We also facilitate students forming study groups, and we encourage students to take advantage of the free BearCLAW tutoring service (we recruit previous successful students to tutor for the BearCLAW, to ensure that good tutoring is available.)

In addition, we strongly encourage students to talk with us whenever they are struggling or need clarification – and we encourage them not to wait to ask us for help, but to see us right away. Students are welcome to talk with us after class, during our office hours, and/or by other appointment; we are here to help, and we want our students to succeed in the course. (And we can often also help if the students are having non-academic problems, as we know of many different campus resources and support services where we can refer them for direct assistance.)

**How do you describe the course to students when they ask “What is this class about?” (without using the catalog description)?**

This course looks at the art and architecture of the region around the Mediterranean (north Africa, Mesopotamia and the Near East, and Europe) from the beginning with Paleolithic cave paintings to around the year 1300 with the Gothic period. The course considers the style and functions of sculpture, painting, architecture, and other arts in the context of the cultures and their history.

**Beyond meeting a General Education requirement, what benefits can students realize from choosing this course?**

Students can gain broad cultural and historical knowledge, as this is essentially a history class, but with a focus on visual culture. Students also gain important critical thinking skills through learning about history and the motivations and forces behind it, and they develop a knowledge and appreciation of different cultures and belief systems.

**Other than your major/minor/certificate students, what groups of students could find this course relevant to their degree program or career path?**

As a General Education course, the material in ART 271 is broadly relevant. Students who will find this course especially relevant to their programs or career paths will be those pursuing degrees in Art History, Studio Art, Design, Museum Studies, Education, Global Studies, Ancient Studies, History, Religious Studies, Anthropology/Archaeology, Philosophy, Sociology, foreign languages, literature, and the performing arts.

*Prepared by the Reynolds College Center for Student Success  
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