Hello Course Participants,

First, welcome to the course! Art History 203: *Survey of Western Art III* is an entirely online course, as I am sure you are aware. Some of you will be well acquainted with this mode of instruction, while for others this may be a relatively, or even entirely new experience. Although I have taught in this manner before, online teaching is relatively new to me, and I will need a great deal of your help, and perhaps patience throughout the quarter. As a teacher, I want to get better every time I teach, and so, please, at any point during the quarter if you have feedback that might contribute to this, I really would like to hear it. I have no ego around receiving your thoughts, criticisms, advice, and such, and promise to thoughtfully consider its implementation.

The modality will be "asynchronous," meaning that participants will work through sequences of materials and assignments organized in weekly “modules” on Canvas according to their own individual schedules with a great degree of flexibility. (You will not be required to be online at the same time as your peers, ever. It no longer matters in which section you enrolled.)

This course has been designated as a “W” or writing intensive course; this is not optional. As such, you may expect a substantial amount of writing assignments, writing tutorials, and feedback on your writing over the course of the quarter. **Please note:** an important method to improve writing proficiency is through revision in response to feedback. You are required to revise two writing assignments this quarter. You are also required to complete all “steps” of the guided research paper. (See the syllabus and Canvas.) Because of the rules in “W” courses, I cannot give you credit for this course if you do not fulfill these requirements.

Canvas LMS is the web tool by which this course will be taught. If you’ve never used Canvas before, spend some time getting acquainted with this platform. For those new to the UW, you just need to log in to MyUW and find the link under “quick links.” Although this course will not officially open until Monday 1/4, you can sign in and look over the general platform of Canvas before then. Once the course opens, you will be able to enter the course and see the way I’ve designed the layout on Canvas. (You will also find a brief video lecture introducing the course, syllabus, sequencing, assignments, and so on.) I’ve attached the syllabus for the course in this email. Please print it and look it over. With the introductory video mentioned above, it will help to guide you. For instance, you will see that each week’s topic is contained in one or two “modules” (or organizational groupings) that contain Panopto video lectures, reading assignments and reading guides, supplemental materials and tutorials, a Discussion Forum and writing assignments. You will be working on one weekly module at a time, at your own pace. You will not be able to see future modules until they are opened by me on the Monday of the week in question, but once a module has been opened, you can always go back to review earlier material in preparation for assignments. (Whenever possible I will open weekly modules early, meaning the Friday of the week before.)

The first week contains two modules; one is an introduction, the other is the first content of the course. In the first module you will find a FAQ discussion forum. If you have any questions whose answer might be of benefit to others, post such questions here. One thing I know in advance—if you are having any problems streaming the videos, or seeing the content, try using a different browser (Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome…). Often simply changing browsers can fix this. Though this may not be an option for everyone, your phone is not the best platform for this course, which is highly dependent on detailed visual images.

This course surveys the major trends in western painting and sculpture from around 1500-1900. Our goals of this course are many, including predominately: to develop a visual familiarity with the canonical works in the history of western art; to consider ways in which these works are products of their rich socio-cultural contexts; to become fluent in some of the fundamental methods and strategies involved in Art Historical interpretations so that you may continue to employ and develop your knowledge of visual representations beyond the classroom environment; and to further develop your writing skills.

I look forward to an interesting quarter with you. For those of you who have never taken an Art History course before, the discipline may surprise you. The content of the course, in many ways, is a visual history of the western Europe and America, touching on religious beliefs, philosophies, politics, and many other topics often mistakenly believed to be separate from “art.” I hope that you’ve been able to get some sense of rest during our holiday “break,” and I look forward to seeing you, so to speak, on the first day of the quarter.

Kolya Rice