

# **Module A1 Report**

## **Introduction to Art History Resources on the Web**

### **Course**

The visual arts component of the introduction to the interdisciplinary humanities course, Humanities 123

### **Description**

This module is the first in a series that focuses on the visual arts on the Internet; it is a general introduction to the art history resources on the Internet through a comprehensive academic website.

### **Transferability**

This module would be appropriate for any course that has a visual arts component such as the introduction to the humanities, introduction to art history, and introduction to art appreciation. It would also be appropriate for any history or anthropology/archaeology course that has a material culture component.

### **Faculty Technology Skill**

Faculty need no advanced technology skills except the ability to access the Internet. High-speed access is recommended because of the time (and frustration) of attempting these assignments with a phone-in modem.

### **Student Technology Skill**

Students need to be able to access the Internet, although this can be easily taught with an earlier module. Because the focus is on digital images, however, high-speed access to the Internet is highly recommended. This module is the first in a series for the visual arts; each subsequent module builds on the technology learned in the previous module.

### **Faculty Equipment**

High-speed Internet access is recommended. Some of the sites require other software, but free downloads are provided on the sites, and faculty need not rely on those sites.

### **Student Equipment**

High-speed Internet access is recommended. Again some of the sites require other software, but free downloads are provided on the sites, and faculty need not rely on those sites.

### **Improvement on Teaching and Learning**

This module is particularly good for schools that have limited access to art galleries and museums. It also opens up the global world of art through Internet access to acquisitions across the globe. Finally, it encourages critical thinking about visual images and virtual images and the limitations and manipulations of digital material. In an increasingly visual world, this is an important aspect of discussing the humanities.

### **Nontechnology Comparison**

There is no nontechnology comparison. The closest might be library assignments but would require a great deal more work on the part of the instructor and still would not provide the amount of accessible material to the student.

**Pertinent Issues**

High-speed computer access is really the most important issue for this module since slow computer access will make this module difficult for students to complete. I am assuming for this module that students would have some access to high-speed computing, either through their school's library or a regional library. It may be difficult for many students to do the assignments at home, and this is a disadvantage, but minor compared to the advantages.

**How to Use in the Classroom**

This module can be used in conjunction with a face-to-face introduction to the possibilities and opportunities on the Internet, but it is also a module that does not necessarily need that kind of introduction. Its purpose is to introduce future teachers to the variety of art images available to them but with a critical eye for their use.

## **Module A1 Directions**

### **Art History Resources on the Web**

This is a general introduction to the art history resources on the Internet. In this section, you are to familiarize yourself with the various resources available on the Internet for art history research.

- The assignment requires a small group (two to four individuals) to work on the questions; your final answers should be posted on the discussion board for the week with the names of the members of your group.
- This assignment could fulfill the requirement for an evaluation of a visual arts website. For this assignment, pick a website that your group did not discuss or evaluate. Your individual evaluation should be about 500 words (two pages) and should include the URL and general content of the site you discuss, its merits and problems, and comparisons to other websites. You may discuss the group's opinions about the other websites, but this paper should reflect your ideas about the site that you are evaluating. (For more on writing an evaluation, go to "Writing an Evaluative Paper.")

#### **Art History Resources**

1. Go to the following art history resource site: <http://witcombe.sbc.edu/ARTHLinks.html>
2. Pick three sites from one category (e.g., the museums, subjects, periods, and so on).
3. Answer the following questions for *each* site.
  - What is the name of the site and its URL address? Does its address suggest that it's a reputable site? How do you know?
  - Is it easy to access? Do you need special equipment or software? Does the site provide the downloads needed? Is it slow downloading?
  - What do you consider to be three strengths of this site and three weaknesses? Why?
  - Why did you pick this site? Did it take you to other interesting sites?
  - Were the graphics and text easy to follow or difficult to follow? What suggestions would you make to the web designer about this site in terms of readability or usability?
  - Would you return to this site again? Why or why not?
  - Were there problems with any of the sites in terms of content? For instance, if you had a question, could you easily find the answer?
  - How long did you spend on each site? Was one site easier or harder to navigate? Why or why not?
4. Send as an e-mail attachment your answers to the questions to me. (This is the quiz for this week.)

5. Post a 200-word evaluation of the best art history site among the three you visited. Include the reasons why you think it is the best and the URL for visiting the site. This should be posted on the Art History Website Discussion Board. (3 points).