General Education Report

Course Information

*Method and Research in Arts*
  Thinking about exhibition.
  Exhibitions that made art history 1863-2002.
Department of Policy Analysis and Public Management
Spring semester, 2017

**Institution:** Bocconi University  
**Professor:** Paola Nicolin

**Course Materials**

*Thinking about exhibitions*, written by Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairne (Routledge, London – New York, 1996);


**Course Description**

During the spring 2017 semester, I had the privilege to attend Bocconi University in Milan, Italy as part of an exchange program with San Diego State University. I had the opportunity to take a variety of courses and continue my progress towards receiving my B.S. in Business Administration, Marketing. Along with taking a few marketing electives, I also selected to take a general education course, *Method and Research in Arts*. The purpose of this course was to provide students with an introductory knowledge about the visual arts. Throughout the course, the course explored a variety of artworks including painting, sculpture, graphic arts, photography and cinema. Class discussions explored how these artworks influenced society and perception during different time periods and our professor emphasized the issues and challenges that are often posed by artistic research and practice. The course encouraged students to explore the visual arts in a way that fosters the understanding of how artwork influences culture, perception and reality.

**Intended Learning Outcomes**

*Understand the logic of artistic creation*

Each class lecture covered a different artist, time period, artwork or exhibition. Professor Paola Nicolin was very knowledgeable about the topics we discussed and utilized her previous experience and involvement with art research in Europe to supplement class materials. She led in-class lectures by first outlining the history of the time period we were covering that day. She discussed with us how different societal influences can
affect an exhibition or piece of artwork. After an introduction about the time period, she would begin a discussion about the artist we were covering that day. Each artist we covered throughout the course had a different background, style and motivation for how they created their artwork. All of these factors influenced not only their artworks, but also the exhibitions they produced to show their work. Class lectures were supplemented with materials such as images of the artwork, quotes and writings from the artists, and videos about the exhibitions.

*Know how to interpret a work of art*

Another component of the course was providing students with the ability to interpret a work of art. As an introductory course in artistic research, the professor discussed with the students a variety of perspectives and methods for interpreting artwork. Throughout the semester, the course had class time dedicated to visiting different art exhibits in Milan including Triennale Milano, Fanta Spazio and Fondazione Carriero. These visits encouraged students to experience artwork for themselves and learn how to interpret artwork from their own individual perspective.

*Apply Knowledge and Understanding*

To encourage students to apply our knowledge and understanding of methods in art and research, the course culminated in a final presentation made by each student. We were encouraged to select an artwork, artist or exhibition that we were passionate about or that we wanted to learn more about. We spent the last few weeks of the semester
researching our topics, crafting content and preparing for our presentation to the professor. I selected to research a French artist by the name of Yves Klein and the revolution of performance art. My presentation provided a comprehensive overview of Yves Klein as an artist and how his background influenced his method for creating his artwork and exhibition. The final presentation was a one-on-one oral presentation of my PowerPoint with Professor Paola Nicolin, where I had the opportunity to share with her my knowledge about the topic I chose to discuss.

Reflection

I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to take Method and Research in Arts at Bocconi University. Participating in the SDSU Exchange Program gave me the chance to immerse myself in the Italian culture and truly see the world from a different perspective. The course provided me with an introductory knowledge about exploring artists, artworks and exhibitions from a variety of time periods. I really enjoyed that the class consisted of a mixture of in class lectures and on-site visits. It was an important part of the course to be able to take what we were learning in the classroom and apply that knowledge in the form of art exhibitions. The presentation at the end of the semester allowed me to further explore a topic of interest as well as demonstrate what I had learned throughout the course.