

Equity Enhancing Strategies for the Art History Classroom

Deadline: Feb 5, 2024

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Our art history classrooms constitute diverse communities of learners. From students with prior knowledge of the field eager to engage to students who may not believe that art is for them, these learners come from innumerable and fundamentally unknowable backgrounds. The committed work of artists, teacher-scholars, activists, and students, especially within recent years, has catalyzed new thinking about art history education's often ambivalent relationship to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. Much of this work has focused on representation and interrogating the centrality of Western traditions in our course content, our major and program offerings, and the subfields supported and funded within PhD programs. This work is crucial and far from complete. Yet less has been done to center the role of educational equity in the teaching and study of art history, or to interrogate how the strategies and methodologies that underpin our teaching might exacerbate inequities within our classrooms.

This volume aims to explicitly address the relationship between the teaching of art history and equity. How might we leverage pedagogical strategies and classroom structures to support students with visible or invisible disabilities, with varying academic and cultural backgrounds, with full-time work or care roles, or with limited access to financial resources in their exploration of the field? We seek essays of about 4000 words exploring how our classrooms, the kinds of thinking we center within them, new theorizations of art history pedagogy, or our program offerings and major requirements can make the field more accessible to more students.

Topics might include:

- Assignments, activities or other interventions specifically designed to address educational inequities
- Strategies for teaching key art historical skills, such as visual analysis, from an equity mindset
- Program- or institutional-level strategies to support students with diverse financial means
- Ways to make the art history classroom more inclusive to students with visible and invisible disabilities
- Considerations of the role of finances, students' cultural backgrounds, and family pressures on the accessibility of art historical study
- Strategies to introduce the field to first-generation college students, non-traditional college students, or students who may have had limited exposure to the fine arts
- Community building in the classroom as an equity enhancing practice
- Modifications to study-away programs that make these opportunities more accessible
- Discussions about how other pedagogical frameworks (trauma-informed pedagogy, design justice, culturally sustaining pedagogy, etc.) might meaningfully intersect with a focus on equity

- Explorations of how the teaching of art history has both shaped and been shaped by racism, ableism, sexism, classicism, and other forms of oppression or exclusion, and ways to meaningfully address this in our programs and classrooms
- Theoretical discussions about the ways in which art history study itself, especially the cultivation of visual literacy, can be a tool of equity outside the classroom

We invite both practical contributions that outline specific interventions as well as more theoretical discussions on topics related to equity and the art history classroom. We encourage educators from diverse institutions, geographies, and backgrounds to submit a proposal. The editors are already in discussion with an open-access, academic press. Please send proposals of up to 300 words to Jenevieve DeLosSantos at jdelossantos@sas.rutgers.edu and Kathleen Pierce at kpierce@smith.edu by Monday, February 5th 2024.

Reference:

CFP: Equity Enhancing Strategies for the Art History Classroom. In: ArtHist.net, Dec 10, 2023 (accessed Jul 10, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/40806>>.