

# Academic Affairs Excellence Awards

## Application Form



Name: Elissa Auerbach

Rank: Professor

Department: Department of Art

Award applying for:

(Check one)

	Excellence in Teaching Award*
X	Excellence in Online Teaching Award*
	Excellence in Scholarship & Creative Endeavors Award*
	Excellence in University Service*
	Excellence in Scholarship of Teaching & Learning Award*
	Department/Program Excellence Award^
	Irene Rose Community Service Award^
	Laurie Hendrickson McMillian Faculty Award^

\*college selection required before being forwarded to university

^university awards

College nominees' final applications received by Center for Teaching and Learning ([ctl@gcsu.edu](mailto:ctl@gcsu.edu)) by March 1.

Please insert the required documentation in the pages below for the award category you have noted above. Detailed information associated with each award is available online at the [Center for Teaching and Learning website](#).

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**Department of Art**

Campus Box 94

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February 20, 2023

Matthew Forrest  
Interim Chair, Associate Professor of Art  
Art Department, 094 Ennis Hall  
Georgia College  
Milledgeville, GA

To whom it may concern,

I fully support Dr. Elissa Auerbach's application for the universities award for Excellence in Online Teaching. Dr. Auerbach in the CoAS award recipient for the 2022-23 academic year, in addition to this year Dr. Auerbach also received this same award in 2018 at the college level as well. Enhanced experiences of studying art history through various interactive media and platforms has made Elissa's class engaging and highly innovative, as well as maintaining pedagogical excellence. Her online classes employ contemporary instructional methods, that has led to the development of creative practices online for her students. This nomination is a testament to her outstanding teaching and the success our students share in by taking her classes. Dr. Auerbach has my full support, if I can offer additional details or support, please contact me.

*Matthew Forrest*

Matthew Forrest  
Interim Chair, Associate Professor of Art

January 5, 2023

To the Awards Committee,

This letter is in enthusiastic support of Elissa Auerbach's nomination for the Excellence in Online Teaching award. Dr. Auerbach received this award in 2018 at the level of the College of Arts and Sciences, and she is eligible to apply for it again this year with the goal of being recognized for her achievements at the university level. She has been a pioneer in her application of the latest in engaging pedagogy, and is highly deserving of recognition for the advances she has made. As the faculty coordinator of the new digital humanities joint initiative between the College of Arts and Sciences and the Ina Dillard Russell Library—now in its second year—Dr. Auerbach is responsible for promoting the use of digital technologies in teaching and scholarship among faculty and students at Georgia College. In addition to her dynamic leadership of this college initiative, she currently chairs our departmental committee on digitizing the university's Permanent Collection of visual art, artifacts, and objets d'art. Her stewardship of this committee, in which she generously provides her expertise in art and technology, has led to a cohesive, collaborative team of colleagues making great progress on the creation of new resources for students and scholars across disciplines and institutions.

Leading by example, Dr. Auerbach researches, demonstrates, and aids the department in incorporating the latest platforms and software applicable to the needs of these multiple, overlapping initiatives. This level of commitment to students, colleagues, and programs typifies her career at Georgia College. Soon after joining the department 16 years ago, Dr. Auerbach co-authored a rigorous Art History Capstone program and, as our student and faculty demographic and facilities have rapidly evolved, she has been deeply involved in instituting the most current classroom methods and models. As an early adopter and developer of the nationally lauded "Reacting to the Past" pedagogy and, since its inception, a major force in our department's success in the GC Undergraduate Student Research Conference, Dr. Auerbach consistently represents the best in faculty and colleagues committed to excellence.

Over the past several years Dr. Auerbach has participated in workshops on contemporary instructional methods, the development of hybrid and online courses, and the use of a wide variety of online resources, interfaces and software provided by the university. The previous guidelines have stressed that summer courses are clearly allowed and limited online offerings could happen, with justification and/or with special exception during the regular semesters. The provided resources and flexible guidelines resulted in Dr. Auerbach's premier course, approved for several years for summer and regular semester scheduling, a method to be touted as a model of success for all those providing and involved in the training, planning, implementation and delivery of cutting edge and diverse instructional methods on our campus. The creation of online courses requires a great deal of additional work and effort, from the developmental stage through the review of student coursework, and Dr. Auerbach faithfully embarked on her mission to create this excellent option for online course delivery. With an eye on student success through providing the transferrable skills and heightened engagement allowed by an enhanced education in the arts, Dr. Auerbach has been a trailblazer within the department and university in her application of Virtual Reality technology, on-line pedagogy, and digital applications of useful student resources. Her long-standing interest, familiarity, and understanding of the role of these technologies in the future of education also benefitted the department greatly during the outbreak of COVID-19. Thanks to her recommendations, workshops, and tutorials to

faculty (all gratis), we were better able to manage the challenges to course delivery resulting from the pandemic. Her students from the general education Core, the Art major, and the Art History minor were also much better prepared as she had taught them well in the areas of remote on-line and hybrid education, research, and presentation.

With the majority of our courses clocking in at just less than three hours, the Department of Art is unique in its class scheduling concerns. To maintain timely graduation rates and to provide for the ongoing needs of our students in the major and across disciplines in Art minor offerings and in the Core, creative scheduling is always required. All departments are also now required to list course offerings several semesters in advance. This single course as online and available to 50 or more every semester is of great benefit in all regards. The glowing student comments indicate the importance of this online option from their perspective, as they are engaged in the delicate juggling act of commuters, distance learners or campus residents struggling to cover all requirements and personal academic interests at some expense and with precious few options normally. Without this course, we would see the numbers of those exposed to the visual arts severely diminished, a limiting of the potential for new majors in Art, and a rise in the frustrations that many experience in navigating conflicts in course scheduling.

Moving ARTS 1110 from face-to-face to online has allowed for the creation of a richer, more distinctive course than otherwise possible. When considering the extremely high level of information shared and elaborated upon, the amount of knowledge gained through a wealth of media including written text, video and online resources, and the writing intensive nature of the class made possible by these resources and online format, this is the best way to teach this course to the large volume of students it consistently serves. This course as online is the only way to maintain its current pedagogical excellence and logistical feasibility. Bringing the most current and formative historical ideas of Art and Culture to a student body typically bereft of such information, opening the world of art to the visually illiterate, is not an easy endeavor and requires the type of commitment, training, and vision exhibited by Dr. Auerbach. For many students, this is the first serious exposure to the wealth of this field. The strong enrollment, positive student feedback, classroom assessments and the students who tell me themselves how much they appreciated and learned from this professor all indicate success by any measure.

The flexibility they provide for instructor and student, the distinction brought to our department and college, and the clear benefits provided to students of diverse disciplines, Dr. Auerbach's online offerings align well with current university-wide discussions on enhancing the national status of the university, and with our stated commitment to attracting and retaining the best possible faculty and student body. Thank you for your consideration of Dr. Elissa Auerbach for this award. She is highly deserving, without question.

Sincerely,

*William Fisher*

William Fisher  
Professor  
(Chair 2008-2021)  
Department of Art  
Georgia College & State University

## **ABBREVIATED CURRICULUM VITAE (OF PAST THREE YEARS)**

### **ELISSA AUERBACH**

Professor of Art History  
Faculty Coordinator of the Digital Humanities Collaborative  
Department of Art  
301 Ennis Hall, CBX 094  
Georgia College & State University  
Milledgeville, Georgia 31061  
(478) 445-0808  
elissa.auerbach@gcsu.edu

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### **MAJOR RESEARCH INTERESTS**

Seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish art; post-Reformation religious history and visual culture of Northern Europe; the history of prints; digital humanities

### **EDUCATION**

Ph.D. in Art History, University of Kansas, 2009  
Dissertation: "Re-Forming Mary in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Prints"

M.A. in Art History, University of Kansas, 1999 (*with honors*)

B.S. in Visual Communications, Towson University, 1994

### **ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT**

Professor, Department of Art, Georgia College, 2018-present

### **AWARDS AND HONORS**

Excellence in Online Teaching Award, College of Arts and Sciences, Georgia College, 2018, 2022

### **PUBLICATIONS**

"Pilgrimage by Proxy in the Dutch Republic: Scenes of Forbidden Holy Sites for the Spiritual Pilgrim." In *Art & Catholicism in the Dutch Republic / Kunst & Katholizismus in der niederländischen Republik*. Edited by Esther Meier and Almut Pollmer-Schmidt. Frankfurt: Städel Museum and Michael Imhof Verlag (Forthcoming, publisher's editing completed, in print 2022).

### **PUBLIC LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS**

"Art for Faith's Sake: How Religious Art Divided Europe in Early Modernity," European Splendors: Old Master Paintings from the Kress Collection Exhibition, Art History Lecture Series, Albany Museum of Art, Albany Museum of Art, Albany, Georgia, November 18, 2021

### **DIGITAL HUMANITIES ACTIVITIES**

Faculty Coordinator, Digital Humanities Collaborative, August 2021-present

Principal Investigator, Art of Social Engagement Digital Online Exhibition Website, August 2022-present

Digital Humanities Workshop Organizer, Digital Humanities Collaborative, February 21, 2022; March 7, 2022; March 30, 2022; April 4, 2022.

Digital Humanities Session Chair, Research Day Conference, Georgia College, March 25, 2022

Workshop Participant, "Introduction to Digital Humanities: Developing Individual Projects," Sponsored by the Global Institute for Research, Education and Scholarship (GIREs) and the Oral History & Digital Humanities Academy (ODA), Amsterdam, the Netherlands (virtual), December 9, 2021 - January 20, 2022

Digital Humanities Committee, College of Arts and Sciences, 2020-2021

Digital Humanities Workshop Organizer, Department of Art, January 25, 2019

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

Curriculum and Instruction Committee, College of Arts and Sciences, Fall 2020-present

Coordinator, Art History and Museum Studies Program Area, Fall 2021-present

University Research Committee, August 2022-present

MURACE Advisory Board, August 2022-present

Sandra Trujillo Post-Tenure Review Committee, Fall 2022

Chair, Ernesto Gomez Promotion to Senior Lecturer Committee, Fall 2021

Emily Gomez Post-Tenure Review Committee, Fall 2021

Chair, Art History Search Committee, 2019-2020

Museum Studies Search Committee, Fall 2019-January 2020

Tenure and Promotion Committee, College of Arts and Sciences, Fall 2018, Fall 2019

Tenure and Promotion Committee for Matthew Forrest, Fall 2019

Co-director, Faculty-Led Study Abroad in Amsterdam, Paris, and Rome, Georgia College, Summer 2017, 2019

**ONLINE COURSES TAUGHT**

2019-2020	Fall 2019:	ARTS 1110: Art and Ideas (2 sections)
	Spring 2020:	ARTS 1110: Art and Ideas (2 sections)
	Summer 2020:	ARTS 1110: Art and Ideas (1 section) ARTS 4870: History of Photography (1 section)
2020-2021	Fall 2020:	ARTS 1110: Art and Ideas (2 sections)
		ARTS 2810: From Renaissance to Mod Wrld (1 section)
		ARTS 4950: Italian Renaissance Art (1 section)
	Spring 2021:	ARTS 1110: Art and Ideas (2 sections)
		ARTS 2810: From Renaissance to Mod Wrld (1 section)
		ARTS 4950: From Rubens to Rembrandt (1 section)
Summer 2021:	ARTS 1110: Art and Ideas (1 section) ARTS 4870: History of Photography (1 section)	
2021-2022	Fall 2021:	ARTS 1110: Art and Ideas (2 sections)
	Spring 2022:	ARTS 1110: Art and Ideas (2 sections)
	Summer 2022:	ARTS 1110: Art and Ideas (1 section)
		ARTS 4870: History of Photography (1 section)



## REFLECTIVE STATEMENT

When I was forced to move my courses completely online during the Covid-19 pandemic, I initially thought I was one of the lucky ones. I had already taught art history courses online for eight years at Georgia College; I considered myself proficient with our D2L LMS enough to lead emergency training sessions for my department colleagues; and I had confidence in knowing how to redesign my courses successfully given the recognition I received in 2018 with the award for excellence in online teaching at the level of the College of Arts and Sciences. What I did not yet realize when the pandemic hit—but I learned quickly—was that our beleaguered students were going to need entirely different approaches to online learning than the traditional methods to which I was accustomed. To maintain their enthusiasm for learning when all their courses were moved online, they would need sympathetic instructors and exceptionally thoughtful ways of connecting with the material. In the semesters following the beginning of the pandemic, I developed a two-pronged response to teaching that surpassed the ways I had taught in previous years:

First, I redesigned my courses to make the material deeply personal for my students. I wanted them to find real value in the course content beyond simply understanding it and applying it toward their major or minor studies. By creating an online learning environment and assessments that more intimately engaged my students in the content, I discovered they were more enthusiastic about learning. Students could recognize how what they were learning in my courses would be applicable to them for the rest of their lives.

Some of my most successful projects that fostered a personal relationship for my students and the artwork we studied were creative and analytical projects involving recreating works of art with materials and people to which they had access at home. Students submitted stunning photographs of objects and figures assembled to recreate existing works of art, which made students feel involved in the learning process. I also developed an elaborate community outreach semester-long project in which students in my ARTS 2810 course created children's books for third-grade students at Lakeview Academy in Milledgeville whom they met in Zoom. These books were the synthesis of research and writing assignments appropriate for the college level that my students then transformed into books appropriate for their third-grade student recipients. In another project for my Italian Renaissance Art course, students made objects with research for a "Back to the Renaissance Party Project" in which they produced something creative for a party set in the Italian Renaissance; this project was accompanied by scholarly research and advanced writing assignments that furthered their understanding of the material. Lastly, I resolved the problem of course lecture notes—a critical learning strategy for success in quizzes or exams—by creating digital notebook assignments in which students submitted notes for recorded class lectures with the addition of thumbnail sketches of works studied, collateral associations of content applied from other courses, or compelling questions for discussion. This assignment helped my students concentrate during lectures and apply what they learned in personal ways.

Second, I embraced the digital environment. I took advantage of digital humanities methods and tools for my projects that I had not yet practiced in previous courses. The learning curve for me was considerable, but well worth my time and effort. I took the opportunity of online teaching to train my students in using 21<sup>st</sup>-century technologies so that they would not only learn the material in new and engaging ways, but also hone transferrable skills to make them more marketable after graduation. Students expressed appreciation in developing new skillsets beyond learning about the fundamentals of art history.

By the time I taught my Spring 2021 course, *From Rubens to Rembrandt*, I was fully prepared to enmesh my approaches to teaching art history with tools and methods from the emerging field of digital humanities. I am convinced that the humanities will be impacted positively by the pandemic if instructors commit to embracing digital technologies pervasively throughout their teaching. I wanted to be part of that new wave of instructors who will not be able to teach the humanities in the same ways they did before the pandemic. I used this course as an opportunity to lead my first digital humanities project, which I entitled *Six Degrees of Rembrandt*. For this project, each student conducted original research on a seventeenth-century Dutch artist and that artist's professional connections to other artists, patrons, theologians, philosophers, statesmen, and more. Then, using the social networking web-based tool called Kumu and Google Sheets, students pooled their data digitally to create a single data visualization of an intricate web that revealed the hundreds of connections they had in common. Students expressed amazement at their final results, and the realization that such a project had to undergo numerous rounds of collaborative revisions for it to work, which they did diligently and with zeal. In the end, students in that course learned to collect data, create spreadsheets, analyze data, and work collaborative—all skills valued in today's workplaces. Some students from the course presented their research at two conferences and received monetary awards for the excellence of their work.

During the semesters under consideration, I advanced my online teaching in other beneficial ways. I began using the GroupMe application for all my courses. Students have a direct line of communication with me and their peers in this format that mimics texting. GroupMe instills a sense of community among students and a sense of relief in the immediacy afforded by the application. I also provided video tours of my course sites, recorded video lectures and Zoom meetings, and I designed infographics as data visualizations of my syllabi. My application materials also reflect how I acquaint my students with digital tools for annotating images, conducting research using online catalogs and art historical resources, creating their own games on topics in art history using methods of game-based learning, and more.

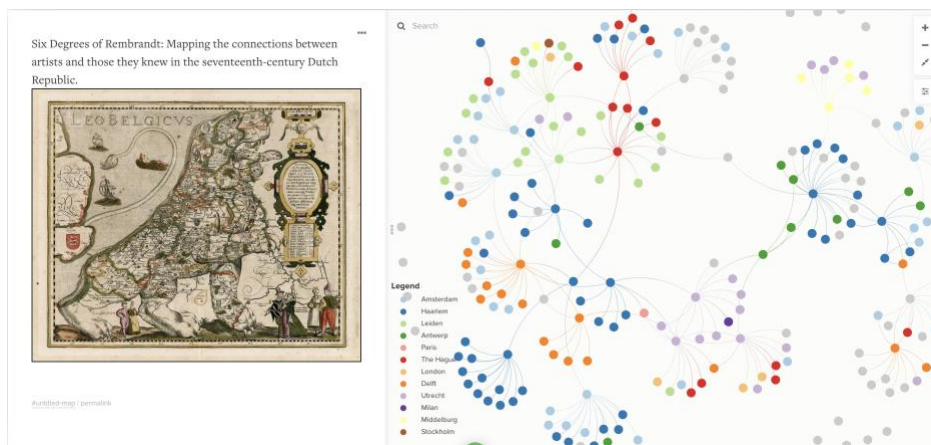
The course syllabi and assignments in this application package aim to demonstrate how I implemented my two-pronged approach to online teaching after the pandemic. When used together, they deepen an understanding of course content for students by making the content personally relevant to them, and in ways that fully embrace the potential of the digital environment in which they are learning.

## Brief Summary of Innovative Teaching Artifacts

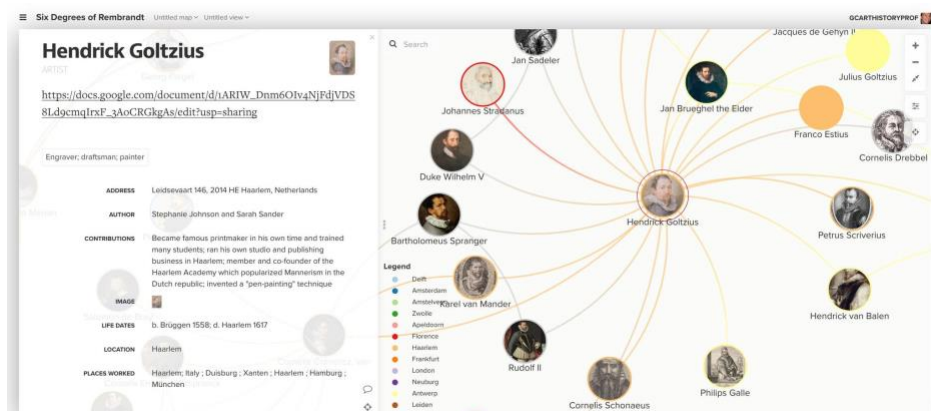
My two-pronged approach to online teaching I developed in the semesters after the start of the Covid-19 pandemic to promote student success is illustrated in the following two teaching artifacts. My approach seeks to (1) make course content deeply personal for my students, and (2) embraces the digital environment in which they are learning.

**Artifact 1:** Screenshot of digital humanities collaborative class project called “Six Degrees of Rembrandt” for the course, ARTS 4950: From Rubens to Rembrandt (Spring 2021). This was a semester-long scaffolded project in which each student conducted research on a seventeenth-century Dutch artist, and then organized data about the artist’s patrons and other professional connections into a Google spreadsheet before uploading it to the web-based social networking digital tool called Kumu. Students worked from a single collaborative spreadsheet and continued to research their artists and connections to find as many other connections as possible among more than 250 individuals they placed in the map of nodes and edges seen on the right in the screenshot. This project culminated with a research paper included in the profile of each student’s artist. Several students presented their research at conferences, and some received cash prizes for exceptional contributions to digital humanities scholarship. This project’s emphasis on original and collaborative research made the content meaningful for my students, and the digital humanities method fully embraced the digital environment.

<https://kumu.io/GCarthistoryprof/six-degrees-of-rembrandt>



Top: Full map view



Bottom: Profile view

**Artifact 2:** Paper planes (“airmail”) and a sample pages from two students ‘digitally made children’s books for a community outreach project I created for the course, ARTS 2810: From the Renaissance to the Modern World (Spring 2021). This was a semester-long scaffolded project in which students conducted research on a modern artist, wrote traditional essays on aspects of the artist’s work, and then translated their research into a children’s book that they also illustrated. The goal of the book was to teach a young audience about the artist and to introduce the reader to art historical terms and concepts. I paired each of my students with students in a class of third graders at Lakeview Academy in the Baldwin County School District. My students sent the third graders “airmail” in the form of illustrated letters of introduction folded into paper airplanes. They also communicated in Zoom, and at the end of the semester they recorded themselves reading their books aloud and gifted paper copies of the books to the third graders. The books included learning activities designed to engage the young audience with the art historical content of the book. The project overall sought to bring greater awareness of the importance of visual art in the lives of young people--and to supplement the art instruction the third graders received only every seven weeks of the year.



Osamu Tezuka popularized what is known around the world as distinctly “manga” style! Characters like Astro Boy have big, dazzling eyes, uniquely cartoonish bodies, and exaggerated expressions, such as Astro Boy’s uplifting smile. Osamu Tezuka also used perspective to create “camera angles.” He drew characters and scenes from different angles to make the “camera” see people in his stories all the way from up in the sky, to the point of view of even an earthworm! Bird’s eye view is when a drawing is depicted from up in the sky, and worm’s eye view is when a drawing is shown from the ground, looking up. These points of view create unique art that make drawings come to life!



**Lizzie Leaman**

12360 Brookhill Crossing Lane, Alpharetta, GA, 30004 • 770-241-0128  
elizabeth.leaman@bobcats.gcsu.edu

February 14, 2023

To whom it may concern,

As a now senior in college, I can confidently say that Dr. Elissa Auerbach excels at teaching her students about art history in various subject matters and processes. I have taken five courses that she has taught over my college career and have thoroughly enjoyed every lesson. I would seek out classes that I know she is teaching, even if the subject is something that I'm unfamiliar with, because I'm confident that she will teach the course in an enthralling way that will ensure I've learned something by the end of the semester. Each course Dr. Auerbach teaches includes a memorable project that is engaging, innovative, and benefits students in learning through a diverse set of skills.

Out of the many teachers here at Georgia College and State University, I cannot recommend a better art history professor to receive such an award. Dr. Auerbach surpasses expectations for a teacher in both her own research and how she educates students about art history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lizzie Leaman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L".

Lizzie Leaman

Senior, Studio Arts Major

Georgia College and State University

Dear Committee,

It is my pleasure to recommend Dr. Elissa Auerbach for the online teaching award at the university level.

My name is Grace Smith, and I am a senior studio art major at Georgia College and State University. I have completed several of Professor Auerbach's course during my college career but specifically a course that was most impactful was her From Rubens To Rembrandt course on 17th century Dutch art history.

In the midst of the Covid pandemic our courses were moved to an online format but Professor Auerbach was ever resilient and formatted our online course to ensure we would still be learning and succeeding, just digitally!

My peers and I completed research on 17th century Dutch artists and entered our findings into a digital map called Kumu in a project Professor Auerbach coined "Six degrees of Rembrandt". I, along with two other peers presented this research at two Digital Humanities Research Conferences and received an award for outstanding achievement in the digital humanities.

I would not have done as well without the help of Professor Auerbach and it was with her guidance that I was able to find a special interest in art history and a willingness to continue my studies through the circumstances of the pandemic in the most intense parts of my college experience.

Dr. Auerbach is more than deserving of the recognition this award will allow.

I would be happy to speak further about my experience in her courses, and can be contacted at 470-349-9286 or [grace.smith@bobcats.gcsu.edu](mailto:grace.smith@bobcats.gcsu.edu)

My best,  
Grace Smith  
Student of Studio Art

To Whom It May Concern,

In the Spring of 2021, I was disappointed to find that classes would once again be held online due to the pandemic. Online courses can easily make students and professors alike feel disconnected and unmotivated. My interest in art history had led to my enrollment in “From the Renaissance to the Modern World” with Elissa Auerbach. After her introductory video on the first day of class, I quickly realized that this online class would be different than any class I had taken in college so far. Dr. Auerbach announced that each student would be writing and illustrating a children’s book as part of a community outreach project involving 3<sup>rd</sup> graders at Lakeview Academy in the Baldwin County School District. Throughout the course, we wrote airmail letters to our individually assigned 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student, participated in zoom meetings, and were able to read our children’s book to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class via pre-recorded video. These activities kept me engaged in the course and I was excited to learn and share my newfound knowledge with others. After taking this class, I switched my major from business to art with a concentration in art history. In the midst of Covid, community and connection were desperately needed. Dr. Auerbach’s online course took advantage of digital tools for humanities research and made an online course that not only helped me to thrive in my understanding of the course material but also created the opportunity to have fun while doing so.

Anna Kate (AK) Sweeney

## SECTION IX. DOCUMENTS PROVIDING EVIDENCE OF TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Description: Screenshots of one recent fully online course as a representation of quantitative and qualitative student evaluations of my online teaching.

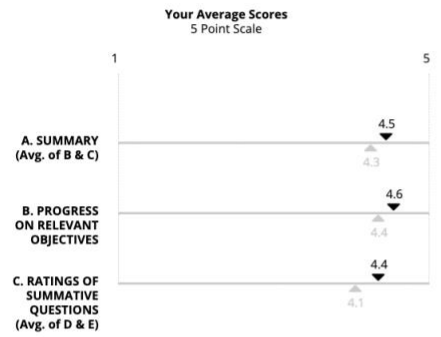
### ARTS 1110 (W01): Art and Ideas

Fall 2021 | Elissa Auerbach | Course CIP Code: 500701

50 | Students Enrolled  
10 | Students Responded  
20% | Response Rate

#### Summative

Adjusted  
 Raw  
 3 Point Plus/Minus



**Your Overall Mean Ratings**  
5 Point Scale

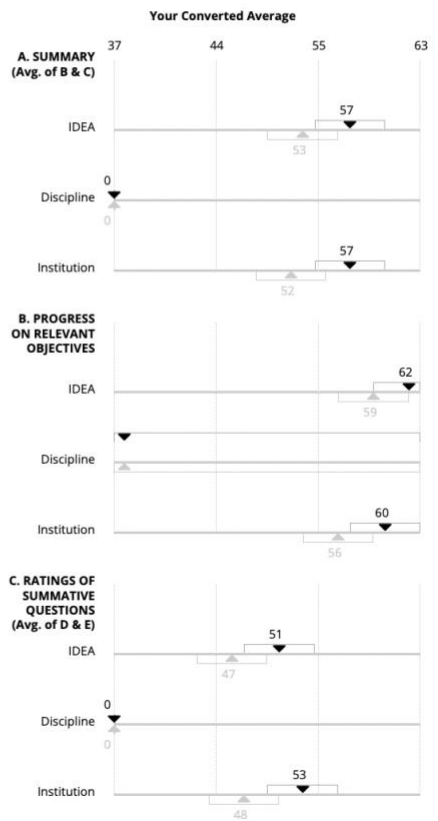
Ratings of Summative Questions	Raw	Adj.
D. Excellent Teacher	4.2	4.4
E. Excellent Course	4	4.3

**Your Overall Converted Ratings**

Ratings of Summative Questions	Raw	Adj.
D. Excellent Teacher		
IDEA	47	51
Discipline		
Institution	48	53
E. Excellent Course		
IDEA	46	51
Discipline		
Institution	47	53

**Converted Average Buckets**  
Based on a Bell Curve

Much Lower (Lowest 10%)	Lower (Next 20%)	Similar (Middle 40%)	Higher (Next 20%)	Much Higher (Highest 10%)
37 or Lower	38 - 44	45 - 55	56 - 62	63 or Higher



Summative
 Quantitative
 Qualitative

Comments -

**Responses**

- Really made an effort to apply what we learned to real world issues and situations.
- Overall, I really enjoyed this art course. I liked how the themes/focus changed each week. Some weeks were more interesting (to me) than others, but that was expected. I do, however, feel like I learned a lot this semester. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend this class to others.
- love her!
- The quizzes were hard given a lot of true and false questions. The projects and assignments were good and I feel like I learned a lot more how to put forth discussing things as well as learning how to connect each thing we did to the real world. Definitely a hard course as its online but worth it!
- This class was out of my comfort zone however I ended up learning a ton and found many things interesting.



**Description:** This sample assignment from an online course demonstrates how I have made course content deeply personal for my students and fully engaged with the potential of the digital environment to ensure their success.

### **ARTS 2810: From the Renaissance to the Modern World, Fall 2020 Studying Art History in a Pandemic**

This project calls for you to reflect upon all of the work we've studied this semester from the 14th century to the present day. Choose the work you studied that most intrigues you and recreate it. The genesis for this project came from the inspiring quarantine challenges begun by major museums during the first coronavirus lockdown, including the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. In these challenges, people were limited to using 3 items they had at home in recreating works of art from the museums. [Click here](#) for the Instagram winners for "Between Art and Quarantine", [and click here](#) for the Rijksmuseum's FB page of their winners, [and click here](#) for the Getty Museum's version of the challenge.

Now that you are inspired with ideas, your challenge is as follows:

1. Pick a work of art we studied this semester that matters to you--something you like. [...]
2. Find three things you have lying around where you live.
3. Recreate the work of art using those three things. [...]
4. Write about your work, how you created it, what decisions you made (about lighting, costume, props, etc), what difficulties you experienced in the process. Most importantly, explain what you learned about the work of art from making a recreation of it. You will need to discuss the original work of art (who made it, what it depicts, its symbolism and iconography, and why it's a significant work of art) in your post. [...]

#### **Examples of completed student projects:**



Description: This is a selection of an assignment with links to completed projects demonstrating student success in online learning.

**ARTS 2810: From the Renaissance to the Modern World, Spring 2021**  
**CHILDREN’S BOOK COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECT**

In Bloom’s Taxonomy, this multi-part project fulfills the “apply, analyze, evaluate, and create” categories. In these categories, students will put their knowledge of art history into action. This community outreach project involves another class of third-grade students in the Operation Explore (OE) gifted program of elementary school students at Lakeview Academy in the Baldwin County School District in Milledgeville. Students in our class will be paired with students in the OE class for a project about art and why it matters. Students in our class will each spend the semester researching and writing a children’s book about an artist or topic on art of their choice (with approval) that they will gift to the OE students. The book will be the outcome of a series of scaffolded assignments with class discussion that will be evenly spread out over the semester to ensure your success. By creating a book about art, you will be tasked with presenting art in a meaningful way to a young reader, thus fostering an appreciation for art and, by extension, an empathy in other people and diverse cultures.

Your scaffolded assignments will introduce you to the basic vocabulary of art and methods of describing, analyzing, and interpreting works of art that is the foundation for any art historical study. You will utilize these skills in advanced art history classes. You will complete the assignments and share them with your classmates for (graded) feedback in the discussion forum of the course site. Each assignment will comprise one section of the final book. As a children’s book, clarity of expression and creativity are critical. This is not a project in which you will be required to create art yourself (unless you choose to do so), or to purchase materials.

Ideally, the final book will be an original work worthy of publication and/or exhibition. Another larger goal of the project is to provide you with an opportunity to teach children about art history through your book and in your communications with the OE students. Such experience may yield important long-term benefits as you consider your career goals, perhaps in such as fields as teaching, museum education, marketing, and of course, art. If done well, you may decide to include your book in a portfolio of application materials for jobs or scholarships. We will have some synchronous Zoom meetings prior to the deadlines for the scaffolded assignments to cover instructions and to address your questions and concerns.

**Examples of completed projects from this assignment:**

Artist’s Name	3rd-Grade Student	GC Student Author	Link
Haring	Trevor	Lizzie Leaman	<a href="https://youtu.be/6GmZGJp00oA">https://youtu.be/6GmZGJp00oA</a>
Monet	Sadie	Chloe Webb	<a href="https://youtu.be/_Jbh1sZhEMY">https://youtu.be/_Jbh1sZhEMY</a>

Description: This is a selection of an assignment for an online course to capture the concept and evaluation methods. Included are screenshots from two students' reflections on their completed projects.

**ARTS 4950: From Rubens to Rembrandt, Spring 2021**  
**Six Degrees of Rembrandt: A Digital Art History Project**

In this project, affectionately called “Six Degrees of Rembrandt,” students will each research the art and connections (professional and social) of a Dutch artist in the seventeenth century -- the so-called age of Rembrandt – to visually reconstruct this early modern social network using digital tools. Students will trace the relationships their selected artist had to other artists, patrons, philosophers, scholars, poets, and more, to discover how their personal network may have merged with others to form a complex web of potential influences and contacts. Your preliminary findings will likely elicit provocative questions about how the patterns and surprises they reveal among these connections help us better understand how early modern Dutch artists developed their remarkable innovations in subjects, styles, techniques, and marketing. This is a project that foregrounds the use of digital tools as a method for collecting data and visualizing it on a topic in art history that is part of the new Digital Humanities initiative at Georgia College.

My inspiration for this project came from several places. First, I want this class to join the Digital Humanities initiative at GC and learn how using digital tools can help us learn about topics in the humanities. My goal is to help students build the 21st-century skills they need to be competitive in today’s job market. By enhancing your portfolio with research, writing, and evidence of digital tools, you will better prepare for scholarships, careers, and graduate school applications.

More specifically, I was inspired by stunning interactive site created for MoMA’s exhibit, *Inventing Abstraction: 1910-1925*:

<https://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/inventingabstraction/?artist=4>

And the Carnegie Mellon project, “Six Degrees of Francis Bacon.”

[http://www.sixdegreesoffrancisbacon.com/?ids=10000473&min\\_confidence=60&type=network](http://www.sixdegreesoffrancisbacon.com/?ids=10000473&min_confidence=60&type=network)

Both of these projects visualize data in a social network relationship graph. Our goal is not to create the graph, but to (1) compile data about artists, (2) utilize an existing digital tool to visualize the data, (3) analyze the visualization to form conclusions about the significance of relationships found between artists, and (4) present research and analysis in the digital tool.

**Steps to Take:**

1. Choose a 17th-century Dutch artist for your research project. [...]
2. Prepare a 1-2 page essay (for Discussion 2 grade) that introduces your artist. [...]
3. Research the artist using scholarly books and articles. [...]
4. Create a list of at least 10 social and professional connections for your artist. Cite sources [...]
5. Compile your data on connections in a spreadsheet. [...]
6. Visualize the data in the [digital tool, Kumu](#). [...]
7. Discuss and analyze the findings you and your classmates have visualized in the tool. [...]
8. Compile your research and analysis of connections in an essay [...]

Assignments Applied to your Six Degrees of Rembrandt Project Grade (40% of final course grade)		
Weight of Grade Item	Description	Deadline
20%	Descriptive list of 10-15 connections and at least 5 scholarly sources [Step 3]  (Extra credit TBA for more than 15 connections)	Mar 14
5%	Compile data in spreadsheet [Step 4]	Mar 21
10%	Compile data in Kumu web interface [Step 5]	Mar 28
25%	Critically analyze and discuss Kumu data visualization results (1-2 pages plus discussion) [Step 6]	Apr 11
5%	Compile final research in Kumu web interface [Step 7]	Apr 25
40%	Submit final 2-3 pages essay [Step 7]	Apr 25

### Sample of Student Reflections:

 **Final Discussion**  
Olivia Berke Apr 29, 2021 2:09 PM [★ Subscribe](#)

The KUMU website helped me with the research that we did for this class in that it helped me visualize trends during the 17th century Netherlands that helped expand my understanding of my artist. I believe that this is a beneficial research method. I think it helps see the artist I studied and understand information about other artists that students researched. The KUMU data visualization helped in my understanding of seventeenth-century Dutch art history. It helped me visualize geographical trends such as which cities had the most artists, where artists traveled, and who they interacted with outside the Netherlands. I liked this collaborative activity because it allowed me to not have such a narrow viewpoint on my artist. By this, I mean how I only think about the research of my artist with his artwork and biographies, but not about who he got to know that could have influenced his artwork. The tool did expand my research experience because instead of typically just researching the artist's biography or works of art, I was now looking for connections of other people to my artist, which allowed me to find out even more information about him. I can imagine applications for this research method in my career aspirations as an artist who wants to tell stories through my art. Most stories need some sort of cultural or historical research. The KUMU map could help me visualize connections of historical and cultural facts I would need to flesh out a story I wanted to create. I think the activity went well. It was a new experience for everyone, so there were some bumps in the road. In the end, I believe almost everything got corrected. The visual map was still a little strange in how it moved around, and it was hard to find specific people by just looking at the map. One improvement would be to make the visual aspect easier to read.


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 **Sarah Sander Discussion 8**  
Sarah Sander Apr 29, 2021 10:22 PM [★ Subscribe](#)

Using the digital tool Kumu, was very helpful to the development of the way I research. I loved having a way to visualize my research as a web of connections, because it was much easier to understand how people interacted and how that affected creative energy throughout history. I think having the map as a collaborative effort was interesting, because not only did it visualize our own individual research, but also showed how even if you research one person or topic, it will always connect and be relevant to another area of research. Personally, I think that this project and this digital tool helped me to open myself up to different research possibilities. I ended up reading a much wider database of articles and journals than I would have otherwise. Because I needed to research all the connections I found, I was able to find a lot of useful papers that would not have been as easy to find by researching only my artist. I think going forward with future research projects this process and the knowledge I gained from it will definitely help me to be more well rounded and thorough in my research. I don't think there is currently anything I would improve about the Kumu map, I think we did a good job troubleshooting as we went step by step.

Description: This page provides evidence of my mentorship of undergraduate research from an online course. Students presented their digital humanities research from my spring 2021 course, From Rubens to Rembrandt, at two conferences: 2021 Georgia Undergraduate Research Conference at the University of West Georgia and the 2022 Georgia College Student Research Conference. All three students won cash awards at the latter conference from the Digital Humanities Collaborative.



Poster created by Art majors Sarah Sander, Grace Smith, and Hayley Johnson.

## Six Degrees of Rembrandt: Using Digital Tools in the Humanities

By: Sarah Sander, Hayley Johnson, Grace Smith  
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Elissa Auerbach

**Sarah Sander**

**From Rubens to Rembrandt**

The *From Rubens to Rembrandt* art history course at Georgia College, taught by Dr. Elissa Auerbach, covered the major artists and innovations of early modern Netherlandish art. The semester-long research project focused on using the digital tool Kumu to combine student research on individual artists from the period to visualize relationships to one another.

**Goals and Outcomes**

The overall goal of this social networking project was to determine the types of professional and personal connections each artist had in their lifetime, and how those connections were shared between other artists. The students were all asked to find at least 10 connections for their artist, but many of them went above this minimum because during the course of the research it became clear that by populating the map with more people, the connections between artists and their affiliations were enriched. This led to the formation of a visual and highly populated map with many interconnecting data points. The nature of the project required students to rely upon one another for a successful outcome in their own projects.

**Process**

Students created spreadsheets of data about their artists gleaned from their primary and secondary source research. The data included artist names, birth and death years, city of residence, and significant works of art. Close editing was required of each student to make the data compatible with Kumu digital tool. Once the information was uploaded into the map, the Kumu interface visualized the categories of data through the use of a web-like structure and individual profiles for the people within it. Included within the profiles, names, birth and death years, geographic location, places worked, a portrait, and a link to the student research paper. This process required good communication and respectful collaboration between students. The final result reveals each social connection that the students found and how the connections relate through varying degrees to other connections in the map. Using the functions in the Kumu site made it possible to isolate and view each person according to their type, such as artists and statesmen, and to geographic locations.

This project helped me visualize and better understand the artistic community of the 17th century Netherlands. I researched the artist Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem who made biblical and mythological paintings. In Haarlem he was a forerunner of the Haarlem Mannerist movement. Using the Kumu map I was able to see that van Haarlem's work influenced Hendrick Goltzius, who taught Jan Saendredam, who then became a student of Jacques de Gheyn III, who influenced Gerrit Dou, who eventually became a pupil of Rembrandt.

**Hayley Johnson**

When working on this project I found myself fascinated by the relationships Pieter de Hooch had in his lifetime. The Six Degrees project doesn't just track relationships of people, but the cascading relationships between paintings as well. Art doesn't exist in a bubble, it is constantly being exchanged between people and trends adapt as visual language advances. This map helps us visualize all of the complex relationships that influence a single artist, and how that could influence their body of work as a whole. De Hooch's influence on his peers is seen throughout many works in his period. He is still regarded as one of the great painters of Delft, but his greatness was not achieved in isolation. The visual dialogue, and every other artist, engaged in builds upon itself to tell the stories of the past. They were inspired by each other and worked in tandem to improve and grow, the exact same way artists do today. Kumu helped me visualize and conceptualize the past in a way that I would not have done on my own.

**Grace Smith**

This project was an opportunity for me to learn to operate a valuable computer tool. It was informative to see so much of the art history I love be strategically mapped out, bringing it all to life. Not only did I learn about my specific artist, Judith Leyster, through research, but I was able to conceptualize her connection to the art world in the Netherlands. Leyster, born in Haarlem, was almost lost to history before her signature was recognized for her shooting star. Through the Kumu map, I was able to find that she was connected to other renowned artists such as Frans Hals, which is a great representation of her inspiration and style. Through this individual and group work, each of my classmates and I received a well-rounded understanding of the area and the different periods of art within the Netherlands during the 17th century.

Legend:

- Age
- Gender
- Location
- Antwerp
- Peter
- The Hague
- London

Additional images include screenshots of spreadsheets and a profile for Pieter de Hooch.

**Description:** This document describes a research project I began this year reflecting my ongoing pursuit of methods to engage students with learning in a digital environment. Among other benefits, the project will provide online students access to physical objects on campus that they cannot otherwise study. In fall 2022, I conceived of this large-scale digital humanities project that would serve to highlight art objects from GCSU collections with content provided by faculty and students from as many different disciplines as possible. The end result will be a digital exhibit accessible to the campus community, prospective students, K-12 educators, and the public. I assembled a committee, invited faculty from multiple departments and colleges on campus, and applied for and received grant money disseminated to faculty from the GC Journeys program for involving students in producing research for the exhibit.

### **The Art of Social Engagement: A Digital Exhibit**

[Art of Social Engagement Exhibit Checklist.xlsx](#) (preliminary checklist)

#### **Project Committee:**

- Elissa Auerbach (Principal Investigator)
- Mark Huddle (Content Editor)
- Members: Bill Fisher, Sandra Trujillo, Matt Forrest, Megan McNaught, Seth Cook

#### **Project Vision:**

To create a digital exhibit website of art objects from GCSU collections on the theme of social engagement (ie., political art, social justice, and human rights, broadly defined). This will be an ongoing project with scholarly contributions from GCSU faculty and students in as many different disciplines as possible. Through our collaboration and the digital form of the exhibit, we seek to demonstrate the value of our liberal arts mission, the tremendous quality of our collections, and the talents of our faculty and students with inclusivity and diversity in mind. This project is associated with the [Digital Humanities Collaborative](#) joint initiative of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Ina Dillard Russell library.

#### **Content:**

The site will contain high-quality images of the objects, metadata in Dublin Core, and short descriptions about the works. The Department of Art committee will select the content; we invite faculty across campus to contribute ideas and participate in other ways. We strongly encourage student involvement. Contributions from faculty/students may take many forms, including, but not limited to: podcasts, data visualizations, interactive maps and timelines, commentary provided in short (2 min) videos or written content of any length, thematic essays and didactic written descriptions of artwork, and so forth.

#### **Committed Faculty Contributors (as of February 2023):\***

- **Art:** Elissa Auerbach, Bill Fisher, Sandra Trujillo\*, Matt Forrest\*, Megan McNaught\*, Seth Cook\*
- **History:** Mark Huddle\*, Aran MacKinnon\*, Steve Auerbach
- **Chemistry:** Peter Rosado\*
- **English:** Sidonia Serafini\*
- **Geography:** Doug Oetter
- **Rhetoric:** Jamie Downing
- **College of Education:** Linda Bradley, Rob Sumowski, Nicole DeClouette, Rui Kang
- **GC Museums:** Matt Davis

\* = Recipients of \$250 grant funding from GC Journeys from a grant I applied for on their behalf.