

GUIDELINES FOR TERM PAPER CONTENT & ORGANIZATION

ARTH 468/568 Medieval Art History

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Your term paper needs to include the following elements. What follows is just a suggestion as to organization; there may be a better way for you to arrange things in your work, depending on your subject and approach.

I. Introduction

II. Description

You will need a full description of your object, including its type, materials (check the museum label), overall form, subsidiary elements (figures, scenes, borders, decoration), and so on. This section will include, or be followed, by:

III. Visual Analysis/Style

How do the forms/lines/colors/textures work together? What elements of composition do you see? Think about issues of unity, variety, symmetry, balance, contrast, etc.

IV. Type of object/purpose/iconography

What is this piece? How was it used? How does the iconography relate to its purpose? This section may be further toward the beginning, if you want. You will at some point need to discuss the provenance of your object (where it comes from). These points will lead to your:

V. Comparisons

You need to choose about two objects to compare to your piece. Choose these to back up the points you wish to underscore about your subject. Here are several examples:

Point: My piece is a typical Gothic ivory diptych.

Comparison: A well-known ivory diptych from the same place and time period, which you compare in detail to the scenes and stylistic elements of your piece.

Point: This manuscript illumination looks like a piece of metalwork, due to its forms and colors.

Comparison: An enamelwork from the same area and time period, showing the same scene, which you will compare to your piece in terms of forms, lines, colors, etc.

VI. Conclusion

Basic Information

To complete this assignment, you will need to consult literature to learn as much as you can to fully consider your object and chose comparisons. A minimum of six juried sources should be consulted for undergraduate papers, nine for graduate level papers. These need to be books or journal articles, not including textbooks (although these contain useful bibliography to serve as a starting point). In addition, electronic sources may be used, if you wish. Our library, as well as the art history libraries of the University of Michigan, Wayne State University and Michigan State University, will be useful to you. We now subscribe to BHA, an online bibliography, which will be an excellent starting place for you. If you are unfamiliar with running a search with an art history bibliography, either I or one of the librarians at Halle can get you started.

Please follow correct term paper form in fulfilling your assignment. The "Term Paper Guidelines" handout will help you with this. I am happy to talk with you about your work as it progresses. Please come by or call me during my office hours, listed on our class syllabus. I can also be easily reached via e-mail at eschwartzATemich.edu (replace the AT with @) for simple questions.