

# Research on the Innovative Path of the “Art Appreciation” Course in Colleges and Universities from an Interdisciplinary Perspective

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## Abstract

In response to issues such as the limited scope of teaching content and the lack of professional coherence in the “Art Appreciation” course within colleges and universities, this paper explores an interdisciplinary approach to course innovation. The objective is to enhance students’ overall competence and advance the reform and development of art education in higher education institutions. Drawing on actual teaching practices, this study proposes strategies for the organic integration of disciplinary elements—such as digital technology, folk culture, and communication—into art appreciation courses. For example, virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) are employed to enrich the teaching of art history and support the modernization of traditional crafts. Through the implementation of interdisciplinary teaching models, student engagement in art appreciation courses has improved, enabling them to apply acquired knowledge to practical creative outputs. By synthesizing insights from multiple disciplines, this approach broadens students’ perspectives and contributes to the comprehensive advancement of art education in higher education.

## Keywords

Interdisciplinary perspective  
Colleges and universities  
“Art Appreciation”  
Curriculum innovation

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## 1. Introduction

With the continuous advancement of knowledge and the increasing diversity of societal demands, art education—particularly the “Art Appreciation” course in colleges and universities—faces both challenges and opportunities for development. Within the higher education system, art education plays a crucial role in enhancing students’ aesthetic abilities. Its objectives include helping students recognize beauty in everyday life, fostering innovative thinking, enriching cultural literacy, and promoting outstanding cultural traditions<sup>[1]</sup>. However, in long-standing teaching

practices, the traditional “Art Appreciation” course has been characterized by monotonous content and outdated pedagogical approaches. The curriculum often overemphasizes theoretical instruction while underrepresenting practical application. Teaching methods predominantly rely on lectures, lacking interactivity and student engagement. Moreover, the learning objectives typically remain confined to superficial appreciation of artworks, without delving into their deeper cultural significance. As a result, the course struggles to meet the evolving needs of students in the new era for diverse cultural exploration. To address these issues, an interdisciplinary approach is proposed. This perspective emphasizes transcending traditional disciplinary boundaries by integrating knowledge and methodologies from various fields, thereby constructing a more comprehensive cognitive framework. It aims to broaden students’ perspectives, enable multi-dimensional understanding of artworks, and stimulate creative learning.

## **2. The Current Situation of the “Art Appreciation” Course in Colleges and Universities**

### **2.1. Student Feedback Issues**

There are several concerns regarding the current structure of the course. Students have expressed that the content of the “Art Appreciation” course is overly focused on Western art history, particularly European oil painting. In many textbooks used for this course, approximately 85% of the case studies feature classical European oil paintings, such as works by Renaissance artists like Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, as well as Baroque artists like Rubens. This Western-centric content framework restricts students’ exposure to the diversity of global artistic traditions. As a result, students rarely engage with the rich and varied artistic expressions from regions such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Consequently, they struggle to grasp the historical interactions between traditional Chinese art and Western art forms. The limited scope of the curriculum hinders the expansion of students’ perspectives and fails to meet their growing interest in exploring diverse cultural contexts<sup>[2]</sup>.

### **2.2. Teaching Pain Points**

For example, when teaching the topic of “Baroque Art,” instructors often focus solely on technical aspects of artists such as Rubens—emphasizing brushwork, color application, and compositional techniques—while overlooking the broader cultural significance of Baroque art. The Baroque period coincided with an era of frequent trade exchanges between Europe and China, during which Chinese porcelain significantly influenced European artistic styles. However, this cross-cultural interaction is seldom addressed in classroom instruction, resulting in missed opportunities for fostering comparative cultural understanding. A single-perspective approach limits students’ ability to fully comprehend the complexity and diversity of artistic phenomena and hampers the development of cross-cultural analytical skills. Additionally, the format of student assignments remains largely theoretical, with most tasks emphasizing appreciation rather than application. This limits students’ capacity to translate acquired knowledge into practical skills<sup>[3]</sup>.

## **3. Innovative Paths for the “Art Appreciation” Course in Colleges and Universities from an Interdisciplinary Perspective**

### **3.1. The Integration of Digital Technology and Art History**

#### **3.1.1. Virtual reality (VR) technology**

By using VR technology to build a virtual art museum space, various architectural styles and spatial layouts of real art museums can be simulated with high precision. Whether it is the classical corridor style or the modern minimalist style, they can all be presented one by one. It surpasses the traditional flat display methods of PPT pictures or videos. Students are placed in the art palace, enhancing their understanding of art works.

Virtual art galleries can accommodate multiple exhibition halls of works from different themes, periods and schools. They can also create fantastical art Spaces that are difficult to achieve in reality, such as starry sky exhibition halls and underwater exhibition halls, allowing students to appreciate the charm of different art styles and broaden their artistic horizons<sup>[4]</sup>.

### 3.1.2. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) can generate various works of art based on input parameters, such as paintings, music, poetry, etc. In the “Art Appreciation” course, taking Monet’s painting style as an example, Monet, as a representative figure of Impressionism, is renowned for his unique use of color and play of light and shadow. Teachers use AI generation tools, input Monet’s painting style parameters, and generate a series of algorithmic paintings of similar styles. By comparing Monet’s original works with the AI-generated works, students can directly feel the collision and integration of traditional art and modern technology, stimulate their thinking on artistic innovation, and help them understand the possibilities of artistic creation under different technical conditions. Teachers can guide students to explore the application of AI-generated tools in artistic creation. Students can try to use AI-generated tools to create their own artworks, or combine AI-generated works with traditional paintings to create unique artistic styles and cultivate students’ innovative consciousness.

### 3.2. The Integration of Folklore and Product Design

To achieve the goals of “cultural inheritance” and “design empowerment” of the “Art Appreciation” course, students are organized to visit intangible cultural heritage workshops in Xinjiang, such as Kashgar’s earthenware village and Hotan’s Edlais Workshop. Through interviews with inheritors, they listen to their stories about the inheritance of skills.

For instance, the Padan wood grain of Adelis silk represents vitality, the Rawap pattern embodies the worship of music, and white, red, yellow and green respectively correspond to deserts, oases and faith. Students vectorize and construct traditional patterns, and with the help of parametric design, generate new patterns with gradients, overlaps and dynamics, which are applied to modern products such as mobile phone cases and silk scarf patterns, bringing new life to ancient patterns on new carriers.

### 3.3. The Integration of Communication Studies and New Media Art

In the “Art Appreciation” course, traditional artworks

are regarded as static and historical cultural heritages. As a treasure of ancient Chinese art, Tang Dynasty murals, with their composition, color and scene, showcase the prosperous culture of the Tang society. However, the dissemination channels of murals in modern society are relatively limited, confined to museums, academic research and art exhibitions. Combining communication studies with new media art, transforming traditional artworks into forms suitable for modern communication, such as using modern short videos, attracts students’ attention through dynamic camera language and tight editing rhythm, and enables students to understand the transformation path of traditional art in modern communication.

To further deepen students’ understanding of the integration of traditional art and modern communication, a short video assignment with the theme of “Dunhuang Aesthetics” was given. Students formed groups automatically, and each group was responsible for creating a short video with the theme of “Dunhuang Aesthetics”. Students needed to select specific scenes or elements from Dunhuang murals as their creative inspiration, such as flying apsaras, caisson ceilings, and nine-colored deer, etc. And transform it into a form suitable for short video presentation. During the creative process, students need to apply modern shooting and editing techniques, such as dynamic shots and special effects production, to transform static murals into dynamic video works. Through script design, students can clarify the narrative main line and plot development of the video. By controlling the editing rhythm, they can enhance the video’s appeal. Practical assignments can stimulate students’ creativity and enable them to improve their new media creation ability in practice.

## 4. The impact of the innovation of the “Art Appreciation” course in Colleges and universities from an interdisciplinary Perspective on students

### 4.1. Effect of Enhancing art Appreciation Ability

Research on the Innovative Effects of the “Art Appreciation” course in Colleges and universities: Do you think the “Art Appreciation” course is helpful for

improving your art appreciation ability? The research results show that 1.4 students think the course is very helpful. Ninety-six students found it helpful, indicating that the vast majority of students recognize that the “Art Appreciation” course plays a positive role in cultivating their aesthetic perception and appreciation level of artworks. Through in-depth analysis of various classic artworks in the course, students gradually establish their own art appreciation system, learn to appreciate the beauty of works from different perspectives, deeply understand the artistic value behind the works, and improve their own art appreciation literacy.

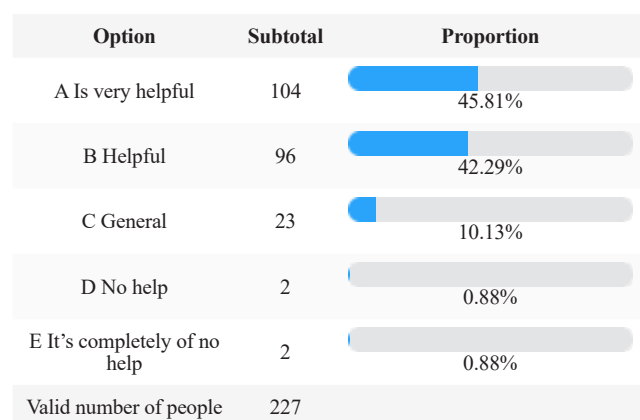


Figure 1. Data on art appreciation ability

#### 4.2. The ability to understand works of art

The improvement of students' comprehension ability of art works in the course is very significant, accounting for 41.85%. The significant proportion is 43.61%. The results indicate that the innovation of the “Art Appreciation” course has achieved remarkable results in guiding students to deeply interpret artworks. Students learn how to delve into the profound meanings of works from their details, understand the unique concepts conveyed by different art schools, and enable them to have a richer aesthetic experience when appreciating artworks.

#### 4.3. Value of Practical Activities

Practical activities, as an important component of the “Art Appreciation” course, are conducive to enhancing students' art appreciation ability. The research data shows that 91 students think practical activities are very effective, and 109 students think they are effective. Students visit art galleries and museums, participate in the copying of artworks, and closely combine the theoretical knowledge learned in class with practical operations. During the visit, students closely experienced the works of masters, directly compared the artistic styles and technique applications of different works, and deepened their understanding of art knowledge in practice. Practical activities enrich students' learning experiences and also enable them to further enhance their ability to appreciate art through personal experience.

#### 5. Conclusion

Under the current background of educational diversification and disciplinary integration, the integration of digital technology, folklore, communication studies and other disciplinary elements into the “Art Appreciation” course in colleges and universities can enrich teaching content, enhance teaching effectiveness, and cultivate students' interdisciplinary thinking and innovation ability. Practice has proved that the interdisciplinary teaching model can effectively stimulate students' interest in learning and enhance their comprehensive quality. However, the innovation of interdisciplinary courses requires strengthening the construction of the teaching staff and encouraging teachers to carry out interdisciplinary teaching practices to provide guarantees for course innovation.

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### Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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