Humanities 2001 Curriculum-Connected Tour

General Information
Augusta State University requires, as part of its bachelors degree core curriculum, that all students take two humanities courses (HUMN 2001 and HUMN 2002). These courses are interdisciplinary courses, each with four semester hours of credit, and take the place of what other schools may teach as literature, art appreciation, and music appreciation. The courses are taught by teams, one faculty member from literature (the team leader), one from music and one from visual art. The overall director for the ASU Humanities program is Kristen Casalotto, professor of art. The course description for HUMN 2001 is as follows. Students must have completed freshman English courses before taking Humanities.

HUMN 2001 World Humanities I
The first semester of a two-semester sequence in which a team of professors, each teaching in his/her area of qualification, provides instruction designed to be an exploration of the humanities through the examination of cultural characteristics and major cultural monuments, including works of art, music, and literature, discussed in the context of their eras and as a reflection of cultural values. The course deals with much of the Western world from antiquity to the seventeenth century as well as studies of the cultural characteristics of Hindu India, Jewish and Islamic peoples.

The humanities classes are a combination of classroom and out-of-classroom (lab) experiences. The Morris offers lab experiences in music (two of our Music at the Morris performances) and visual art. Gallery tours are offered for HUMN 2001 and HUMN 2002 and have two variations for each level: a “curriculum-connected” tour led by a docent and a version led by the art instructor.

The students have only 45 minutes for the tour. They often arrive late and leave early because of the distance from campus and their schedules. Please watch the time.

Overall Goals
The goal is to utilize the context of a Humanities 2001 lab experience to introduce students to an art museum and its programs and to nurture their perception of an art museum as a source of enjoyment, learning, and intellectual growth for themselves and their families.

Tour Objectives
The students will:

- Learn that an art museum (1) collects and preserves works of art, (2) exhibits and interprets works of art, and (3) provides resources for scholarly research.
- Discuss briefly how the Morris Museum of Art fulfills these functions.
- Be shown or recognize on their own images, techniques, or styles that relate to the visual art being studied in the classroom.
- Recognize that artists use various mediums to create their works.

Introduction
- Introduce yourself and review the general museum rules for adults.
  - Please keep a safe distance from all works of art.
- No food or drinks in the galleries.
- Still, non-flash photography is permitted except where “no camera” icons are posted.
- Notes may be taken in pencil only.

- Review briefly the functions of an art museum and use your introduction of the Morris to illustrate how it fulfills those functions.
  - First, the Morris focuses on the art and artists of the American South and has in its collection approximately 5,000 paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, sculptures. These works are safeguarded in storage spaces and we work with conservators when necessary.
  - Second, in 1992, we opened our doors to these galleries, exhibiting selected works that help us illustrate our collection and provide the basis for interpretive and educational programming for the public.
  - Finally, our library and collection are resources for scholarly research in the area of Southern art.

- Tell the group what they are about to do: Look for connections to what they are studying in Humanities and see some of the mediums that artists use.

**Tour Activities – Curriculum-connected**
Please explain that the students are *not* about to see works that are from the periods they are studying in the first Humanities course. The works in our galleries date, at the earliest, to the 1800s, and are American. These are time periods and places they are *not* studying.

- However, there are at least six places in our current galleries that offer opportunities to connect our collection to the students’ 2001 curriculum. Use them in any order you find necessary when there are multiple groups in the galleries.
  - **Sculpture and statuary** (Comparison of the Greek kouros to the Freeman Schoolcraft Figure Dedicated to Peace).
  - **References to classical Greek architecture** in our building and in at least two paintings.
  - **Conventions of composition** using Charles Bird King’s *Portrait of Mrs. William Creighton* and Leonardo’s *Mona Lisa*.
  - **Use of oil paints** using Morse’s portraits of the Thurstons.
  - **Allegory and symbolism in paintings** using Brumidi’s *Columbia Welcoming the South back into the Union* in the Civil War gallery or Way’s *An Abundance of Fruit* in the Still-Life gallery.
  - **Development of linear perspective** using Virginia Randall McLaws’s *Locks on the Savannah River* in the Southern impressionism gallery.
Sculpture and statuary; Greek kouros. There is, of course, no Greek kouros in the Morris collection. However, the Freeman Schoolcraft sculpture, Figure Dedicated to Peace, offers the opportunity to compare and contrast two three-dimensional full-length figures.

The kouros pictured on the left above is at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. It dates from about 600 BCE. The word kouros means “young man” and the statues were a uniquely Greek celebration of the male nude. In the sixth century BCE alone, more than 20,000 kouri were carved. The sculpture is an example of the Archaic style, the name given to art produced from 600 to 480 BCE. (This example of a kouros is from the student’s humanities textbook, and you will have this picture among your props.)

Ask the students to talk about how the two statues are alike and how they are different. The exercise here is to have them recall the characteristics of the kouros and to look closely at the Schoolcraft work. (In preparation for the tour, please refer to the material on the Schoolcraft work at the end of the landscape section of the Docent’s Guide to the Permanent Collection Galleries.)

Alike: Nude; left foot slightly extended forward, hair style, full figure, expressions.
Different: One male, one female; rigidity of kouros stance, Schoolcraft more relaxed; positions of arms,
Influence of classical Greek architecture. There are several references in the building’s architectural decoration (Ionic capitals in the foyers, for example) and in paintings in the galleries.

This painting is The Artist in His Studio by Frank Wright, hanging in the Contemporary gallery. Ask the students to identify the type of columns in the building outside the artist’s window. (They are Doric. See below)

This painting is 923 Telfair by Edward Rice, hanging in the Contemporary gallery. Ask the students to identify the type to columns on the porch of the house. (They are, it appears, Ionic. See below.)

Concluding point: These characteristics of Greek architecture have been used continuously in architecture to this day. What do they connote when used today? Formality, authority, wealth, etc.
Conventions of composition or standard ways in which artists arrange subjects and backgrounds. Charles Bird King’s Portrait of Mrs. William Creighton (Elizabeth Meade Creighton) in the Nineteenth-Century Portraits gallery gives the opportunity to compare and contrast with Leonardo’s Mona Lisa.

- Both link figures and landscapes with rendering of flesh tones.
- Both models appear to be sitting, shown from below the waist, hands visibly crossed, torso turned to the right (3/4 pose).
- View of landscape; frontal view of figure
- Spatial depth is depicted
- Examples of sfumato, a technique used and named by Leonardo to achieve a smokiness or hazy effect. It is achieved by building up color with many layers of transparent oil paint...the process of glazing. There is blending of light and shade.
- The mysterious smiles
- General forms of clothing are similar, even though from different time periods
- Now contrast the paintings—how are they different?
Use of oil paints. Oil paints date to the late 1300s and early 1400s. In our galleries, Samuel F. B. Morse's portraits of the Thurstons of Charleston provide nineteenth-century examples of underpainting and the use of superimposed translucent layers of glazes. Below is the portrait of Mrs. Thurston. The discussion can focus on how the subtle shading was built up with many layers of glazes rather than with more opaque paints (as in works in Impressionism gallery and Contemporary gallery.)
**Allegory and symbolism.** The Civil War gallery’s *Columbia Welcoming the South Back into the Union* by Constantino Brumidi is an example of allegory, utilizing figures that parallel and illustrate a deeper meaning.

Constantino Brumidi moved to Washington, D.C., in 1855 and was almost constantly employed thereafter working on decorating the U.S. Capitol. In this allegorical painting, a study for a mural in the vice president’s Senate office, Brumidi has created a conciliatory scene in which the South is warmly welcomed back into the federal union. Columbia, dressed in a tunic and holding what appears to be a rudder, sits between two other female figures. One is shown with a sheaf of wheat and a cornucopia symbolizing agriculture while the other holds the caduceus, a symbol of commerce. Columbia extends a hand to the South, who approaches wearing a toga and holding a bouquet of cotton bolls. The south is being led by Liberty, who wears a liberty cap and a sash of stars across her chest. At Liberty’s feet is an eagle, who holds the olive branch of peace in its beak.

In the Still Life gallery, Andrew John Henry Way’s *An Abundance of Fruit* provides a context in which to discuss *vanitas*, the symbolic representation of the transience of life and certainty of death.

Some examples of transience of life: Fruit off the trees or vines, browning leaves, insect holes in leaves, etc.
Linear perspective. Virginia Randall McLaws's *Locks on the Savannah River* in Impressionism in the South gallery probably is our most obvious example of the use of linear perspective, the mathematical system formalized by the Renaissance architect Brunelleschi.

Ask the students to identify the lines the artist uses to create the illusion of depth.

The lines superimposed on the painting reveal that the use of linear perspective here is not terribly precise...not all lines lead to one vanishing point. However, the artist does create the effect of depth by the lines...both actual and implied...in the painting.
Tour Activities – mediums in which artists work
During most of the year, the vast majority of works will be oil on various surfaces. Take note of temporary exhibitions to point out photography, drawings, prints, or watercolors when they are available.

Conclusion
- Ask if there are any questions.
- Remind the students about the library, the Center for the Study of Southern Art (research function of museums).
- Encourage the students to visit museums when they travel to other cities.
- Invite them to return to the Morris to see more of the works in the galleries and to participate in educational and public programming.
- Remind the students that Sundays are free.