

ARTH 4850: History of Fashion and Dress
Spring 2026, Fridays 2-4:50pm, ART 280

Instructor: Dr. Annette Becker (she/her)

Office: Welch Street Complex 1 (405 S. Welch St), Suite 103

Student drop-in hours: Friday 9-11am or by appointment

Communication:

- Messages: Please use the Canvas inbox for communication.
- Tone: Please communicate respectfully and professionally. Within the context of this course, please refer to the instructor as Dr. Becker.
- Timeliness: Dr. Becker commits to responding to your messages within 24 hours during the week. Weekend communications will be responded to by the following Monday.

Course Description: Introduction to dress history; with a focus on material culture in nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty first-century fashion; with a course structure inspired by the metadata from archive and museum database entries; modeling research practices of professionals in fields shaped by art history.

Course Objectives: Through readings, discussions, in-class engagement, and writing assignments, students will:

- Recognize and engage theoretical and methodological issues associated with the history of fashion and dress
- Identify and deploy scholarly and field-based practices related to the history of fashion and dress
- Analyze primary and scholarly sources and conduct research, presenting findings verbally and in writing

Required Materials

- Readings: There is no textbook for this course. All required materials will be made available through hyperlinks to web resources, through the UNT Libraries website, or through uploaded documents in Canvas.
- In class: For each course meeting, please bring a way to access your reading responses and all assigned content for that week. Please also bring materials to take notes for your own use and for in-class activities that include discussion and writing.
- Outside of class: To prepare for course meetings and to complete assignments, you will need access to a computer and reliable internet. Information about UNT tech resources can be found here: <https://academictechnologies.unt.edu/services/computer-labs/request/find-student-computer-lab>

Course Structure: This in-person course meets Fridays from 2-4:50pm in ART 280. Classes will include: a short object-based lecture; participatory discussion of readings; guest lectures; instructor lectures; class debates and hands-on activities; and introduction to next week's topics. Readings are from a variety of sources, accessible online, and must be completed before class.

Attendance and Absences: Attendance is critical to active engagement with course materials, exposure to in-class content, and developing a mutually beneficial learning environment with your fellow classmates. Active engagement is modeled by arriving on time and staying through the entirety of the course session, engaging with course activities and guest lecturers, and participating in class discussions. This participation will count for 20% of your course grade. Absences will be handled according to these guidelines:

- One absence will be excused with no questions asked.
- Beyond the one automatically excused absence, additional absences will only be excused if you provide the instructor with timely written notice via Canvas message and relevant documentation from a medical professional or UNT student office. If needed, the Dean of Students Office is available to assist you with documenting your absence. It is located in the University Union, Suite 409 or email them at deanofstudents@unt.edu
- Beyond that one automatically excused absence, additional absences without written notice and documentation will result in a reduced attendance and participation grade.
- With any absence, students are still responsible for the materials covered during missed class sessions. Such information can be obtained by asking classmates for notes, reviewing content on Canvas, and/or meeting with the instructor during office hours.
- All assignments are still due unless a deadline extension has been requested and granted.

Course requirements and student assessment: Assignment details will be distributed separately and posted on Canvas. Reading responses are due in advance of that week's class meeting. All other due dates are noted in the schedule of classes.

Attendance + Participation		20%
Reading Responses	12 total (not first and last week), 1.25% each	15%
Research Papers	2 total, 15% each	30%
Annotated Bibliographies	2 total, 10% each	20%
Speaker Proposal		5%
Final Presentation		5%
Final Presentation Reviews		5%

A: 100 - 89.5 outstanding and well above minimum requirements
B: 89.4 - 79.5 impressive and above minimum requirements
C: 79.4- 69.5 good college-level work and meets minimum requirements
D: 69.4 - 59.5 below average and fails to meet minimum requirements
F: 59.4 - 0 well below average or failure to complete

Late Work: All assignments are due by their given deadline. Deadline extensions and acceptance of late work are made on a case-by-case basis. Requests made more than 24 hours after the deadline passes will not be considered.

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences: According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. Submitting work to this class that is found to violate UNT's academic integrity policy will result in a failing grade in the class.

Policy on AI: Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can be helpful in smoothing prose, articulating ideas more effectively, and structuring thoughts more clearly. This course considers AI an optional tool for enhancing students' original ideas and arguments, with the understanding that AI-created content will not demonstrate adequate depth of thought nor sufficient critical engagement to pass this course. To encourage thoughtful use of AI and guided by the *AI Writing Indicator* score through Turnitin, students using AI are required to:

- If the *AI Writing Indicator* score is at or above 20%, include a written description and explanation of how and why you decided to use AI. This must be specific to the individual assignment, at least 125 words in length, and be attached to the end of the writing assignment. If it is not provided, the assignment will receive a grade of zero.
- If the *AI Writing Indicator* score is 100%, the assignment will receive a grade of zero.

ADA Accommodation Statement: Please discuss and confirm your accommodations with me via Canvas message or through an in-person meeting during the first two weeks of class.

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information,

refer to the Office of Disability Access website at <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Emergency Notification and Procedures: UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to the UNT Learning Management System (LMS) for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Rules of Engagement: Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.
- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge rather than attack other people's ideas.
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.

Date	Theme	Intro Artifact	Speaker	Research Resource	Readings
16 Jan	Intro	Texas Fashion Collection, UNT Digital Library	Rebecca Barham, UNT Libraries, art subject librarian	Cora Ginsburg auction catalogues, link .	(This week is optional) Taylor, Lou. 1998. "Doing the Laundry? A Reassessment of Object-Based Dress History." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 2 (4): 337–58. doi:10.2752/136270498779476118. Texas Fashion Collection. 2025. "Systems as Archives." Youtube. link
23 Jan	Fiber	Adele Simpson, day dress, 1952, Gift of Adele Simpson. link	Abby Sherrill, independent fiber artist	CAMEO database, link .	Thanhauser, Sofi. 2022. "Cotton: Texas Fields" and "Cotton: The Fabric Revolution." <i>Worn: A People's History of Clothing</i> . New York, Pantheon Books. (Access through UNT Libraries, link .) Lamarche-Beauchesne, Rachel. 2023. "Reviving the Silenced; Defining Vegan Fashion and Classifying Materials of Animal Origin." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 27 (7): 937–56. doi:10.1080/1362704X.2023.2276547. Blaszczyk, Regina Lee. 2006. "Styling Synthetics: DuPont's Marketing of Fabrics and Fashions in Postwar America." <i>The Business History Review</i> 80 (3): 485-528. https://www.jstor.org/stable/25097227
30 Jan	Textile/ Material	Cristobal Balenciaga, evening cape, 1960, Gift of Claudia Heard de Osborne. link	Emma Cormack, Bard Graduate Center Gallery, curator	Textile swatch books, physical resource in class.	Abrego, Sonya. 2019. "Cone Mills Denim: An Investigation into Fabrication, Tradition, and Quality." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 23 (4–5): 515–30. doi:10.1080/1362704X.2017.1420540. McConnell, Lucy Elizabeth. 2020. "The Rise and Fall of the Paisley Shawl through the Nineteenth. <i>Journal of Dress History</i> 4 (1): 30-48. link Avery Truffelman. 2018. "Plaid." 99% Invisible: <i>Articles of Interest</i> Podcast. link
6 Feb	Type	Claire McCardell, television suit, 1951,	Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell,	Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus, link .	RISD Museum. 2011. Exhibition checklist and labels from <i>Cocktail Culture : Ritual and Invention in American Fashion, 1920-1980</i> . (Read intro and

		Gift of Neiman Marcus. link	independent researcher and curator		<p>peruse exhibition checklist accessed through the link at the end of this webpage: link</p> <p>Essays from: Antonelli, Paola et al. 2017. <i>ITEMS: Is Fashion Modern?</i> New York: Museum of Modern Art.</p> <p>Chrisman-Campbell, Kimberly. 2023. "The Not-So-Sexy Origins of the Miniskirt." <i>The Atlantic</i>. Link – and uploaded to Canvas.</p>
13 Feb	Date	Adrian, daytime suit, ca. 1944, Gift of Mrs. Elmer Wheeler. link	Doug Campbell, UNT Libraries, history subject librarian	Berg Fashion Library - Timeline, link .	<p>Zachary, Cassidy, and Callahan, April. 2021. "Fashion Under Fascism, an interview with Dr. Eugenia Paulicelli." <i>Dressed: The History of Fashion</i> podcast. link</p> <p>Chapin, Chloe. 2022. "Masculine Renunciation or Rejection of the Feminine?: Revisiting J.C. Flügel's Psychology of Clothes." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 26 (7): 983–1008. doi:10.1080/1362704X.2021.1952919.</p>
20 Feb	Description	Stella Mae Pettway and Greg Lauren, "Overall Lounge" pants, 2010, TFC purchase. link	Ailie Pankonien, Texas Fashion Collection, collection manager	<i>Fairchild's Dictionary of Fashion</i> (New York: Fairchild Books), many editions, physical resource in class.	<p>Mida, Ingrid, and Kim, Alexandra. 2015. "Introduction." <i>The Dress Detective</i>. London: Bloomsbury. (available on Canvas)</p> <p>Mariotti, Anna. 2020. "1861 – Elizabeth Keckley, Purple velvet day and evening dress." <i>Fashion History Timeline</i>. link</p> <p>Carter, Michael. 2020. "Dressed in Adjectives, Part 2 the Lowly Adjectives." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 24 (5): 775–82. doi:10.1080/1362704X.2018.1543245.</p> <p>Victoria and Albert Museum. 2020. "Fashion Unpicked: The Bar suit by Christian Dior." <i>V&A Youtube</i>. link</p>
27 Feb	Size	FUBU, ensemble, 2002, TFC purchase. link		Online CVs and reading lists, example link .	<p>Libes, Kenna. 2024. "All the Ba-Zooms Go': Industry Ideals and the Aesthetics of Size in Dress Collections." <i>Dress</i> 50 (2): 285–98. doi:10.1080/03612112.2024.2360815.</p>

					<p>Demby, Gene. 2014. "Sagging Pants and the Long History of 'Dangerous' Street Fashion." <i>WNYC NPR</i>. link</p> <p>Peters, Lauren Downing. 2019. "Flattering the Figure, Fitting in: The Design Discourses of Stoutwear, 1915-1930." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 23 (2): 167–94. doi:10.1080/1362704X.2019.1567059.</p>
6 March	Condition	Maker unknown, court coat, ca. 1780s, Gift of the Family of Scott and Stuart Gentling.	Melanie Sanford, conservator, Conserving Threads of Texas	TBD	<p>Abrego, Sonya. 2014. "Exhibition Review: Tattered & Torn: On the Road to Deaccession." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 18 (1): 97–102. doi:10.2752/175174114X13788163471749.</p> <p>Scaturro, Sarah. 2024. "For the People: Renewing Conservation Ethics for Dress Collections." <i>Dress</i> 50 (2): 245–59. doi:10.1080/03612112.2024.2354658.</p> <p>High, Rachel. 2014. "Charles James: Beyond Fashion – Interview with Conservators Sarah Scaturro and Glenn Petersen." Met Museum website. link (And watch at least three animations of Charles James patternmaking here)</p>
13 March	Spring Break				
20 March	Geography/ Culture	Stella Jean, print ensemble, Fall 2016, TFC Purchase.	Ashlee Solice, Chickasaw Cultural Heritage Center, exhibits and gallery coordinator	Europeana database, link .	<p>Jirousek, Charlotte. 2010. "The Kaftan and Its Origins." <i>Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion: Central and Southwest Asia</i>. Edited by Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood: 134–138. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010. http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/BEWDF/EDch5023. (Access through UNT Libraries, Berg Fashion Library database)</p> <p>Square, Jonathan Michael. "From Vicksburg to Paris" and "Aesthetic Literacy." <i>Fashioning the Self</i> 1 (1): 22-31. link</p> <p>Mars, Roman. 2024. "The Society of Ambiance Makers and Elegant Persons." <i>99% Invisible</i> podcast. link</p>

27 March	Maker	Victor Costa, cocktail ensemble, 1987, Gift of Victor Costa. link	Ayaka Sano, Metropolitan Museum of Art, researcher	Fashion Institute of Technology, Special Collections and Archives, Oral History Collection, link .	Dior, Christian. 1957/2021. "An Innocent Abroad in the USA." London: Victoria & Albert Museum. (Available on Canvas) Truffelman, Avery. 2020. "Knock Offs." <i>99% Invisible: Articles of Interest</i> podcast. link Fondazione Ferragamo. 2026. "Salvatore Ferragamo." Ferragamo website. link
3 April	Contributor	Emilio Pucci, "Mariposa" day dress, 1967, Gift of Ann J. Folz. link	TBD	Vogue Archive via UNT Libraries, link .	UNT Libraries Special Collections. 2020. <i>Mod City: The Jon Rogers and Georgette de Bruchard Collection</i> . UNT Libraries. link Tregenza, Liz. 2021. "Copying a Master: London Wholesale Couture and Cristóbal Balenciaga in the 1950s." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 25 (4): 457–79. doi:10.1080/1362704X.2021.1905945. Gross, Rachel Elspeth. 2024. "Remembering Fashion Icon Peggy Moffit." Forbes. Link and available on Canvas
10 April	Donor	Assorted designers, 1980s-2010s, Gifts of Ellen Johnson. link	TBD	TBD	Bolton, Andrew. 2019. "Interview with the Collector." In <i>Pursuit of Fashion: The Sandy Schreier Collection</i> . New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art. Available on Canvas Windsor-Liscombe, Emma. 2024. "Fabrics of Memory." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 28 (2): 209–29. doi:10.1080/1362704X.2024.2326330. Fondation Azzedine Alaia. 2026. "History of Fashion." Foundation Azzedine Alaia website. link
17 April	Value	Unknown maker, tiara, 1930s, Unknown donor. link	Macy Shackelford, Heritage	Revisit: Cora Ginsburg auction catalogues, link .	Christie's. 2025. "Unapologetically Iris: The Personal Collection of Iris Apfel." Christie's website. Link (and make sure to look through sale items)

			Auctions, cataloguer		Huggard, Emily, Patrick Lonergan, and Anja Overdiek. 2023. "New Luxury Ideologies: A Shift From Building Cultural to Social Capital." <i>Fashion Theory</i> 27 (4): 555–79. doi:10.1080/1362704X.2022.2117008. Stoehrer, Emily. 2021. "The Evolution of Vintage Jewellery on the Hollywood Red Carpet, 1995-2005." <i>The Journal of Dress History</i> 5 (1): 88-102. link
24 April	Institution	Giorgio di Sant' Angelo, patchwork dress, 1969, Gift of the Museum at FIT. link	Kristen Stewart, formerly of The Valentine Museum, curator	Costume Society of America, Digital Costume Collection Guide, link .	Smithsonian Museums. ND. "A Look at the Black Fashion Museum Collection and Designer Peter Davy." Google Arts & Culture. link Fernandez, Chantal. 2024. "The Met Gala's Costume Drama." <i>The Cut</i> . link
1 May	Finals Week				

Assignments

Attendance + participation	To create deeper understandings of course content, attending and participating in course sessions is required. Attendance policy outlined in syllabus.	20%	Assessed every course session
Reading responses	To facilitate active engagement with assigned readings and adequately prepare for course discussion, a short reading response is required every week. (None first and last weeks, 1.25% each week)	15%	Due by the time class starts each week, every week except the first and last course meetings, required even if absent from class
Research papers	To apply the readings' themes to research practices, two 5-6 page papers will engage an assigned TFC artifact with one of the course's themes. (15% each, one for each half of the semester)	30%	Research Paper 1: Due Fri, March 20 at midnight Research Paper 2: Due Fri, May 1, at midnight
Annotated bibliographies	To deepen a scholarly engagement with course topics, two annotated bibliographies will evaluate and propose additional readings that might be included in a future iteration of this course. (10% each, one for each half of the semester)	20%	Annotated Bibliography 1: Due on Friday, March 6 at midnight Annotated Bibliography 2: Due on Friday, April 24 at midnight
Speaker proposal	To learn more about fashion history scholars and professionals, a speaker proposal will persuasively present why a current figure should be considered to speak in a future iteration of this course.	5%	Due on Friday, April 17 at midnight
Final presentation	To gain experience with public speaking and share research findings with classmates, a recorded five-minute oral presentation with accompanying powerpoint will synthesize and disseminate findings from one of the two research papers.	5%	Due on Friday, May 1 at midnight
Final presentation reviews	To learn from your classmates' research and practice giving constructive feedback, watch and comment on five classmates' final presentations. Comments should make note of assigned course content, noting use of themes from readings, class lectures, and guest speakers.	5%	Due on Friday, May 8 at midnight