Social Psychology of Dress and Appearance (Component Area A, University Core)
MDSE 3370.001 Fall 2026
T/TH 11:10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Cury 104

INSTRUCTOR: Ms. Ashley WIlliams Durbin
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TEXT: Lennon, S. J., Johnson, K. K. P., Rudd, N. A. (2024). *The Social Psychology of Dress, 2nd edition.* Bloomsbury, NY. ISBN: 9781501391347

OFFICE HOURS:

Day	Time	Location
T/TH	9:30 am- 10:30 am	330J

If this day/time does not work for you, no problem! Let's schedule a time that works with both of our schedules. I'm happy to meet via Zoom as well. Note - Please schedule your appointment ahead of time, whenever possible.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Theoretical frameworks are examined and used to interpret the meanings of dress in cultural patterns, social organizations, and personal identities. Current fashion trends are analyzed and interpreted through the study of popular culture and everyday life.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
1. Consider diverse experiences and points of view, both within and outside one's own cultural group.
2. Identify the role dress plays in the development and understanding of self and others.
3. Understand the role of socio-cultural, psychological, economic, political and technological factors in aesthetic expression and appearance management across cultures.
4. Apply theories, concepts, and research regarding appearance and human behavior to industry, societal, and global problems.
5. Analyze the role of dress and appearance in reflecting and shaping intra-and-inter-cultural interactions.
6. Critique the fashion industry's influence on consumer body image by analyzing model representation, sizing standards, and media use.

MDSE 3370 fulfills the three-hour Component Area A of the university core. Through the Texas Core Curriculum, 'students gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning.' Our core objectives for this course include skill building in critical thinking, communication, empirical/quantitative analysis, and social responsibility.

INSTRUCTOR COMMITMENT AND EXPECTATIONS (WILLIAMS' EXPECTATIONS)
My teaching philosophy is one based upon mutual respect. I set high expectations, and I believe that every student can meet that standard. I am committed to your success and will respond promptly to emails, provide engaging classroom experiences, and offer clear instructions to guide your learning. On the flip side, I expect that you attend each class period, stay organized, turn in assignments on time,

arrive promptly, engage in the learning process, behave professionally, and submit quality work. The sky is the limit when we are all on the same page.

OUR APPROACH

From the Harajuku girls of Japan to toddler beauty pageants in Georgia; from the sworn virgins of Albania to the runway models on Seventh Avenue, we will learn how material and nonmaterial aspects of culture are learned and reinforced by those around us. In short, dress is an artifact of culture. Dress varies depending upon time, geography, technical skills, and the underlying values, beliefs and mores of a given culture. Perhaps you have a preconceived notion of how certain people should look dress based on their position or social role. How would you respond to a medical doctor who was heavily tattooed or pierced? How does this preconceived notion differ for individuals living in Japan, Kenya, or the United States? We will use dress and appearance to learn about the practices of cultures in terms of cultural beliefs, aesthetic sensibilities, and lifestyle practices. Our end goal is for you to be knowledgeable, considerate, and inclusive of those in your own culture and other cultures. We will achieve this outcome through integrated learning activities, writing assignments, media, speakers, lectures, discussion, etc.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

GLOBAL CONNECT (50 points; 5 @ 10 points each). The world will be our platform for applying the theoretical frameworks and concepts discussed in class through global connect assignments. In fact, our cultural frame of reference gives understanding to our dress and appearance actions. We will use these assignments to springboard into classroom discussion, so **please note that late work is not accepted on GLOBAL CONNECT assignments.**

BEYOND THE LECTURE (50 points). These are unannounced assignments that will be completed during class. You must be present to earn these points. **No make-ups allowed, but you will have an opportunity to drop a missed assignment.**

NUMBER 12 LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU ANALYSIS (80 points). In this two-part assignment, you will analyze plastic surgery trends and critically evaluate standards of ideal body image based on an episode of the Twilight Zone, Number 12 Looks Just Like You. ***This assignment will be used for University Core Assessment of quantitative/empirical analysis, critical thinking, social responsibility, and communication.***

THEORY QUIZ (20 Points). Throughout the semester we will examine dress and appearance through the lens of various anthropological, psychological, and sociological perspectives. The theory quiz will test your ability to apply these theories to real world situations.

EXAMS (300 points). There will be four exams given during this course divided purposefully between items to assess experience with the reading material and familiarity with the materials presented. Exams are online, timed and administered during our regularly scheduled class time. Do not come to class on exam dates; rather find a quiet location with a reliable internet connection.

Detailed information and requirements will be distributed throughout the semester for the papers and assignments listed above and below via Canvas.

ASSIGNMENT		PTS.	DUE DATE
Global Connect Assignments		50	Multiple Dates, See Canvas
Beyond the Lecture Assignments		50	Multiple Dates, Unannounced
Writing Assignment, **Number 12 Looks Just Like You** • **Future of Plastic Surgery** CORE Part I (32 points) • **Beauty, Aesthetic Expression, and Diversity** CORE Part II (48 points)		80	October 1, 11:59 p.m. October 27, 11:59 p.m.
Exams*	Exam 1 (online)	75	September 10, 11:10-12:30 p.m.
	Exam 2 (online)	75	October 8, 11:10-12:30 p.m.
	Exam 3 (online)	75	November 10, 11:10-12:30 p.m.
	Theory Quiz (online)	20	November 12, 8:00 a.m.-11:59
	Final Exam (online)	75	December 10, 10:30 am-12:30 pm
TOTAL POINTS		**500**	
**Do not come to class on exam dates; rather find a quiet location with a reliable internet connection*.			

EVALUATION/GRADING:
Rubrics for each of the assignments will be posted in Canvas throughout the semester. The final semester grade will be determined as follows:
A = 90-100%
B = 80-89.9%
C = 70-79.9%
D = 60-69.9%
F = 59.9% or below

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES (UNT Policy 06.039)
Attendance is taken on a regular basis and will influence your final grade as many of our assignments are completed and discussed during class. Repeated tardiness (3) will count as an absence. You are responsible for attending each class meeting and securing your own lecture notes should you miss. Here are a few rules of engagement for our class. Showing up for class is key.

- Sign in with your full first name and last name (legibly) as listed on the class roster.
- Do not sign in for your classmates
- Do not wear headphones.
- Stay engaged in class activities. Be alert.
- Be respectful.
- Contribute to discussion.

SEATING ARRANGEMENTS
You will select an assigned seat for the duration of the semester. The instructor may change seating assignments at the request of the student or as a result of classroom behavior.

LATE WORK POLICY
Late work is only accepted for your writing assignments but will be downgraded at the rate of 10% for each calendar day late**. After one week late, papers will not be accepted**. Because of the interactive

nature of your other assignments (i.e., Global Connect, Beyond the Lecture), no late work will be accepted.

MISSED EXAMS
You are responsible for taking all exams at the scheduled times. Makeup exams are given only in extreme cases (e.g., illness or death in family). You must email or call prior to exam for approval of alternative testing.

FINAL EXAM POLICY
Final exams will be administered at the designated time, TBA. Should you have more than two finals on one day, you may request to reschedule one of these exams on another day during the final exam period. Please check the course calendar early in the semester to avoid any schedule conflicts. I'm here to help!

ADA ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT
The University of North Texas and the College of Merchandising, Hospitality and Tourism make reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking 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 an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. ODA notices of 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 accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their accommodations with faculty. 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 see the Office of Disability Access website at disability.unt.edu. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION AND PROCEDURES
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in an event of emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at https://my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) ensuring you know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas, determining how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and identifying where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, I will communicate with you through Canvas regarding assignments, exams, and other items that may be impacted by the closure.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES (UNT Policy 06.003)
A range of disciplinary actions may result from any finding of academic dishonesty (i.e., admonition, class failure, expulsion) depending upon the severity of the misconduct. At a minimum for this class, any finding of academic misconduct on exams, writing assignments, use of AI, or any other graded assignment will result in a "0" for that graded activity or assignment. Specific deductions for TurnitIn violations will be available on your assignment rubrics within Canvas. For additional information, please refer to UNT Policy 06.003 and the CMHT Syllabus Addendum.

COURSE RECORDINGS
Class recordings are the intellectual property of the university/ instructor and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes. Students may not post or otherwise share the recordings outside the class, or outside the Canvas Learning Management System, in any form.

Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

OTHER INFORMATION.
Class lectures and other activities are intended to enrich or supplement the assigned readings. They are not intended to summarize or substitute for the readings. I will be glad to meet individually with you to discuss materials presented in the readings or the class lectures, to help you determine your progress in the class, or other relevant purposes.

MDR DEPARTMENTAL POLICY FOR AI
Submitting assignments that use Generative AI without proper citation or indication of its use is plagiarism. It is a substitute for your own creative thought and effort. Your brain continues to develop and make connections throughout your life; train your brain, not AI. Instructors will monitor AI use and will check student work for ethical use according to their policies. Every instructor has consequences stated for plagiarism in their policies. A range of disciplinary actions may result from any finding of academic dishonesty (for example, admonition, class failure, expulsion) depending upon the severity of the misconduct. Plagiarism will be reported to the UNT Academic Integrity Officer. Policies may differ between instructors and courses. Read the syllabus and course policies, especially for the consequences. If you are allowed by your instructor to use any Generative AI in a course, you must disclose and cite its use by including citations in APA style. If you are allowed by your instructor to use any Generative AI in a course, you must also carefully check for errors. Here are a few cautions to consider before submitting an assignment that uses Generative AI: "hallucinations" or fictitious information, being wrong, and oversimplified, low quality, or generic results. It also tends to replicate and amplify any biases or inaccuracies that exist in the training sources or the Internet. To protect student data privacy, students are prohibited from the submission of personally identifying information to Generative AI systems. In this course, students will receive a 0 for any assignment using AI generated unless otherwise required in project/paper guidelines.

MDSE 3370
TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

DATES	TOPIC	READINGS	DUE DATES
Aug. 18	Course Introduction: Why Study Dress?	Chapter 1	
Aug. 20	Definition of Terms	Chapter 1	
Aug. 25	Cultural Components of Dress	Chapter 1	**Global Connect 1: 11:59 p.m.**
Aug. 27	Contextual Perspectives of Dress	Chapter 1	
Sept. 1	Origins & Functions of Dress	Chapter 2	
Sept. 3	Origins & Functions of Dress	Chapter 2	**Global Connect 2: 11:59 p.m.**

DATES	TOPIC	READINGS	DUE DATES
Sept. 8	Conducting Research on Dress	Chapter 3	
Sept. 10	**Exam 1**	**Chpts. 1,2, 3**	**Exam 1, 11:10-12:30 p.m. (50 minute, timed exam)**
Sept. 15	Dress & Social Cognition	Chapter 4	**Global Connect 3: 11:59 p.m.**
Sept. 17	Dress & Social Cognition	Chapter 4	
Sept. 22	*CMHT Career Expo 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., at the University Union*		
Sept. 24	Dress & Impression Formation	Chapter 5	
Sept. 29	Dress & Appearance	Chapter 6	
Oct. 1	Dress & Appearance	Chapter 6	**Writing Assignment, Future of Plastic Surgery, 11:59 p.m.**
Oct. 6	Dress & Appearance	Chapter 6	
Oct. 8	**Exam 2**	**Chpts. 4, 5, 6**	**Exam 2, 11:10-12:30 p.m. (50 minute, timed exam)**
Oct. 13	Dress & Body Image	Chapter 7	
Oct. 15	Dress & Body Image	Chapter 7	**Global Connect 4: 11:59 p.m.**
Oct. 20	*Executive Lecture - Details TBA*		
Oct. 22	Dress & Personality	Chapter 8	
Oct. 27	Dress & Self	Chapter 9	**Writing Assignment, *Beauty, Aesthetic Expression, and Diversity*, 11:59 p.m.**
Oct. 29	Dress & Self	Chapter 9	
Nov. 3	Dress & Identity	Chapter 10	
Nov. 5	Dress & Identity	Chapter 10	
Nov. 10	**Exam 3**	**Chpts. 7, 8, 9, 10**	**Exam 3, 11:10-12:30 p.m. (50 minute, timed exam)**
Nov. 12	Dress & Socialization (Recorded Lecture) **Theory Quiz**	Chapter 11	**Theory Quiz 8:00 a.m. – 11:59 p.m.**

DATES	TOPIC	READINGS	DUE DATES
Nov. 17	Dress & Social Groups	Chapter 12	
Nov. 19	Dress & Social Groups	Chapter 12	
Dec. 1	Dress & Ritual	Chapter 14	**Global Connect 5, 11:59 p.m.**
Dec. 3	Dress & Ritual	Chapter 14	
Dec. 8	Tentative No Class Day		
Dec. 10	**Tentative Final Exam**	**Chpts. 11, 12, 14**	**Final Exam, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (50 minute, timed exam)**

ALL DUE DATES/EXAM DATES AND ASSIGNED READINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE