



**Instructor: Jacquelyn Delin McDonald, Ph.D.**  
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**Meeting Times: Tues/Thurs 9am-12:50pm**  
**Room: ART 280**  
**Office Hour: Zoom by appointment**  
**Summer I 2026: 05/18- 06/19**

## **Art History 4811.002- Topics in 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

### *19<sup>th</sup> Century Sculpture*

**Course Description:** The three-dimensional media of various artists from primarily Europe and the U.S. will be studied in this course to better understand cultural history during the long nineteenth century. We will look to various monuments, as well as ‘Halls of Fame,’ filled with statuary to understand this period’s need and desire for the timeless medium. Portrait busts, mythological works and historical tableaux will be examined. There will also be special emphasis on women sculptors of the period, who worked to defy societal barriers and develop professionalism in the medium. How one experiences the three-dimensional medium of sculpture will also be of concern- as the aesthetics of its presentation and engagement extend into the viewer’s space- ‘the expanded field.’ Marketing, materials and process, ideas of representation, nationalism, politics, and gender will be discussed to better consider sculpture of the period and best understand how 19th century sculptural works continue to be of importance to this day.

#### **Course objectives:**

1. Students will learn to examine works of the visual past to better understand their culture(s), economies, and class relations considering diverse perspectives.
2. Students will implement critical thinking with close reading.
3. Students will develop their research and writing skills.
4. Students will work together to analyze conceptual frameworks, defend arguments, and analyze works formally during course discussions and presentations.

**Required Texts:** Articles/Chapters/Online Databases via Course Reserves/Canvas

**Writing Standards:** As ARTH 4811 is an upper-level course, the quality of student writing is expected to meet an advanced college-level. There are several written assignments throughout this semester where students will need to be proactive and work independently via research, drafting, and editing to perform well in this course.

**Technology policy:** I do not allow the use of cell phones, or recording devices in the classroom, except by special permission. (If you have a disability requiring ODA accommodations, please provide me with the documentation (see below)). All devices must be silenced and put away during class to avoid distractions. I prefer that students do not use laptops or tablets during class to avoid distractions. *Writing notes on paper has been proven to increase retention of information due to kinetic learning.* However, if you must use a laptop/tablet for taking notes or

viewing articles, please ask for permission after class or via email. If you are in a situation where you may need to have your phone out (and on vibrate) due to personal circumstances, please let me know at the beginning of class.

**Attendance:** You are allowed 1 unexcused absence this semester, lecture notes or slides will not be provided, and it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate. (We only meet 10 times, so it is not advisable to miss class). If you have a longer illness, please submit your documentation to the Dean of Students for an accommodation letter to excuse your absences. Please make every effort to be on time for class. Students who consistently arrive late, leave early, or take long restroom breaks during class will not only miss important information covered in class, but will receive marks off their Participation/Discussion grade. Please take the time we have together in our course each week to learn, and engage with your classmates.

**Late work:** Late work is not accepted. Make up work for assignments are allowed only in rare cases where the student has an excused reason for their absence accompanied by documentation via email. You must email a request for late work within 48 hours of deadline.

**Course Disclaimer:** Content in the arts can sometimes include works, situations, actions, and language that can be offensive to some students on the grounds of sexual explicitness, violence, or blasphemy. As the College of Visual Arts and Design is devoted to the principle of freedom of expression, artistic and otherwise, and it is not the college's practice to censor these works or ideas on any of these grounds, students who might feel unduly distressed or made uncomfortable by such expressions should withdraw at the start of the term and seek another course.

**Student Support:**

**ADA Policy-** UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, 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. For additional information see the ODA website (<https://disability.unt.edu/>).

**Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)-** The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because 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 in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

**Emergency Notification & 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 Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

**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.

**All work submitted for a grade in this class must be written in your own words and original to this term.** You may not copy or transcribe anyone else's material, including but not limited to AI-generators or editing software, websites, museum publications, books, or articles. You may not reuse work previously uploaded or submitted to this or any other class, either your own or another person's. Students found to violate this policy will be sanctioned with penalties ranging from zero on the assignment to a failing grade in the course. All offenders will be reported to the university.

#### **Course Assignments Breakdown**

Reading Write ups – 30%  
Museum Assignment- 15%  
Research Paper/Presentation- 35%  
Participation/Discussion- 10%  
Final Reflection Paper- 10%

#### **Course Rubric**

A- 100-90  
B- 80-89  
C- 70-79  
D- 60-69  
F- 59 or below  
(out of 100 points, or 100 %)

#### **Course Assignments**

**Write-ups-** At the beginning of the semester, students will select two different topics/themes to produce a summary of each of assigned reading(s) for the day. Students will also provide three discussion questions, which they will prompt to their classmates during in-class Discussion. You must submit digitally via Canvas to run it through Turn-it-In. (15% each, 30% total)

**Quizzes-** There will be no scheduled quizzes this semester. However, the professor reserves the right to administer pop quizzes should it seem that a significant number of students are not completing the reading assignments and/or paying attention during course lecture and discussion.

***Museum Assignment Paper:*** Students will independently visit and write about works within the collection at the Dallas Museum of Art. Findings will culminate in a paper. A handout will be provided. Papers are due at the beginning of class. You must submit digitally via Canvas to run it through Turn-it-In. (15%)

***Final Paper/Presentation-*** Each student will be required to produce an 7–8-page paper over a relevant topic/artist for our course. Additionally, a short PowerPoint (or similar) presentation will be required to share research with classmates during a 8–10-minute presentation. A handout will be provided. (35%)

***Class Participation/Discussion-*** All students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. It is imperative for the course that all participate regularly to consider all perspectives. To encourage the free exchange of ideas, students must respect and listen to each other. Students are encouraged to disagree with the authors, other students, or the professor within class discussion, however, students must remain cordial and collegial. If students treat any persons disrespectfully, they will be asked to leave the classroom. While in class, I expect students to be engaged- looking to their readings, participating in class discussions, etc. In the case that discussion is not constructive, I reserve the right to administer unannounced quizzes or assign in-class writing assignments that will count toward your participation/discussion grade. If students are texting, chatting, napping, or otherwise inattentive in class, they may be asked to leave and marked as absent. (10%)

***Final Reflection Paper*** – At the culmination of our course, students will produce a 2-3 page paper to prepare for final discussion. Expectations and rubric will be explained in handout. (10%)

**Course Calendar with Required Readings**  
**(Subject to change at the discretion of the professor)**

**Week One: Introduction- Material/Methods/Paragone & Museum Visit**

**Tuesday, May 19- Syllabus; Introduction to Course**

Overview of sculptural types and processes

**(In-class Readings)**

Excerpts from: Emile Zola, *The Masterpiece*, 1886 and Baudelaire, “Salon of 1864” (*Pourquoi la sculpture est ennuyeuse*)

*Course reading sign-ups*

**Thursday, May 21 – Reading Day, Museum Visit (Independently)**  
**Visit to Dallas Museum of Art (Handout provided)**

**Readings**

Excerpts from: J.W. Janson, *19<sup>th</sup> Century Sculpture*, and Rheims, *19<sup>th</sup> Century Winckelmann*, Johann Joachim, “Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture,” 1777.

Potts, Alex. “The Sculptural Imagination and Viewing Sculpture,” from *The Sculptural Imagination*.

Goethe, “Observations on the Laocoon”

**(Write-ups due by Friday, May 22)\***

**Museum Assignment due by Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>\*\*\***

**Week Two: Neoclassicism// Politics of Form- Ideal Beauty**

**Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> - Canova, Thorvaldsen, Rauch**

**Readings**

Darr, Alan and Roney, Lara. “The Reach of Antonio Canova’s “Angelic Hand,” *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts*, 2020.

Skovmøller, Amalie. “Thorvaldsen’s Marble Connections,” *Sculpture Journal* 30.2, 2021.

Wardropper, Ian, “Bertel Thorvaldsen’s “Nessus Abducting Deianira,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, 2006.

**(Write-ups due by Monday, May 25).**

**Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup> - Panthéon and Walhalla / French Republic(s)/Empire**

**Readings**

Ben-Amos, “Monuments and Memory in French Nationalism”

Butler, Long Live the Revolution, The Republic and Especially the Emperor!: The Political Sculpture of Rude.”

Bouwers, Eveline. “‘National Education’ in a Royal Pantheon in Regensburg” from *Public Pantheons in Revolutionary Europe*.

**(Write-ups due by Wednesday, May 27)**

**Week Three: More Neoclassicism, Romanticism & SCULPTRESSES**  
**Archaeology/Statuary Hall / The United States and Monument Mania**

**Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Gossman, "Imperial Icon: The Pergamon Altar in Wilhelminian Germany," 2006.  
Wills, "Washington's Citizen Virtue, Greenough and Houdon"  
Sienkewicz, "Thomas Jefferson, Architect: Palladian Models, Democratic Principles, and the Conflict of Ideas," 2021.  
*(Write-ups due by Monday, June 1)*

**Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> – WOMEN Sculptors\*\*\***

Excerpts from: Dabakis, *Sisterhood of Sculpture*, 2014 and Charlotte Rubenstein, *American Women Sculptors*,  
Tufts, Eleanor. "An American Victorian Dilemma, 1875: Should a Women be Allowed to Sculpt a Man?" from *Art Journal*, 1992.  
McDonald, Jacquelyn Delin, "Carving Space at the Fair, Edmonia Lewis' *Death of Cleopatra*" from *Nineteenth Century Magazine*. 2025.  
McDonald, Jacquelyn Delin. "The Sculptress Phenomenon," Statuary Hall and Elisabeth Ney, from *The Dome*, 2022.  
*(Write-ups due by Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>)*

***Week Four: 'Modernism,' Presentations Begin\****

**Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup> - Rodin, Claudel- impressionism- modernism; Global Contexts**

Nochlin, Linda, Excerpt from: *Realism*, "The Heroicism of Modern Life"  
Pierre, Caterina, "A New Formula for High Art"  
Roos, "Rodin's *Monument to Victor Hugo*: Art and Politics in the Third Republic"  
*(Write-up due by Monday, June 8th)*

**Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> - Group 1, Presentations**

*Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> - Last day to drop a course with a grade of W).*

***Week Five: Final Presentations/Discussion***

**Tuesday, July 16<sup>th</sup> - Group 2. Presentations**

**All research papers due by Wednesday, July 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 pm**

***Nationalism and Heroes// The Death of Sculpture?***

**Thursday, July 18<sup>th</sup>- (Group 3 Presentations, if needed)**

Final Discussion Day  
Carr, Nicole. "Do We Need Monuments?" 2020, etc.  
*(Reflection Paper Due by July 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 pm)*