Course content & objectives: This topics course examines the ways that Indian sculpture is identified and explained in educational materials published by North Texas museums. We will focus on prominent artworks housed in the DMA, Kimbell Art Museum, and the Crow Museum of Asian Art of UTD. The selected artworks are diverse in terms of medium, date, and religious attribution and are assessed through three lenses: iconography, context, and new paradigms. This allows us to recognize and investigate what is prioritized in the museum’s descriptions of these objects. Objectives of the course include establishing an in-depth understanding of these artworks in terms of their initial socio-religious and historical contexts as well as recognizing their new identifications and interpretive frameworks as museum objects. These objectives will be met and demonstrated through a variety of written assignments.

Goals of the course include:
(1) to identify and interpret artworks as objects that shape (and are shaped by) their larger socio-historical contexts—both at the time of their creation and beyond
(2) to identify select frameworks and paradigms employed in the study, display, and interpretation of Indian art

Course structure and materials: Delivery of course materials is through assigned readings, prerecorded lectures, and videos. There is no assigned textbook for this course—all readings are found on Canvas. As this course is asynchronous, students have the opportunity to complete the weekly coursework at their own time and pace. However, activities need to be completed each week. Through Canvas, I am able to track student activities in accessing, viewing, and/or downloading course material. In other words, I can verify that students are keeping up with the weekly scheduled readings, lectures and assignments. If I notice a period of inactivity, I will reach out to the student via their UNT email.

Technological requirements: Students will need to have access to a computer and to the internet. For best performance, according to CLEAR—“Canvas should be used on the current or first previous major release of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari. Because it’s built using web standards, Canvas runs on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android, or any other device with a modern web browser.” Students are also
Communication: I am always available to answer questions and/or concerns through the Canvas course email. Alternatively, you may email me at lowen@unt.edu but please identify this particular class in the subject line of your email (e.g., Exhibiting Indian Art). I am also happy to schedule a Zoom appointment with you.

Course requirements and grading criteria:
Response paper (3 at 15%) ........................................................................................................45%
Museum description (2 at 20%) ....................................................................................................40%
Image biography .........................................................................................................................15%

Response paper: Three response papers will be assigned at specific times during the semester (see schedule). These assignments will focus on key themes that are addressed in the prerecorded lectures, videos and/or assigned reading(s). Specific format and content guidelines will be uploaded at the appropriate time. These assignments will be graded on both content and the mechanics of writing. See the Grading Criteria on the last page of this syllabus.

Museum description: Twice during the semester (see schedule), students will be asked to write a new museum description to accompany a selected artwork. Specific format and content guidelines will be uploaded at the appropriate time. These assignments will be graded on both content and the mechanics of writing. See the Grading Criteria on the last page of this syllabus.

Image biography: As a final project for the course, students will be asked to select one of the artworks examined during the semester and construct a ‘biography’ of that object from its initial making to its present location in a North Texas museum. Specific format and content guidelines will be uploaded at the appropriate time. This project will be graded on both content and the mechanics of writing. See the Grading Criteria on the last page of this syllabus.

Late work: Late work is not accepted unless there is a documented (and university sanctioned) emergency. In this case, the student must notify me about the emergency prior to the posted deadline. If I agree to accept late work, it will be marked down 10 points per day (including weekends) that it is late.

Illness: If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Hotline at 844-366-5892 or COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure. Also, please communicate with me over email so that we may work together in regard to any potential missed work for this class. Please visit this link for more info and a scenario guide for UNT students: https://healthalerts.unt.edu/symptoms-monitoring

Posting of grades: Grades will be posted on Canvas. If you would like to discuss a grade with me, we can do so over email and/or set up a Zoom appointment. Students have a window of two weeks to talk to me about a grade. In other words, at the end of the semester, I will not look over past material for you and/or re-grade any assignments.

Academic integrity standards and consequences: According to UNT Policy 18.1.16—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.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism necessitates that I file an incident report to the appropriate authorities and this may result in your failing the assignment, failing the course, and/or being expelled from the university. Please ask me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism and how you should give proper acknowledgement to your sources in your written work.

**Sexual discrimination, harassment, and assault:** UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

**ADA accommodation statement:** 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 communicate with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at https://disability.unt.edu/

**Emergency 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). Please make sure your information is current with this system.

**Prerecorded lectures:** The lectures that are uploaded in Canvas under Modules are the intellectual property of the professor 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.

Content in the arts can sometimes include works, situations, actions, and language that can be personally challenging or offensive to some students on the grounds, for example, 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, 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.
Schedule

Please note: The professor reserves the right to alter this syllabus if necessary. © 2021 Lisa N. Owen

Week 1 (Jan 11-15) Welcome to the course!

Welcome videos: Intro to the course, selected artworks, and assignments. Overview of syllabus.

Recorded lecture: The Buddha Image

Week 2 (Jan 19-22) Seated Buddha with Two Attendants, AD 82—Kimbell Art Museum

Theme: iconography

Readings: 1) Kimbell Art Museum online description and accompanying audio narratives

Recorded lecture: lakshanas

Response paper #1—due Monday, Jan 25 by 11:59pm CST

Week 3 (Jan 25-29) Seated Buddha with Two Attendants, AD 82—Kimbell Art Museum

Response paper #1—due Monday, Jan 25 by 11:59pm CST

Theme: context


Recorded lecture: Patronage and Practice

Week 4 (Feb 1-5) Seated Buddha with Two Attendants, AD 82—Kimbell Art Museum

Theme: new paradigms


Recorded lecture: The Buddha’s Body

Museum description #1—due Monday, Feb 8, by 11:59pm CST
Week 5 (Feb 8-12)  
**Celestial Female—Dallas Museum of Art**

**Museum description #1**—due Monday, Feb 8, by 11:59pm CST

**Theme:** iconography


**Recorded lecture:** *Khajuraho and the female form*

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Week 6 (Feb 15-19)  
**Celestial Female—Dallas Museum of Art**

**Theme:** context

**Video:** *The Temple of Kama: Khajuraho Group of Monuments*


**Recorded lecture:** *Interpreting the Erotic*

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Week 7 (Feb 22-26)  
**Celestial Female—Dallas Museum of Art**

**Theme:** new paradigms

**Recorded lecture:** *Art History to the Rescue!*


**Response paper #2**—due Monday, Mar 1, by 11:59pm CST

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Week 8 (Mar 1-5)  
**Jain tirthankara—Crow Museum of Asian Art of UTD**

**Response paper #2**—due Monday, Mar 1, by 11:59pm CST

**Theme:** iconography

**Video:** *India’s Jains*

Recorded lecture: The Tirthankara’s Body

Week 9 (Mar 8-12) Jain tirthankara—Crow Museum of Art of UTD

Theme: context


Recorded lecture: Jina image consecration and worship

Week 10 (Mar 15-19) Jain tirthankara—Crow Museum of Art of UTD

Theme: new paradigms


Recorded lecture: darshan

Museum description #2—due Monday, Mar 22, by 11:59pm CST

Week 11 (Mar 22-26) Shiva Nataraja—Dallas Museum of Art

Museum description #2—due Monday, Mar 22, by 11:59pm CST

Theme: iconography

Readings:

Recorded lecture: Cosmic implications
Week 12 (Mar 29-Apr 1)  *Shiva Nataraja—Dallas Museum of Art*

**Theme:** context


**Recorded lecture:** *Regional and dynastic implications*

**Video:** *Portrait of a Queen: Patronage of Dancing Shiva, ca. 941-1002*

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Week 13 (Apr 5-9)  *Shiva Nataraja—Dallas Museum of Art*

**Theme:** new paradigms

**Recorded lecture:** *Shiva in transition*

**Video:** *The Dancing Shiva*


Response paper #3—due Monday, Apr 12, by 11:59pm CST

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Week 14 (Apr 12-16)

**Response paper #3—due Monday, Apr 12, by 11:59pm CST**

**Recorded lecture:** *Image biography instructions*

Image biography—due Thursday, Apr 22, by 5pm CST

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Week 15 (Apr 19-22)

**Image biography due Thursday Apr 22 by 11:59pm CST**

Friday, Apr 23, Reading Day—No Classes/End of Class
Grading Criteria for Written Work:

A = Such a grade indicates that the student was able to execute the assignment/exam with rigor and clarity of thought. An ‘A’ grade means that there were little to no errors in grammar/spelling and that the introduction and conclusion were clear as was the development of the body of text. An ‘A’ grade also demonstrates that the student provided exceptional responses to the questions posed in the assignment/exam guidelines.

B = Such a grade indicates that the student was able to execute the assignment/exam with diligence and forethought, though some main issues were not addressed fully by the student. A grade of ‘B’ also usually indicates that there were limited structural, spelling, or grammatical problems.

C = This is similar to the ‘B’ description, but the number of problems is more extensive. These may include significant grammatical or structural problems, adding irrelevant material or new material inappropriately, too many generalities, and/or not fully addressing the main questions posed in the guidelines. ‘C’ essays often contain too many quoted passages.

D = A grade of ‘D’ indicates that the student did a poor job in following the prompt and/or in answering questions to complete the assignment/exam. Further, grammatical/structural problems make a ‘D’ essay quite difficult to follow. There are usually far too many generalities and a lack of analysis.

F = This either indicates that the assignment/exam was not done or what was done was simply unacceptable for any number of reasons. This includes any indication of plagiarism, which may entail further academic penalty. Please see the section on plagiarism in this syllabus.