

ARTE 4790.002: Radical Imaginings in Art and Education

Term: Fall 2026

Meeting time: Wednesdays, 2:25-5:15 p.m.

Location: ART 182

Course modality: In person

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Marta Torres

Email: marta.torres@untDallas.edu

Office location: Virtual

Office hours: Fridays, 1:00-3:00 p.m., and by appointment

Email is the best way to reach me. I generally respond within two business days. If you have not received a response after two business days, please send a follow-up message; a gentle reminder is welcome.

Course Description, Structure, and Objectives

Course Description

ARTE 4790 introduces students to inquiry and dialogue in contemporary art and art education. Students examine how artists use diverse ideas, materials, methods, and forms of creative expression to explore identity, community, place, power, culture, the natural world, and social possibility. Through readings, dialogue, creative experimentation, and curriculum development, students consider how contemporary art can support meaningful learning across K-12 settings. The course also explores embodied art education and the role of sight, sound, touch, smell, taste, movement, memory, and lived experience in creativity and learning.

Course Structure

This is a three-credit, in-person course that meets once each week for the full Fall 2026 semester. Class meetings combine discussion, close looking, artist research, collaborative inquiry, artmaking, sensory and embodied activities, critique, reflection, and curriculum design. Canvas will be used to share announcements, readings, assignment instructions, grades, and other course materials.

Learning Objectives

- Analyze themes and questions addressed by contemporary artists working across different social and cultural contexts.
- Identify contemporary artists who use innovative materials, methods, and approaches to creative expression.
- Use multiple forms of inquiry and dialogue to engage contemporary art in educational settings.
- Explain the educational possibilities of embodied and sensory learning in art education.
- Reflect on how sensory experiences, identity, culture, memory, and lived experience shape artistic understanding.
- Design embodied, sensory, and inquiry-based art-learning experiences for K-12 settings.

How to Succeed in this Course

Success in this course depends on consistent attendance, preparation, experimentation, reflection, and engagement with classmates' ideas. Complete the assigned reading before class and arrive ready to contribute through discussion, attentive listening, writing, visual response, artmaking, or small-group work. Technical perfection is not the goal; thoughtful inquiry, sustained effort, and willingness to revise are more important.

Connect with me through email or virtual office hours when you need clarification, feedback, or support. Office hours are time set aside for you, and appointments outside the posted hours are available when scheduling permits.

Office of Disability Access

The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. To request accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) by completing an application for services and providing documentation to verify your eligibility each semester. Once your eligibility is confirmed, you may request your letter of accommodation. ODA will then email your faculty a letter of reasonable accommodation, initiating a private discussion about your specific needs in the course.

You can request accommodations at any time, but it is important to provide ODA notice to your faculty as early as possible in the semester to avoid delays in implementation. Keep in mind that you must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and meet with each faculty member before accommodations can be implemented in each class. You are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding your accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty have the authority to ask you to discuss your letter during their designated office hours to protect your privacy. For more information and to access resources that can support your needs, refer to the [Office of Disability Access website](#).

Academic Success Resources

UNT strives to offer a high-quality education in a supportive environment where you can learn, grow, and thrive. UNT offers mental-health and wellness services, academic support, and assistance with financial concerns. Explore unt.edu/success, unt.edu/wellness, and [Scrappy Says](#) for available resources.

Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

The perspectives students bring to this course are valuable. Together, we will create a learning environment grounded in curiosity, mutual respect, care, and belonging. Disagreement and critical dialogue are welcome; personal attacks, harassment, and discriminatory behavior are not. We will develop shared habits of engagement for discussing artworks and issues that may be complex, personal, or contested.

Contemporary art may include imagery, language, or subjects that some students find challenging. When potentially sensitive material is planned, I will provide context whenever possible. Students are encouraged to communicate privately with me about access needs or concerns so that we can identify appropriate ways to support engagement without removing the intellectual substance of the course.

Students are expected to follow the [UNT Code of Student Conduct](#).

Required/Recommended Materials

Required Text

Marshall, Julia, Connie Stewart, and Anne Thulson. Teaching Contemporary Art with Young People: Themes in Art for K-12 Classrooms. Teachers College Press, 2021.

Additional required readings, artist interviews, and media will be provided through Canvas.

Required Technology and Materials

- A computer or tablet with reliable internet access
- Access to Canvas and a UNT email account
- A digital camera or smartphone for documenting work
- A visual journal or sketchbook
- Basic art materials appropriate to weekly experiments and the final project

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System and to submit assignments. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [Learn Anywhere](#).

Supplemental Reading References

- Kozinets, Robert V., Ulrike Gretzel, and Anja Dinhopl. 'Self in Art/Self As Art: Museum Selfies as Identity Work.' *Frontiers in Psychology* 8 (2017): 731.
- Farías, Gabriela. 'Everyday Aesthetics in Contemporary Art.' *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* 3, no. 3 (2011): 440-447.
- Demos, T. J. 'Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology: An Introduction.' *Third Text* 27, no. 1 (2013): 1-9.
- Gómez, Marisa. 'Reconceptualizing Body, Space and Place: Telepresence in Art.' *Interartive*, May 31, 2015. Excerpt available through Canvas.
- Ruud, Claire. 'POWER in the Contemporary Art World.' *Glasstire*, April 30, 2011.
- Appleby, R. Neal. 'Synaesthetic Education for Sense Ability.' *Art Education* 27, no. 3 (1974): 22-26.
- Springgay, Stephanie. 'Corporeal Pedagogy and Contemporary Video Art.' *Art Education* 61, no. 2 (2008): 18-24.

Recommended References

- New Museum, New Museum of Contemporary Art Staff, and Zoya Kocur. *Rethinking Contemporary Art and Multicultural Education*. Routledge, 2011.
- Jaffe, Nick, Becca Barniskis, and Barbara Hackett Cox. *Teaching Artist Handbook, Volume One: Tools, Techniques, and Ideas to Help Any Artist Teach*. University of Chicago Press, 2015.

Course Requirements/Schedule

Course requirements include participation in weekly class meetings, ten inquiry responses, a visual inquiry journal, a themed contemporary artwork, and a final reflective essay. Detailed assignment instructions and rubrics will be posted in Canvas.

Participation and Professional Engagement - 20 points

Participation means more than physical presence. Students are expected to arrive prepared, engage thoughtfully with course materials, contribute to activities, listen carefully, support classmates' learning, and reflect on their own growth. Participation may take the form of discussion, written reflection, small-group dialogue, visual response, artmaking, critique, and other meaningful forms of engagement.

Weekly Inquiry Responses - 50 points

Students will complete ten weekly responses worth five points each. Unless a specific format is assigned, students may respond through: (1) a written response of at least 150 words that includes a specific example; (2) illustrations or diagrams with meaningful labels or brief annotation; (3) an image response using at least four identified and sourced images with a brief synthesis; or (4) a small creative or sensory experiment accompanied by a brief reflection. Students are encouraged to connect responses to teaching when relevant. Each response must meaningfully engage the weekly inquiry and appropriately attribute ideas, images, artists, and sources. Weekly responses are due in Canvas by 11:59 p.m. on the Tuesday before class unless otherwise announced.

Visual Inquiry Journal - 10 points

Students will maintain a visual inquiry journal documenting their evolving understanding of contemporary art, embodied learning, and art education. Entries may include questions, sketches, visual experiments, responses to artists and readings, sensory documentation, collected materials, teaching ideas, and changed thinking. The journal should show an active process of inquiry rather than only polished products. Selected pages will be presented on December 2.

Themed Contemporary Artwork - 10 points

Students will create an original artwork or creative experience that investigates a personally meaningful theme connected to the course. The project may use traditional, digital, sensory, performative, participatory, or interdisciplinary approaches. Evaluation emphasizes depth of investigation, the relationship between form and meaning, creative experimentation, appropriate artist research, and evidence of process rather than technical perfection.

Final Reflective Essay - 10 points

Students will submit a five-to-eight-page reflective essay connecting their final artwork, visual inquiry journal, and development as an artist-educator. The essay should analyze the project's guiding question, development, influences, materials and methods, sensory or embodied dimensions, and implications for future teaching. The essay is due in Canvas on December 2 by 11:59 p.m.

Course Schedule

Complete readings before class. Textbook pages are from Chapter 5, "Exploring Contemporary Art Through Themes." Weekly Inquiry Responses are due in Canvas by 11:59 p.m. Tuesday unless announced otherwise.

Date	Topic	Assignment	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
<i>Term</i>	<i>Attendance and active engagement in class inquiry, discussion, artmaking, and critique</i>	<i>Participation and Professional Engagement</i>	<i>20 points</i>	<i>20%</i>

Date	Topic	Assignment	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
08/19	<i>Introduction: What Can We Imagine Together?</i> <i>No advance reading</i>	<i>Syllabus, visual dialogue, and community agreements</i>	--	--
08/26	<i>Self and Others</i> <i>Ch. 5, Theme 1, pp. 29–33; Kozinets et al.</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 1</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>
09/02	<i>Everyday</i> <i>Ch. 5, Theme 3, pp. 38–41; Farías</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 2</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>
09/09	<i>Nature and Earth</i> <i>Ch. 5, Theme 2, pp. 34–37; Demos</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 3</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>
09/16	<i>Space and Place</i> <i>Ch. 5, Theme 4, pp. 42–45; Gómez</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 4</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>
09/23	<i>Power and Popular Culture</i> <i>Ch. 5, Theme 5, pp. 46–50; Theme 6, pp. 51–54; Ruud</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 5</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>
09/30	<i>Embodied Art Education: Sight/Vision</i> <i>No new reading</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 6</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>
10/07	<i>Embodied Art Education: Hearing</i> <i>No new reading</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 7</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>
10/14	<i>Embodied Art Education: Touch</i> <i>No new reading</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 8</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>
10/21	<i>Embodied Art Education: Smell</i> <i>No new reading</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 9</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>
10/28	<i>Synaesthesia and Multisensory Art</i> <i>Appleby, pp. 22–26; Springgay, pp. 18–24</i>	<i>In-class multisensory studio/lab</i>	--	--
11/04	<i>Embodied Art Education: Taste</i> <i>No new reading</i>	<i>Weekly Inquiry Response 10</i>	<i>5 points</i>	<i>5%</i>

Course Schedule (continued)

Date	Topic	Assignment	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
11/11	<i>Contemporary Art and Curriculum Translation</i> <i>Review selected Chapter 5 excerpts assigned in Canvas</i>	<i>Curriculum translation workshop</i>	--	--
11/18	<i>Review, Synthesis, and Final Project Development</i> <i>No new reading</i>	<i>Final-project workshop and peer feedback</i>	--	--
11/25	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i> <i>No class</i>	<i>No assignment</i>	--	--
12/02	<i>Final Presentations</i> <i>No new reading</i>	<i>Visual Inquiry Journal; Themed Contemporary Artwork; Final Reflective Essay due by 11:59 p.m.</i>	30 points	30%

Because this once-weekly course is exempt from the Pre-Finals Days restriction in UNT Policy 06.031, final artwork and visual inquiry journal presentations will occur during the regular meeting Wednesday, December 2, 2:25–5:15 p.m., in ART 182; no new curricular content will be introduced. No traditional final examination is required. No classes are held on Reading Day, Friday, December 4. This course will not meet December 9.

Students will be notified through Eagle Alert if a campus closing affects class. When circumstances require a change in meeting format, assignment deadline, or course schedule, instructions will be posted in Canvas. This calendar is subject to change in accordance with the [Campus Closures Policy](#).

Assessing Your Work

Grading Scale

A = 90-100 points

B = 80-89 points

C = 70-79 points

D = 60-69 points

F = 0-59 points

Grades are based on the quality of each student's work in relation to the stated assignment criteria. Grades are not curved. Rubrics and assignment instructions will be available in Canvas. This course does not offer routine extra-credit assignments.

Late Work

Assignments may be submitted up to two calendar days after the deadline with a 10% reduction in the assignment grade. Work submitted more than two days late will not be accepted unless an extension was

approved in advance or the student experienced documented extenuating circumstances. Contact me as early as possible if circumstances may affect your ability to meet a deadline.

Generative AI: Limited Use

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools create content in response to prompts; examples include ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, image generators, and predictive-writing tools. This course follows UNT's Limited Use approach: use GenAI only when an assignment or I explicitly authorize it and only for the approved purpose. Approved uses may include brainstorming, organizing ideas, accessibility support, or revising your own writing. GenAI may not replace your artistic decisions, analysis, reflection, journal entries, or writing. Disclose and cite every approved use, naming the tool, purpose, and how you used its output. If an assignment is silent, work independently. Ask before using GenAI, Grammarly, or another predictive-text tool.

I may use GenAI to draft instructional materials or assist with course planning and administrative tasks. I will disclose material student-facing use, review AI-assisted content, and remain responsible for it. Presenting GenAI output as your own, using it without required credit, or using it without authorization violates the UNT Honor Code. Verified violations are addressed case by case under UNT Policy 06.003 and may result in a warning, reduced-credit resubmission, point loss, course-grade consequences for repeated violations, and/or referral to the Academic Integrity Office.

Academic Integrity

All work submitted in this course must be the student's own and must appropriately acknowledge the ideas, images, words, and creative work of others. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, forgery, facilitating academic dishonesty, sabotage, and unauthorized GenAI use. Violations will be addressed under [UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity](#).

Honor Code: "I commit myself to honor, integrity, and responsibility as a student representing the University of North Texas community. I understand and pledge to uphold academic integrity as set forth by UNT Student Academic Integrity Policy, 06.003."

Attendance and Participation

Because this course meets only once each week and relies on collaborative discussion, artmaking, sensory exploration, and critique, every class meeting is important. Students should arrive on time, prepared to participate, and remain for the full class period. If an emergency, illness, religious observance, active military service, or official university activity affects attendance, contact me as early as possible.

Participation points are earned through engagement in each class meeting. An unexcused absence results in no participation credit for that meeting. University-excused absences will not be penalized, and a reasonable opportunity to complete an alternative learning activity will be provided when practicable. Repeated tardiness, early departure, or being present without participating may reduce the participation score for that class meeting. Students are always welcome to enter class if they arrive late; please do so with minimal disruption. Attendance is governed by [UNT Policy 06.039, Student Attendance and Authorized Absences](#).

Syllabus Changes

I will make every reasonable effort to follow this syllabus and course schedule. Adjustments may be necessary to respond to student learning needs, university operations, artist or guest availability, or other circumstances. Material changes will be communicated through Canvas and discussed in class whenever possible.