

Fall 2025
ARTH 4802: The Art of Ancient Greece

Class Meetings: Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30-10:50 AM in Wooten Hall 216

Instructor: Dr. Neville McFerrin

Contact Information: neville.mcferrin@unt.edu; I will respond to all student emails within 24 hours on weekdays; on weekends and university holidays, responses will be delayed. To ensure a speedier response, include the course number in the subject line.

Office Hours: Tuesdays from 2:00-4:00 PM in ART 310 and by appointment. All appointments must be scheduled via email at least 24 hours in advance.

Course Description:

From the Athenian Acropolis to the pottery workshops of the Kerameikos, from monumental architecture to the loom weights stacked in a corner of a house, the visual and material culture of ancient Greek speaking territories provides insights into the social, political, and cultural worlds of the individuals who built, crafted, used, and maintained these works. Through discussion of the forms and themes of the art of ancient Greece and its environs, this course explores the ways in which these past peoples utilized visual and material culture to frame their realities on both the large and the small scale. Through a focus upon a range of media, from ceramics to sculpture to monumental architecture to domestic spaces, the course invites students to consider the ways in which ideas developed and changed over time and with shifting cultural contacts and to reflect upon the ways in which the artworks considered continue to influence visual and material culture today.

Course Objectives:

Through the analysis of visual, material, and textual evidence students will:

- Explore the range of artistic and creative practices associated with Greek art from the Bronze Age to the Hellenistic period
- Identify major sites, artifacts, and artworks
- Describe styles, periods, and media associated with named artists, regions, and time periods
- Contextualize artistic creations by time period, group, and function
- Integrate multiple theoretical and methodological approaches into discussion and writing
- Apply terms and identifications to the analysis of previously unseen works

- Generate original research projects or artistic works that expand upon the major themes and artworks presented in the course

Course Structure:

This course presents a chronological overview of the art generated by Greek speaking groups throughout the ancient Mediterranean region. It will present these explorations through in-person course meetings that will blend lecture, discussion, and experiential activities.

All additional readings, assignments, and discussion prompts will be uploaded to the course Canvas website. Weekly modules on the course Canvas site will provide links to relevant readings, assignments, and prompts.

Classroom Expectations:

- *Attend.* Much of our time in class will reference, but not replicate, the information provided in assigned readings. Those who do not attend class will not be prepared to succeed in the course.
- *Participate.* Class meetings will often integrate both discussions and in-class demonstrations. These are designed to provide an opportunity to engage actively with ideas and materials that are central to the themes of our course. These opportunities for engagement will, in many cases, directly inform associated assignments.
- *Read.* Assigned readings are the foundation for insights that will propel discussion and inform written work in the course. All readings listed on the syllabus appear in association with the date on which they will be discussed. For best results, it is useful to read these texts before the start of each class. Thus, readings listed on a Monday on the syllabus should be read before the Monday course meeting; similarly, readings listed for Wednesday should be completed before the Wednesday meeting
- *Look.* When encountering an image or object, take a moment to look at it. Consider the details that are visible, the composition of the image or thing, and the materials used to make it. These are the foundations of our interpretations. After each class, a copy of the slides from that class will be uploaded to Canvas. These provide an opportunity to take another look and serve as a resource for study.
- *Think.*
- *Respect.* While discussion without dissent would be futile, a functional discussion environment is dependent upon mutual respect for differing thoughts and for those who voice them. Students who do not show appropriate respect for their classmates will be asked to leave the room and will be counted absent for the day.

Course Environment:

- So that all voices have the opportunity to be heard, and all of the thoughts of the class can be shared, each of us must respect the ideas presented by others. Although you may have a pertinent point to share, please refrain from interrupting others. And while differing interpretations lead to lively and interesting conversations, when presenting such concepts, all comments must be kept impersonal.
- Please restrict the use of cell phones, computers, and tablets to class related activities. Except in cases of emergencies, those who choose to text during class meetings will not be given credit for the session in which the texting occurs. Similarly, if students choose to use cell phones, computers, or tablets to explore sites that are not related to course activities, no credit will be given for the course meeting during which this distraction occurs. Should you choose to view websites unrelated to course content that contain audio, and should your device be unmuted, you may be asked to leave the classroom space.
- To help those around us focus upon the content of our course meeting, please make all reasonable attempts to be on time for class. If you are late, please do try to keep your entrance as quiet as possible.

Course Requirements:

Required Readings: All required readings for the course can be found as PDFs on our course Canvas page.

Required Equipment: In order to access course materials provided on Canvas students will require regular access to a computer with an Internet connection.

Course Assessments:**Attendance: 10%**

Absences will be excused for documented medical reasons, family emergencies, university activities, and religious observances. Should you need to miss class for one of these reasons, please make this clear via email. As unforeseen difficulties are a fact of life, all students may be absent from two class meetings with no questions asked in without penalization. In these cases, there is no need to email.

If you must miss a class, you are responsible for turning in any assignment due that day. In the case of excused absences, assignments are due upon the day you return to class. You are also responsible for the materials covered during any missed days. Such information can be obtained by asking classmates for notes, reviewing posted slides, and studying posted readings. Should you have questions after undertaking these steps, please set up a meeting with Dr. McFerrin.

Participation: 10%

As much of our time together in this course will be devoted both to discussing long-standing questions in the study of ancient Greek art and in experiencing and interacting with facsimiles of the materials we encounter in readings and in lectures, this is a course in which much depends upon participation, not only in discussions and lectures, but in in-class demos and assessments.

There are many ways to be an active participant in our course discussions. Active participants may put forth points or raise questions that stimulate discussion. They may provide relevant examples in support of the points raised by others, or point the class towards useful resources. They may tie ideas presented in lectures or readings to other works of art, or to contemporary visual culture. Students may nod, shake their heads, or offer other signs of active listening. Some students may choose to devote their time to note taking, which can lead to active participation should we wish to reference discussions that took place in previous meetings. Any combination of the above listed approaches contributes in valuable ways to our work together. However, activities that are disruptive to others, including belligerent or combative behavior or responses, undermine the spirit of scholarly dialogue. These behaviors, together with those that may actively detract from the ability of other students to learn, will result in a one-point deduction from the final course grade for each violation.

In the case of in-class demonstrations, it is ideal if students join in with our explorations. This can occur by holding and handling objects, by sketching and photographing details, by volunteering to undertake parts of the demonstration when prompted, and by an overall willingness to experiment with this type of learning.

On some days, students will be given short in-class assessments. These assessments, which will average less than 5 minutes of response time, are designed to gauge the extent to which the knowledge presented in lectures, demos, and readings has been retained. While the responses themselves will be considered as part of the course scores related to knowledge assessment, simply turning in these in-class assessments will provide credit towards the course participation score.

Assignments: 30%

Over the course of the semester, students will be asked to generate short written responses, typically of around 250-300 words, in response to course readings, discussions, and in-class activities. Guidelines for each of these assignments are provided as part of the Canvas module in which they are assigned. Relevant due dates are noted below in the course schedule.

One-on-One Paper or Project Meeting: 5%

During week 9, each student will have a 10-minute consultation focused on their plans for their course papers or projects with Dr. McFerrin. In this one-on-one meeting, students will have the opportunity to expand upon their written project

proposals, to ask questions about the paper and project parameters, and to clarify any questions they have about the course materials related to their planned work. Dr. McFerrin will provide suggestions for further research or idea revision. Students should come to this meeting prepared with questions, concerns, or further ideas to present. Failure to schedule a meeting or to appear at during the chosen meeting time will lead to a grade of zero for this assignment. To make certain that students with complicated schedules have an opportunity to meet, there will be no course meeting on Wednesday, October 15. Instead, this time will be set aside for meetings.

Knowledge Assessments: 25%

Over the course of the semester, students will be presented with questions designed to determine their knowledge of key works, makers, and concepts. Some knowledge assessments will take place in class. These will be quick check-ins, often focused on things like names, places, and terms. Each of the assessments of this type will take under five minutes to complete and will be handed in during class.

Some knowledge assessments will ask students to think further or in different ways about the ideas encountered in lectures, discussions, readings, and in-class activities. These assessments will be posed as a question during a course meeting; students will then respond to the question on Canvas. These responses will be timed, so that the assessment can remain manageable.

Course Paper or Project: 20%

The art of ancient Greece has been an inspiration to makers and thinkers for over two millennia. This assignment offers students the opportunity to consider how the ideas encountered in this course can inform and enliven their own practice, whether textual or material. Students whose practice or intended practice focuses upon scholarly writing, particularly those students majoring in history, art history, English, and related disciplines, may choose to craft a traditional scholarly paper. These papers should be approximately 2,500-3,000 words in length, and should present an arguable thesis, clear argumentation, and an appropriate scholarly bibliography. This bibliography should include no fewer than eight scholarly works, at least three of which should be drawn from sources beyond the course materials.

Those students who have a practice focused upon making may choose to generate creative works in any medium. The end goal is a completed work executed at a portfolio-quality standard. Together with this work, students will provide an artist's statement of around 750 words. The aim of the statement is to describe the intersections between the ideas and works encountered in this course and the work that has been created. This statement should include no fewer than four images of ancient Greek art, including appropriate identifications that helped to inform the work created.

This project is due on Sunday, November 16 at 11:59 PM.

Course Policies:

Policy on Late Work:

Students who miss an in-class knowledge assessment due to an excused absence have one week to make up the assignment, following their return to class. To schedule a make-up meeting, email Dr. McFerrin. In the email, provide the days and times within this one-week window during which you are available.

Assignments and assessments that take place outside of class may be accepted at Dr. McFerrin's discretion. If you miss an assignment or a due date, send her an email.

For one-on-one paper or project meetings, missed meetings will result in a zero for the assignment, except in cases of extreme duress.

The deadline for course papers and projects is **Sunday, November 16 at 11:59 PM**. Should students have multiple projects or papers due on or around this time, they can email Dr. McFerrin no later than **November 1, at 11:59 PM** to schedule an alternate due date.

Policy on ADA Accommodation:

The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the course environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course. Additional information can be found on the ODA website at <http://disability.unt.edu/>

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, after which we can enter into private discussion to consider a student'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 ensure that appropriate steps are taken. Students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students who have letters of accommodation should schedule an appointment to discuss their individual needs with Dr. McFerrin no later than **Friday, September 29**.

Policy on Student Behavior in the Classroom:

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other student's 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 instructed to leave the instructional space 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 fora, including university and electronic classrooms labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism:

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and violate UNT's Code of Student Conduct. 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. Plagiarism, defined by the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, as "the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person of one's own without acknowledgement," is a serious academic offense. Students who fail to attribute ideas appropriately, or who put forward another's work as their own, as in the case of purchasing term papers, will be reported to the appropriate academic authorities. Upon evaluation of the incident, the student may fail the assignment, fail the course, or be expelled from the University. Please consult policy 06.003 for further information.

Policy on Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Assault:

UNT is committed to providing an environment free from 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.

Emergency Notifications 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 Canvas for further instructions regarding course continuity.

Course Risk Factor:

According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category one course. Students enrolled in this course will not be exposed to any significant hazards and are not likely to suffer any bodily injury. Students in this class will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves or others.

Policy on Course Content:

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 may feel unduly distressed or made uncomfortable by such expressions should withdraw at the start of the term and seek another course.

Policy on the Syllabus:

This document serves as an agreement between students, professors, and the community of the course. Students with questions regarding any of the procedures or policies outlined here are strongly encouraged to schedule an appointment to discuss any concerns with Dr. McFerrin no later than **Friday, September 29**. By remaining in the course, students signal their willingness to adhere to the policies and course procedures presented throughout the syllabus.

Course Topics, Schedule and Overview:

The following list of topics, readings, assignments, and deadlines will provide us with the structure needed to consider the many interesting complexities of Greek art. However, the following information is subject to change, given the interests and aptitudes of the class.

*Week 1: Who are the Greeks?*Monday, August 18: Introduction to the Course

Reading: Our course syllabus

Wednesday, August 20: The Problem of the Greeks

Reading: Yannis Hamilakis, "Decolonizing Greek Archaeology: Indigenous Archaeologies, Modernist Archaeology, and the Post-Colonial Critique," p. 273-284.

Assignment: **About Me, due by Sunday, August 24 at 11:59 PM**

*Week 2: Early Art in the Greek Isles*Monday, August 25: Figurines and Social Connection in the Cyclades

Reading: Gail Hoffman, "Painted Ladies: Early Cycladic II Mourning Figures?" p. 525-550

In-Class Activity: Community, Making, and Cycladic Figures

Wednesday, August 27: Reconstruction, Restoration, and Forgeries: The Problem of Minoan Art

Readings: Kevin Butcher and David W.J. Gill, "The Director, the Dealer, the Goddess, and Her Champions: The Acquisition of the Fitzwilliam Goddess," p. 383-401

Assignment: **Suspicious Art: Identifying Potential Forgeries, due by Sunday, August 31 at 11:59 PM**

Week 3: The Minoans Reconsidered

Monday, September 1: **No Class Meeting! Labor Day!**

Wednesday, September 3: Beyond Snake Goddesses and Reconstructed Walls: Interpreting the Minoans

Reading: Anne P. Chapin, "Power, Privilege, and Landscape in Minoan Art," p. 47-64

Week 4: Echoes of Homer

Monday, September 8: Looking Beyond Crete: Pottery, the Sea, and Interconnected Influences in early Greek Art

Reading: Matthew Haysom, "Fish and Ships: Neopalatial Seascapes in Context," p. 77-97

In-Class Activity: Composing the Sea: Considering Minoan Pottery in Three Dimensions

Wednesday, September 10: Life and Death from Mycenae to Troy

Reading: Lambros Malafouris, "How Did the Mycenaeans Remember? Death, Matter, and Memory in the Early Mycenaean World," p. 303-314

Assignment: **The Shape of the Sea: Form and Composition in Minoan Pottery, due by Sunday, September 14 at 11:59 PM.**

Week 5: Narrative and Image

Monday, September 15: Projecting or Crafting? Working with Narrative from Troy to Lefkandi

Reading: Kate Harrel, "Man/Woman, Warrior/Maiden: The Lefkandi Toumba Female Burial Reconsidered," p. 99-104

Wednesday, September 17: Text, History, and Narrative Vessels

Reading: Murray K. Dahm, "Not Twins at All: The Agora Oinochoe Reinterpreted," p. 717-730

In-Class Activity: Movement, Interaction, and Geometric Art: The Dipylon Krater in the Round

Assignment: **Repeated Elements: Looking beyond Text-Based Narratives in Geometric Art, due by Sunday, September 21 at 11:59 PM**

Week 6: A Space for Connection: Temples, Communities, and the Gods

Monday, September 22: Conceptualizing Sacred Spaces from Temenos to Temple

Reading: Gloria Ferrari, "Architectural Space as Metaphor in the Greek Sanctuary," p. 225-240

Wednesday, September 24: Hera and the Articulation of the Greek Temple

Reading: Marina Yeroulanou, "Architecture in City and Sanctuary," p. 132-152

Week 7: Gifts for the Gods: Temples and Treasuries

Monday, September 29: Divine Narratives, Human Competition

Reading: Richard Neer, "Framing the Gift: The Politics of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi," p. 273-336

Wednesday, October 1: Votive Offerings and the Accumulation of Community

Reading: Verity Platt, "Clever Devices and Cognitive Artifacts: Votive Giving in the Ancient World," p. 141-157

In-Class Activity: Approaching Korai: The Peplos Kore in Detail

Assignment: **Cora and Her Archive: Gifts and Community at CVAD, due by Sunday, October 5 at 11:59 PM**

Week 8: Potters at Work

Monday, October 6: The Business of Pottery

Reading: Eleni Hasaki, "Workshops and Technology," p. 255-272

Wednesday, October 8: Named Artists and the Function of the Signature in Ancient Greece

Reading: Sarah Bolmarcich and Georgina Muskett, "Artists' Signatures on Archaic Greek Vases from Athens," p. 154-176

In-Class Activity: The Space of the Signature: Text and Composition

Assignment: **Paper or Project Proposal due by Sunday, October 12 at 11:59 PM.**

Week 9: The Business of Fun at the Symposium

Monday, October 13: The Space of the Symposium and Dionysiac Revelry

Reading: Timothy McNiven, "The View from Behind the Kline: Symposial Space and Beyond," p. 125- 133

In-Class Activity: On the Wine Dark Sea: Exekias in Action

Wednesday, October 15: **No Class Meeting! Sign-Up and Appear for One-on-One Paper or Project Meetings with Dr. McFerrin!**

Assignment: **One-on-one Paper or Project Meetings**

Week 10: Bodies in Motion

Monday, October 20: Euphronios and Interactive Red-Figure Pottery

Reading: Jenifer Neils, "The Unheroic Corpse: Re-Reading the Sarpedon Krater," p. 212-219

In-Class Activity: Activating Emotions: The Euphronios Krater in Action

Wednesday, October 22: Framing the Scene: Composition and Space on Greek Pots

Reading: Clemente Marconi, "The Frames of Greek Painted Pottery," p. 117-153

In-Class Activity: Meaningful Frames on Greek Pots

Assignment: **Meaning in Interaction, Loss and Decontextualization: The Problem of Looking at Greek Pots**

Week 11: Identity, Supersized: Temples as Wonders

Monday, October 27: Monumentalization and the Wonder of Ephesus

Reading: Bluma Trell, "The Temple of Artemis at Ephesos, p. 78-99

In-Class Exercise: Measuring Monumentality: Making Sense of Scale

Wednesday, October 29: Memory, and Meaning at the Temple of Zeus at Olympia

Reading: Judith Barringer, "The Temple of Zeus at Olympia, Heroes, and Athletes," p. 211-241

Week 12: Considering Athens: The Parthenon and its Context

Monday, November 3: The Parthenon and the Architecture of Athenian Imperialism

Reading: Rachel Kousser, "Destruction and Memory on the Athenian Acropolis," p. 263-282

Wednesday, November 5: The Parthenon, Deconstructed: What is the Point of the Parthenon?

Reading: Robin Osborne, "The Viewing and Obscuring of the Parthenon Frieze," p. 98-105

Week 13: Taking another Look: Thinking Beyond Dominant Narratives

Monday, November 10: Persian Echoes on the Acropolis: Looking Beyond Narratives of Athenian Exceptionalism

Reading: Margaret Cool Root, "The Parthenon Frieze and the Apadana Reliefs at Persepolis: Reassessing a Programmatic Relationship," p. 103-120

Wednesday, November 12: Living an Ideal: Men of Bronze in Sculpture and Armor

Reading: Marina Haworth, "The Impenetrable Body: Armor and the Male Nude in Greek Art," p. 161-174

Assignment: **Papers or Projects due by Sunday, November 16 at 11:59 PM**

Week 14: Alexander and the Hellenistic Kingdoms

Monday, November 17: Dynamic Compositions: Pergamon and Hellenistic Sculpture

Reading: Richard Whitaker, "Art and Ideology: The Case of the Pergamon Gigantomachy," p. 163-174

Wednesday, November 19: In Search of Greek Architecture—Resonances from Past to Present

No course meeting! Seek out Greek architecture in your environments!

Assignment: **Greek Architecture in the Wild, due Sunday, November 30 at 11:59 PM**

Thanksgiving Break! No Class Meetings on November 24 or November 26!

Week 15: Fragmentary Perspectives: The Art of Working with Ancient Greek Art

Monday, December 1: Nike, Aphrodite, and the Lure of the Incomplete

Reading: Andrew Stewart, "The Nike of Samothrace: Another View," p. 399-410

Wednesday, December 3: Don't Cry over Spilled Wine: Life Lessons from the Greeks