Spring 2022
ARTH 4801.005: Pompeii: Art and Life on the Bay of Naples

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00-12:20 in ART 280

Instructor: Dr. Neville McFerrin

Contact Information: neville.mcferrin@unt.edu and Canvas Inbox. I will respond to all student emails within 24 hours on weekdays. If emailing please include the course number in the subject line. In general, emails sent to my UNT email address are likely to be answered more swiftly than those sent through Canvas.

Office Hours: In person office hours will be held at my office ART 206 on Thursdays from 2:00-3:00 and by appointment; Zoom office hours will be held on Thursdays from 3:00-4:00 and by appointment. All appointments must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.

Course Description:

With its long history of excavation and its extraordinary state of preservation, the site of Pompeii offers a glimpse into the spaces occupied by civic leaders and shopkeepers, children and slaves, providing the opportunity for modern scholars both to explore a wide range of extant visual and material culture, ranging from mosaics to sculpture to wall painting to ceramics and to confront the perspectives of past peoples who operated both within and beyond the dominant structures that inform the bulk of our textual narratives from the period. Using art as a lens, this course explores the site of Pompeii from multiple vantage points; by providing insight into a portion of the extant remains, focusing topics ranging from street plans, city infrastructure, and civic structures, to domestic spaces, shops, and workshops, it offers students the opportunity to consider the extent to which material and visual culture an help us to reconstruct and reconsider the lives of those who are often silent in longstanding dominant narratives concerning the late first century BCE and early first century CE. By juxtaposing the houses of civic leaders with the public dedications of freedmen, by considering the informal artwork of children alongside the wall paintings produced by professional workshops, we will begin to access the dynamic interactions that constituted daily life in Pompeii, and we will investigate the extent to which the tools we use to access these concepts can help us to integrate the stories of those who are often overlooked into our thinking about both the past and the present.

Course Objectives:

Through the analysis of material, visual, and textual evidence, students will:
• Explore the range of artistic and creative practices associated with the site of Pompeii
• Identify major constructions, artworks, artifacts, and objects
• Describe styles, periods, and media associated with particular periods within the site’s history
• Contextualize artistic creations by time period, function, and location
• Integrate multiple theoretical and methodological approaches into discussion and writing
• Apply terms, theories, and methodologies to the identification and discussion 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 thematic overview of the visual and material culture of the site of Pompeii, focusing on and problematizing questions of interiority and exteriority to juxtapose works generated for both public and private consumption. It will present this material through a series of recorded lectures that, together with assigned readings, will inform our face-to-face in person meetings. These meetings will provide an opportunity for more in-depth analysis of particular structures and works from the site together with offering the opportunity for related experiential activities designed to offer greater insight into the theoretical approaches used to analyze this material.

All recorded lectures, readings, assignments, and discussion prompts will be uploaded to the Canvas website. Weekly modules on the course Canvas site will provide links to relevant readings, assignments, and prompts. In-class activities will be both presented and undertaken separately from this material.

**Classroom Expectations:**

- **Attend.** As much of our discussion together will reference, but not replicate, the information provided in assigned texts, a lack of attendance will lead to a lack of understanding.
- **Participate.** Class meetings are designed to give you the opportunity to engage actively with ideas and images that are central to the themes of our course. It is through dialogue that new ideas come to light.
- **Read.** Assigned readings are the foundation for insights that will propel discussion and inform written work. All readings listed on the syllabus are intended to be read before the class on which they will be discussed. Thus, readings listed on a Tuesday on the syllabus should be read before the Tuesday course meeting; similarly, readings listed for Thursday should be completed before the Thursday meeting.
- **Look.** The lectures uploaded prior to each class meeting and the assigned meetings will highlight multiple artworks that relate to the time period, area, or theme upon which we focus in any given week. Take the time to look carefully at each work. Consider the composition and media, and any relevant comparanda that might help to provide insight into the piece.

- **Study.** After each class, a copy of the slides from that class will be uploaded to Canvas. Take the time to look carefully at each work presented, both in class and in readings. Devise a system for organizing this data and for distinguishing between multiple similar works.

- **Think.**

- **Respect.** While discussion without dissent would be futile, a healthy discussion environment is dependent upon mutual respect for differing opinions. Students who do not show proper respect for their classmates may be asked to leave the room and will be counted absent for the day.

**Course Environment:**

- In order to foster an inclusive learning environment, each of us must respect the thoughts and opinions presented by others. Although you may have a pertinent point, refrain from interrupting. And while disagreements lead to lively and interesting conversations, comments must be kept impersonal.

- Turn off all cell phones. Those who choose to text during sections will not be given credit for the session in which the texting occurs.

- Restrict your use of computers to classroom purposes. Those who choose to use computers for activities that are not related to the day’s coursework will receive no participation credit for the day.

- While at times, it may be useful to share examples from social media and other relevant online outlets to explore connections between multiple types of art, any consumption of such materials should be undertaken as a group. Please refrain from scrolling through images or watching videos during class time as such activities prevent full engagement with the ideas discuss and can distract those around you. Those who choose to do so will receive no participation credit for the day. If such activities take place for the whole of the course period, students engaging in them will be marked absent.

**Course Requirements:**

**Required Texts:**

All required readings will be provided as PDFs on our course Canvas site.

**Required Equipment:**

As responses to the pandemic evolve, it may be necessary for students or the professor to self-isolate. Should this occur, you may need to access the class remotely. To make certain this is possible, students will need the following equipment:
• Regular access to a computer
• A stable internet connection
• Regular access to a webcam
• Regular access to a microphone (Built-in microphones, such as those found in most laptops and desktop computers are fine!)

Assessments:

Discussion Attendance: 5%
Please be on time to class. If you must miss a class, you are responsible for turning in any assignment due that day, although you may turn in assignments for excused absences upon your return to class. Absences will be excused for documented medical reasons, family emergencies, university activities, and for religious observances. If you must be absent, please make sure to turn in any assignments that are due that day and to ask a classmate for notes.
As unforeseen difficulties are a fact of life, all students may take two absences from class, with no questions asked; unless there are previously discussed difficulties, those who are more than 15 minutes late will be counted as absent for the day.

While attendance is expected as outlined above, please contact me if you are ill or unable to attend class due to COVID-19 or COVID-19 exposure. If you have any COVID related symptoms or are running a fever, please do not attend class. Instead, send me an email explaining the issue, and we will make alternate arrangements. It is important to take appropriate steps to ensure your health and the health of our community. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your healthcare provider prior to any campus interactions. 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.

Discussion Participation: 10%
Prior to each course meeting, students will have access to a set of assigned readings which, together with the image prompts provided at the end of each course meeting in preparation for the next, will serve as a starting point for our discussions in class. Students should read the assigned texts carefully, making note of any questions or thoughts that arise from them. If questions are posed to accompany the readings, students should be prepared to discuss these as a group.

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 the discussion in a previous course meeting. 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 unresponsiveness or inattentiveness, will result in a 1 point deduction from the overall course participation grade for each violation.

If you are unable to attend a course meeting for any reason, you can receive participation credit for the day, regardless of the nature of the absence, by completing a 350 word written assignment that offers the opportunity to consolidate and analyze the materials presented in recorded lectures and in the day’s readings. Further guidelines associated with this written alternative are provided on the course Canvas site in the module titled “Absence Related Information.”

**Responses: 20%**
Over the course of the semester, students will be asked to generate short written responses of approximately 500 words, or to seek out relevant images, in response to a series of prompts or in response to activities undertaken during class meetings. Guidelines for each of these assignments will be provided as part of the Canvas module in which they are assigned. Relevant due dates are noted below in the course schedule.

**Test 1: 15%**
This test, focusing on material from lectures and readings assigned during the first half of the course will be offered in Week 8. To ensure that all students have time to take the test, there will be no discussions, lectures, or assigned readings on Thursday, March 10.

**Paper/Project Proposal: 5%**
At the end of week 10, students will propose a theme or topic for their final project. They will generate a short proposal (250-300 words) identifying the format of their final project and 2 images or sources, at least one of which is drawn from a source other than the syllabus or lectures, which will inform the project. Students will then provide either a brief description of their intended project output, or propose a question that they wish to explore through further research.

**Paper/Project Consultations: 5%**
During week 11, each student will sign up for a 10-minute consultation with Dr. McFerrin. During this individual meeting, students will have the opportunity to expand upon their project proposals, and 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 during the chosen meeting time, will lead to a grade of zero for this assignment.

Test 2: 15%

This test, focusing on material from lectures and readings assigned during the second half of the course will be offered in week 14. To ensure that all students have time to take the test, there will be no discussions, lectures, or assigned readings on Thursday, April 28.

Final Paper/Project: 25%

This final work, which may take the form of a traditional research paper, a digital recording, an artwork, or a recorded performance, offers students the opportunity to expand upon the ideas presented and discussed in the course. Papers should be approximately 2500 words in length, and should incorporate multiple lines of argumentation and relevant comparanda. A bibliography of no fewer than 6 scholarly works is required, together with a clearly stated, arguable thesis. Students choosing to generate their own works of art in response to those presented in class should provide an artist’s statement of no fewer than 750 words, which describes the intersections between course themes and artworks and their own creation. Together with this statement, they should submit no fewer than 3 works of Pompeian art that inform their own work.

The final paper/project is due no later than TUESDAY, MAY 10 AT 11:59 PM.

Course Policies:

Policy on Late Work:
For written assignments with a 10-15 point value, late work is accepted via the Canvas portal with a 0.5 point deduction for each day that the assignment is late until half credit has been reached, after which point, assignments will receive no more than half credit. For paper/project consultations, missed consultations will result in a zero for the assignment, unless extreme circumstances require accommodation. Late tests may be accepted at the discretion of the professor. Students must notify Dr. McFerrin to identify the circumstances that prevent them from completing the test within 24 hours of the due date. All late work must be submitted no later than April 29 at 11:59 PM. Except in cases of extreme duress, late final projects will not be accepted.

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 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 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 offences. 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.

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.

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 me no later than **Friday, January 28.** Additional information can be found on the ODA website at [http://disability.unt.edu/](http://disability.unt.edu/)

**Course Risk Factor:**
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.

**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.

**Policy on Recordings:**
Recorded lectures provided for use in this class are the intellectual property of the instructor and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes. Students may not post or otherwise share 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.

**Policy on Face Coverings:**
UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering when indoors, regardless of vaccination status, to protect yourself and others from COVID infection, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Face covering guidelines could change based on community health conditions.

**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. By remaining in the course, students signal their willingness to adhere to the policies presented here.

**Course Topics, Schedule and Overview:**

The following list of topics, readings, and assignment deadlines will provide us with the structure needed to explore our topic. However, the following information is subject to change, given the interests and aptitudes of the class.

*Week 1: Ruins, Memory, and the Story of Pompeii*

**Tuesday, January 18:** Introduction to the Course

**Thursday, January 20:** Ruins and Ruination

Online Lecture: Ruins, Time Capsules, and the Perception of Pompeii


Assignment: About Me, Due Monday, January 24 by 11:59 PM

*Week 2: Pompeii—The Basics*

**Tuesday, January 25:** Pompeii’s Early Excavations

Online Lecture: A Volcano, Some Dates, and the World’s Longest Running Excavation


**Thursday, January 27:** Pompeii’s Early Inhabitants

Online Lecture: In Search of Early Pompeii


*Week 3: Navigating Pompeii*

**Tuesday, February 1:** Civic Organization and the Structure of Urban Life

Online Lecture: The Implications of Civic Organization

Thursday, February 3: Streets, Movement, and the Circulation of People

Online Lecture: Finding Your Way in a Roman Town


Assignment: Streets and Meaning, Due Monday, February 7 by 11:59 PM

Week 4: Civic Life in Pompeii

Tuesday, February 8: Temples and Public Devotion

Online Lecture: Shifting Currents in Pompeian Public Religion


Thursday, February 10: Civic Life and Public Duty

Online Lecture: The Forum and the Ideal Citizen


Assignment: Performing Religion, Due Monday, February 14 by 11:59 PM

Week 5: Public Patrons and Private Power

Tuesday, February 15: Eumachia, Guilds, and Public Patronage

Online Lecture: Eumachia, Women, and Public Constructions of Power


Thursday, February 17: Games, Spectacles, and Buying Favor

Online Lecture: Isis in Pompeii


Week 6: Life on the Street, Part I

Tuesday, February 22: Streets and Social Communication
Online Lecture: Crowds, Benches, and Social Control


Thursday, February 24: Shops, Bars, and Other Stopping Off Places

Online Lecture: In Taberna—Public Conviviality in Pompeii


Week 7: Life on the Street, Part II

Tuesday, March 1: Commissioning Text: Electoral Graffiti as Design

Online Lecture: Writing on Pompeian Walls


Thursday, March 3: Informal Art in Public Spaces

Online Lecture: Graffiti in the Amphitheater and other Public Spectacles


Assignment: Visualizing Text, Due Monday, March 7 by 11:59 PM

Week 8: Interrogating Houses

Tuesday, March 8: What’s in a Name? Naming Conventions and Pompeian House

Online Lecture: Repopulating the Villa of the Mysteries


Thursday, March 10: TEST 1! No Class Meeting! No Recorded Lecture!

Assignment: Test 1, Due Monday, March 21 by 11:59 PM.

Spring Break: March 14-18
**Week 9: Confronting the Pompeian House**

**Tuesday, March 22:** Stuff, Trash, and Things Left Behind

Online Lecture: Fishhooks in the Atrium: Working with Domestic Assemblages


**Thursday, March 24:** Navigating Pompeian Houses

Online Lecture: Rooms, Terms, and the Problems with Both

Readings: John Clarke, “Space and Ritual, 100 BC- AD 250,” p. 2-29

Assignment: Working with Trash, Due Monday, March 28 by 11:59 PM

**Week 10: Crafting the Pompeian House**

**Tuesday, March 29:** Painters at Work

Online Lecture: Designing Women—Depicting Painters in Pompeian Wall Painting


**Thursday, March 31:** Repopulating the Pompeian House

Online Lecture: Looking Beyond the Patron


Assignment: Paper/Project Proposal, Due by Monday, April 4 at 11:59 PM

**Week 11: Wealth and Tradition in Pompeian Interiors**

**Tuesday, April 5:** Experiencing the Pompeian House

Online Lecture: Engaging the Senses in the Pompeian Interior

Readings: Rebecca Molholt, “Roman Labyrinth Mosaics and the Experience of Motion,” p. 287-303

**Thursday, April 7:** No Class Meetings! Sign Up for Individual Meeting Times!
Assignment: Individual Paper/Project Meetings with Dr. McFerrin, See sign-up sheet for available times.

**Week 12: Keeping up with the Popidii: Houses and Competition in Pompeii**

**Tuesday, April 12: Friendly Neighborhood Rivals in Region VI**

Online Lecture: Surprise and Expectations in Pompeian Interiors


**Thursday, April 14: Water, Resources, and Power in the Pompeian House**

Online Lecture: Controlling Nature from Aqueducts to Gardens


**Week 13: Alternative Living Arrangements**

**Tuesday, April 19: Living Beyond the Domus**

Online Lecture: Renting Space in Pompeii


**Thursday, April 21: Brothels and the Space of Prostitution**


Assignment: Displaying Pompeian Nudity, Due Monday, April 25 by 11:59 PM

**Week 14: Pompeians at Work**

**Tuesday, April 26: The Business of Everyday Life**

Online Lecture: Celebrations of Work in Pompeian Art


**Thursday, April 28: TEST 2! No Class Meetings! No Recorded Lecture!**
Assignment: Test 2, Due no later than Monday, May 2 at 11:59 PM

**Week 15: Deaths and Afterlives**

**Tuesday, May 3: Death in Pompeii**
Online Lecture: Graves in Pompeii and Pompeii as Grave


**Thursday, May 5: Crisis, Catastrophe, and Longevity: Life Lessons from Pompeii**

**Final project due no later than Tuesday, May 10 at 11:59 PM!**