Spring 2023
ARTH 4847: Topics in Ancient Mediterranean Art
The Art of Early Italy

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 AM-12:20 PM 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; on weekends and university holidays, responses will be delayed. If emailing, please include the course number in the subject line.

Office Hours: Wednesdays from 1:00-3:00 PM in Art 206 and by appointment. All appointments must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.

Course Description: From Etruria to Sicily, Sardinia to Samnium, from painted tombs to monumental sanctuaries, from commemorative statues to exuberantly painted pots, the peoples of early Italy generated a vast visual and material record that resonates with their joy, their humor, their resilience, and above all, their humanity. While the story of ancient Rome has long dominated discussions of the ancient Italian peninsula, this course seeks to make a space for the work of social actors that are often overlooked in traditional narratives of the early Italian peninsula, which often focus on the so-called “rise of Rome,” and in so doing to consider methodologies for working with the productions of marginalized and under-considered groups in other times and spaces. The course considers the visual and material record associated with ancient Sardinia, Etruria, Samnium, Apulia, Magna Graecia, Campania, and Latium, in the periods between 1200 BCE-100 CE. Key themes include: dialogues between early Italic groups and the larger Mediterranean world, tensions between continuity and change, connections between art, memory, and memorialization, expressions of public and private identity, and the utilization of visual and material culture as a means of both support for and resistance to imperial processes.

To explore these themes, the course will focus on close visual analyses, on the materiality of key objects, and upon the integration of multiple theoretical apparatuses that will encourage course participants to think critically about the role that visual and material culture played in the lives of the peoples of early Italy.
**Course Objectives:**
Through the analysis of material, visual, and textual evidence students will:

- Explore the range of artistic and creative practices associated with early Italy
- Identify major sites, artifacts, and objects associated with the groups of focus
- Describe styles, periods, and media associated with the groups of focus
- Contextualize artistic creations by time period, group, function, and identity intersection
- 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 an overview of art generated by the peoples of the Italian peninsula, devoting blocks of time to Italic peoples located across the zone. It will present these explorations through in-person, face-to-face 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.* 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, should be read before the Tuesday meeting. Readings listed for a Thursday should be read on the Tuesday or Wednesday prior to the Thursday class meeting.
• **Look.** A copy of the slides from each class will be uploaded to our course Canvas site. Take the time to look carefully at each work presented, both in these slides and in the assigned readings. Consider the composition and media of each work, together with any relevant comparanda that might help to provide insight into the work.

• **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 sign-off for the day and will be counted absent.

**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 our course meetings will not be given participation 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.

**Course Requirements:**

**Required Readings:** All required readings for the course will be uploaded 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.

**Attendance:** 5%

Please be on time to class. Those who are more than 20 minutes late will be counted absent for the day. 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.

Absences will be excused for documented medical reasons, family emergencies, university activities, and religious observances. As unforeseen difficulties are a fact
of life, all students may take two absences from class with no questions asked and without penalization.

**Discussion Participation: 10%**

Prior to each course meeting, students will have access to a set of assigned readings, which together with the prompts provided at the end of each course meeting, 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 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 violation from the final course grade for each violation.

**In-Class Activities: 10%**

The art of early Italy is immersive, multi-sensorial, and constructs meaning around expectations of interaction. To engage with these elements of the work produced across the Italian peninsula, the class will engage in activities that will occur within our planned course meetings designed to encourage us to consider the myriad ways in which consideration of questions of shape, form, subject, and iconography are enlivened by interactions with objects. To think through the implications of these activities, at the close of each meeting that includes such work, students will be given a short writing prompt that will allow each student to consider the implications of the work of the day for our understanding of the art of the place and period in question. The dates for such assignments are indicated in the schedule below.

**Objective Object Description: 5%**

At times, art historians working on the art of early Italy encounter excavated objects with few known comparanda. To better enable the scholarly community to engage with such works, we rely upon clear, objective descriptions both to enable us to compare objects and artifacts across sites and to begin the process of identification and analysis. This assignment, due by Friday, February 3, gives students the opportunity to practice such skills.
Mini-Test: 5%
This short test, offered during Week 5 and due by Friday, February 17, is designed to prepare students for the longer tests that will occur later in the course. It will feature a previously unseen artifact or work of art, and will ask students to craft an argument regarding a probable date, place of origin and identification of the artifact, using terms and identifications presented in the course materials to support this argument.

Object Analysis: 5%
This assignment builds upon the skills developed by students through the objective description of provided objects undertaken in Week 3. For art historians, descriptions serve not only as a means to document, but also as tools in the initial process of analysis. By returning to objects that they previously described, students will have the opportunity to consciously consider the ways in which strong descriptions can enable equally productive analyses. This assignment is due in Week 7.

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 and is due by Friday, March 10. To ensure that all students have time to take the test, there will be no discussions, lectures, or assigned readings on Thursday, March 9.

Paper/Project Proposal: 5%
In Week 10, students will propose a theme or topic for their final project. They will generate a short proposal of 250-300 words identifying the format of their final project together with two ancient Italian images or two sources that 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. In 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 at during the chosen meeting time will lead to a grade of zero for this assignment. To make certain that those students with complicated schedules have an opportunity to meet, there will be no class meeting on Tuesday, April 4. Instead, this time will be set aside for individual paper/project meetings.
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 Tuesday, April 25.

Final Paper/Project: 20%
This final work, which may take the form of a traditional research paper or a creative work in any medium, offers students the opportunity to expand upon the ideas presented and discussed in the course. Papers should be approximately 2500-3000 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. Students choosing to generate creative works should provide an artist’s statement of no fewer than 750 words, which describes the intersections between course themes and artworks of their own creation. Together with this statement, students undertaking a creative project will submit no fewer than four works of ancient Italian art, including appropriate identifications, that helped to inform their work.

This project is due no later than Tuesday, May 9 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 the seventh calendar day after the due date. After seven days, if assignments are not turned in, students wishing to turn in late assignments should contact Dr. McFerrin. At this point, Dr. McFerrin may offer alternative due dates at her discretion. 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 any missed test within 24 hours of the due date. 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](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 Dr. McFerrin no
later than Friday, February 3. Additional information can be found on the ODA website at http://disability.unt.edu/

**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.

**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 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, assignments, and deadlines will provide us with the structure needed to consider the complex and fascinating art of early Italy. However, the following information is subject to change, given the interests and aptitudes of the class.

*Week 1: Time and Space—Reconsidering the Italian Peninsula*

*Tuesday, January 17: Thinking with Fragments: An Introduction to the Course*
Thursday, January 19: What’s in a Map? The Political Cartography of Early Italy


**About Me due by Friday, January 20 at 11:59 PM!**

Week 2: *Economies of Bronze and the Making of Early Sardinia*

Tuesday, January 24: Considering Sardinia—An Introduction to the Island


Thursday, January 26: Monumental Mysteries: The Case of Nuraghi


**Week 3: Movement and Meaning: Engaging with Portable Objects**

Tuesday, January 31: Thinking with Objects—Considering Sardinian Figurines

In Class Activity: Descriptions and their Utility

Reading: Isabelle Vella Gregory, “Thinking through the Body: The Use of Images as a Medium of Social Exchange,” p. 23-46

Thursday, February 2: No Group is an Island—Sardinia in Context

Reading: Carlo Tronchetti and Peter van Dommelen, “Entangled Objects and Hybrid Practices: Colonial Contacts and Connections at Monte Prama, Sardinia,” p. 184-209

**Objective Object Description due by Friday, February 3 at 11:59 PM!**

Week 4: *Introducing the Etruscans*

Tuesday, February 7: From Sardinia to Etruria: The Etruscans in Context


Thursday, February 9: The Art of Early Etruria

In Class Activity: The Materiality of Urns
Reading: Lucy Shipley, “Potting Personhood: Biconical Urns and the Development of Individual Funerary Identity,” p. 55-76

Week 5: At Home with the Dead in Etruria

Tuesday, February 15: Cities of the Dead, Part I: Stone Commemorations


Thursday, February 16: Cities of the Dead, Part II: Etruscan Painted Tombs

Reading: Peter J. Holliday, “Narrative Structures in the François Tomb,” p. 175-191

Mini-Test due by Friday, February 17 at 11:59 PM!

Week 6: The Crafting of Memory

Tuesday, February 21: Dining with the Dead: Re-Contextualizing Greek Pots in Etruria

In Class Activity: Function as Interpretation—Another Context for the Sarpedon Krater


Thursday, February 23: Portraiture and the Picturing of Connection

Reading: Judith Swaddling, “Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: An Etruscan Aristocrat,” p. 769-780

Week 7: Homes for the Gods: Etruscan Monumental Architecture and its Impacts

Tuesday, February 28: The Spaces of Etruscan Religion

In Class Activity: Practicing Divination

Reading: Ingrid Edlund-Berry, “The Architectural Heritage of Etruria,” p. 695-707

Thursday, March 2: Houses for the Gods? The Evidence from Murlo

Reading: Anthony Tuck. “The Evolution and Political Use of Elite Domestic Architecture at Poggio Civitate (Murlo),” p. 35-64

Object Analysis due by Friday, March 3 at 11:59 PM!
Week 8: Wondrous Things: Etruscan Artists and the Construction of Detail

Tuesday, March 7: Shiny Things: Reflective Surfaces and the Experience of Beauty


Thursday, March 9: No Class meetings! No readings! Take test 1!

Test 1 due by Friday, March 10 at 11:59 PM!

Spring Break! No class meetings on Tuesday, March 14 or Thursday, March 16!

Week 9: Uncouth Mountain Men? Reconsidering the Samnites

Tuesday, March 21: Samnites: The Peoples of the Mountains

Reading: Gianluca Tagliamonte, “The Samnites,” p. 419-446

Thursday, March 23: Monumental Humans: The Warrior of Capestrano and Beyond

Reading: Larissa Bonfante, “Gender Benders,” p. 109-116

Week 10: Life Beyond Cities: Structuring Community in Samnium

Tuesday, March 28: Visibility, Space, and the Sanctuary at Pietrabbondante

Reading: Rafael Scopacasa, “Building Communities in Ancient Samnium: Cult, Ethnicity, and Nested Identities,” p. 69-87

Thursday, March 30: Unexpected Iconography in the Apennines: Considering Monte Pallano

Reading: Susan Kane, “Terracotta Dolphin Plaques from Monte Pallano,” p. 176-180

Paper/Project Proposals due by Friday, March 31 at 11:59 PM! Sign up for individual paper/project meetings!

Week 11: Hercules in Central Italy

Tuesday, April 4: No course meeting! Time set aside for individual paper/project meetings!

Thursday, April 6: Hercules the Unifier—Hercules the Defiant: From Figurines to the Sanctuary of Hercules Curinus
In Class Activity: The Materiality of Figurines

Reading: Guy Bradley, “Aspects of the Cult of Hercules in Central Italy,” p. 129-152

**Week 12: The View from the South**

Tuesday, April 11: The Greek Connection: Magna Graecia and Its Story

Reading: Peter Funke, “Western Greece (Magna Graecia),” p. 153-173

Thursday, April 13: Paestum or Poseidonia? Considering Identity in Southern Italy

Reading: Maurizio Gualtieri, “Greeks, Lucanians, and Romans at Poseidonia/Paestum (South Italy),” p. 369-387

**Week 13: Beyond Magna Graecia**

Tuesday, April 18: The Painted Tombs of Southern Italy


Thursday, April 20: Whose Pottery is It Anyways? Apulian Red-Figure Reconsidered

In Class Activity: The Dynamics of Apulian Pottery

Reading: T. H. Carpenter, “Prolegomenon to the Study of Apulian Red-Figure Pottery,” p. 27-38

**Week 14: The View from Pompeii**

Tuesday, April 25: No class meeting! No assigned readings! Take test 2!

Thursday, April 27: Etruscans, Samnites, and the Art of Pompeii

Reading: Nancy de Grummond, “Mirrors, Marriage, and Mysteries,” p. 63-85

**Test 2 due by Friday, April 28 at 11:59 PM!**

**Week 15: Latium and Roman Connections**

Tuesday, May 2: Latium and the Growth of Early Rome

Reading: Francesa Fulminate, “The Latins,” p. 473-498
Thursday, May 4: Considering Resonance: Herennius Etruscus, Hirpus, and the Longevity of Memory

Final papers/projects due via Canvas no later than Tuesday, May 9 at 11:59 PM!