

# ARTH 4815 -- Modern Architecture, Interiors, and Furniture

Spring 2026

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:30-3:50

Curry Hall 103



*A chair that works, for people who work*

Steelcase model 451 office chair advertisement image set, 1972.

**Professor:** Paula Lupkin

**Preferred Contact:** Canvas Message

**Office:** Art 311

**Office Hours are For Everybody:** Thursdays 9:30-12 or Zoom by appointment

*Yes, really. Office hours are a regular part of the course and are meant to be used. You do not need to be confused, behind, or in trouble to come; asking questions, thinking through ideas, or checking that you're on the right track are all good reasons to stop by. Make office appointments [here](#).*

**Teaching Assistant:** Melyssa Hawes

**Office Hours:** Posted on Canvas

**Preferred Contact:** Canvas Message

## Course Description

This course examines modern architecture, interiors, and furniture from the late nineteenth century through the late twentieth century. Emphasis is placed on the relationship between design, technology, labor, consumption, gender, and everyday life. Through lectures, readings, films, and visual analysis, students will analyze how modern interiors shape and reflect social, cultural, and political values.

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### Learning Outcomes and Texas Core Objectives

With engagement and steady work, students will:

- Analyze how modern architecture and design express cultural, technological, and social change (Critical Thinking).
- Communicate ideas clearly in written and oral formats (Communication).
- Interpret visual, spatial, and historical evidence to support arguments (Empirical and Quantitative Skills).
- Collaborate through class discussions and in-class workshop (Teamwork).
- Demonstrate academic integrity and responsible research practices (Personal Responsibility).
- Evaluate the social, political, and environmental implications of design decisions (Social Responsibility).

## Course Materials

### Required Book

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, 4th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2020).

### Additional Readings and Media

Articles, book chapters, films, and primary sources are provided on Canvas. These include historical texts, exhibition catalog essays, film clips, and *Smarthistory* essays.

Students are expected to complete readings **before class** on the date listed in the schedule. Exams include questions drawn directly from assigned readings.

The course is graded on a **100-point scale**.

<b>Summary of Assignments and Grading</b>			
<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
January 15	Syllabus Acknowledgement Due		
February 10	Quiz 1 (Weeks 1--4)	15	15%
February 12	Assignment 1: Critical Engagement with a Reading	10	10%
March 24	Quiz 2 (Weeks 5--10)	15	15%
April 2	Assignment 2: Populuxe Advertisement Analysis	10	15%
April 16	Playtime Canvas Discussion Group Activity	10	10%
April 30	Quiz 3 (Weeks 11--15)	15	15%
May 5	Assignment 3: Framing Everyday Life through Postwar Design	15	15%
---	Participation and Engagement	10	10%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Grading Scale**

A: 90--100

B: 80--89

C: 70--79

D: 65--69

F: 64 and below

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## Syllabus Acknowledgement Requirement

Students are required to complete the syllabus acknowledgement assignment by **January 15**. The acknowledgement quiz (ungraded) must be submitted by the deadline posted on Canvas. Completion of this quiz serves as confirmation that the syllabus has been read and understood. Students who do not complete the acknowledgement may be unable to submit assignments or receive credit until it is completed.

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## Quizzes

There are **three in-class quizzes, each worth 15% of your final grade**. Each quiz consists of **five short-answer questions** drawn from lectures, readings, films, and images and a **comparative essay**. Quizzes are **non-cumulative** and cover defined blocks of weeks.

Before each quiz, students will receive review materials listing ten possible questions. On the quiz, students answer their choice of five of those questions. Responses should demonstrate understanding of key concepts and use specific examples.

- Quizzes are handwritten and held during class.
- Each quiz covers material from the **previous modules only**.
- Short answer question answers should be approximately **150--200 words**.
- Comparative Essay should be approximately 500 words.

Strong answers clearly address the question, use specific examples from lectures, readings, or images, and demonstrate understanding of key concepts.

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## Writing Assignments

This course includes three writing assignments. Each assignment builds directly on lecture and reading material already covered in class.

## Assignment 1: Critical Engagement with a Reading

### Short Analytical Essay

**Due:** February 12@11:59pm

**Points:** 10

This assignment introduces students to analytical reading as a historical method. Students will write a short essay that engages closely with one assigned course reading, focusing on the author's central argument, key concepts, and use of evidence.

Rather than summarizing the text, students will practice identifying how an argument is constructed and how it shapes interpretation of design, interiors, or everyday life. This assignment emphasizes careful reading, paraphrasing, and the use of Chicago-style footnotes to support analytical claims.

## Assignment 2: Populuxe Advertisement Analysis

### Short Image-Based Analysis

**Due:** April 2 @11:59pm

**Points:** 10

This assignment asks students to apply Thomas Hine's concept of Populuxe to a single postwar domestic advertisement drawn from *Life* or *House and Garden*. Building on skills developed in Assignment 1, students will move from textual analysis to visual analysis, treating the advertisement as historical evidence.

Students will analyze how design, imagery, and language work together to normalize expectations about consumption, domestic life, and modern living in the postwar United States. The assignment emphasizes close looking, careful description, and the integration of a course reading with visual evidence.

## Assignment 3: Framing Everyday Life through Postwar Design

### *Focused Analysis Paper*

**Due:** May 5@11:59pm

**Points:** 15

Students will write a sustained analytical paper focused on one postwar interior or one postwar advertisement discussed in class. Building on skills developed in Assignments 1

and 2, the paper analyzes how design shaped expectations about everyday life in the mid-twentieth century, including gender roles, consumption, labor, or domestic life.

The paper is framed by the following research question:

**How did postwar design shape expectations about everyday life, and what kinds of behaviors, values, or identities did it encourage or normalize?**

Students may narrow this question to suit their chosen object. The paper emphasizes close analysis of course material rather than independent research and requires use of two assigned course readings.

A detailed assignment description, expectations, and grading rubric are available on Canvas.

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## Playtime Canvas Discussion Group

**Due:** April 16

**Points:** 10

Students will select a short clip from *Playtime* (1967), identify timestamps, and analyze how Jacques Tati uses set design and interior space to satirize modern corporate culture. Students will post their analysis to Canvas and respond substantively to classmates' posts.

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## Weekly Schedule and Reading Assignments

All readings are to be completed **before class** on the date listed.

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### Week 1

#### **January 13 -- Introduction; Syllabus Review**

In class: Course structure and policies; overview of modern architecture, interiors, and furniture as historical problems.

No readings due.

#### **January 15 -- Industrialization and Design**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, 4th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2020), Chapter 1.

John Heskett, "The American System," in *The Idea of Design*, ed. Victor Margolin (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), 63--78 (Canvas PDF).

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## **Week 2**

### **January 20 -- Consumer Culture**

Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Macmillan, 1899), Chapter 4, "Conspicuous Consumption" (Canvas PDF).

Penny Sparke, "The Mass-Consumed Interior," in *The Modern Interior* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 145--170 (Canvas PDF).

### **January 22 -- Arts and Crafts Movement**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 2.

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## **Week 3**

### **January 27 -- Morality, Modernity, and the Machine**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 3.

### **January 29 -- Theories of Architecture and the Machine**

Frank Lloyd Wright, "The Art and Craft of the Machine," in *The Essential Frank Lloyd Wright*, ed. Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 35--49 (Canvas PDF).

Henry van de Velde and Hermann Muthesius, "Thesis and Antithesis," in *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-Century Architecture*, ed. Ulrich Conrads (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1970), 24--28 (Canvas PDF).

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## **Week 4**

### **February 3 -- The Market and the Profession**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 5.

Joel Sanders, "Curtain Wars: Modern Architecture and the Public Sphere," *Journal of Architectural Education* 53, no. 1 (1999): 38--45 (Canvas PDF).

### **February 5 -- Quiz 1 Review**

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## **Week 5 -- ⚠ QUIZ WEEK**

**February 10 -- QUIZ 1** (Weeks 1--4)

**February 12 -- Assignment 1 Introduction: Critical Engagement with a Reading**

In-class close reading workshop (Frank Lloyd Wright).

**Assignment 1 Due**

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**Week 6**

**February 17 -- Art Nouveau in France and Belgium**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 2.

**February 19 -- Wright, Sullivan, and Chicago**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 3.

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**Week 7**

**February 24 -- Research Day (No Class)**

**February 26 -- Early Modern Movements: Germany and the Netherlands**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 3.

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**Week 8**

**March 3 -- Prototypes and Standardization**

Ernst Neufert, *Architects' Data* (1936), selections (Canvas PDF).

"The Frankfurt Kitchen," Museum of Modern Art,

<https://www.moma.org/collection/works/126451>.

"The Frankfurt Kitchen," *Counter Space: Design and the Modern Kitchen* (MoMA, 2010),

[https://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2010/counter\\_space/the\\_frankfurt\\_kitchen/](https://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2010/counter_space/the_frankfurt_kitchen/).

Robert Rotifer, "The Frankfurt Kitchen," video, MoMA.

**March 5 -- Art Deco and L'Esprit Nouveau**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 4.

Le Corbusier, "Argument" and "Eyes That Do Not See: Automobiles." selections from

[\*L'Esprit Nouveau\*](#)

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**Week 9**

## March 9--15 -- Spring Break

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### Week 10

#### March 17 -- Marketing and Branding

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 4.

#### March 19 -- Quiz 2 Review

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### Week 11 -- ⚠ QUIZ WEEK

#### March 24 -- QUIZ 2 (Weeks 5--10)

#### March 26 -- Research Workshop: Working with Primary Sources

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### Week 12

#### March 31 -- Postwar Consumer Culture

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 7.

Thomas Hine, *Populuxe* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), Introduction and Chapters 1--2.

#### April 2 -- Postwar Consumer Culture, Domestic Ideology, and the Kitchen Debate

Thomas Hine, *Populuxe*, Chapters 3--4.

[Nixon--Khrushchev Kitchen Debate 1](#) [Nixon—Khrushchev 2](#)

### Assignment 2 Due

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### Week 13

#### April 7 -- Corporate Modernity and Interior Systems

Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler, "If the Chair Fits," in *Open Plan* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2021), chapter excerpt (Canvas PDF).

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 6.

Bobbye Tigerman, "The Knoll Planning Unit," in *California Design, 1930--1965* (Canvas PDF).

#### April 9 -- Brazil and Mexico

Smarthistory, "Modern Architecture in Latin America: Mexico and Brazil,"

<https://smarthistory.org/modern-architecture-latin-america/>.

[Lina Bo Bardi, Curatorw](#) (video).

Luis Barragán House and Studio (video).

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 10.

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## **Week 14**

### **April 14 -- U.S. Regional Modernism: California**

Pat Kirkham, "Humanizing Modernism," in *Charles and Ray Eames: Designers of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), selections (Canvas PDF).

House: [After Five Years of Living](#), film (1955).

*Arts & Architecture* and the Case Study House Program (video).

### **April 16 -- Jacques Tati, [Playtime](#) (1967). Group Discussion Playtime Canvas Discussion Group Due**

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## **Week 15**

### **April 21 -- High-Tech and Postmodernism**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 8.

### **April 23 -- Ecology and Sustainability**

Anne Massey, *Interior Design Since 1900*, Chapter 9.

Victor Papanek, "Do-It-Yourself Murder: The Social and Moral Responsibility of the Designer," in *Design for the Real World* (New York: Pantheon, 1971), 1--22 (Canvas PDF).

William McDonough and Michael Braungart, "The Hannover Principles" (2000) (Canvas PDF).

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## **Week 16 -- ⚠️ QUIZ WEEK**

### **April 28 -- Quiz 3 Review**

### **April 30 -- QUIZ 3 (Weeks 11--15)**

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## **May 5 -- Assignment 3 Due @ 11:59 pm**

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# COURSE POLICIES

## Participation, Engagement, and Attendance

### **Monitored throughout the semester**

**Points: 10**

Participation and engagement are assessed cumulatively across the semester and reflect intellectual presence, preparation, and attentiveness, not how often a student speaks. Participation may take multiple forms, including in-class discussion, engagement with images and case studies, office hours, email communication, and assigned activities.

Regular attendance is a core component of participation. Being present in class supports engagement with lectures, images, discussions, and activities that cannot be replicated outside the classroom. Attendance is tracked throughout the semester and affects the Participation and Engagement score as follows:

- Up to five unexcused absences: no attendance-related reduction
- Six to eight unexcused absences: up to a five-point reduction within Participation and Engagement
- More than eight unexcused absences: up to a seven-point reduction within Participation and Engagement

Attendance does not function as a separate grade and does not exceed the 10 points allocated to Participation and Engagement.

Excused absences include documented illness, religious observances, university-sponsored activities, and documented family or personal emergencies. Excused absences do not count toward the unexcused absence total. Students are responsible for notifying the instructor or TA and for keeping up with course material.

Detailed expectations and the Participation and Engagement rubric are available on Canvas.

## Office Hours, Communication, and Feedback

Students are strongly encouraged to seek feedback before submitting assignments by attending office hours with the professor or TA. Office hours are an appropriate place to clarify expectations, test ideas, confirm use of course material, ask questions about structure or evidence, and review material missed due to an absence.

Office-hour appointments must be scheduled through Google Bookings. Make office appointments [here](#).

Email is appropriate for brief, logistical questions and should be directed to Melyssa Hawes first. Should she need clarification, she will contact me. Requests for summaries of missed class sessions, or emails asking whether “anything important was missed,” will not be addressed by email. Guidance on how to catch up after an absence and appropriate communication after missing class is provided on Canvas.

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## Student Course Evaluations (SPOT)

The University of North Texas administers student course evaluations (SPOT) near the end of the semester. These evaluations provide important feedback on the course and instruction. Time will be set aside during class for students to complete SPOT evaluations when they open. Participation is voluntary and anonymous, and instructors do not have access to individual responses.

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## Lecture Slides and Devices

Lecture slides will be posted on Canvas shortly before class begins so that students may take notes directly on the PDF using their own devices. Slides are provided as a reference and study aid and are not a substitute for attending class or taking notes.

Electronic devices such as laptops and tablets may be used for note-taking and engagement with course materials. Device use that distracts or disrupts other students may result in the loss of device privileges, as documented by the TA. Headphones are not permitted unless approved through a documented ADA accommodation.

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## Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Writing Tools Policy

This course is designed around direct engagement with assigned readings, lectures, films, images, and primary visual material discussed in class. Students are not expected to conduct independent or original research beyond course materials.

For this reason, the use of AI-generated writing, analysis, summaries, or paraphrasing tools is not permitted.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- AI chatbots and generative tools.
- AI-assisted writing or rewriting tools.
- Writing assistants such as Grammarly when used beyond basic spelling correction.

### **Permitted Use**

- Standard spell-check.
- Basic proofreading for typographical errors.

Use of AI-generated or AI-assisted writing beyond these limits constitutes a violation of the UNT Academic Integrity Policy.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructor before submitting work.

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## University of North Texas Policies

### Academic Integrity Policy

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. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

### ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA). If verified, the ODA will provide an accommodation letter to begin a private discussion

regarding course needs. Accommodation requests should be made as early as possible to avoid delays.

### **Emergency Notification and Procedures**

UNT uses Eagle Alert to notify students in the event of emergencies such as severe weather, campus closure, or health and safety incidents.

### **Retention of Student Records**

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained by the instructor of record for at least one calendar year after course completion.

### **Code of Student Conduct**

Student behavior that interferes with the instructor's ability to conduct class or with other students' learning is unacceptable and may be referred to the Dean of Students.