Art 1301--003 Honors Art Appreciation: Furniture, Design, and Decorative Arts
University of North Texas
Professor Paula Lupkin
Spring 2017

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:50
Art 226

Lina Bo Bardi, Bowl Chair, 1951

Course Description
This course introduces students to the study of visual and spatial culture, expanding awareness and appreciation of the aesthetic dimension of everyday life. Focusing on the history of furniture and interior design, we will explore issues of material culture, design, style, craftsmanship, and technology in diverse cultures, with a focus on Western and East Asian traditions. Lectures, discussions, and course readings will present a range of objects and materials, including chairs, tables, beds, lighting, and textiles. Students will also develop visual analysis and writing skills through a field trip and research project on the furniture collections at the Dallas Museum of Art.

Office: Art 224D
Office Hours: Fridays 12-2 and by appointment
paula.lupkin@unt.edu
**COURSE OUTCOMES**
If you attend each class meeting and engage with the content of the lectures, do the required reading, work conscientiously on your research assignment, and participate in field trips and discussions, the end of the semester you should:

--gain knowledge about decorative arts and design in a conceptual context.

--develop analytical and evaluative skills through readings from primary sources, journal articles and other supplementary materials.

--engage in high-level thinking and learning through intensive discussion; writing in small, collaborative learning settings.

--develop research, writing, and presentation skills through assignments.

**COURSE BOOKS:**
• Witold Rybczynski, *Now I Sit Me Down, From Klismos to Plastic Chair: A Natural History* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2016)

**LIBRARY RESERVES**
The two course textbooks are available, on two-hour library reserve, at the Willis Library Reserve desk. Find the reserve course page at: http://iii.library.unt.edu/search/r

**COURSE WEBSITE**
The professor will maintain a Blackboard course website, which can be accessed at learn.unt.edu with your EUID. This is an important source of information and you should check it regularly. We will post announcements on Blackboard, as well as the syllabus, assignments, class handouts, the attendance roster, calendar, and gradebook.

**COURSE EVALUATION**
Your grade will be determined by the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Attendance and Participation</th>
<th>20%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation 1</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation 2</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal Exchange 1</th>
<th>March 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal Exchange 2</td>
<td>April 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNT Field Trip</td>
<td>February 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denton Field Trip</td>
<td>February 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMA Field Trip</td>
<td>March 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Journal Due</td>
<td>May 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schedule

January 17  
**Introduction**

January 19  
**Material World**  
Rybczynski, “Is it Art?” Chapter 2

January 24  
**Thinking about Art and Material Culture**  
David Prown “The Truth of Material Culture: History or Fiction”  
Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, “Why We Need Things”  
Robert Friedel “Some Matters of Substance”  

January 26  
**Sitting vs. Squatting**  
Rybczynski, Chapter 3  
Sarah Handler, “Rising from Mat to Chair: A Revolution in Chinese Furniture,”  
Chapter 1 in *Austere Luminosity of Classical Chinese Furniture* (Berkeley: University of California Press)

January 31  
**Seat of Power: The Throne**  
Massey, Chapter 1

February 2  
**The Stool**  
Sarah Handler, “A Ubiquitous Stool,” Chapter 7 in *Austere Luminosity of Classical Chinese Furniture*.  
Rybczynski, 11-19.

February 7  
**Benches: For and Against the People**  
Edwin Heathcote “Public Benches: Seats of Civilization” Financial Times, June 19, 2015, [https://www.ft.com/content/f38b96f2-1019-11e5-ad5a-00144feabdc0](https://www.ft.com/content/f38b96f2-1019-11e5-ad5a-00144feabdc0)  

February 9  
**UNT Tour**—meet in the lobby of the Business Leadership Building

February 14  
**Gender and Class**  


February 16  
*Style, Status, and Slavery: Chippendale and Mahogany*
Rybczynski, Chapter 5  

February 21  
*Connoisseurship and Oeuvre*
“The Extraordinary Thomas Chippendale” parts 1-4, on YouTube

February 23  
*Craft and Materials*
Massey, Chapter 4

February 28  
*Denton Tour: Little Chapel in the Woods, Denton City Hall*

March 2  
*Comfort* (first journal exchange)

March 7  
*Journal Exchange Discussion*

March 9  
*Mass Production*
Rybczynski, Chapter 7 and 9  

March 14  
SPRING BREAK

March 16  
SPRING BREAK

March 21  
*Designer Chairs*
Rybczynski, Chapters 8  

March 23  
*NO CLASS-DMA TRIP*

March 26  
*Saturday DMA Field Trip*

March 28  
*NO CLASS-DMA TRIP*

March 30  
*Human Engineering*
Rybczynski, Chapter 11  
“On Average” *99 Percent Invisible Podcast*  

April 4  
*Chairs and the Workplace*
April 6  
*Film Viewing: Jacques Tati, Playtime, 1967 (Second Journal Exchange)*

April 11  
*Journal Exchange Discussion*

April 13  
*The Chair Reformed*  
Galen Cranz, *The Chair: Rethinking Culture, Body, and Design*, Chapter 5

April 18  
*Sustainability*  

April 20  
*Chairs in Art*  
Anne Massey, *Chair*, Chapter 5

April 25  
*Our Time*  
Rybczynski, Chapter 12

April 27  
*Journal Meetings*

May 2  
*Journal Meetings*

May 4  
*Journals Due*

**Presentation Topics and Schedule**

January 31  
*Seat of Power: The Throne*  
1. What serves as a throne in contemporary culture?

February 7  
*Benches: For and Against the People*  
1. Contemporary Park Bench Design: A Survey  
2. Benches and Community on the UNT Campus: Photo Survey  
3. Designing Shelters for the Homeless

February 9  
*UNT Tour*  
1. A Brief History of UNT  
2. Student Union Buildings: What are the precedents for the UNT student union building? The architecture, function, and design of student union buildings in the United States.  
3. The UNT Business Leadership Building: Who are the architects and what kind of similar work have they done before and after the UNT Business School? How does it compare to other business school buildings and office buildings?  
4. Andrea Palladio and the Palladian Window  
5. Starbucks and the Concept of the “Third Space”
February 14  
**Gender and Hierarchy**  
1. Manspreading—What is this phenomenon and what does it have to do with our relationship of Gender and Hierarchy to furniture design?  
2. Sitcoms and Seating: Investigate the role of chairs in the 1970s sitcom *All in the Family* and the 1990s sitcom *Friends*.  
3. The Italian Renaissance Cassone and the American Hope Chest

February 16  
**Style, Status, and Slavery: Chippendale and Mahogany**  
1. Thomas Day: North Carolina African American craftsman

February 21  
**Connoisseurship and Oeuvre**  
1. Experts and the Antiques Roadshow  
2. Sotheby’s and Christie’s: Auction Houses and Expertise  
3. Domino’s Pizza, Thomas Monaghan, and Frank Lloyd Wright

February 23  
**Craft and Materials**  
1. Injection molded plastic  
2. Bentwood from Thonet to Aalto  
3. PVC Plastic  
4. Sam Maloof  
5. Gustav Stickley

February 28  
**Denton Tour: Little Chapel in the Woods, Denton City Hall**  
1. O’Neill Ford—the career of this Texas architect  
2. History of TWU  
3. The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration  
4. Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan  
5. Marie Curie  
6. Dorothy LeSelle  
7. Martha Graham  
8. Isadora Duncan  
9. Ruth St. Denis  
10. Isadora Duncan  
11. Quakertown Community in Denton

March 2  
**Comfort**  
1. History of the La-Z-Boy Recliner

March 9  
**Mass Production**  
1. The Plastic Lawn Chair

March 21  
**Designer Chairs**  
1. Knoll Furniture Company  
2. Herman Miller Furniture Company  
3. Target and the Mass-Merchandising of Designer Furniture
March 26  
**Saturday DMA Trip**

1. Chairs and Museums: Introduce and discuss the way that chairs are displayed and interpreted in the following collections: Winterthur Museum Chair Typology, Vitra Design Collection, Living Chair Museum, Chair Park at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

2. The Period Room Today: What is a Period Room? What is its history and what are some key examples? How has the traditional period room of the 1920s been challenged and interpreted in recent years?

March 30  
**Human Engineering**


April 4  
**Chairs and the Workplace**

1. *Mad Men*: the evolving set design of the office


3. Dot Com and Contemporary Alternative Office Spaces

April 6  
**Film Viewing: Jacques Tati, Playtime, 1967** (Second Journal Exchange)

1. Jacques Tati—who was he, and what role does furniture and design play in his films?

April 13  
**The Chair Reformed**

1. The Stand-Up Desk

April 18  
**Sustainability**

1. LEED, the US Green Building Council, and Sustainable Furnishings Council

2. Recycled Park Benches

April 20  
**Chairs in Art**

1. Andy Warhol and the Electric Chair series

2. Artist Furniture: Find and discuss examples of studio artists who make furniture their medium.
**Course Elements**

**Participation**
Active participation in discussion and as a member of the course group, including attendance and active participation at all class meetings is expected and required. Roll will be taken. Any absences may have serious repercussions on your course grade.

**Presentations**
Presentations are intended to provide context for our class-meetings and field-trip visits on the UNT campus, in Denton, and to the Dallas Museum of Art. They will be assessed according to the following criteria:
• approximately 5-7 minutes in length,
• presentations should be researched through the internet, library sources, and/or fieldwork.
• they should be accompanied by 27 copies of a one-page handout of the most pertinent information that you present, including links and bibliography, so that your peers will have this as a reference.
• if in the classroom, presentations should be accompanied by a power-point presentation with a maximum of 3 slides.
• presenters should be prepared to answer questions and participate in engaged discussion on their topic at the time of presentation and beyond.

**Journal entries:**
Your journal is a record of your active engagement in the course material and course experience. It should be composed of five different types of entries, for a total of at minimum 35 entries, arranged chronologically according to the timeline of the course:

1. **Classmate Journal Entries:**
   Read and respond to a site visit or reading response journal entry by another member of the class. How does their approach, idea, opinion compare with your own? How might their entry challenge or change your perspective? What suggestions or responses would you pass along to the writer? *(minimum: two)*

2. **Reading Responses:**
   Consider the following questions:
   What are the strengths and weaknesses of the author’s thesis and evidence?
   Compare this reading with another from the course. How are they similar or different? *(minimum: five)*

3. **Site Visits:**
   The following prompts would work for any of the site visits. *(minimum: three)*
   a. Write a formal analysis of what you see. Describe a space or object that you see using words. To assist you in this project, refer to a handy guide to formal analysis
b. Sketch an object, image, or site

c. Write a narrative in which the object, image, or site plays a role.

d. Write about the process by which the image, object, or site was made. Consider materials, processes of production, cost, labor, etc.

e. Consider the context or use of the object/space. How might it inform your interpretation?

4. **Scavanger Hunt**

As part of your course journal, include a minimum of 15 photographs of yourself with items from the collections of the Dallas Museum of Art, the UNT Campus, and your everyday life. These photographs must also include captions of 1-2 sentences at a minimum. *(minimum: fifteen)*

5. **Image Portfolio**

As part of your course journal, maintain a portfolio of images/video of furniture and interiors you encounter in popular culture, including print and tv advertisements, film or tv shows, social media. *(minimum: ten)*
Course Policies

Attendance
Your success in this lecture course will depend on your exam grades but also in part, upon your attendance and active engagement. You are expected to be in class at every assigned meeting, including field trips. An attendance sign-up sheet will be circulated. Be on time for class; arrivals later than 10 minutes after roll is taken may be counted as an absence.

Sometimes an illness, emergency, or other circumstances may cause you to miss class. Absence will only be excused in the case of serious medical or family problems. To be excused for an absence please notify your TA before class or immediately afterwards and provide proper documentation.

More than two unexcused absences will result in a reduced grade. Each absence beyond two will result in a reduction of your final earned grade. 5 points of your total score will be deducted from your final grade for each absence after three absences. For example, 4 absences = 5 points deducted from your total points. A final course grade of 90 (A) will become and 85 (B). If you experience serious personal or academic problems that interfere with your attendance please let me know before it wrecks your grade.

If you miss class, try to borrow a classmate’s notes. The instructor will not assume responsibility for providing class notes to you.

Acceptable Student Behavior
Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' 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 directed to leave the classroom 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 forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.deanofstudents.unt.edu

Sexual Discrimination, Harrassment, and Assault
UNT is committed to providing an environment free of 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.

Field Trips
Experiencing and learning about architecture and design outside of the classroom is an essential aspect of this course.
Late or Missing Assignments
All assignments must be completed to pass the course, and submitted on the due dates, in person or through previously arranged electronic submission. Students will only be permitted to turn in late projects in the case of religious holiday observance or medical or family emergencies. Computer, disk, or printer malfunction are not valid excuses. Back up your work at all times. Late assignments will be penalized, with a drop of 10 points per day, including weekend days. Incompletes will be awarded only in instances of medical or severe family emergencies, or other unusual situations beyond the student’s control. Documentation will be required.

Electronic Citizenship
As many students have reported to me, the use of music players, email, or video games during class is distracting to those around you, and detrimental to your own learning and performance in class. A Canadian study has proven that laptop use in the classroom negatively affects student grades. [http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/parenting/back-to-school/laptops-in-class-lowers-students-grades-canadian-study/article13759430/](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/parenting/back-to-school/laptops-in-class-lowers-students-grades-canadian-study/article13759430/) Therefore there will be no use of electronic devices in class. Please turn off your cell phones, put away your ipad and laptops when you sit down. Accommodations may be made in the case of students with disabilities with official documentation.

In this course, I will often use email to send messages to students regarding announcements, assignments, and answers to questions. I am receptive to email messages from students; however, I prefer to meet with students in person during my office hours. I hold office hours every Monday 11-12 and by appointment. I encourage every student to take advantage of this opportunity to meet with me one on one. Given the size of the class I encourage every student to take advantage of this opportunity to meet with me, even if only to introduce yourself. Your teaching assistant will also have regular office hours. This is the ideal, appropriate time to ask for clarification about course material and policies, or to get help with your research project.

When that is not possible, feel free to email me, but you must allow at least 24 hours for my reply. Because email often takes the place of face-to-face communication, please maintain the same level of courtesy and respect in electronic communications that you would in conversation. Do not write something in an email that you would not feel comfortable saying in person.

Academic Integrity
Students in this class have the right to expect that their fellow students are upholding the academic integrity of this University. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense because it undermines the bonds of trust and honesty between members of the community and defrauds those who may eventually depend on our knowledge and integrity. Such dishonesty includes cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism.

The University of North Texas has established a range of penalties for students guilty of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. Appropriate penalties include a failing grade for the course,
a failing grade for the assignment, or a reduced grade or redone assignment or even expulsion from the University. All instances of serious plagiarism are reported to the Dean of Students.

Plagiarism is the most common form of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism can be a difficult concept to define; however simply put, plagiarism is using other people’s ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. It is important to note that at the university we are continually exposed to other’s ideas. We read ideas and words in textbooks, hear them in lectures, discuss them in class, and incorporate them into our own writing. You must always keep in mind that you must give credit where credit is due.

Plagiarism can occur in many forms and media. Although most commonly associated with writing, all types of scholarly work, including interior design projects, music, scientific data and analysis, and electronic publications can be plagiarized. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, and receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any other means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.

To avoid plagiarism you must give credit (for example, in a footnote) whenever you use:
- another person’s idea, opinion, or theory;
- any facts, statistics, graphics, visual images (i.e.: drawings, videos, etc.) that are not common knowledge.
- quotations of another person’s spoken or written words; or
- paraphrase of another person’s spoken or written words

If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism or academic dishonesty, or have difficulty addressing source material in your papers, please consult with the instructor.

Syllabus Changes: The syllabus is a reliable outline for the semester’s work, but readings and assignments may be changed at any time at the discretion of the instructor.

American Disabilities Act: 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 classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course.

If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes for students registered with the ODA as of the beginning of the current semester. If you register with the ODA after the first week of classes, your accommodation requests will be considered after this deadline.

Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at
www.unt.edu/oda, and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You also may call the ODA at 940.565.4323.

**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 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.

**University Emergency Notification & 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 Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

**Building Emergency Procedures:** In case of emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather related threat, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your teachers and act accordingly.

**Student Rights and Responsibilities:** Students in this course are subject to the University of North Texas code of student rights and responsibilities. By taking this course, you agree to refrain from any and all forms of physical and/or verbal abuse, harassment, threats, or intimidation towards students, faculty, staff or others associated with course delivery or instruction. Cases of harassment, threats or abuse will be reported to University authorities. See [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr) for further information.

**Student Health Insurance**
Brochures for student insurance are available in the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medical attention at the Student Health and Wellness Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If students have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, they should be sure that the plan covers treatment at this facility. If students choose not to go to the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center, they may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. Students are responsible for expenses incurred there.
Please sign this declaration of understanding and agreement with the above syllabus provisions and risk factor.

I ____________________________ (print) acknowledge that I have read the course syllabus. I understand the course structure, grading and attendance policies as well as the risk factor rating. I hereby agree to the syllabus and its provisions.

---

Course number and section

Risk Rating

Student phone #, e-mail address (print)  Signature  Date

Faculty Name  Signature  Date