ARTH 5801.002 – Topics in Art History: Science and Design, 1800–Today
Fall 2023, 3 credits
Wednesdays, 5:00–7:50 PM, ART 280

Professor Contact Information
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Office hours: Mondays from 2:00–3:00 PM and Wednesdays from 3:30–4:30 PM. Also available by appointment (in-person or Zoom).

Course description
This course investigates connections between science and design from c. 1800 to the present. A particular emphasis will be placed on the close relationship between science and design during the nineteenth century. The course will demonstrate how design helps produce science and how science informs design, showing that they are not compartmentalized, separate fields but in continual dialogue with one another. In addition to considering the cross-fertilization between science and design, both disciplines will also be studied as products of the broader culture they inhabit. “Design” will be conceived broadly, and a variety of topics will be explored, including but not limited to astronomical drawings and photography, botanical and natural history illustration, medical illustration, science fiction illustration, typography, information graphics, video games, fashion, furniture, and dioramas.

Course structure & content
This class meets in person. Readings are from a variety of sources and will be posted on Canvas. Make sure you do your readings and any required work before our class days. Readings will be supplemented by lectures, discussions, and class activities throughout the semester. I have included a course schedule of topics and readings in this syllabus, but be sure to check your email and Canvas regularly for any adjustments to the schedule.

Course objectives
• Students will investigate various forms of design in connection with different scientific disciplines.
• Students will reach an understanding of the dynamic interchange between design and science.
• Students will engage in and recognize the value of a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design history.
• Students will apply the analytical and communication skills needed to conduct research and present conclusions thoughtfully in verbal and written form.
Course disclaimer
Content in the arts and design 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. We might encounter examples of harmful stereotypes, racially insensitive images, and expressions of cultural and racial superiority. 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 might feel unduly distressed or made uncomfortable by such expressions should consider withdrawing at the start of the term and seeking another course.

Technical assistance
At UNT we have an IT Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.
Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
Live Chat: https://it.unt.edu/helpdesk/chatsupport
Phone: 940-565-2324
In Person: Sage Hall, Room 330
Hours and Availability: Visit https://it.unt.edu/helpdesk for up-to-date hours and availability.

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 deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Rules of Engagement
Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. These rules will be factored into your final participation grade. Here are some general guidelines:
• While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.
• Treat your instructor and classmates with respect, even when their opinion differs from your own.
• Speak from personal experiences. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or another individual’s experiences.
• Use your critical thinking skills to respectfully challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.

Student Support Services
UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:
• Student Health and Wellness Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
• Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
• UNT Care Team (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
• UNT Psychiatric Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)
• Individual Counseling (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling)

Other student support services offered by UNT include
• Registrar (https://registrar.unt.edu/registration)
• Financial Aid (https://financialaid.unt.edu/)
• Student Legal Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)
• Career Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)
• Multicultural Center (https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center)
• Pride Alliance (https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance)
• UNT Food Pantry (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry)

Academic Support Services
• Academic Resource Center (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
• Academic Success Center (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
• UNT Libraries (https://library.unt.edu/)
• Writing Lab (http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences
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 Accommodation Statement**
UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. 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 to begin a private discussion regarding one’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 avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

**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 Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

**Survivor Advocacy**
UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT’s Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim’s compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at 940-565-2759.

**Course Requirements & Grade Distribution**
Attendance & Participation: 25%
Midterm Essay: 20%
Short Oral Presentations on 2 readings: 15%
Final Project Oral Presentation: 10%
Final Project: 30%
Attendance & Participation
Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. Your Attendance & Participation grade will be lowered by one full letter grade for more than 2 unexcused absences. An excused absence is granted if you are ill or have an urgent reason for being unable to attend class. Appropriate documentation is required (i.e. a doctor’s note or proof of a positive Covid test) unless I tell you otherwise. It is important that you communicate with me prior to being absent so we can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals. Excessive tardiness will count as an absence (3 late arrivals=1 unexcused absence). Do not leave the class while it is in session unless you have an urgent reason.
It is required that each student come to class having completed the required reading and any assignments. You are also expected to participate in class discussions and any in-class or asynchronous activities that are assigned. Additionally, discussion board responses will factor into your participation grade. There will be 10 discussion board questions posted to Canvas throughout the semester, and you should aim to contribute to at least 5 posts in order to maintain an “A” for Participation.
No cell phones shall be visible or audible in the classroom after class begins unless there is an emergency. If you are seen using a phone repeatedly during class without permission, your participation grade will suffer.

Midterm Essay
You must complete a Midterm Essay of at least 1000 words and no more than 1500 words by Wed., October 18. You will have a choice of questions, and they will be provided to you a week in advance. You are allowed to refer to readings and notes and will submit the essay on Canvas.

Oral Presentations on Readings
You will present on 2 readings over the course of the semester. A sign-up sheet will be provided. You must effectively summarize the reading and share your perspective/opinion of the reading. Each presentation must be between 10–15 minutes. More detailed instructions are on Canvas.

Final Project
For your final project, you will have the option of completing a research paper (10–15 pages) or a creative project along with an accompanying statement of 5 pages. I will provide you with more detailed instructions on Canvas. You must review your topic with me during office hours or email your topic to me for approval by 11:59 PM on Wed., Nov. 15. The assignment is due by Wed., Dec. 13 at 5:00 PM. A letter grade will be deducted from the final project grade for each day past the deadline if you are late.
You will also give a short presentation on your final project in class on Wed., December 6. More detailed instructions will be provided.

Grading
A: 90% course average or above. Excellent work produced throughout the semester.
B: 80% course average or above. Good work produced throughout the semester.
C: 70% course average or above. Fair work produced throughout the semester.
D: 60% course average or above. Passing work produced throughout the semester.
F: Failure
COURSE SCHEDULE & READINGS (subject to revision)

Wednesday, August 23: Introduction to the course

Required readings:

Recommended readings:

Wednesday, August 30: Darwin

Required readings:
Recommended readings:

Wednesday, September 6: Astronomy

Required readings:

Recommended readings:
Wednesday, September 13: Air, The Invisible, & The Indeterminate

Required readings:

Recommended readings:
• Stephen Eisenman, “Ecology and Air Pollution in Nineteenth-Century British Art and Literature,” Venti 1, no. 3 (Fall 2020).

Wednesday, September 20: Animals

Required readings:

Recommended readings:
Wednesday, September 27: Flowers + Botanical Illustration
VISIT TO UNT MEDIA LIBRARY! Meet at 5:00 PM at Room 111 Chilton Hall:
https://library.unt.edu/media/

Required readings:
• Lewis Gordon, “Gardening games are blossoming in turbulent times,” The Verge, July 16, 2019: https://www.theverge.com/2019/7/16/20696253/gardening-games-harvest-moon-animal-crossing-ooblets-cultivation

Recommended readings/listenings:
• John Ingram, Flora symbolica; or, the Language and Sentiment of Flowers (London: Frederick Warne and Co.; New York: Scribner, Welford and Co., 1869). https://archive.org/details/florasymbolica00ingr/mode/1up
• Kate Greenaway, Language of Flowers (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1884). https://archive.org/details/languageofflower00gree/mode/1up
• Drawing Blood podcast with Emma Merkling and Christy Slobogin, season 2 episode 4, “Vegetal Agents, Plant-Human Entanglements, and Julia Margaret Cameron’s Photography”: https://open.spotify.com/episode/0XpN4POaWssPzNi01Vm3qW?si=1db933d52ee74d9d&nd=1

Saturday, September 30: Flowers + Botanical Illustration (continued)
FIELD TRIP TO DALLAS ARBORETUM & BOTANICAL GARDEN from 2:00–5:20 PM. Details regarding transportation TBA.
Note that we will not meet at our regular class time on Wednesday, October 4!

Wednesday, October 11: Medical Illustration
UNT Libraries Research Overview with Rebecca Barham
Midterm Essay questions provided

Required readings:

Recommended readings:

**Wednesday, October 18: Frankenstein**
**MIDTERM ESSAYS DUE!**
**VISIT TO UNT SPECIAL COLLECTIONS + FILM VIEWING!**
Meet at 5:00 PM at Special Collections, Room 443, 4th fl., Willis Library
**Note:** *Frankenstein* oral presentations will happen on Wednesday, October 25!

Required readings:

Recommended readings:
• Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or, the Modern Prometheus* (London: H. Colburn and R. Bentley; Edinburgh: Bell and Bradfute, 1831).
https://archive.org/details/ghostseer01schiuoft

**Wednesday, October 25: Sci-Fi**
**Note:** *Frankenstein* oral presentations will happen today!

Required readings:

Recommended readings:
Wednesday, November 1: Biomimicry and Patterns

Required readings:
• Google Arts & Culture: Women in Art Nouveau: https://artsandculture.google.com/story/women-in-art-nouveau-le-carton-voyageur-mus%C3%A9e-de-la-carte-postale/GgXBMa93xyTuLw?hl=en
• Browse Nervous System website: https://nervous-system.com/

Recommended readings:
• Neri Oxman, “Design at the Intersection of Technology and Biology,” TED talk, October 29, 2015: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVa_IZVzUoc
• Janine Benyus, “Biomimicry in Action,” TED talk, August 6, 2009: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_GFq12w5WU&t=168s
Wednesday, November 8: Fashion + Glenn Adamson lecture at UNT
Meet Annette Becker (Director of UNT’s Texas Fashion Collection) in 280 at 5:00 PM.
You will then attend the Glenn Adamson lecture together at 5:30 PM. Once the lecture is finished, you will visit the TFC (https://tfc.evad.unt.edu/visit/directions) with Annette.
Note: Fashion oral presentations will happen on Wednesday, November 15!

Required readings:
• Amy De La Haye, Ch. 7, “The Twentieth Century: ‘A Rose is a Rose is a Rose’,” in Ravishing: The Rose in Fashion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), 146–75.
• Browse online exhibition for the Bard Graduate Center 2023 exhibition Shaped by the Loom: Weaving Worlds in the American Southwest: https://exhibitions.bgc.bard.edu/shapedbytheloom/

Recommended readings:

Wednesday, November 15: Fashion (continued); Collection & Display
Note: Fashion oral presentations will happen today!
DEADLINE FOR APPROVAL OF FINAL PROJECT TOPIC!

Required readings:

Recommended readings:

Wednesday, November 22: THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS!

Wednesday, November 29: Collection & Display (continued); Information Graphics & Graphic Design
PEER REVIEW OF FINAL PROJECTS!
Note: Peer review groups will be assigned in class on November 15. You are encouraged to share your final project draft or outline with your group members by Monday, November 27 so they have a chance to review it before class on the 29th.

Required readings:
Recommended readings:

**Wednesday, December 6: ORAL PRESENTATIONS (10-13 minutes!) ON FINAL PROJECTS!**

**Wednesday, December 13: FINAL PROJECTS DUE by 5:00 PM!**

Note: If you have a physical art/design project, you can drop it off to me in my office (room 206 in the Art Building) on Wed., December 13 between 12:00 and 5:00 PM. I will be in my office to return physical projects on Monday, December 18 between 3:00 and 6:00 pm. If these times don’t work with your schedule, please get in touch with me to arrange an alternate time for drop off or pick up.