**ANT 450/550: Anthropology of Art**



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**Office hours:** Tuesday 3:30-4:30 in 220 Lloyd (except 1/14; 2/18; 3/18)

Wednesday 1-2:30 in 17 ten Hoor

or by appointment

**Course Description:**

The course views the art that societies past and present produce; it explores culture, creativity, and human beings' distinctive compulsion to make decorative objects. The artistic styles and forms of various cultural groups provide insight into the social, cultural, political, and economic functions of art.

**Course Prerequisites:**

For ANT450: At least six hours of ANT courses, including ANT 102; or permission of the instructor.

For ANT550: Graduate standing or permission of the instructor.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course students will:

\*gain familiarity with a range of artistic styles and forms of various cultural groups;

\*understand the social, cultural, political, and economic functions of art;

\*be conversant in the key theoretical insights about creative expression that have emerged from cross-cultural approaches to the study of art.

\*become adept at analyzing visual materials via classroom presentations and writing.

**Reading:**

Morphy, Howard and Morgan Perkins, eds.

2006 The Anthropology of Art: A Reader. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Supplementary articles will be posted on ereserves or blackboard learn. They include those listed below, although additional resources may be added that address the specific interests of students in the class.

Boone, Sylvia Ardyn

1993 Radiance from the Waters: Mende Feminine Beauty. *In* Art in Richard L. Anderson and Karen L. Field, eds. Small-Scale Societies: Contemporary Readings Pp. 303-308. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Dubin, Steven C.

1997 The Centrality of Marginality: Naïve Artists and Savvy Supporters. *In* Outsider Art: Contesting Boundaries in Contemporary Culture. Vera L. Zolberg and Joni M. Cherbo, eds. Pp. 37-52. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Irenaus

1988 The Biological Foundation of Aesthetics. In Beauty and the Brain: Biological Aspects of Aesthetics. Ingo Rentschler, et al., eds. Pp. 15-68. Boston: Birkhauser Verlag.

Errington, Shelly

1998 The Death of Authentic Primitive Art and other Tales of Progress. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 137-157; 188-227

Finney, Henry C.

1997 Art Production and Artists Careers: The Transition from “Outside” to “Inside.” *In* Outsider Art: Contesting Boundaries in Contemporary Culture. Vera L. Zolberg and Joni M. Cherbo, eds. Pp. 85-97. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Geary, Christraud M.

1993 Art and Political Process in the Kingdoms of Bali-Nyonga and Bamum (Cameroon Grassfields). *In* Art in Richard L. Anderson and Karen L. Field, eds. Small-Scale Societies: Contemporary Readings Pp. 84-102. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Lawal, Babatunde

1993 Some Aspects of Yoruba Aesthetics. *In* Art in Richard L. Anderson and Karen L. Field, eds. Small-Scale Societies: Contemporary Readings Pp. 309-316. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Lewis-Williams, David

2004 Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art. London: Thames & Hudson.

Price, Sally

1989 Primitive Art in Civilized Places. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 82-99.

Roe, Peter G.

1993 Marginal Men: Male Artists among the Shipibo Indians of Peru. *In* Art in Richard L. Anderson and Karen L. Field, eds. Small-Scale Societies: Contemporary Readings Pp. 247-266. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Smith, Kenneth W.

1993 The Kites of Santiago Sacatepequez *In* Art in Richard L. Anderson and Karen L. Field, eds. Small-Scale Societies: Contemporary Readings Pp. 64-69. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Whitley, David S.

2009 Cave Painting and the Human Spirit: The Origin of Creativity and Belief. Amherst, MA: Prometheus Books.

Witherspoon, Gary

1977 Language and Art in the Navajo Universe. Ann Arbor. University of Michigan. Pp. 151-178.

Zolberg, Vera L., and Joni M. Cherbo

1997 Introduction. *In* Outsider Art: Contesting Boundaries in Contemporary Culture. Vera L. Zolberg and Joni M. Cherbo, eds. Pp. 1-10. New York: Cambridge University Press.

**Grading Policy:**

Grades will be calculated as follows:

Response papers and assignments (about the weekly readings) 25%

Class presentation and short paper 15% + 10% =25%

Midterm 25%

Final Research Paper (1800 words for Ant 450, 3000 words for Ant 550) 25%

Classroom participation: You will gain additional points through classroom participation, and lose points due to absences or inattention in class.

I expect assignments to be handed in on time; students will lose 2% off the assignment grade for each business day the assignment is late (up to a maximum of 20%; beyond that, assignments will not be accepted). If extraordinary circumstances will make it difficult for you to turn in your assignment on time, contact me before the due date to make special arrangements.

Exams will be administered only at the assigned times. Exceptions will be made only under extraordinary circumstances; contact me beforehand to make special arrangements.

**Attendance Policy:**

Attendance is mandatory. You are allowed two absences; any absences beyond two indicate that you are not fully committed to the class, and will reflect in your class grade. Upon request, and with legitimate excuses for absences, you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of missed material, and "make up" 1 or 2 absences.

**Policy on Academic Misconduct:**

All students in attendance at The University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University of Alabama expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. At the beginning of each semester and on examinations and projects, the professor, department, or division may require that each student sign the following Academic Honor Pledge: “I promise or affirm that I will not at any time be involved with cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation while enrolled as a student at The University of Alabama. I have read the Academic Honor Code, which explains disciplinary procedure resulting from the aforementioned. I understand that violation of this code will result in penalties as severe as indefinite suspension from the University.”

See the [Code of Student Conduct](http://policies.ua.edu/conduct.html) for more information.

**Disability Statement**

If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary.

If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, please call (205) 348-4285 (Voice) or (205) 348-3081 (TTY) or visit 133-B Martha Parham Hall East to register for services. Students who may need course adaptations because of a disability are welcome to make an appointment to see me during office hours. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services, 133-B Martha Parham Hall East, before receiving academic adjustments.

**Severe Weather Guidelines**

The guiding principle at The University of Alabama is to promote the personal safety of our students, faculty and staff during severe weather events. It is impossible to develop policies which anticipate every weather-related emergency. These guidelines are intended to provide additional assistance for responding to severe weather on campus.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate life-saving actions.

When West Alabama is under a severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the [National Weather Service](http://www.weather.gov/) and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take.

**The Office of University Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:**

* Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage
* Weather advisory sent out through UA Alerts to faculty, staff and students
* Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM
* Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM
* Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA-TV/WUOA-TV, and on the website at <http://wvuatv.com/content/weather>. WVUA-TV Home Team Weather provides a free service you can subscribe to which allows you to receive weather warnings for Tuscaloosa via e-mail or cell phone. Check <http://wvuatv.com/content/free-email-weather-alerts> for more details and to sign up for weather alerts.

In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar; sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

**Use of Plagiarism Detection Software**

The University of Alabama is committed to helping students to uphold the ethical standards of academic integrity in all areas of study. Students agree that their enrollment in this course allows the instructor the right to use electronic devices to help prevent plagiarism. All course materials are subject to submission to Turnitin.com for the purpose of detecting textual similarities. Turnitin.com will be used as a source document to help students avoid plagiarism in written documents.

**Topics Covered:**

**R=Reader; E=Electronic Resource (available via ereserves or blackboard learn)**

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| **Date** | **Topic** | **Assignments/Reading** |
| Jan 9 | Introduction: Studying art from an anthropological perspective | **R:** Morphy and Perkins (Pp. 1-33) |
| Jan 14 & 16 | Foundational perspectives: Boas; Levi-Strauss; Bateson | **R:** Pp. 33-39; Boas (39-55); Levi-Strauss (56-73); Bateson 78-90 |
| Jan 21 & 23 | The category of “primitive art” and reactions to it | **R:** 125-7; Firth (91-108); Rubin (129-146); Danto (147-149); Price (167-185). **DUE:** citation and paragraph summary of book |
| Jan 28 & 30 | Snowpocalypse | Nothing |
| Feb 4 & 6 | Art and artifacts  **Student presentation:** Jolynn on socialization of Native American children via children’s books | **R:** Clunas (186-208); Vogel (209-218); Gell (219-235)  **E:** Price  **DUE** Tuesday: assignment #1 |
| Feb 11 & 13 | Aesthetics in cross-cultural perspective  **Student presentations:** Greg on tattoos; Brass on Primitive Art in Civilized Places | **R:** Pp. 239-241; Thompson 243-69; Morphy 302-320 |
| Feb 18 & 20 | Cultural perspectives on beauty  **Student presentation:** Caroline on conceptualism in Latin America | **E:** Boone; Lawal; Witherspoon  **DUE** Thursday: assignment #2 |
| Feb 25 & 27 | Meaning in art: Form, style, and meaning  **Student presentation:** Melanie on animal symbolism in African art | **R:** Pp. 323-5; Munn (326-338); Rosman and Rubel (339-357); Jonaitis (358-73) |
| Mar 4 & 6 | Meaning in art: Social order and the distribution of power  FILM: Trobriand Cricket | **R:** O’hanlon (387-406);  **E:** Geary  **Midterm** Thursday |
| Mar 11 & 13 | Art and the market; Outsider art  **Student presentation:** Cynthia on anthropology and archaeology not *of* but *with* art and architecture | **R:** Pp. 407-411; Graburn (412-430); Steiner (454-466)  **E:** Roe |
| Mar 18 & 20 | Meaning in Art: Commemorations of the Dead; FILM: Day of the Dead  **Student presentations:** Daryll on everyday art in Edo Japan; Chris on Visionary Art of the Huichol | **E:** Smith  March 19: last day to “W” **DUE** Tuesday: assignment #3 |
| Mar 25 & 27 | SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS |  |
| Apr 1 & 3 | Origins of Art: Cave Painting and Consciousness  **Student presentation:** Aaron on Yemeni pottery | **E:** Whitley; Lewis-Williams  **DUE** Thursday: assignment #4 |
| Apr 8 &10 | Tourism and Art  Film: Cannibal Tours | **E:** Errington |
| Apr 15 & 17 | The biological basis of beauty  **Student presentation:** Achsah on the art instinct | **E:** Eibl-Eibesfeldt  **DUE** Thursday: assignment #5 |
| Apr 22 & 24 | Contemporary hybrid forms | **R:** Pp. 469-471; Myers (495-512); Bennett (513-519); Townsend-Gault (520-543) |
| May 1 | FINAL Thursday 8-10:30 AM |  |