



Meeting time and location	Day/Time	Classroom Location
Daily	Jan 5-16	TBD
This course meets for 3 hours/per day (10 teaching days) in class and 12 hours of fieldwork (community-based learning) outside of class throughout the J-Term period. Instructional time requirements are met by the scheduled meeting times.		

Faculty Details	
Name	Khulood Alawadi
Email	<a href="mailto:ka70@nyu.edu">ka70@nyu.edu</a>
Workspace	C1-157
Office Hours	By appointment

### Course Description

What can national dress reveal about identity, belonging, and power? How is it shaped, preserved, or reimagined—and is it fashion or something else entirely? While centered on the Emirati National Dress, the course explores how national dress emerges, becomes standardized, and adapts to shifting urban, environmental, and social conditions. Special attention is given to the crafts that underpin Emirati dress—embroidery, weaving, scenting - and their cultural and symbolic significance across men's and women's attire. We also examine the contemporary economies of craft, from local artisanal practices to global fashion systems, considering how tradition is preserved, commodified, or reinterpreted—and the tensions that may arise, including appropriation, dilution, or loss of meaning. Through debates, design experiments, and fieldwork with local organizations, designers, and artisans, students will produce a final exhibition and develop a nuanced understanding of the evolving relationship between Emirati dress, craft, design, and fashion.

**Credits:** 3

**Prerequisites:** None

**Co-requisites:** None

This course counts towards the following NYUAD requirements:

Core Curriculum > Core Field Colloquium

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and Links to Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:	PLO1 (a, b, c, d)	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4
CLO1: Form a holistic understanding of the cultural, symbolic, and political dimensions of National Dress, situating it within broader discourses of identity, belonging, fashion, and heritage.	Med, a High, c	Low	High	High
CLO2: Analyze the cultural, symbolic, and economic significance of national dress and craft practices, and evaluate how they are preserved, commodified, consumed, and represented within global fashion systems and through everyday behaviors.	Med, a High, c	Low	Med	High
CLO3: Elicit and generate knowledge from experiential learning environments and collaborative inquiry through observation, field note taking, interviews, and other forms of engaged learning that help bring critical reflection to experience.	High a Med, c	High	High	Med
CLO4: Reflect critically on personal and collective perspectives through engaged learning, discussion, and written analysis.	High a High c Med d	High	High	High
CLO5: Apply creative and technical skills to design and curate an exhibition that communicates a nuanced understanding of the evolving relationship between National dress, craft, design, and fashion.	Med a, Med c, High, d	High	Med	Med

### Teaching and Learning Methodologies

- Seminar sessions of lectures, presentations and critical discussions based on the analysis of key texts with the aim of providing relevant historical knowledge, highlighting the intellectual contexts, and articulating key concepts and analytical implications;
- This course is Student-centered, which emphasizes in-class activities and the critical pedagogy approach to co-construct knowledge together including peer-to-peer learning.
- Experiential learning and field study guides our approach, whereby students will extract and generate knowledge through participatory learning, active observation, and critical reflection.
- Hands on studio sessions may include demonstrations of various techniques and tools relevant to the course topic, offering guided practice to build foundational skills.
- Regular critique sessions will provide opportunities for students to present their work and receive constructive feedback from peers and

instructors.

- We will host guest speakers from diverse backgrounds to share their insights and expertise, deepening our interdisciplinary understanding of the fashion world.

### Course Materials

Students will read selections from the following texts. All materials will be available digitally as a PDF and/or links via the class Brightspace site.

To ensure a balanced and manageable reading experience, especially on days when the assigned materials are dense or exceed 50 pages, the readings will be divided between two groups (Group A and Group B). Each group will be responsible for reading and engaging with their assigned portion.

During class, students will be asked to share thoughts, reflections, or opinions based on their assigned reading. This is not a formal presentation but a chance to spark discussion and deepen collective understanding by hearing from peers with different reading perspectives.

This approach allows us to cover more ground without overloading anyone and encourages collaborative learning.

### Required books:

- *The Fashioned Body* by Joanne Entwistle
- *Tribal Modern: Branding New Nations in the Arab Gulf* by Miriam Cooke
- *Rethinking Fashion Globalization* by Sarah Cheang
- *Fashion Criticism: An Anthology* by Francesca Granata
- *Fashion, Performance, and Performativity* by Andrea Kollnitz
- *The new politics of the handmade: craft, art and design* by Anthea Black

### Journal papers:

- Akinci, Idil. "Dressing the Nation? Symbolizing Emirati National Identity and Boundaries through National Dress." *Ethnic & Racial Studies*, vol. 43, no. 10, Aug. 2020, pp. 1776–94. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2019.1665697>.
- Koch, Natalie. "The Corporate Production of Nationalism." *Antipode*, vol. 52, no. 1, Jan. 2020, pp. 185–205. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12588>.
- Al-Qasimi, Noor. "Immodest Modesty: Accommodating Dissent and the 'Abaya-as-Fashion in the Arab Gulf States.'" *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, Jan. 2010, pp. 46–74. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.2979/mew.2010.6.1.46>.
- Māzimī, Aḥmad ibn Ya'qūb. "The Apocalyptic Hijab: Emirati Mediations of Pious Fashion and Conflict Talk." *Hawwa*, vol. 19, no. 1, Mar. 2021, pp. 5–27. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15692086-bja10015>.
- Hahner, Leslie A., and Scott J. Varda. "Modesty and Feminisms: Conversations on Aesthetics and Resistance." *Feminist Formations*, vol. 24, no. 3, Dec. 2012, pp. 22–42. EBSCOhost,

search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.41819649&site=eds-live

- La Fornara, Lisa M. "Islam's (In)Compatibility with the West: Dress Code Restrictions in the Age of Feminism." *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, vol. 25, no. 1, Jan. 2018, pp. 463–94. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edshol&AN=edshol.hein.journals.ijgls25.22&site=eds-live.
- Akinci, Idil. "Culture in the 'Politics of Identity': Conceptions of National Identity and Citizenship among Second-Generation Non-Gulf Arab Migrants in Dubai." *Journal of Ethnic & Migration Studies*, vol. 46, no. 11, July 2020, pp. 2309–25. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2019.1583095>.
- "Curbing Cultural Appropriation in the Fashion Industry with Intellectual Property." *WIPO Magazine*, vol. 4, Jan. 2019, pp. 9–14. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsbl&AN=RN621476864&site=eds-live.
- Miladi, Noureddine, et al. "Digital Youth in Qatar: Negotiating Culture and National Identity through Social Media Networks." *Journal of Arab & Muslim Media Research*, vol. 15, no. 2, Nov. 2022, pp. 151–77. EBSCOhost, [https://doi.org/10.1386/jammr\\_00045\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/jammr_00045_1).
- Na'amneh, Mahmoud M. "Brand Consumption among Emirati Youth: A Socio-Cultural Perspective." *Social Identities*, vol. 27, no. 6, Nov. 2021, pp. 718–28. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2021.1948827>.
- Potluri, Rajasekhara Mouly, et al. "An Exploratory Treatise on the Ethnocentric Tendencies of Emirati Gen Z Consumers." *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 3, Feb. 2022, pp. 763–80. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-07-2020-0197>.
- Brooks, Andrew, et al. "Fashion, Sustainability, and the Anthropocene." *Utopian Studies*, vol. 28, no. 3, Feb. 2018, pp. 482–504. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.5325/utopianstudies.28.3.0482>.
- Crewe, Louise. "Ugly Beautiful?: Counting the Cost of the Global Fashion Industry." *Geography*, vol. 93, no. 1, Apr. 2008, pp. 25–33. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.40574213&site=eds-live.

#### Further readings for the curious ones:

- Fashion by Georg Simmel
- Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection by Herbert Blumer
- Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison by Michel Foucault
- Cities of Salt by Abdul Rahman Munif
- Girls of Riyadh by Rajaa Alsanea
- The Bamboo Stalk by Saud Alsanousi

From NYUAD Library Special Collections:

- *Sultani, traditions renewed: changes in women's traditional dress in the United Arab Emirates during the reign of Shaykh Zâyyid bin Sultan Âl Nahyân, 1966-2004* by Reem ʿTariq Mutwalli

#### Assignments and Grades

	Grade Percentage	Submission Date	Linked to Course Learning Outcome(s)
<b>Participation</b>	10%	daily	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<b>Material Culture Interpretation</b>	20%	Jan 9	1, 2, 3, 4
<b>Ethnographic Shorts</b>	20%	Jan 12	2, 3, 5
<b>Reflection essay</b>	20%	Jan 15	1, 2, 3, 4
<b>Site-specific Intervention</b>	30%	Jan 16	1, 2, 3, 5

## Description and Distribution of Graded Activities

### Interpreting National Dress Through Material Culture 20%

You will be given an item of national dress or adornment, treating them as cultural texts. Students will apply the four-step material culture methodology (description, deduction, speculation, and evaluation) to interpret its cultural significance. To deepen the analysis, you will use photography as both a research tool and a storytelling medium.

A photography task will accompany each of the four steps: 1. Recording the object as a specimen 2. Documenting the object in real space 3. Abstracting the object 4. Narrating the object.

You will submit a written analysis (approximately 1,000 words) covering each of the four steps alongside the accompanying photographs. A template will be provided.

### Ethnographic Shorts 20%

In small groups, you will be assigned a location or individual (e.g. a men's tailor, abaya shopkeeper, perfumer, or embroiderer) from a curated list of shops and ateliers across Abu Dhabi. Your task is to prepare and conduct a short ethnographic interview that captures the story, practice, and personality of this place/person. You will then produce a 1–2 minute social-media-ready video that tells their story in a compelling way.

Your video should be visually engaging, emotionally resonant, and accessible to a wide audience. Think of it as a mini-documentary or profile piece designed for platforms like Instagram Reels or TikTok, quick to watch, but rich with meaning.

### Site-Specific Intervention 30%

In small project teams, students will design, prototype, and install a site-specific small-scale intervention that explores the symbolic and spatial dimensions of national dress, craft and adornment. These installations should provoke reflection on the themes we've explored in the course. Projects will be temporary and could be performative, visual, or material in nature.

Each team will present their site-specific intervention in the class exhibition. The goal of the presentation is not only to show what you made, but to share how you engaged with the space, the material, and the course themes. You will also submit documentation of the

installation (e.g. photos, video) and a short, clear exhibition text to accompany your intervention (50-100 words, written in the third person). This text should help someone encountering your work understand it.

### Reflection Essay 20%

This assignment invites you to reflect on your learning throughout the course, connecting theoretical concepts, field experiences, and personal perspectives on national dress, craft, and identity. Your reflection should demonstrate critical thinking, cultural awareness, and an ability to situate your own learning within the broader themes of the course.

You are encouraged to reference course materials (readings, lectures, guest talks) and primary experiences (interviews, fieldwork, class discussions), but formal citations are not required.

Throughout the course, you are expected to maintain a reflection journal which is a space for writing down thoughts, sketches, questions, observations, and reactions to each day's activities. This may be digital, handwritten, visual, or multimodal. Your journal will serve as the foundation for your final essay

We will host a Reflection Circle the day before the final course exhibition, once you submit your Reflection Essay. This is an opportunity for collective meaning-making: to share insights, lingering questions, and personal takeaways from the course. Rather than preparing you for the essay, it is meant to help you reflect aloud on what you've written and hear how your peers experienced and interpreted similar themes. Attendance and thoughtful participation is expected.

### Participation 10%

See Appendix 2 for rubric.

### Grade Conversion Table

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
[100-95]	(95-90]	(90-87]	(87-83]	(83-80]	(80-77]	(77-73]	(73-70]	(70-67]	(67-60]	(60-0]

Scores will be rounded up at precisely .5, so 89.5 becomes 90 but 89.49 does not.

### Course Schedule

#### WEEK 1

#### Mon Jan 5, 2026 Why dress matters

- Why dress matters
- The language of our clothes
- Theories of Fashion, Simmel vs Blumer

The following books will inform our class discussions; please note that no advance reading is expected before the first day.

- *The Fashioned Body* "Theorizing Fashion and Dress" p.40-77
- *Fashion Criticism* "The Importance of Being Dressed" p.31-33
- *Fashion* (Simmel)

p.541-558 (18)

- *Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection* (Blumer) p.275-290 (15)

### **Tues Jan 6, 2026 A Uniform Approach**

- History of dress & sartorial traditions in the UAE
- Nationhood and the Emirati Identity
- Nation-building, Nation-branding
- The color controversy

Readings to be done before class:

- *The Fashioned Body "Fashion and Identity"* p.112-139 (28)
- *Dressing the nation? Symbolizing Emirati National Identity* p.1776-1791 ● *Tribal Modern "Performing National Identity"* p.123-137 (15)

### **Wed Jan 7, 2026 Global & Local Fashion systems, Design strategies & challenges**

- West vs rest
- Seasons and seasonality
- Capital: economic, cultural, social, symbolic
- Decolonizing the discourse around fashion globalization
- Cultural appropriation, inspiration vs mimicry
- Local vs Global Design Practices
- Co-creation practices, methods of production
- Intellectual property

Readings to be done before class:

- *Curbing Cultural Appropriation in the Fashion Industry* p.1-16

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Visit to Bisht artisan studio

Looking ahead:

- Material Culture Interpretation Assignment due on Friday 9th

### **Thurs Jan 8, 2026 Craft**

- Economies of Craft
- Contemporary Reinterpretations & Innovation
- Maker Movements

Readings to be done before class:

- *The new politics of the handmade* p. 61-78 (18), p.97-116 (20), p.125-146 (22)

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Guided tour of House of Artisans
- Talli & Sadu workshop

Looking ahead:

- Material Culture Interpretation Assignment due on Friday 9th

**Fri Jan 9, 2026 Multiple Modesties, Multiple gazes**

- Choice, conviction, obligation or commitment?
- Transformation, Performativity
- Spatial dress practices
- The panopticon gaze, external and local gaze
- Self-orientalization and the orientalist gaze
- Transgressive bodies, felt bodies, surveilled bodies
- Style choices and Emirateness, othering
- Emirati dress portrayals in popular culture

Readings to be done before class:

- *Immodest Modesty* "Abaya as Fashion" p.46-69 (24)
- *The Apocalyptic Hijab* p.5-25 (21)
  - *Fashion, Performance, and Performativity* "The Emirati Burqa" p.41-54 (14)

Readings for the curious ones (not required):

- *Discipline and Punish* "Panopticism" p.184-213 (30)
- *Islam's (In)compatibility with the West?* P.463-494
- *Fashion Criticism* "Fashion's Military Fascination" p.151-152 (2)

Due:

- Material Culture Interpretation Assignment

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Guest lecture by Intangible Heritage Team (Dept. of Culture & Tourism)

Looking ahead:

- Ethnographic Short due on Monday 12th

**Sat Jan 10, 2026 Emirati Fashion Designers Panel**

Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Panel discussion with Emirati / Khaleeji male and female fashion designers and business owners (clothing, footwear, accessories)

**WEEK 2**

**Mon Jan 12, 2026 Consumptionscape**

- Retail & consumption spaces
- Social media
- The changing room(s)
- UAE's creative economy

Readings to be done before class:

- *Digital youth in Qatar: Negotiating culture and national identity through social media networks* p.151-172 (22)
- *Brand consumption among Emirati youth* p.718-726 (9)
- *Ethnocentric tendencies of Emirati Gen Z consumers* p.763-776 (13) Due:
- Ethnographic Shorts

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Class dinner. Continue discussion on days topic.

### **Tues Jan 13, 2026 The Elephant in the Room**

- Disposal & renewal cycles
- Environmental sustainability in fashion production & consumption
- Rethinking fashion globalization
- The new luxury

Readings to be done before class:

- *Fashion, Sustainability, and the Anthropocene* p.482-500
- *Ugly beautiful?* p.25-33 (9)

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Visit “Lest we Forget”

Looking ahead:

- Reflection Essay due on Thursday 15th

### **Wed Jan 14, 2026 The Future of the National Dress**

- Embedded technologies, textile technologies
- Disembodiment, Phygital fashion
- Speculative costumes
- Cultural annihilation, preservation, revitalization

Readings to be done before class:

- *Pilgrim bodies nano-tech attire* p.1-2 (2)

Looking ahead:

- Reflection Essay due on Thursday, 15th

### **Thurs Jan 15, 2026 Reflections & Exhibition Design**

- Reflection Circle
- Teamwork to prepare projects, materials, space etc. for the class exhibition.

Due:

- Reflection Essay

### **Fri Jan 16, 2026 Course Exhibition**

- Final course exhibition and presentations

Due:

- Site-specific installation deliverables
- 

### **Potential Community-based Learning (CBL) Engagements**

- Visit “Lest we Forget” a UAE-based archival and research initiative dedicated to preserving and documenting the Emirates' cultural memory and engage with the founders (2 hours)
- Visit to Bisht artisan studio (2 hours)
- Guided tour of House of Artisans (1 hour)
- Talli & Sadu workshop (3 hours)
- Guest lecture by Intangible Heritage Team (Dept. of Culture & Tourism) (1 hour)
- Emirati Fashion Designers Panel (3 hours)

### **Academic Policies**

#### **Attendance**

Due to the condensed nature of J-Term, each day of absence is the equivalent of missing more than a full week in a regular semester – with less of an opportunity to make up for missed material. An unexcused absence results in the deduction of one full letter grade from the final course grade (e.g., from an A- to a B-). Excusing absence is at the discretion of the instructor. Students who miss more than two classes will not be able to complete the course: if one or more of these absences are excused, students will be withdrawn; if all of the absences are unexcused, students will fail.

Regular attendance is mandatory for all class sessions. Students must come prepared, having completed the assigned readings and creative tasks. Students are expected to contribute thoughtfully to seminar discussions, demonstrating a close reading of assigned texts and a willingness to engage with diverse perspectives. This includes asking critical questions, offering insights, and responding to peers in a respectful and constructive manner. Active listening is just as important as verbal participation. Absences or tardiness will impact your grade unless communicated in advance and excused for legitimate reasons.

#### **The Use of Artificial Intelligence (e.g., Chat GPT)**

Generative AI tools may be used in this course, but only in ways explicitly permitted in each assignment brief. When you use these tools, you must clearly cite and attribute their use, whether in concept development, ideation, writing, or visual outputs—using footnotes, captions, or a references section. Failing to do so constitutes academic misconduct and violates NYUAD's Academic Integrity Policy. Please consult individual assignment descriptions for guidance on the appropriate use of generative AI tools.

Not Permitted:

- Using generative AI to create full drafts of written assignments.
- Relying on AI to generate entire design concepts, sketches, prototypes, videos, or other final media deliverables
- Submitting AI-generated work as your own without proper acknowledgment and reflection on your creative process

Permitted (with proper citation):

- Using AI for moodboarding, ideation prompts, or preliminary concept exploration
- Generating inspiration images as long as you critically reflect on and clearly document their use
- Employing AI as a tool *within* your process—not *as* your process

Remember: ideas, visuals, or text produced by generative AI are not your own intellectual property. They must be treated as external sources—aggregated from the work of others—and acknowledged as such.

### **Student Commitment and Expectations:**

Students should keep their calendars free of other commitments during J-Term for weekdays, weekends, and evenings until they have the final syllabus on the first day of class and can see what is required. J-Term courses are academically rigorous and, because of their intensive nature, demand a lot from students. Every day of a J-Term class is the equivalent of more than a week of classes in a regular semester. Students should expect to spend several hours each day preparing assignments for class. J-Term courses also feature distinctive community-based learning components, which add co-curricular activities outside of class time. These co-curricular activities are required and missing one is comparable to missing a regularly scheduled class period. Missing required co-curricular activities conducted outside of formal class time will negatively affect the final grade.

### **Academic Integrity:**

At NYU Abu Dhabi, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students, faculty, and staff take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others. In turn, these values create a campus climate that encourages the free exchange of ideas, promotes scholarly excellence through active and creative thought, and allows community members to achieve and be recognized for achieving their highest potential. Students should be aware that engaging in behaviors that violate the standards of academic integrity will be subject to review and may face the imposition of penalties in accordance with the procedures set out in the NYUAD policy [here](#).

### **Moses Center for Student Accessibility (CSA): [mosescsa@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsa@nyu.edu)**

New York University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. The Center works with students to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations that support equal access to a world-class education. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. Disability-related information is never disclosed without student permission. Find further information [here](#).

### **Health Resources:**

As a university student, you may experience a range of issues that can interfere with your ability to perform academically or impact your daily functioning, such as heightened stress, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbance, strained relationships, grief and loss, and/or personal struggles. If you have any well-being or mental health concerns please visit the Counseling Center on the ground floor of the campus center from 9 am-5 pm, Monday - Friday, or schedule an appointment to meet with a counselor by calling: +971-2-628-8100, or email: [nyuad.healthcenter@nyu.edu](mailto:nyuad.healthcenter@nyu.edu). If you require mental health support outside these hours, call

NYU's Wellness Exchange hotline at 02-628-5555, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also utilize the Wellness Exchange mobile chat feature, details of which you can find on the NYUAD student portal. These services are available remotely for students studying outside of the UAE.

**The Writing Center:**

The Writing Center is an excellent resource for you to use throughout your university career. Consultants will meet with you to discuss your writing for any writing project. They don't do the work for you—they don't edit or proofread your work or give you ideas—but they can help you figure out what you need to do to improve your writing. To register and to schedule an appointment, go to <https://nyuad.mywconline.com>. It is wise to schedule appointments well in advance because appointment slots fill up. These services are available remotely for students studying outside of the UAE.

**Appendix 1**

Students who successfully complete a CCOL-J course should be able to:

- 1) Critically examine historical and contemporary topics of global significance, which includes formulating clear, precise questions and arriving at well-reasoned conclusions using: a) qualitative, b) quantitative, c) contextual, and d) creative modes of reasoning;
- 2) Communicate effectively for various audiences and purposes, including participation in public settings;
- 3) Demonstrate self-understanding and intercultural competency; and
- 4) Identify and reflect critically on conceptual and ethical complexity.

**Appendix 2**

Participation Grading Rubric

10: Excellent	Excellent preparation by in-depth reading of the assigned material, leads/contributes in a significant way to discussions, demonstrates consistent active involvement, and offers thoughtful analysis and critique of the course material. Consistently contributes insightful ideas and feedback during discussions and critiques. Actively engages in all class activities, demonstrating enthusiasm and creativity. Demonstrates leadership by initiating discussions or helping peers.
8: Good	Good preparation (knows facts, considers implications), offers interpretation and analysis, leads/contributes well in discussion and is consistently involved in the class. Regularly contributes thoughtful ideas and feedback during discussions and critiques. Shows active participation in class activities and demonstrates creativity in assignments.

6: Adequate	Adequate preparation (knows basic facts of the readings but does not show evidence of trying to interpret and analyze), does not participate voluntarily in discussions, demonstrates sporadic involvement. Participates in discussions and critiques, though contributions may sometimes lack depth or originality. Completes assignments on time and demonstrates basic understanding and creativity.
4: Poor	Poor preparation (has a superficial knowledge and understanding of the readings), tries to respond when called on, infrequent involvement in discussions or speaks without engaging with the reading or classmates' comments. Participates minimally in discussions and critiques, offering few ideas or feedback. Assignments are often incomplete or lacking effort.
2: Very poor	Very poor preparation (no evidence for reading assigned material), does not respond substantially when called on, participates very rarely in discussions. Rarely participates in discussions and critiques, often not prepared or engaged in class activities. Assignments are frequently incomplete or significantly lacking in effort.
0: No participation	Consistently fails to participate in discussions, critiques, or class activities. Assignments are consistently incomplete or not submitted. Shows no effort or engagement in the course.

Faculty & Course Details:	
Name:	Jonathan H. Shannon
Email:	<a href="mailto:jhs7@nyu.edu">jhs7@nyu.edu</a>
Telephone:	+13322486034 (also WhatsApp)
Workspace:	Classroom
Office Hours:	By Appointment
Classroom:	C2-W005
Class meeting times:	9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Instructional time:	This course meets for 3 hours/per day (10 teaching days) in class and 12 hours of fieldwork (community-based learning) outside of class throughout the J-Term period. Instructional time requirements are met by the scheduled meeting times.

### Course Description

A bottle of olive oil, a basket of warm bread, platters of fresh produce, grilled fish: these are stock images of the Mediterranean diet. Cuisine is an integral part of Mediterranean foodways – attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors associated with food production, preparation, and consumption. How does food relate to memory? How do foodways relate to forms of social difference, including ethnicity, gender, class, and nationality? How do Mediterranean foodways engage with the processes of globalization? What have been the effects of migration across the Mediterranean on its foodways? Students will explore the intersections of food and culture through analysis of the Mediterranean diet, food markets, and the Slow Food movement. Case studies from around the Mediterranean as well as film viewings and field excursions (including food tasting!) will enable students to appreciate of the multiple and contradictory ways traditions are created and recreated in a globalized Mediterranean.

**Prerequisites:** none

**Credits:** 3

**This course counts toward the following NYUAD degree requirements:**

**Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and Links to Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)**

(see appendix 1)

<b>Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:</b>	PLO1 specify: a, b, c, or d	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4
CLO1: Elicit and generate knowledge from experiential learning environments and their community context through participant observation, field note taking, interviews, and other forms of engaged learning that help bring critical reflection to experience	1a high, 1b high, 1c high, 1d low	low	high	medium
CLO2: Define the concept of foodway	1a high, 1b low, 1c high, 1d low	low	low	low
CLO3: Identify the central debates in Mediterranean studies	1a high, 1b low, 1c high, 1d low	low	low	medium
CLO4: Describe how Mediterranean foodways relate to social identities such as gender, class, religion, and national origin	1a high, 1b low, 1c high, 1d low	low	medium	medium
CLO5: Analyze qualitative and quantitative data from local food markets	1a high, 1b high, 1c high, 1d medium	medium	low	low
CLO6: Present findings on Mediterranean foodways orally and in writing	1a high, 1b high, 1c high, 1d high	high	high	high

**Teaching and Learning Methodologies**

The course follows a mixture of seminars, group projects, and site visits with an emphasis on experiential learning. Students will be assigned to discussion groups and rotate through the responsibility of presenting and commenting on readings throughout the semester. In addition, students are expected to be active participants in the class, bringing their experiences and intellectual insights to bear on important questions of food, identity, and sustainability.

### Course Materials (see Appendix 3)

Students will read selections from the following texts, as well as additional materials available on the class Brightspace site as pdfs or links. All materials are provided by the professor.

### Required Texts (eBooks via the NYUAD Library or as PDFs on Brightspace).

1. Carlo Petrini, *Slow Food: The Case for Taste*. Columbia University Press, 2003.  
(<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.library.nyu.edu/lib/nyulibrary/ebooks/detail.action?docID=909221>)
2. Carol Helstosky, *Food Culture in the Mediterranean*, Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2009.  
<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=491923>
3. International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), *Mediterra 2012. The Mediterranean Diet for Sustainable Regional Development*. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2012. [https://www.ciheam.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Mediterra\\_2012\\_EN.pdf](https://www.ciheam.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Mediterra_2012_EN.pdf)

### Recommended Texts

1. Jean-Claude Izzo, *Garlic, Mint, and Sweet Basil. Essays on Marseilles, Mediterranean cuisine, and Noir Fiction*. Europa Editions, 2013.
2. Massimo Montanari, *Italian Identity in the Kitchen, or Food and the Nation*, Columbia University Press, 2013. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com/lib/nyulibrary/ebooks/detail.action?docID=1103462>

### Audio-visual materials/other materials:

1. YouTube [channel](#) for selected videos: <https://tinyurl.com/Med-Foodways>

### Assignments and Grades (see grading rubrics in Appendix 2)

Activity	Percentage	Due Date	CLO assessed
Participation	10%	Weekly	1, 2, 3, 4
Response Papers (4)	60% (15% each)	Jan 11, 13, 14, 16	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Florentine Presentation and Essay	30%	Jan 17	1, 2, 3, 6,

### Description of Assignments:

#### Participation

All students are expected to participate actively in class discussion as well as in group work and site visits. The participation grade is based on the quality and consistency of participation, and not only quantity. See Appendix 2 for an evaluation rubric.

#### Response Papers

Students will write *four* short ( $\leq 4$  page/1000 word) essays. The essays will examine aspects of culinary cultures of the Mediterranean in light of course readings, site visits, and class discussions.

1. Paper 1 will analyze a "Mediterranean meal" in Florence. Go eat some good food and write

about how it is (or is presented to be) “Mediterranean.” (due January 11)

3

2. Paper 2 will discuss how the cooking class sheds light on themes related to the study and experience of Mediterranean foodways. Reflect on what elements of the cooking class deepened your knowledge of the Mediterranean, the Mediterranean Diet, and food culture in the region? Consider not only the actual food but the experience of learning about it and, especially, preparing it. (Due January 13)
3. Paper 3 will discuss the role of olive oil in the Mediterranean diet, AND as an important marker of authenticity in Italian foodways. Based on readings, the film, and the site visit, consider the following: What creates “authenticity” in Italian olive oil? What are some of the “qualia” (Meneley) that accentuate authenticity for this commodity? What are some contradictions in the process of authentication? (due January 14)
4. Paper 4 will be a report of a field trip to a food market that focuses on how authenticity is constructed and marketed (due January 16) and *must* include photos and information from at least 2 interviews/conversations with vendors.

### **Florentine Presentation and Essay**

Students will design and conduct a research project on a particular aspect of the Mediterranean foodways of Florence using participant-observation, field-notes, interviews, and other forms of qualitative and or quantitative research. Students will choose a theme in consultation with the instructor. They will present the research on the final day of class. The presentation should include photos and or videos of foods and should reflect on the main themes of the class: experiencing the Mediterranean through its foodways, questions of authenticity and identity as expressed in and created by food, and any other relevant themes. Students can work on their projects individually or, if appropriate, in groups. The presentation should be accompanied by a  $\geq 4$  page essay that addresses the main points of the presentation. To be presented in class on the final day. (Due January 17)

### **Conversion table:**

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
[100-95]	(95-90]	(90-87]	(87-83]	(83-80]	(80-77]	(77-73]	(73-70]	(70-67]	(67-60]	(60-0]

### **Course Schedule (Subject to modification)**

**Nota Bene:** Classes will meet most days from 9:00 – 12:00 PM on campus. However, there will be additional activities that will take place in the afternoons and sometimes evenings. Students are required to attend all course-related activities. Note that we have a mandatory class on Saturday January 11<sup>th</sup>.

Date	Topics and Questions	Reading	Other
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Jan 7	<p>Introduction to the Mediterranean and Mediterranean Foodways</p> <p><u>Introduction: Experiencing Mediterranean Foodways</u></p> <p>1. What is the Mediterranean? What are Mediterranean Foods and Foodways?</p>	<p>1. In-class: Gleason, "Mediterranean Food." <i>Gastronomica</i>, pp. 1-3 (pdf)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Morning: Orientation!</b></li> <li>• <b>Afternoon: First Class</b></li> <li>• <b>Free Write!</b></li> </ul> <p>- Food Fight! Foods we love, foods we hate</p>
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Jan 8	<p>Critical Perspectives on the Mediterranean and Mediterranean Foodways</p> <p><u>Part I: Conceptualizing the Mediterranean</u></p> <p>1. How has the Mediterranean been studied?</p> <p><u>Part II: Conceptualizing Mediterranean Foodways and the Mediterranean Diet</u></p> <p>1. What is the Mediterranean Diet?</p> <p>2. How have scholars approached the study of the Mediterranean diet?</p> <p>3. What is its role in the popular nutritional imagination?</p>	<p>1. Bromberger, "Towards an Anthropology of the Mediterranean." <i>History &amp; Anthropology</i>, pp. 91-107. (pdf)</p> <p>2. Cassano, Franco, <i>Southern Thought, and Other Essays on the Mediterranean</i>. (introduction)</p> <p>3. Essid, "History of Mediterranean Food." <i>The Mediterranean Diet for Sustainable Regional Development</i>, pp. 51-69 (pdf)</p> <p>4. Dueck, "Seeing Mediterranean." <i>Gastronomica</i>, pp. 43-58. (pdf)</p> <p>5. Blum, "The Mediterranean Diet Really Is That Good for You. Here's Why." <i>New York Times</i> Jan. 6, 2023. (<a href="#">link</a> and pdf)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Watch!</b> Marino Niola, "Mediterranean Diet" (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> <li>• Pausa Gastronomica: Exploring Florentine Foodways (types of restaurants, foods, etc.)</li> <li>• <b>Do!</b> - Basic Italian Phrases!</li> <li>• <b>Read!</b> - "Online Resources" for restaurant recommendations and fun and fascinating Florentine food facts!</li> </ul>
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Jan 9	<p>Food, Culture, and Identity: National, Regional, &amp; Global</p> <p><u>Part I: Food and Nationalism</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How are food cultures and national cultures related?</li> <li>What does it mean to consume a nation?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helstosky, <i>Food Culture in the Mediterranean</i>, p. 3-23</li> <li>Helstosky, "Recipe for the Nation." <i>Food and Foodways</i>, pp. 113-140. (pdf)</li> <li>Avieli, "The Hummus Wars" <i>Gastronomica</i>, pp. 19-30 (pdf)</li> <li>Povoledo, "A Proto-Pizza Emerges..." <i>New York Times</i> June 27, 2023 (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>• Watch!</b></li> <li>- Film selections: Food in Italian cinema!</li> </ul>
Jan 10	<p>Food, Culture, and Identity</p> <p><u>Part I: Food and Family in Tuscany</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does food relate to family life in a changing Mediterranean?</li> </ol> <p><u>Part II: La Cucina Povera</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is <i>la cucina povera</i>? 2. How does it relate to Italian and Mediterranean histories?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counihan, <i>Around the Tuscan Table</i>. Ch. 1, pp. 1-15 (pdf)</li> <li>Helstosky, "Introduction." <i>Garlic and Oil</i>, pp. 1-10 (pdf)</li> <li>Iulo, "La Cucina Povera," <i>Gastronomica</i>, pp. 55-58 (pdf)</li> <li>Fabiani, Louise, "<i>La cucina povera</i> delivers the fare we need to sustain us now," <i>Pysche</i>, pp. 1-7 (pdf)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>• Do!</b></li> <li>- Cooking class (@Chefactory, 7:00 pm)</li> </ul>
Jan 11	<p>Food, Culture, and Identity</p> <p><u>Part I: Food and Social Memory</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the relationships among foodways, social identity, and memory?</li> </ol> <p><u>Part II: Food Memoir</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are food memoirs? 2. How do we approach writing them?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counihan, "Memories, Meals, and Shame in Florence, Italy." <i>Food in Memory and Imagination</i>, pp. 149-158. (pdf)</li> <li>Ascione et al., "Remembering and Promoting Grandma's Cooking through the Mediterranean Diet ...." <i>Food in Memory and Imagination</i>, pp. 2667-280 (pdf)</li> <li>Finn, "Gâteaux Algériens: A Love Affair." <i>Gastronomica</i>, pp. 78-82 (pdf)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>• Watch!</b></li> <li>- Film screening: <i>The Golden Harvest</i>, by Alia Yunis (6:30 pm, Santo Stays Screening Room)</li> <li><b>• Do!</b></li> <li>- Write a brief food memoir! (in class)</li> </ul>

		4. MFK Fisher, <i>The Gastronomical Me.</i> ("Excerpt")	
Jan 12	No class		
Jan 13	<p>Food, Commodities and Value: Olive Oil</p> <p><u>Part I: Olive Oil in the Mediterranean Imagination</u> 1. What is the history and importance of olive oil in the Mediterranean region?</p> <p><u>Part II: Olive Oil in The Italian Imagination</u></p> <p>1. What are the associations of gender, sexuality, and food? 2. How are Mediterranean food commodities gendered?</p>	<p>1. Meneley, "The olive and imaginaries of the Mediterranean." <i>History and Anthropology</i>, pp. 66–83 (pdf)</p> <p>2. Hilton, "Quality and Genuineness in the World of Sicilian Olive Oil" <i>Gastronomica</i>, pp. 38-50. (pdf)</p> <p>3. Segal and Bautista, "The Olive Oil Capital of the World, Parched" <i>New York Times</i>, Sept. 10, 2022 (pdf)</p>	<p>• <b>Do!</b></p> <p>- Visit to Olive Oil Fattoria Torre Bianca (morning)</p> <p>- Afternoon: discussion</p>
Jan 14	<p>Markets, Local and Global</p> <p><u>Part I: Market Visit &amp; Markets, Local and Global</u></p> <p>1. What are traditional markets in the Mediterranean?</p> <p>2. How have they been transformed under globalization?</p> <p>3. How is authenticity constructed in food markets today?</p>	<p>1. Black, "The Porta Palazzo Farmers' Market." <i>Anthropology of Food</i>, pp. 1- 12. (pdf)</p> <p>2. Medina et al. "Food and Migration: The Abacería Central Market of Gràcia (Barcelona)," <i>Anthropology of food</i>, pp. 1-8 (pdf)</p> <p>3. Cavanaugh, "Authenticity and Its Perils: Who Is Left Out When Food Is 'Authentic'?" <i>Gastronomica</i>, pp. 28-37 (pdf)</p>	<p>• <b>Morning:</b> Market tour (morning)</p> <p>1. Mercato Le Cure 2. Mercato di Sant'Ambrogio 3. Mercato Centrale di Firenze</p> <p><b>Afternoon:</b></p> <p>- Class discussion</p>

Jan 15	<p>Slow Food and its Responses: From Fast to Slow</p> <p><u>Part I: Slow Food (Guest Lecturer, Olivier De Maret)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the history of the Slow Food movement?</li> <li>2. How has the Slow Food movement changed?</li> <li>3. How is it relevant to the Mediterranean today?</li> </ol> <p><u>Part II: Garden Tour</u> How are some of the principles of Slow Food practiced in Tuscany?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Crowther, Gillian. "Gastro Anomie: Global Indigestion?" (pdf)</li> <li>2. Portinari, "The Official Slow Food Manifesto" 2 pages (pdf)</li> <li>3. Petrini, <i>Slow Food: The Case for Taste</i>, Preface, Chs. 1 &amp; 2, pp. 1-36, 37-64</li> </ol>	<p>• <b>Guest Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Profs. Nick Dakin Elliot and Olivier de Maret</li> <li>- Crostini workshop!</li> </ul> <p>Check out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Slow Food Toscana" website (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
Jan 16	<p>Slow Food: Histories and Current Practices</p> <p><u>Part I: The Evolution of Slow Food</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are some criticisms of Slow Food?</li> <li>2. How has the Slow Food movement changed?</li> <li>3. What are alternatives to Slow Food?</li> </ol> <p><u>Part II: Beyond Slow Food</u> What are some pathways toward sustainable Food futures in the Mediterranean?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amo, "The Slow Food Movement and the Terra Madre project." <i>Globalizations</i>, pp. 644-660.</li> <li>2. Mintz, "Food at moderate speeds." (pdf)</li> <li>3. Grasseni, "Crafting Futures through Cheese-Making in Val Taleggio (Northern Italy)." <i>Gastronomica</i> pp. 51- 64. (pdf)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Farewell Dinner!</b></p>
Jan 17	<p>Final Class! Lollapalooza Fiorentina!</p>	<p>Final presentations</p>	<p>Final essay due</p>

**Potential Community-Based Learning (CBL) engagements:**

- Cooking class (4 hours)
- Olive Oil making tour (4 hours)
- Market walking tour in Florence (4 hours)

**The Use of Artificial Intelligence (e.g., Chat GPT):**

While it may be tempting to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as Chat-GPT, Gemini, Claude, or

similar platforms to complete assignments, I expect that all your work will be your own. You will submit assignments to Brightspace, which has integrated AI-based plagiarism detection. In addition, students will draft sections of essays in class and may be required to show drafts of work to obtain full credit for assignments. While Artificial Intelligence can be a useful tool, if used intelligently, our class motto is: do your own work. I reserve the right to use TurnItIn or other AI detectors for written assignments.

## **Statements and Policies**

### **Attendance:**

Due to the condensed nature of J-Term, each day of absence is the equivalent of missing more than a full week in a regular semester – with less of an opportunity to make up for missed material. An unexcused absence results in the deduction of one full letter grade from the final course grade (e.g., from an A- to a B-). Excusing absence is at the discretion of the instructor. Students who miss more than two classes will not be able to complete the course: if one or more of these absences are excused, students will be withdrawn; if all of the absences are unexcused, students will fail.

### **Student Commitment and Expectations:**

Students should keep their calendars free of other commitments during J-Term for weekdays, weekends, and evenings until they have the final syllabus on the first day of class and can see what is required. J-Term courses are academically rigorous and, because of their intensive nature, demand a lot from students. Every day of a J-Term class is the equivalent of more than a week of classes in a regular semester. Students should expect to spend several hours each day preparing assignments for class. J-Term courses also feature distinctive community-based learning components, which add co-curricular activities outside of class time. These co-curricular activities are required and missing one is comparable to missing a regularly scheduled class period. Missing required co-curricular activities conducted outside of formal class time will negatively affect the final grade.

### **Academic Integrity:**

At NYU Abu Dhabi, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students, faculty, and staff take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others. In turn, these values create a campus climate that encourages the free exchange of ideas, promotes scholarly excellence through active and creative thought, and allows community members to achieve and be recognized for achieving their highest potential. Students should be aware that engaging in behaviors that violate the standards of academic integrity will be subject to review and may face the imposition of penalties in accordance with the procedures set out in the NYUAD policy [here](#).

### **Moses Center for Student Accessibility (CSA): [mosescsa@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsa@nyu.edu)**

New York University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. The Center works with students to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations that support equal access to a world-class education. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. Disability-related information is never disclosed without student permission. Find further information [here](#).

### **Health Resources:**

As a university student, you may experience a range of issues that can interfere with your ability to perform academically or impact your daily functioning, such as heightened stress, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbance, strained relationships, grief and loss, and/or personal struggles. If you have any well-being or mental health concerns please visit the Counseling Center on the ground

floor of the campus center from 9 am-5 pm, Monday - Friday, or schedule an appointment to meet with a counselor by calling: +971-2-628-8100, or email: [nyuad.healthcenter@nyu.edu](mailto:nyuad.healthcenter@nyu.edu). If you require mental health support outside these hours, call NYU's Wellness Exchange hotline at 02-628-5555, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also utilize the Wellness Exchange mobile chat feature, details of which you can find on the NYUAD student portal. These services are available remotely for students studying outside of the UAE.

### **The Writing Center:**

The Writing Center is an excellent resource for you to use throughout your university career. Consultants will meet with you to discuss your writing for any writing project. They don't do the work for you—they don't edit or proofread your work or give you ideas—but they can help you figure out what you need to do to improve your writing. To register and to schedule an appointment, go to <https://nyuad.mywconline.com>. It is wise to schedule appointments well in advance because appointment slots fill up. These services are available remotely for students studying outside of the UAE.

### **APPENDIX 1: Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for Core courses:**

- 1) Critically examine historical and contemporary topics of global significance, which includes formulating clear, precise questions and arriving at well-reasoned conclusions using a)  
qualitative
  - b) quantitative
  - c) contextual, and
  - d) creative modes of reasoning;
- 2) Communicate effectively for various audiences and purposes, including participation in public settings;
- 3) Demonstrate self-understanding and intercultural competency; and
- 4) Identify and reflect critically on conceptual and ethical complexity.

### **APPENDIX 2: Grading Rubrics**

#### ***Participation***

The standard rubric for assessing participation follows. Note that the grade ranges are broad. You will receive a number grade according to my evaluation of the degree to which you meet the rubric.

#### Participation Rubric

10: Excellent preparation by in-depth reading of the assigned material, leads/contributes in a significant way to discussions, demonstrates consistent active involvement, and offers thoughtful analysis and critique of the course material.
8: Good preparation (knows facts, considers implications), offers interpretation and analysis, leads/contributes well in discussion and is consistently involved in the class.
6: Adequate preparation (knows basic facts of the readings but does not show evidence of trying to interpret and analyze), does not participate voluntarily in discussions, demonstrates sporadic involvement

4: Poor preparation (has a superficial knowledge and understanding of the readings), tries to respond when called on, infrequent involvement in discussions or speaks without engaging with the reading or classmates' comments.

2: Very poor preparation (no evidence for reading assigned material), does not respond substantially when called on, participates very rarely in discussions.

0: No participation

### Writing

This is a general rubric. Your specific assignments and therefore assessment criteria may vary.

	<b>A (100-90)</b>	<b>B (89-80)</b>	<b>C (79-70)</b>	<b>D/F (69-0)</b>
<b>Focus:</b> Purpose	Purpose is clear	Shows awareness of purpose	Shows limited awareness of purpose	No awareness
<b>Main idea</b>	Clearly presents a main idea and supports it throughout the paper.	There is a main idea supported throughout most of the paper.	Vague sense of a main idea, weakly supported throughout the paper.	No main idea
<b>Organization:</b> Overall	Well-planned and well-thought out. Includes title, introduction, statement of main idea, transitions, and conclusion.	Good overall organization includes the main organizational tools.	There is a sense of organization, although some of the organizational tools are used weakly or missing	No sense of organization
<b>Organization:</b> Paragraphs	All paragraphs have clear ideas, are supported with examples, and have smooth transitions.	Most paragraphs have clear ideas, are supported with some examples, and have transitions.	Some paragraphs have clear ideas, support from examples may be missing and transitions are weak.	Paragraphs lack clear ideas
<b>Content</b>	Exceptionally well presented and argued; ideas are	Well-presented and argued; ideas are detailed, developed, and	Content is sound and solid; ideas are present but not particularly developed or	Content is not sound

	detailed, well developed, supported with specific evidence & facts, as well as examples and specific details.	supported with some evidence and details, mostly specific.	supported; some evidence, but usually of a generalized nature.	
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<b>Research (if assignment includes a research component)</b>	Sources are exceptionally well integrated, and they support claims argued in the paper very effectively. Quotations and Works Cited conform to MLA style sheet.	Sources are well integrated and support the paper's claims. There may be occasional errors, but the sources and Works Cited conform to MLA style sheet.	Sources support some claims made in the paper, but might not be integrated well within the paper's argument. There may be a few errors in MLA style.	The paper does not use adequate research or if it does, the sources are not integrated well. They are not cited correctly according to MLA style, nor listed correctly on the Works Cited page.
<b>Style:</b> Sentence structure	Sentences are clear and varied in pattern, from simple to complex, with excellent use of punctuation. Free from misspellings and typographical errors.	Sentences are clear but may lack variation; a few may be awkward and there may be a few punctuation and spelling or typographical errors.	Sentences are generally clear but may have awkward structure or unclear content; there may be patterns of punctuation errors.	Sentences aren't clear
<b>Style:</b> Word choice, Tone	There is clear use of a personal and unique style of writing, suited to audience and purpose; the paper holds	There is an attempt at a personal style, but style of writing may be awkward or unsuited to audience and purpose; the reader may lose interest in some sections of the paper.	There is little attempt at style; reads as flat and perhaps uninteresting in content, which is usually generalized and clichéd.	No attempt at style

	the reader's interest with ease.			
<b>Style: Details and Examples</b>	Large amounts of specific examples and detailed descriptions, where appropriate.	Some use of specific examples and detailed descriptions. May have extended examples that go on for too long.	Little use of specific examples and details; mostly generalized examples and little description.	No use of examples
<b>Grammar &amp; Mechanics</b>	Excellent grammar, spelling, syntax, and punctuation. Does not exceed word limit.	A few errors in grammar, spelling, syntax, and punctuation, but not many. Does not exceed word limit.	Shows a pattern of errors in spelling, grammar, syntax and/or punctuation. Could also be a sign of lack of proof reading. Exceeds or does not meet word limit.	Continuous errors; does not meet standards; exceeds or does not meet word limit.

### Appendix 3: Class Bibliography

- Amo, Emanuele, "The Slow Food Movement and the Terra-Madre project: food sovereignty and translocal assemblages." *Globalizations* 20, no. 4 (2023): 644-660.
- Ascione, Elisa, Vincenza Gianfredi, and Daniele Nucci, "Remembering and Promoting Grandma's Cooking through the Mediterranean Diet, Apulia, Southern Italy," In *Food in Memory and Imagination: Space, Place and, Taste*, edited by Beth Forrest, and Greg de St. Maurice, Bloomsbury, 2022, 2667-280.
- Avieli, Nir, "The Hummus Wars Revisited: Israeli-Arab Food Politics and Gastronomiation." *Gastronomica* Vol. 16, No. 3 (2016):19-30.
- Black, Rachel Eden, "The Porta Palazzo farmers' market: local food, regulations and changing traditions," *Anthropology of Food* 4, 2005, pp. 1-12.  
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- Crowther, Gillian, "Gastro-Anomie: Global Indigestion?" *Eating Culture: An Anthropological Guide to Food*, University of Toronto Press, 2013, pp. 209-234.

- Dueck, Jennifer, "Seeing Mediterranean: How Food Journalists Re-Imagined the Middle East and North Africa in the Twentieth-Century United States." *Gastronomica* Vol. 22, No. 2 (2022):43–58.
- Essid, Mohamed Yassine, "History of Mediterranean Food, The Mediterranean Diet for Sustainable Regional Development." *The Mediterranean Diet for Sustainable Regional Development / International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM)*. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po., 2012, pp. 51-69.
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- Grasseni, Cristina, "Crafting Futures through Cheese-Making in Val Taleggio (Northern Italy)." *Gastronomica* Vol 23, No. 1 (2023): 51-64.
- "Heat-struck Mediterranean is climate change 'hot spot'." *Phys.org* July 20, 2023. <https://phys.org/news/2023-07-heat-struck-mediterranean-climate-hot.html>
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- Hilton, Amanda, "Quality and Genuineness in the World of Sicilian Olive Oil." *Gastronomica* Vol. 23, No. 1 (2023): 38-50.
- Medina, F. Xavier, Danièle Provansal and Cecilia Montero, "Food and Migration: the Abacería Central Market of Gràcia (Barcelona)," *Anthropology of food*, pp. 1-8 [Online], 7 | December 2010, Accessed 31 January 2023
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- Segal, David, and José Bautista, "The Olive Oil Capital of the World, Parched" *New York Times*, Sept. 10, 2022.

### **Recommended Readings**

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- Izzo, Jean-Claude, (2013), *Garlic, Mint, and Sweet Basil. Essays on Marseilles, Mediterranean cuisine, and Noir Fiction*. Europa Editions.
- Montanari, Massimo, *Italian Identity in the Kitchen, or Food and the Nation*, Columbia University Press, 2013. (<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary/ebooks/detail.action?docID=1103462>)
- Ranta, Ronald, and Yonatan Mendel, "Consuming Palestine: Palestine and Palestinians in Israeli food culture." *Ethnicities* Vol. 14 No. 3 (2014):412-435.
- Wong, Aliza S., "Authenticity *all-italiana*: Food Discourses, Diasporas, and the limits of cuisine in

Contemporary Italy." *Representing Italy Through Food*, edited by Peter Naccarato, et al., Bloomsbury, 2017, pp. 33-53.

### **Films**

We may watch selections from several of these films in class or in special screenings:

*Bicycle Thieves (Ladri di biciclette)*, dir. Vittorio De Sica, 1948

*Big Night*, 1996, dir. Campbell Scott, Stanley Tucci ("*Il timpano*")

*Journey to Italy*, 1954, dir. Roberto Rossellini

*Mediterraneo*, dir. Gabriele Salvatores, 1991

*Poverty and Nobility (Misericordia e nobiltà)*, dir. Mario Mattoli, 1954

*The Big Feast (La grande abbuffata)*, dir. Marco Ferreri, 1973

*The Gold of Naples (L'oro di Napoli)*, dir. Vittorio De Sica, 1954

*We All Loved Each Other So Much (C'eravamo tanto amati)*, dir. Ettore Scola, 1974

جامعة نيويورك أبوظبي



NYU ABU DHABI

CCOL-UH 2042J

Arts for Transformation: The Case of Cambodia

J-Term 2026

Site: Cambodia

Faculty & Course Details:	
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Workspace:	Designated classroom
Office hours:	By appointment
Class meeting times:	9am to 12pm
Credits:	3
Instructional time:	This course meets for 3 hours/ per day (10 teaching days) in class and 12 hours of field work (community-based learning) outside of class throughout the J-Term period. Instructional time requirements are met by the scheduled meeting times.

This course appears in...

Core Curriculum > Core Field Colloquium (partial fulfillment)

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### Course description:

How can arts and culture drive transformation and healing in post-conflict societies? And how can they contribute to heritage preservation, historical narrative shaping, and contemporary expression in such settings? This course explores the role of the arts in reconstruction, revitalization, reconciliation and peacebuilding. We will examine the methods and tools that prove successful and consider why other approaches fail. Using Cambodia's complex history as a case study, we will investigate how shifting narratives, cultural governance, social welfare, and the cultural economy intersect to shape the arts ecosystem. Through meetings with local artists in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Battambang; site visits from the World Heritage site of Angkor temple complex to the Tuol Sleng Genocide museum, students will gain insight into the social, cultural, economic, and political factors that shape and drive Cambodia's dynamic and transformative arts scene.

### More information:

In this course you will look into the power of arts and culture as a transformative force. How can safeguarding heritage, curating history, stimulating contemporary expressions, and promoting sustainability and cultural diversity heal a population and rebuild a post-conflict country whilst being a vital actor in sustainable development? What methods are viable, what tools proved useful, what approaches failed? This course will provide a platform to explore and debate this specific approach to reconstruction, revitalization, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

After gaining independence in 1953, the country experienced a formative period of monarchy, a coup d'etat and heavy American bombing before Cambodia's dark era began in 1975. For almost four years the Khmer Rouge imposed their radical agro-communist ideology on the people, leaving two million people dead and many starved and overworked. In 1979, the Khmer Rouge regime was defeated by Vietnamese forces and a new government was installed, some of whose members were former Khmer Rouge cadres.

The case of Cambodia with its troubled past provides the backdrop for exploring issues of changing dominant narratives, governance of culture, social welfare, cultural economy, and many others. Through contextualization you will discover the social, cultural, economic and political interdependencies that frame the Cambodian arts ecosystem. You will get to know institutions, individuals, networks and structural frameworks that shape transformation processes in and through the culture sector.

The course is designed to allow for a wide range of engagement with the topic and the country: narration and film, history and theory, performance and experience, site visits and interviews, as well as a group project. The aim of the course is to stimulate discussions, reflect on practices, ideas and visions. You are encouraged to ask questions and discover your own experiences with arts and culture during conflicts, their prevention and dealing with their aftermath. Think of critical situations in places and communities you are attached to and the role of arts in these. Ultimately, it is your creativity and inspiration that will shape the next innovative approach to the use of arts in processes of post-conflict transformation, pre-conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

### **Teams:**

You will be divided into four small teams of students, with each team having its own theme to investigate. These four themes frame the discourse of this class and the wider topic. From the very beginning of the course, you will pay particular attention to your topic and the questions laid out in the team descriptions. To help you organize your thoughts and act as a living source of reference, you will be able to meet some accomplished Cambodian arts practitioners who can tell you a lot about the Cambodian arts ecosystem during our stay in Cambodia. On the last day of the course each team will present one element reflecting on their topic as part of a class exhibition. This may take the form of an object, a presentation, a performance or anything else as long as it is adequately explained and reflects an understanding of arts for transformation gained in the course. A multi-layered approach is encouraged.

### **Team 1: Safeguarding and reviving heritage**

Cambodia is home to the famous temple complex of Angkor Wat. Conservation of these structures has been on the agenda of both national and international actors for a long time. A constant flow of tourists assures the influx of money and public attention. In 2003, UNESCO recognized the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage as an important pillar of global cultural policy.<sup>1</sup> In Cambodia, efforts to preserve and revive traditional Cambodian performing arts and oral history have been ongoing since the 1990s, mainly through individuals like Arn Chorn-Pond. In a region with a colonial past and contested borders, cultural heritage can also be a source of cross-border understanding and a sense of shared culture. Nonetheless, it also sits at the root of some cultural but also geo-political conflicts fueled by national narratives about said heritage and a competitive race to secure world heritage status.

### **Questions:**

- How does cultural heritage relate to identity?
- What is the importance of both tangible and intangible heritage?
- How do international intervention and nationalization of cultural heritage affect public perception?
- Who benefits from built heritage?
- How can oral traditions survive in the digital age?
- What role does more recent (architectural) heritage play?

### **Team 2: Curating histories and futures**

How can art and culture be used to explore, create and negotiate narratives? History is always contestable and dominant narratives often oversimplify the complexity of relationships and interdependencies. Better education, increasing globalization and advancements in technology create new opportunities for people to engage with information. Cultural and educational institutions must

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO (1972), The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, and UNESCO (2003), Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

answer questions on how to present content, how to interact with audiences and content providers, and negotiate political debates. Museums and schools are obvious places where histories and also futures are curated, but what about dance, literature, sculpture and cinema? In an increasingly political society, questions of how to present historic narratives also appear in popular culture and other realms of society, such as the justice system. For example, think about presentation choices at the UN-backed Khmer Rouge Tribunal (ECCC) and potential political messaging in pop culture. Moreover, how can messages and narratives be presented to paint a certain understanding of a society's future?

Questions:

- What channels for what messages and target groups are viable in which context?
- How important is space in influencing perceptions and shaping narratives?
- What role does education play?
- Who steers narratives and counter-narratives, and for what purpose?
- Why would you want to curate perspectives of narratives for the future?

### **Team 3: Stimulating contemporary expressions**

Cambodia's most recent past was characterized by preserving and reviving what might have been otherwise lost, but more and more forms of cultural expression can be witnessed in Cambodia these days. Some call it progress and personal creative development, while others denounce such developments as 'foreign' influences. What many now perceive as classical dance was only adapted in the last century. It is the young, first post-war generation that has grown up without the access and understanding of orally transmitted arts and culture that their parents have enjoyed. However, they have been exposed to a much wider range of artistic expressions. Emerging cultural leaders are on a quest to channel young people's curiosity, keep the arts alive and culture dynamic. Additionally, the arts sector and Cambodia in general have received enormous amounts of foreign aid in the past, while technical assistance and individual engagement from abroad also left its marks. What does this mean for the future?

Questions:

- What are the dynamics of tradition and creativity in contemporary cultural expressions?
- What capacity does contemporary cultural expression have to address what issues?
- Who is opposed to contemporary art and why?
- How do contemporary artistic expressions relate to identity?
- Who is contemporary art for, and where can they be found? How important is space?

### **Team 4: Promoting sustainability and diversity**

In 2005, UNESCO called for the promotion and protection of the diversity of cultural expressions. Thinking about this goal in sustainability terms is very relevant to Cambodia. The arts can only remain diverse and dynamic when their future is secured. However, cultural expression also poses questions of audience development, folklorization and museumification, funding sources and business models, social welfare and health, as well as access and decentralization. Cambodia still has to negotiate the value of arts programs for tourists, employment realities of cultural practitioners and its global interconnectedness.

Questions:

- How does social welfare relate to artistic sustainability?
- How can networks create links and facilitate partnerships to achieve both sustainability and diversity?
- Is self-sustainability viable?
- Who can participate in cultural life?
- What is the relationship between funding diversity and cultural diversity?

**Structure and assessment:**

**Course Prerequisites:**

There are no prerequisites for this course. In addition, no prior knowledge of the subject matter is necessary. However, strong motivation for this subject is expected.

**Learning Outcomes:****Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and Links to Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)**

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:	Linked to PLOs (refer to Appendix 1)
1) Elicit and generate knowledge from experiential learning environments and their community context through participant observation, field note taking, interviews, and other forms of engaged learning that help bring critical reflection to experience.	2 medium 3 high 4 medium
2) You will gain a profound understanding of the histories and the current state of Cambodia and its relevance in global debates on the role of culture in sustainable societies and the international development agenda.	1a high, 1c high, 3 medium 4 medium
3) You will develop critical analysis skills to understand the roles and interdependencies of and between institutions, individuals and networks in processes of transformation	3 high 4 high
4) Through case studies you will learn about and reflect on the value that arts and culture can bring to social and sustainable development	2 high 3 high 4 high
5) You will acquire skills to identify, evaluate and develop viable methods of how arts and culture can be intrinsic and instrumental to changing perspectives, attitudes and behavior	1d high 3 high 4 high
6) You will develop your perspectives on cultural leadership and use these for self-reflection and development	2 medium 3 medium 4 high

**Teaching & Learning Methodologies**

The course will make use of various teaching and learning methodologies, as described below:

**Lectures:** Lectures will provide relevant knowledge, highlight the intellectual contexts of required readings, spell out key concepts and outline analytical implications.

**Assigned reading and viewing:** For each required reading/ viewing, one student will be expected to prepare a short presentation pertaining to the substance of the reading which will be presented at the start of the class (see more detail below). All students will be expected to submit 150 words summarizing their take-aways or any questions arising from the reading, this is to be posted in Brightspace before the start of class each day. Students' knowledge of the readings assigned for class will also be assessed by the teacher asking questions related to the content as part of class discussion.

**Oral presentation:** For individual presentations on reading/viewing, you should assume that everyone has carefully read the material. The main purpose of the presentation is not to offer a detailed summary of the reading, but to provide an evaluation of the reading, and to launch the discussion.

For group presentations, all group members are expected to present. You will be assessed on the quality of your content and on the quality, effort and originality that has been put into your presentation delivery and format.

**Written assignment:** You will be expected to write one paper as a critical reflections, where students are expected to relate the course content to apply in their own context. You will be expected to demonstrate that you have understood the concepts and questions posed in the class, and can formulate them into a hypothesis or question that you can then interrogate by applying it/ positioning it in a different context. You will be assessed on the level of criticality of your reflection, and the clarity of your argumentation. The deadline and guideline length for the paper is detailed in the course description.

**Field work:** Students will be guided on a field trip to expose the ecosystem of the arts and cultural scene in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Battambang, with visits ranging from museum and formal institutions to meeting individual artists. Students are expected to ask questions, show interest and attention when with guests, and to use the field trip as an opportunity to explore the concepts that have been taught in the preceding classes.

**Interactions with guest speakers:** Guest speakers and facilitators will include experts from NGOs, think tanks, and independent artists, curators and cultural workers all with a direct experience in the field of arts for transformation in Asia. Interaction with guest speakers through question and answer sessions, based on knowledge of their work via assigned class readings, will serve to enhance students' understanding of the context of arts for transformation.

**Creative Expression:** Students will do one creative project as a group. Students will work together to produce a creative expression. An excellent piece of work will be multi-layered, revealing different aspects of what has been learned during the program; it will be participatory and demonstrate active contributions from all members of the group; it will be inventive and surprising; it will be relevant to the topic. External guests will be invited to the presentations of the group projects.

### Course Materials

A full list of course materials can be found in Appendix 2.

Required materials: No material will be required

Links to download the document for all readings will be available on Brightspace

### Assignments and grades:

You will be evaluated on the following:

Assessment	Grade Percentage	Due Dates	CLO(s) assessed
Participation	15%	ongoing	1, 2, 3, 5 & 6
Individual presentation 5-7 minutes introductory oral presentation about Cambodian personalities and institutions (pre- assigned)	10%	Date will be assigned individually	1, 3, 4 & 6
Daily Instagram Post Post one photo or video per day for 10 days, each one reflecting one personal question inspired by your Cambodia experience	25%	Jan 7 - Jan 16	1,2 & 5
Creative group project 25-30 minute group presentation of a creative expression collectively and	30%	Jan 16	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

collaboratively developed in response to one of the assigned themes			
Individual paper 4-5 pages personal reflection on a practice or approach encountered through the course, which you think could be applied for transformation in your own society/ context	20%	Jan 16	2, 3, 4, 5, & 6

### 1. Participation (including attendance) (15%)

This grade encompasses active participation and professionalism in all seminar meetings. You are expected to come prepared to discuss the readings, films and other work. You are also expected to orally summarize assigned class readings and report back to the class when asked by the lecturer, as well as actively contribute to the class glossary. This grade covers your attendance in all classes and field trip events.

The following scale will be used to grade participation overall (on a scale of 1-15):

15: Excellent preparation by in-depth reading of the assigned material, leads/contributes in a significant way to discussions, demonstrates consistent active involvement, and offers thoughtful analysis and critique of the course material.

12: Good preparation (knows facts, considers implications), offers interpretation and analysis, leads/contributes well in discussion and is consistently involved in the class.

9: Adequate preparation (knows basic facts of the readings but does not show evidence of trying to interpret and analyze), does not participate voluntarily in discussions, demonstrates sporadic involvement

6: Poor preparation (has a superficial knowledge and understanding of the readings), tries to respond when called on, infrequent involvement in discussions. Or speaks without engaging with the reading or classmates' comments.

3: Very poor preparation (no evidence for reading assigned material), does not respond substantially when called on, participates very rarely in discussions.

0: No participation

### 2. Individual presentation (10%)

This grade covers an individual presentation you will present throughout classes in Cambodia. While you should give us a general idea about the respective institution/person, please also critically analyze their work and determine what exactly it contributes to "arts for transformation". How is their art and work transformational? It would be particularly interesting to find out about your personal thoughts and questions. Your presentation should be 7 minutes at most and you have to use a PPT presentation. You will be allocated one of the following institutions/individuals to research and report on:

- |                             |                               |                                |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| · DC-CAM & Youk Chhang      | · CICADA                      | · Cambodian Living Arts        |
| · APSARA National Authority | · Khmer Magic Music Bus & Arn | · Tuol Sleng (S21)             |
| · Center for Khmer Studies  | · Chorn Pond                  | · Phare Ponleu Selpak & Phare  |
| · Cambodia Peace Gallery    | · KlapYaHandz & Sok Visal     | · Performing Social Enterprise |
| · FT Gallery & Fonki        | · Lakhon Komnit Organization  | · Artisans Angkor              |
|                             | · Creative Generation & Dana  | · Bophana Center               |
|                             | · Langlois                    |                                |

### 3. Instagram reflection (25%)

We will have one Instagram account for the entire group that everyone will get access to. Each day of the Cambodia trip, you must upload one photo or video by day's end or the next morning, answering

the instructor’s question of the day and reflecting on your experiences, observations, and emotions. In an accompanying paragraph that you will post alongside your photograph or video, please explain your choice of the content shared and your reflections. In the end, you will have submitted a total of ten (10) photographs or short videos to the shared Instagram account. You will be assessed on the depth of your reflection, both through the photo/video and your writing.

**4. Creative group project (30%)**

Each of the four teams will prepare and present an *object* for a class exhibition on arts for transformation, and more specifically what you have witnessed in Cambodia as part of your team experience. Think of the final presentation as of a modern multi-media gallery aiming to educate and aesthetically amaze the audience. Your *object* can be anything you are willing to justify and explain, e.g. a performance, a photo slide show, a poem, a sculpture, a sound sample, a project concept – whatever you feel best expresses your ideas regarding your specific topic. As part of the presentation you will need to contextualize your exhibition *object* and demonstrate critical engagement with all the material studied in the course. Teams can interact and work together as long as the results are clearly distinguishable from each other.

**5. Individual paper (20%)**

Over the course you will gain a lot of ideas about how arts can facilitate the transformation of a society, of a country. In this 4-5 pages paper, you are expected to identify a practice that could be applied to help transform a pre-, mid- or post-conflict situation by the means of arts and culture. You will evaluate how such an intervention would operate and what it might achieve. Note that conflicts can occur on many levels, from personal struggles to global crises, and that they are not always visible or physical. Taking into account some of the literature and cases you have studied, carefully evaluate and apply what seems feasible and sensible in your case and why. Feel free to make use of methods utilized in class, such as CATWOE, debate or critical review. Experimental and novel approaches are highly encouraged. You will be assessed based on the elaborateness and originality of your approach as well as its feasibility, resourcefulness and vision. The individual paper shall be handed no later than 23:59pm on January 16th.

**Conversion table:**

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
[100-95]	(95-90]	(90-87]	(87-83]	(83-80]	(80-77]	(77-73]	(73-70]	(70-67]	(67-60]	(60-0]

**Course schedule:**

Classes will meet most days from 9:00 – 12:00 PM on designated spaces. However, there will be additional activities that will take place in the afternoons and sometimes evenings. Students are required to attend all course-related activities. Note that we have a mandatory class on Saturday January 10th.

**Compulsory Pre-Course Reading:**

- Not required

**Suggested Pre-Course Reading (optional):**

If you want to arrive well prepared, you can read these materials before coming to class:

- Patricia McCormick (2012), *Never Fall Down: A Novel*.
- Robert Carmichael (2015), *When clouds fell from the sky: A disappearance, a daughter’s search and Cambodia’s first war criminal*.
- Oliver Hensengerth (2008), *Transitions of Cambodia: War and peace, 1954 to the present*.
- Elena Cusimano et al. (2014), *UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators: Cambodia’s Technical Report*.
- Cynthia E. Cohen, Roberto Guitérrez Varea, Polly O. Walker (2011), *Acting Together I: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict*.

**Monday, January 5**

**Travel to Cambodia**

**Tuesday, January 6 – Phnom Penh**

**Personal journeys and Cambodia's histories**

Summary:

Before entering the topic, we are going to get to know each other. Each student and teacher will tell their personal journey, how they arrived at where they are at today, with a particular focus on one's own experience or knowledge of the arts as well as any experiences you want to share related to conflict, both visible and hidden, and post-conflict contexts. We will explore the histories of Cambodia, focusing on the past 60 years: the post-colonial period, monarchy and "the golden era", military coups, the rise of the Khmer Rouge, the role of the U.S., and the Vietnamese-backed government. Eventually we will look at Cambodia today. After an overview of the syllabus and a chance to ask questions about the assignments, the second half of the class will be dedicated to a first exploration of the city, led by a young Cambodian architect who will take us on a tour of key landmarks of New Khmer Architecture from the 1960s.

Questions:

- Why are you here, where are you coming from and what made you take this course?
- What is your experience or interest in conflict and post-conflict contexts?
- What actors and pivotal events have shaped Cambodia's history?
- How might these histories help to understand the current state of Cambodia?

Audio-visual resources:

Students are strongly encouraged to download the "Khmer Rouge History" app by Bophana to explore the rich material to learn more about this dark chapter in Cambodia's past:

- Download for iOS: [-> LINK](#)
- Download for Android: [-> LINK](#)

You are invited to keep using this as a resource and reference throughout the course.

**Wednesday, January 7 – Phnom Penh**

**What is transformation? Exploring contested debates around conflict, post-conflict and sustainable development**

Summary:

From this day onward, some students will be sharing their individual presentations with the class each day. Additionally, assigned students will report back to the class about the day's required reading summarizing key messages and formulating questions after the presentations. A glossary for the course's key terms will be jointly developed by all the students and teacher.

As transformation is a vague term and often used in various contexts, in this class we will discover the different characteristics of pre-conflict, conflict, post-conflict and development situations and discourses. You will come across terms such as resilience, renewal and revitalization. We will challenge perspectives and try to find a common understanding of the theme we will be working on throughout the course. We will be having group discussions in which we will prepare statements to be discussed in the whole group.

In the afternoon we will explore the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Centre that has made its mission to archive the wealth of all Cambodian film recordings, train the next generation of filmmakers and educate young generations about Cambodia's past. We will be watching the documentary "Don't Think I've Forgotten" by John Pirozzi (2014) telling a story of Cambodia through the lens of Rock'n'Roll.

Questions:

- Who or what is being transformed, and to what end?
- Who is leading the debate, who is participating?

- To what extent do the debates overlap, do they have the same objectives?
- On what layers does transformation work?
- What role do colonialism, imperialism and orientalism play in these?

Compulsory reading:

- Deth Sok Udom, Bradley J. Murg, Ou Virak, Michael Renfrew, *Cambodia 2040: Culture & Society*, Future Forum, Chapter 2, pp. 12- 33
- Susanna Seidl-Fox and Seema Sridhar (2014), *Conflict Transformation through Culture: Peace-Building and the Arts*, Salzburg Global Seminar. (just skim through)

Optional reading:

- James O'Keefe et al. (2016), *Living Arts in Post-Conflict Contexts: Practices, Partnerships, Possibilities*, Cambodian Living Arts. (just skim through)

Individual presentations:

- DCCAM & Youk Chhang
- Tuol Sleng Museum (S21)
- Bophana Audiovisual Resource Centre & Rithy Panh
- Cambodia Peace Gallery

**Thursday, January 8 – Phnom Penh**

**Between memory, justice and reconciliation: what can be healed?**

Summary:

Silence and selective forgetting are possible results of traumatic experiences just as reconciliation and remembrance. Due to the individual nature of memories and emotions, one size does not fit all and many attempts at providing media for healing have been made. In this session we will explore several approaches to healing, justice and remembrance, some of which are artistic.

In the afternoon, we will visit the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, UNESCO Memory of the World, where you will get the chance to critically assess the audio-tour and presentation choices of the site. We will have a special reflection session at the museum facilitated by psychotherapist Yim Sotheary.

Questions:

- Can you remember what you have never experienced?
- Is trauma a form of memory?
- What are the differences between individual, collective, cultural and political memory?
- Are aesthetics important in remembrance?
- What role do institutions like museums and libraries play in the field of memory?

Compulsory Reading (choose two of the following):

- Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (2016), *Civil Party Lead Co-Lawyers' submission relating to reparation projects for implementation in case 002/02*, pp. 1-14.
- Burcu Münyas (2008), *Genocide in the minds of Cambodian youth: transmitting (hi)stories of genocide to second and third generations in Cambodia*, *Journal of Genocide Research* 10 (3), pp. 413-439.
- Rachel Hughes (2003), *The abject artifacts of memory: photographs from Cambodia's genocide*, *Media, Culture & Society* 25 (1), pp. 23-44.

Optional Reading:

- Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (2011), *An Introduction to the Khmer Rouge Trials*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. (just skim through; focus on visuals)
- Chin Ying Jocelyn Chng (2010), *Disturbing the Silence: A Study of Performance and Collective Memory in Cambodia*. (just skim through)

Individual presentations:

- Cambodian Living Arts

- CICADA
- FT Gallery & Fonki
- Creative Generation & Dana Langlois

## Friday, January 9 – Phnom Penh

### The ecology lens: arts ecosystems, societal interdependencies and governance

#### Summary:

Nothing and nobody operates in isolation. We will apply the concept of an ecosystem to culture and society analyzing them in terms of interdependencies, such as cooperative and reactive behaviors. Understanding the arts as an ecosystem with many different actors and stakeholders will also open a discussion about the role and characteristics of cultural policy and governance. We will make sense of the theoretical concepts together and meet with So Phina, Director of CICADA. We will learn about CICADA research, advocacy and projects.

#### Questions:

- What is cultural policy, who is making it and what is it good for?
- How can ecological phenomena explain societal, political and cultural developments?
- How does the culture of governance play a role in the governance of culture?
- What is the role of networks?

#### Compulsory Reading:

- CICADA (2024), *Discussion paper: Cambodia's Cultural and Creative Industry*
- Jeremy Ahearne (2009), *Cultural policy explicit and implicit: a distinction and some uses*, International Journal of Cultural Policy 15 (2), pp. 141-153.
- Royal Government of Cambodia (2014), *National Policy for Culture*. (read pp. 3-11)

#### Optional Reading:

- Kai T. Brennert (2016), *Towards an arts council formula: Exploring cultural governance solutions in Cambodia*, Paper to the International Conference for Cultural Policy Research (ICCP) 2016, pp. 1-12.

#### Individual presentations:

- Center for Khmer Studies
- Klapyahandz
- Khmer Magic Music Bus & Arn Chorn Pond

## Saturday, January 10 – Siem Reap

### Intrinsic or instrumental? The role of arts and culture in processes of transformation

#### Summary:

Arts and culture are often overlooked when it comes to processes of change and transformation in organizational, developmental and market-oriented environments and non-artistic sectors. Just recently, policy makers increasingly recognize the role of the arts as an important driving force and enabling factor for transformative processes, both on a local and a global scale. We will visit and learn about the Center for Khmer Studies an institution that significantly contributes to the cultural environment through preservation of Khmer art and scholarly research and publications.

In the afternoon, at Wat Bo pagoda is dedicated to questions of women's empowerment, gender and tradition. All-female drumming group Medha will tell us about their journey to conquer the traditionally male domain of drumming and what performing means to them and their families.

#### Questions:

- How does Bourdieu's concept of capitals relate to the Cambodian reality?
- How can arts and culture heal, revitalize, develop, reconcile, spark and rebuild?
- What are tangible, what intangible results the arts can trigger?
- What different values do the arts have to different people?
- Who should be involved and who will be affected?

- What role do arts and culture play in sustainability discourses?
- What ethical issues can arise when instrumentalizing the arts?

#### Compulsory reading:

- Pierre Bourdieu (1986), *The forms of capital*, Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education, pp. 241-258.
- Nancy Duxbury, Anita Kangas and Christiaan de Beukelaer (2017), *Cultural policies for sustainable development: four strategic paths*, International Journal of Cultural Policy, Vol. 23 No. 2, pp. 214–230.

#### Optional reading:

- Louis Bickford (2009), *Transforming a Legacy of Genocide: Pedagogy and Tourism at the Killing Fields of Choeung Ek*, International Center for Transitional Justice. (read pp. 4-19)
- Chey Chankethya (2008), *Cambodian Dance-Education: A personal view from a classical Cambodian dancer and graduate of the Royal University of Fine Arts*, Dance dialogues: conversations across cultures, art forms and practices, pp. 1-4.
- Anmol Vellani (2015), *Culture and Identity*, unpublished, pp. 1-4.
- David Throsby (2017), *Culturally sustainable development: theoretical concept or practical policy instrument?*, International Journal of Cultural Policy 23 (2), pp. 133-147.
- Polly Stupples (2014), *Creative contributions: The role of the arts and the cultural sector in development*, Progress in Development Studies 14 (2), pp. 115-130.
- Geoffrey Crossick and Patrycja Kaszynska (2016), *Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project*, Arts & Humanities Research Council. (read executive summary and chapter 10: pp. 6-10, pp. 152-158)

#### Individual presentations:

- Phare Ponleu Selpak
- Artisans Angkor
- Apsara National Authority
- Lakhorn Komnit Organization (LKO)

### **Sunday, January 11 – Siem Reap (Optional)**

#### **Angkor Temple Complex**

##### Summary:

We will leave early in the morning and spend the day to see some temples of the vast Angkor complex and learn about some ancient art forms carved in the temple walls as well as the politics surrounding this UNESCO World Heritage site.

### **Monday, January 12 - Battambang**

#### **Why stories matter: Nurturing a diversity of narratives**

##### Summary:

We will leave early in the morning to Battambang. The city is known for its charming, laid-back atmosphere. Its beautiful architecture reflects the different phases of its history with New Khmer, French-Classical and traditional Khmer homes and buildings lining either side of the river. Battambang is also Cambodia's visual arts and circus hub.

Culture, communication, education and politics are inextricably linked. The class will meet in the afternoon upon arrival in Battambang at Phare Ponleu Selpak, an organization providing arts education to disadvantaged youth.

##### Questions:

- Who is telling the story and who listens?
- What are alternative narratives and counter-narratives?
- What role does accessibility play in shaping narratives?
- What is the artist's role in addressing societal challenges?

## **Tuesday, January 13 – Battambang**

### **Why stories matter: Nurturing a diversity of narratives**

#### Summary:

We will have a workshop with Lakhon Komnit a Battambang-based grassroots Cambodian theatre group, dedicated to the inclusive development of Lakhon Niyeay (Cambodian Spoken Theatre). During the workshop we will explore how different ways of telling a story shape the lives of many people. We will think about techniques, the power of dominating narratives, political interests, cultural determinants and societal consequences of one-sided storytelling. Can the arts be a remedy, an educator, a subversive force?

#### Questions:

- What are the challenges for visible and invisible art?
- How do politics of space impact the arts and cultural life?
- How can you enable creativity and entrepreneurship?
- What is the artist's role in addressing societal challenges?

## **Wednesday, January 14 – Battambang to Phnom Penh**

### **The politics of memory: (re)presentation, storytelling and curation**

#### Summary:

In the morning, we will visit the Cambodia Peace Gallery, a space for reflection and learning on Cambodia's journey from war towards peace and reconciliation, presenting the complicated Cambodian history characterised by structural violence emerged from the past atrocities, while celebrating the work of Cambodian peacebuilders.

Afterward, we will be leaving Battambang City to drive back to Phnom Penh.

#### Questions:

- What is the role of healing in documentation?
- What purpose shall the curation of Cambodia's historic genocide sites serve?
- Who is the target audience?

## **Thursday, January 15 – Phnom Penh**

### **Edge & dredge – resistance, compliance, self-realization**

#### Summary:

Students are assembled in team; you are expected to work on your final presentations. Instructor is available to answer questions in person.

To end the day on a positive and forward looking note and to demonstrate just how inextricably linked memory and arts are in Cambodian culture and society, we will have a cruise on the Mekong River with Cambodian Living Arts founder Arn Chorn Pond.

## **Friday, January 16 – Phnom Penh**

#### Summary:

In a class exhibition you will introduce and present your *objects*. After an open discussion with all course participants about the contributions we will close the course and proceed to discuss your personal experiences of and reflections on your journeys.

## **Saturday, January 17 – Travel back to Abu Dhabi**

#### Summary:

Early departure flight to Abu Dhabi

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## **Community-based Learning (CBL) Engagements**

- Khmer Architecture Tour (2hrs)
- Visit to the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Centre (1hr)
- Audio-guide tour & healing workshop of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, UNESCO Memory of the World (1hrs)
- Visit to the Center for Khmer Studies at Wat Damnak (1hr)
- Rhythm workshop with all-female drumming group Medha (2hrs)
- Guided tour of some temples of the vast Angkor complex (3hrs) - Optional
- Visit Phare Selpak, an organization providing arts education to disadvantaged youth (1hr)
- Workshop with Lakhon Komnit a Battambang-based grassroots theatre group (2hrs)
- Visit of the Peace Gallery (1hrs)
- Cruise on the Mekong River with Cambodian Living Arts founder Arn Chorn Pond (1hr)

## **Chat GPT**

AI tools can be used thoughtfully or thoughtlessly. In this course, assignments are designed to minimize thoughtless uses and maximize thoughtful ones. If you do use AI tools, you should use them sparingly and only in generating ideas or early drafts.

## **Student Guidelines/Policy Statements**

### **Attendance:**

Due to the condensed nature of J-Term, each day of absence is the equivalent of missing more than a full week in a regular semester – with less of an opportunity to make up for missed material. An unexcused absence results in the deduction of one full letter grade from the final course grade (e.g., from an A- to a B-). Excusing absence is at the discretion of the instructor. Students who miss more than two classes will not be able to complete the course: if one or more of these absences are excused, students will be withdrawn; if all of the absences are unexcused, students will fail.

### **Student Commitment and Expectations:**

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### **Academic Integrity:**

At NYU Abu Dhabi, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students, faculty, and staff take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others. In turn, these values create a campus climate that encourages the free exchange of ideas, promotes scholarly excellence through active and creative thought, and allows community members to achieve and be recognized for achieving their highest potential. Students should be aware that engaging in behaviors that violate the standards of academic integrity will be subject to review and may face the imposition of penalties in accordance with the procedures set out in the NYUAD policy here.

### **Moses Center for Student Accessibility (CSA): [mosescsa@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsa@nyu.edu)**

New York University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. The Center works with students to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations that support equal access to a world-class education. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. Disability-related information is never disclosed without student permission. Find further

information here.

### **Health Resources:**

As a university student, you may experience a range of issues that can interfere with your ability to perform academically or impact your daily functioning, such as heightened stress, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbance, strained relationships, grief and loss, and/or personal struggles. If you have any well-being or mental health concerns please visit the Counseling Center on the ground floor of the campus center from 9 am-5 pm, Monday - Friday, or schedule an appointment to meet with a counselor by calling: +971-2-628-8100, or email: [nyuad.healthcenter@nyu.edu](mailto:nyuad.healthcenter@nyu.edu). If you require mental health support outside these hours, call NYU's Wellness Exchange hotline at 02-628-5555, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also utilize the Wellness Exchange mobile chat feature, details of which you can find on the NYUAD student portal. These services are available remotely for students studying outside of the UAE.

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### **Workload and Deadlines:**

Come to class having carefully done the reading and being ready to participate in discussions and in-class group work. It is in your best interest to keep up with the reading and submit your work on time. The grade for late assignments is lowered by a third mark for each late day (from B to B-).

### **Preparedness and Notetaking:**

Bring the required reading, processed, annotated, and ready for discussion. Bring a notebook to each class. Studies show that we learn better by taking notes by hand. Be prepared to discuss the reading. We are an intellectual think tank. Our work is only as good as our commitment, participation, and generosity.

### **Attention, Presence, and Collaboration:**

Turn off your phones and computers. Go online during class only when explicitly asked to do so. Your learning outcomes will be as good as your focus. Engage with coursework from the first day of the session to avoid a rush, catch-up, and stress. Bring your best collaborative standards to engage your classmates with intellectual inquiry, curiosity, enthusiasm, and respect. Be responsible to your classmates by being present and prepared.

### **Attendance/Tardiness:**

On-time attendance at every class meeting is mandatory. Students will be marked 'late' if they arrive more than 5 minutes after class begins. Three 'lates' will be considered an unexcused absence.

### **Appendix 1: Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for Core courses:**

- 1) Critically examine historical and contemporary topics of global significance, which includes formulating clear, precise questions and arriving at well-reasoned conclusions using
  - a) qualitative,
  - b) quantitative,
  - c) contextual, and
  - d) creative modes of reasoning;
- 2) Communicate effectively for various audiences and purposes, including participation in public settings;

- 3) Demonstrate self-understanding and intercultural competency; and
- 4) Identify and reflect critically on conceptual and ethical complexity.

## Appendix 2: Course materials

### Music:

- Spotify playlist “Welcome to Cambodia” introducing the diversity of Cambodian music: [-> LINK](#)

### Film:

- John Pirozzi (2014): Don’t think I’ve forgotten

### Suggested Pre-Course Reading (optional):

If you want to arrive well prepared, you can read these materials before coming to class:

- Patricia McCormick (2012), *Never Fall Down: A Novel*.
- Robert Carmichael (2015), *When clouds fell from the sky: A disappearance, a daughter’s search and Cambodia’s first war criminal*.
- Oliver Hensegerth (2008), *Transitions of Cambodia: War and peace, 1954 to the present*.
- Elena Cusimano et al. (2014), *UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators: Cambodia’s Technical Report*.
- Cynthia E. Cohen, Roberto Guitérrez Varea, Polly O. Walker (2011), *Acting Together I: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict*.

### Compulsory reading:

- Margaux Portron (2017), *The Art of Resilience: Creativity, Courage and Renewal*, Salzburg Global Seminar.
- Susanna Seidl-Fox and Seema Sridhar (2014), *Conflict Transformation through Culture: Peace-Building and the Arts*, Salzburg Global Seminar.
- Pierre Bourdieu (1986), *The forms of capital*, Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education, pp. 241-258.
- Nancy Duxbury, Anita Kangas and Christiaan de Beukelaer (2017), *Cultural policies for sustainable development: four strategic paths*, International Journal of Cultural Policy, Vol. 23 No. 2, pp. 214–230.
- Jerry C. Y. Liu (2016), *The Ecology of culture and values: Implications for cultural policy and governance*, encatcSCHOLAR 6. [-> LINK](#)
- Jeremy Ahearne (2009), *Cultural policy explicit and implicit: a distinction and some uses*, International Journal of Cultural Policy 15 (2),
- Royal Government of Cambodia (2014), *National Policy for Culture*.

### Optional reading:

- James O’Keefe et al. (2016), *Living Arts in Post-Conflict Contexts: Practices, Partnerships, Possibilities*, Cambodian Living Arts.
- Louis Bickford (2009), *Transforming a Legacy of Genocide: Pedagogy and Tourism at the Killing Fields of Choeung Ek*, International Center for Transitional Justice.
- Chey Chankethya (2008), *Cambodian Dance-Education: A personal view from a classical Cambodian dancer and graduate of the Royal University of Fine Arts*, Dance dialogues: conversations across cultures, art forms and practices
- Anmol Vellani (2015), *Culture and Identity*, unpublished
- David Throsby (2017), *Culturally sustainable development: theoretical concept or practical policy instrument?*, International Journal of Cultural Policy 23 (2).
- Polly Stupples (2014), *Creative contributions: The role of the arts and the cultural sector in development*, Progress in Development Studies 14 (2)
- Geoffrey Crossick and Patrycja Kaszynska (2016), *Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project*, Arts & Humanities Research Council.

- Kai T. Brennert (2016), *Towards an arts council formula: Exploring cultural governance solutions in Cambodia*, Paper to the International Conference for Cultural Policy Research (ICCP) 2016
- Catherine Grant (2015), *Learning and teaching traditional music in Cambodia: Challenges and incentives*, International Journal for Music Education

## Disability, Technology, and Media

NYUAD J-Term 2026, 3 credits  
Course: CCOL-UH 2063J  
*No prerequisites*

Hours: 1-4 p.m. (+ field trips, guest lectures) Friday classes meet 2:20-5:20

Classroom: TBD

Professor Mara Mills

[mmills@nyu.edu](mailto:mmills@nyu.edu)

Office Hours: *by appointment*



A collage from the Engineering at Home archive, a project by Sara Hendren & Caitrin Lynch at Olin College. **Design credit: Casey Gollan**

Mondays, 9:30-12 Room: 25W4  
C-10

### **Instructional Time**

This course meets for 3 hours/per day (10 teaching days) in class and 12 hours of fieldwork (community-based learning) outside of class throughout the JTerm period. Instructional time requirements are met by the scheduled meeting times.

### **Course Description:**

Starting from the premise that disability is a social phenomenon, rather than an individual and medical one, this course asks: How does the built environment shape disability? And how might disability studies inform better design? In our seminar discussions, we will consider the significance of media and technology to the definition and experience of disability in a cross-cultural perspective. Topics include: universal and critical design; “assistive technology”; visual rhetorics of disability in photography and film; and disability aesthetics. Following the principle “nothing about us without us,” we will host lecturers with a range of disability expertise. We will also practice access techniques such as captioning, alt text, plain language, and video description. An overarching question for this course will be how to shift access from a retrofit and compliance issue to a creative practice. An important component of the course are our partnerships with Mawaheb and with Zayed National Museum: each student will complete 12 hours of community-based fieldwork to help these organizations make their exhibitions accessible and visitor experience welcoming.

This course appears in...

Core Curriculum > Field Colloquia (partial fulfillment)

### **Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) linked to Program Learning Outcome (PLOs) in Bold - see appendix 1:**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Distinguish between the disability justice and disability rights approaches to accessibility (**4 medium**)
2. Explain different models of accessible design including universal design, critical design, and resonant design (**1c low**)
3. Compare definitions of disability in different national and cultural contexts (**3 high**)
4. Interpret symbols, metaphors, rhetorics, and aesthetics of disability in visual and text-based media, and understand how they shape identity (**1a,d medium**)
5. Create and edit captions for audio, video, and/or social media (following best practices for music, sound effects, etc.) (**2 medium**)



*This assignment will be completed in groups of 2, and time will be devoted in class for group work.*

**Reading Reflection** **due 1/16** **10%** **[CLO 3]**  
**& Question for Prof. Alshammari**

*You will write a short (1 page) reflection on selections of Prof. Alshammari's work, in response to a prompt from the professor. You will also write one question to potentially ask Prof. Alshammari at the end of her book reading.*

*Due by the start of class 1/16. Submitted via Brightspace.*

Conversion table:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
[100-95]	[94-90]	[90-87]	[86-83]	[83-80]	[79-77]	[76-73]	[73-70]	[69-67]	[66-60]	[59-0]

**Grading Policies**

This course follows the standard NYU Abu Dhabi Policies & Procedures for academic integrity and grading:

<https://nyuad.nyu.edu/en/academics/registrar/academic-policies.html>

**Attendance Statement:**

Due to the condensed nature of J-Term, each day of absence is the equivalent of missing more than a full week in a regular semester – with less of an opportunity to make up for missed material. An unexcused absence results in the deduction of one full letter grade from the final course grade (e.g., from an A- to a B-). Excusing absence is at the discretion of the instructor. Students who miss more than two classes will not be able to complete the course: if one or more of these absences are excused, students will be withdrawn; if all of the absences are unexcused, students will fail.

**Participation Rubric:**

Your participation grade is based on discussion, readiness (bringing readings/notes to class), and attentiveness. Laptops/tablets will be allowed during discussions, but not screenings or guest lectures (unless otherwise announced); they should not pose a distraction to me, you, or the other students.

**A general rule about class participation is “quality is better than quantity.”**

The following scale will be used to grade participation overall (on a scale of 1-15):

15: Excellent preparation by in-depth reading of the assigned material, leads/contributes in a significant way to discussions, demonstrates consistent active involvement in discussion and small group work, and offers thoughtful analysis and critique of the course material.

12: Good preparation (knows facts, considers implications), offers interpretation and analysis, leads/contributes well in discussion and is consistently involved in the class.

9: Adequate preparation (knows basic facts of some of the readings but does not show evidence of trying to interpret and analyze), does not participate voluntarily in discussions, demonstrates sporadic involvement

6: Poor preparation (has minimal knowledge and understanding of the readings), infrequent involvement in discussions or speaks without engaging with the reading or classmates' comments; minimal completion of in-class work or group activities.

3: Very poor preparation (no evidence for reading assigned material), does not respond substantially when called on, participates very rarely in discussions and group activities.

0: No participation

**Accessibility, Accommodations, Abilities:**

I want this course to be accessible to all interested students. If you need specific accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. I am available to discuss course accessibility

in person, on the phone, or via email.

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## **Course Schedule**

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### **January 5      What is Disability? Terms, Boundaries, and Intersections**

Introductions and Course Syllabus

**Mini-Lecture on Key Concepts in Disability Studies:** Impairment, Disability, Nondisabled, Ableism, People of Determination, Medical Model, Social Model

**In class: start ADA Checklist Activity**

### **January 6      Disability and Design / The Aesthetics of Access**

**ADA Checklist Write-Up Due**

**In class small group work** with some of the “boundary” terms in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (e.g. Deafness, Fat, Pain, Illness)

**In class we will also watch:** Jason da Silva, [The Disability Trap](#), NYT (2018)

**In Class: Test and Complete Survey Form**, “Introduction to Digital Accessibility,” for NYU IT

Simi Linton, “Reassigning Meaning,” from: *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity* (NYU Press, 1998), <https://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/edu/essay.html?id=21>

Peter Conrad, “Medicalization: Contexts, Characteristics, and Changes” (ONLY READ Ch. 1 p. 3 to p. 8)

*Mending Our Ways: A Selection of NYU Abu Dhabi Student-Led Proposals*, Ch. 1, 52-56, 80-82, 120-129

Graham Pullin, *Design Meets Disability*, chs. 4 and 5

*Optional:*

NYU Accessibility Resources for Students,

<https://www.nyu.edu/life/information-technology/web-and-digital-publishing/digital-publishing/accessibility/accessibility-guides-by-role/accessibility-students.html>

Taeyoon Choi, “A Guide for Co-Creating Access and Inclusion,”

<https://thecreativeindependent.com/guides/a-guide-for-co-creating-access-and-inclusion/>

Accessibility Guidelines for NYU Gallery Spaces

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/12QViuqpFHh3HMms\\_5XUW8hhigCm1ib6xkmhOfomh9pQ/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/12QViuqpFHh3HMms_5XUW8hhigCm1ib6xkmhOfomh9pQ/edit)

### **January 7      Captioning**

Captioning lesson by Prof. Mills (co-created with Marshall Sunnes of NYU IT)

In class viewing: Artist Christine Sun Kim rewrites Closed Captions, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tf479qL8hg>  
Carolyn Lazard, A Recipe for Disaster, <https://vimeo.com/267429320>

Joseph Grigely, "Inventory of Apologies," <https://journal.voca.network/inventory-of-apologies/>

Sean Zdenek, *Reading Sounds: Closed Captioned Media and Popular Culture*, selections

David Owen, "Subtitling Your Life," *The New Yorker*, 28 April 2025

**January 8 Field Trip: Zayed National Museum Traveling Exhibit (Ajman Museum)**  
Captioning Assignment Due

Zayed National Museum: Preliminary Visit and Discussion of Museum Inclusivity plans with Tahani Alashqar (or other member of ZNM accessibility team)

**Meet outside welcome center for bus transport: Time TBD (Course LEO will announce)**

Tour starts at 3:30 p.m. (@Ajman Museum), with lunch and dinner provided en route

**January 9: Visual Rhetorics of Disability**  
*Bring to class an advertisement or other visual representation of disability*

**In-class Screening:** *Code of the Freaks* (2020, excerpt)

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "Seeing the Disabled: Visual Rhetorics of Disability in Popular Photography," *The New Disability History*

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, *Staring: How We Look* (excerpt)

**January 12: Alt Text as Poetry / Visual Description Workshop**  
In class: Watch excerpt from *Fire thru Dry Grass* in class with AD

"Bojana Coklyat in Conversation with Shannon Finnegan," *Believer Magazine*,  
<https://thebeliever.net/bojana-coklyat-in-conversation-with-shannon-finnegan/>

"At SFMOMA, Disability Artwork Makes History," *New York Times*, 7 May 2024

Tobin Siebers, "Introducing Disability Aesthetics"

*To be used for workshop in class:*

Bojana Coklyut and Shannon Finnegan, *Alt Text as Poetry Workbook*  
<https://alt-text-as-poetry.net/assets/Alt-Text-as-Poetry-Workbook-PDF-2020-12-01.pdf>

**January 13: Field Trip to Mawaheb (Dubai)**  
**Art Studio for People of Determination**  
We will receive an orientation to Mawaheb, followed by lunch at the Mawaheb [Community Café](#)

Victor Pineda, "Exploring Functioning and Freedoms in Dubai," Ch. 5 from pp. 103-113.

**January 14: Touch Tours**  
*Mawaheb Assignment Due (Image Description/Alt Text)*

Georgina Kleege, "The Art of Touch: Lending a Hand to the Sighted Majority," *Journal of Visual Culture* (2021)

**In class:** watch Haben Girma, "How the Hand of Ableism Hijacks a Touch Tour for Blind Patrons at the British Museum" and module, "Touch Tours and other Tactile Experiences,"  
<https://emuzeum.cz/admin/files/Navstevnici-se-zrakovym-znevyhodnenim-02.pdf>

*Second Half of Class: Work on Touch Tour with Partner*

**January 15 Plain Language Writing**  
**Zayed National Museum Touch Tour Assignment Due**

**Class meets 1-4 p.m., Zoom Workshop with Kelsie Acton, 1:30-3:30 p.m.**

Kelsie Acton, "Plain Language for Disability Culture," *Crip Authorship: Disability As Method*, forthcoming, [https://docs.google.com/document/d/11hhV-RQAsC9iUOZ72oz1\\_S4n\\_26MUJMb/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/11hhV-RQAsC9iUOZ72oz1_S4n_26MUJMb/edit)

Gabrielle Peters, "Crip Class" (+ plain language version by Kelsie Acton)

*Optional:*

NYU Steinhart: "Writing for Accessibility on the Web" [only read that section]  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rtEAX1EEUgTQgxXrcq0RoGxXTNvm5PR3AlbOqtGYNAk/edit>

*Access Ability: A Practical Handbook on Accessible Graphic Design*,  
[https://www.rgd.ca/database/files/library/RGD\\_AccessAbility2\\_Handbook\\_2021\\_09\\_28.pdf](https://www.rgd.ca/database/files/library/RGD_AccessAbility2_Handbook_2021_09_28.pdf)

**January 16: Global & Comparative Perspectives: Shahd Alshammari Book Talk**  
**Reading Reflection and Question Due**  
**Friday Schedule, 2:20-5:20**

3-4:30 pm Book Talk: Shahd Alshammari, author of *Head Above Water: Reflections on Illness* (2023)

Shahd Alshammari, "On Being Woman, Other, and Disabled," 1-11.  
Shahd Alshammari, *System Shock* (excerpt)

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**Community-based Learning (CBL) Engagements**

1 Field trip to Mawaheb Art Studio for People of Determination (Dubai) -- 5 h. (includes small project as homework)

1 Field trip to Zayed National Museum Traveling Exhibit (Ajman) -- 3 h.

Group project assigned by Zayed National Museum Accessibility Coordinator -- 4 h.

**Policy Statements:**

**Chat GPT / AI**

AI (such as Chat GPT) will be accepted with prior permission for certain projects (such as captioning) as a starting point for a student's media accessibility projects. I reserve the right to use Turnitin for written assignments.

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The Writing Center is an excellent resource for you to use throughout your university career. Consultants will meet with you to discuss your writing for any writing project. They don't do the work for you—they don't edit or proofread your work or give you ideas—but they can help you figure out what you need to do to improve your writing. To register and to schedule an appointment, go to <https://nyuad.mywconline.com>. It is wise to schedule appointments well in advance because appointment slots fill up. These services are available remotely for students studying outside of the UAE.

### **Appendix 1:**

#### **Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for Core courses:**

- 1) Critically examine historical and contemporary topics of global significance, which includes formulating clear, precise questions and arriving at well-reasoned conclusions using
  - a) qualitative,
  - b) quantitative,

- c) contextual, and
- d) creative modes of reasoning;
- 2) Communicate effectively for various audiences and purposes, including participation in public settings;
- 3) Demonstrate self-understanding and intercultural competency; and
- 4) Identify and reflect critically on conceptual and ethical complexity.

## Appendix 2: Course materials

Simi Linton, "Reassigning Meaning," from: *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity* (NYU Press, 1998), <https://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/edu/essay.html?id=21>

Peter Conrad, "Medicalization: Contexts, Characteristics, and Changes"

Taeyoon Choi, "A Guide for Co-Creating Access and Inclusion," <https://thecreativeindependent.com/guides/a-guide-for-co-creating-access-and-inclusion/>

*Mending Our Ways: A Selection of NYU Abu Dhabi Student-Led Proposals*, Ch. 1, 52-56, 80-82, 120-129

Graham Pullin, *Design Meets Disability*, chs. 4 and 5

Accessibility Guidelines for NYU Gallery Spaces

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/12QViuqpFHh3HMms\\_5XUW8hhigCm1ib6xkmhOfomh9pQ/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/12QViuqpFHh3HMms_5XUW8hhigCm1ib6xkmhOfomh9pQ/edit)

Shahd Alshammari, "On Being Woman, Other, and Disabled," 1-11.

Shahd Alshammari, *System Shock* (excerpt)

*Code of the Freaks* (2020, excerpt)

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "Seeing the Disabled: Visual Rhetorics of Disability in Popular Photography," *The New Disability History*

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, *Staring: How We Look* (excerpt)

Artist Christine Sun Kim rewrites Closed Captions, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfe479qL8hg>

Carolyn Lazard, A Recipe for Disaster, <https://vimeo.com/267429320>

Joseph Grigely, "Inventory of Apologies," <https://journal.voca.network/inventory-of-apologies/>

Sean Zdenek, *Reading Sounds: Closed Captioned Media and Popular Culture*, selections

David Owen, "Subtitling Your Life," *The New Yorker*, 28 April 2025

"Bojana Coklyat in Conversation with Shannon Finnegan," *Believer Magazine*, <https://thebeliever.net/bojana-coklyat-in-conversation-with-shannon-finnegan/>

Bojana Coklyat and Shannon Finnegan, *Alt Text as Poetry Workbook* <https://alt-text-as-poetry.net/assets/Alt-Text-as-Poetry-Workbook-PDF-2020-12-01.pdf>

"At SFMOMA, Disability Artwork Makes History," *New York Times*, 7 May 2024

Tobin Siebers, "Introducing Disability Aesthetics"

Victor Pineda, "Exploring Functioning and Freedoms in Dubai," Ch. 5 from pp. 103-113.

Kelsie Acton, "Plain Language for Disability Culture," *Crip Authorship: Disability As Method*, forthcoming, [https://docs.google.com/document/d/11hhV-RQAsC9iUOZ72oz1\\_S4n\\_26MUJMb/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/11hhV-RQAsC9iUOZ72oz1_S4n_26MUJMb/edit)

Gabrielle Peters, "Crip Class" (+ plain language version by Kelsie Acton)

NYU Steinhardt: "Writing for Accessibility on the Web"  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rtEAX1EEUgTQgXrcq0RoGxXTNvm5PR3AlbOqtGYNAk/edit>

*Access Ability: A Practical Handbook on Accessible Graphic Design*,  
[https://www.rgd.ca/database/files/library/RGD\\_AccessAbility2\\_Handbook\\_2021\\_09\\_28.pdf](https://www.rgd.ca/database/files/library/RGD_AccessAbility2_Handbook_2021_09_28.pdf)

"Celebrating Disability at the Met,"  
<https://www.metmuseum.org/perspectives/articles/2022/7/disability-pride>

Describing Visual Resources Toolkit (read background page):  
<https://describingvisualresources.org/background/>

Christine Sun Kim interview, <https://vimeo.com/31083172>