

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Course Prefix/Number: AMH 5990 Material Culture**

**Course Credit Hours: 3.0**

**Instructor Name and Contact Information: Dr. Amy Mitchell-Cook**

**Phone: 857-6014 50/142**

**Office Hours: T/W: 1:00-3:30**

### **Course Description:**

Course Description: This course examines the use of material culture as a form of historical research. The objects people used are just as important as the documents they wrote, and reveal much about the past. Utilizing primary documents as well as material culture, students will expand on traditional research methodologies to incorporate the use of material objects to understand history.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

- Evaluate and critically analyze material culture as a form of historical research.
- Develop critical thinking and writing skills through class discussions, presentations and research papers.
- Interpret secondary and primary sources and be able to discuss each within larger historiographical debates concerning material culture

**Topics:** material culture, collections management, architecture, furniture, clothing, consumer culture and death. There are numerous topics covered in this class.

### **Texts:**

Berger, *What Objects Mean*, Left Coast Press, 2009

Karen Harvey, *History and Material Culture*, Routledge, 2009.

Hallam and Hockey, *Death, Memory and Material Culture*, Berg, 2001.

Thomas Schlereth, *Material Culture: A Research Guide*, Kansas, 1985.

Bridget Heneghan, *Whitewashing America*, Mississippi, 2003.

Kate Haulman, *Politics of Fashion*, UNC, 2011.

Bleichmar, *Collecting Across Cultures*, Penn Press, 2011

### **Grading / Evaluation:**

Research Paper: 100 points

Attendance/Participation: 100 points

St. Michael's Research/presentations: 100 points

Artifact Biographies (2): 100 points

### **Course Requirements:**

The **research papers** are between 15-18 pages. Your research must include original interpretation of secondary and primary resources. Aim for 15-18 sources, with approximately 30% primary material. Do not get bogged down in looking for primary sources or of limiting yourself to documents in Pace library. Plan ahead and you can get a variety of sources! Primary sources can be an object, painting, etc...but you will need historical documents to back up your research. **RESEARCH PAPERS ARE DUE April 27th!!!** (Friday of the last week of classes) Please use footnotes or endnotes and no in-text citations.

**Class participation** includes leading a discussion one week. You will take one aspect of that week's topic and make introductory remarks, initiate questions, etc.... You must get with me **BEFORE** your assigned class to turn in a bibliography (I would bring in 3-5 additional sources), discuss possible topics and questions, etc... I **DO NOT** want you to merely summarize the readings for that week. Instead you must **ADD** to the discussion at hand by bringing in outside sources. You will have to work as part of a team for this exercise but you'll be graded individually for your efforts.

As graduate students you are expected to talk! Merely showing up will not earn you a good evaluation for this part of your grade. Some students may have an initial understanding of the material, theories, topics, etc...and may seem to know more than you....don't worry, everyone feels that way. Ask questions, at least then I know you read the material!

**Attendance** is expected of everyone. You have one free "get of class." I will deduct 10 points from your final grade for each additional class you miss. The only excused absences are those made in advance with me!! (and you cannot be absent the week of your discussion...unless you are in the hospital or something of that nature)

For **St. Michael's Cemetery** each of you will research a 5-8 page paper on one aspect of death, as it relates (or possibly) relates to St. Michael's Cemetery. (I need to finalize this with Margo) In addition to a research report for the cemetery you will submit an article to the *Pensacola News Journal* and do an online interview. The newspaper assignment will be due by the **end of March**. Margo Stringfield will talk to the class and I may have a representative from PNJ come in as well. You will also participate in St. Michael's Get in the Spirit Event, **April 14<sup>th</sup>**....this is a Saturday, probably 10-2pm!!! Your **paper is due April 9<sup>th</sup>**.

The **first biography** is on an artifact that you selected the first day of class. You need to come in with a brief bio...about two pages, double-spaced on the 3rd week of class. I want you to create a short narrative about the artifact that places it in its proper historical context, next you will write a paragraph or so that examines the artifact from one theoretical perspective, as outlined in Berger.

The second artifact will be one that is of possible unknown origin and you will again have to create a historical narrative to somehow put the artifact in its proper context. This artifact will come from the WFHPI collections. In February we will meet with them. I will have more information later. This bio will be due on **March 12<sup>th</sup>**.

### **Expectations for Academic Conduct/Plagiarism Policy:**

As members of the University of West Florida academic community, we commit ourselves to honesty. As we strive for excellence in performance, integrity—both personal and institutional—is our most precious asset. Honesty in our academic work is vital, and we will not knowingly act in ways which erode that integrity. Accordingly, we pledge not to cheat, nor to tolerate cheating, nor to plagiarize the work of others. We pledge to share community resources in ways that are responsible and that comply with established policies of fairness. Cooperation and competition are means to high achievement and are encouraged. Indeed, cooperation is expected unless our directive is to individual performance. We will compete constructively and professionally for the purpose of stimulating high performance and standards. Finally, we accept adherence to this set of expectations for academic conduct as a condition of membership in the UWF academic community.

*From the Student Life Handbook, page 46.*

See [uwf.edu/cas/aasr/Plagiarism.doc](http://uwf.edu/cas/aasr/Plagiarism.doc) for further information

### **Departmental Academic Standards:**

See [uwf.edu/history/studentinfo/index.com](http://uwf.edu/history/studentinfo/index.com) for further information

“The act of representing the ideas, words, creations, or work of another as one’s own.’ Plagiarism combines theft and fraud, and the penalty is correspondingly severe: failure for the assignment, and in some cases, for the entire course. As the instructor’s discretion, she/he may recommend the student be suspended from the university. Ignorance of the rules about plagiarism is no excuse for it, and carelessness is just as bad as purposeful violation. Students who have plagiarized have cheated themselves out of the experience of being responsible members of the academic community and have cheated their classmates by pretending to contribute original ideas.”

**"We shall tolerate no cheating on examinations and no plagiarism of written work. In the event that such behavior is documented, the instructor will assign that student an "F" for the course in which the offense occurred. The chairperson of the department and the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will be notified concerning the specific nature of the offense. Where additional penalties seem just, the instructor and/or chairperson will refer the case to the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for further action as outlined in the rules of the Florida Administrative Code. Each student has the right to appeal the charge of cheating or plagiarism and the right to examine any materials in his/her files."**

### **ASSISTANCE:**

Students with special needs who require specific examination-related or other course-related accommodations should contact the, Director of Disabled Student Services (DSS), [dss@uwf.edu](mailto:dss@uwf.edu), (850) 474-2387. DSS will provide the student with a letter for the instructor that will specify any recommended accommodations.

## Course Schedule:

Week 1: January 9  
Introductions, etc....

Week 2: January 16  
No School, Martin Luther King Day

Week 3: January 23  
Read: Chapter 1 in Schlereth; Introduction and Chapter 1 in Harvey.

*Bring in your 2-page artifact biography to discuss in class.*

Week 3: January 30  
Read: Chapters 1-7, *What Objects Mean*, by Berger.

*Bring in your artifact and be prepared to discuss using a 'theoretical approach' in Berger.*

Week 4: February 6  
Read: Chapter 2-4, Schlereth; Chapters 2-3, 5, Harvey

*Turn in artifact bio.*

Week 5: February 13  
Read: Chapters 5-7, Schlereth; Chapters 6-10, Harvey

Week 6: February 20  
Go to WFHPI?

Week 7: February 27  
Collecting Across Cultures, chapters 1-8

Week 8: March 5  
Collecting Across Cultures, chapters 9-14

Week 9: March 12  
Hallam and Hockey, *Material Culture of Death*

*Choose topics for St. Michael's research project*  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Bio due*

Week 10: March 19  
No Class-Spring Break

Week 11: March 26  
Politics of Fashion  
*Paper due to PNJ?*

Week 12: April 2  
Whitewashing America

Week 13: April 9  
In-Class Presentations of your research paper with student feedback

***Turn in written material for St. Michael's project***

Week 14: April 16  
In class presentations with student feedback and finalize papers

Week 15: April 23  
Finalize papers

**Research Papers Due Friday, April 27th. 5:00pm**