

# Course Syllabus

# Folk Art: Reflections of Diverse Cultures and Traditions

## Course Information

## Assessment

## Policies

## Course Expectations

## Course Information

### Course Description

This course has been designed to acquaint you with various works of folk art and to provide an approach to understanding and appreciation through knowledge of the kinds of folk art, of its purposes, techniques, form and content. The course is designed to sensitize you to the variety of folk art and their importance in the time and culture in which they were created and their importance in contemporary civilization. The theory, history, and mechanics of folk art, plus a survey of the major developments in the visual folk arts, and their respective aesthetic criteria, are explored through reading and discussion. Visuals in museums, local collections, community-practicing artists, book visuals and images found online are used as resources. The course will focus on American art but will also give some consideration to global folk art.

You will also have an opportunity to differentiate between the roles of traditional folk art, contemporary folk art, mass exchange folk art and what is commonly called "outsider" folk art.

As part of the course, you will also be asked to select several major works and analyze and interpret these works using a set of criteria that will be provided early in the course.

The assignments have been designed to build upon one another sequentially to develop a broad overview of the subject. Hopefully you will gain an appreciation of folk and outsider art and will understand its contribution to our visual world as we know it today.

We also hope that you will become comfortable with discussion folk work and commenting on it with confidence in your knowledge of the subject.

### Course Learning Goals

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Identify traditional, contemporary folk art, outsider art and mass exchange folk art
- Be able to explain the difference between the four categories as well as other art that is sometimes confused with folk art
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of how to analyze a work of art
- Select works that represent major medium and subject areas of folk art
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of some of the major museums that house large collections of folk art and how

those collections are similar or different

- Understand how to recognize folk art when encountering it in the public arena and how to research the work and its authenticity

## Course Resources

### Required Text Books

Stacy, B. & Hollander, A. (2002). *American Anthem: Masterworks from the American Art Museum*. Publisher: Abrams.

Russell, Charles. (2001). *Self-taught Art: The culture and aesthetics of American vernacular art*. Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press.

Barnet, Sylvan. *A Short Guide to Writing about Art*.

### Websites to visit often for information

[http://www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/history/museums/abby\\_art.cfm](http://www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/history/museums/abby_art.cfm)

<http://fenimoreartmuseum.org/>

<http://www.antiques-internet.com/>

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/am-folk.htm>

<http://www.askart.com/>

<http://www.nga.gov/collection/gallery/iad.htm>

<http://www.tfaoi.com/aa/1aa/1aa18.htm>

## Course Competencies

In this course, you will develop the following competencies:

Competence	Competence Statement
A-1-H	Can explain the function of folk arts in the transmission of culture and values.
A-1-E	Can interpret the work of writers or artists within a historical or social context.
A-1-D	Can analyze writers' or artists' representations of human experience.
A-1-X	Written by student/faculty

### Relationship of this course to the competence statements

**A-1-H: Can explain the function of folk arts in the transmission of culture and values.**

- Explains the characteristics of folk art.

- Describes dynamics or mechanisms of how culture and values are transmitted.
- Describes the role folk art may play in the transmission of culture and values.

Applies (3) to one or more specific examples of folk art.

Folk art reflects the beliefs, customs, and rituals of a culture and the values that inform their creation in a way that the members of a culture easily understand. Students demonstrate this competence by analyzing the way in which at least one work of folk art contributes to the preservation or evolution of the values of a culture and communicates them to members of the culture. Singling out folk art as a category is meant to draw attention to it, rather than to devalue it.

This will be accomplished through on-line discussion, viewing and reporting on visuals and through written papers.

#### **A-1-E: Can interpret the work of writers or artists within a historical or social context.**

- Chooses an artistic or literary work to consider.
- Identifies a historical or social context relevant to the work.
- Analyzes the work from the perspective of that historical or social context.

This will be accomplished through on-line discussion, viewing and reporting on visuals and through written papers.

#### **A-1-D: Can analyze writers' or artists' representations of human experience.**

- Chooses particular artistic or literary works to consider.
- Analyzes the works of the artists or writers as those works relate to an aspect of the human experience.

Students demonstrate this competence by articulating how the representations of one or several artists or writers inform and enrich our understanding of human experience (for example, friendship, racism, suffering, love, work, leisure, sexuality, class, etc).

#### **A-1-X: Written by student/faculty.**

### **Assessment Criteria for each Competence**

The following are criteria for receiving a passing grade. The criteria for passing require that:

- You participate consistently and constructively by completing course activities, the readings and assignments by their due dates.
- You submit your final paper by the due date. Note that a first submission and a revised submission are required. The first submission is considered a draft that has been re-written and revised by the student before it is handed in. It is not considered an initial draft.
- You consistently, actively, and in a timely fashion participate in the online discussions. You will receive a weekly note from the instructor, if your participation is estimated as outstanding, sufficient or insufficient. In any case you will have the opportunity to comment on the opinion of the instructor.

### **Course Structure**

This course consists of 10 modules. The estimated time to complete each module/unit is 1 week.

**To view the course schedule, click on the Schedule link on the left-hand navigation bar. This page contains the most recently updated listing of the topics and assignments due for each week of the course.**

[Top](#)

## Assessment

### Assessment Criteria for Reading and Writing Assignments

- Your participation and advance in terms of concepts and competencies will be assessed in the weekly discussion forums.

### Assessment Criteria for your Final Paper for each Competence

It is important that your final paper for each competence:

Demonstrate the knowledge you have acquired as a result of this course and your ability to:

- Synthesize that knowledge in your final paper(s).
- Show significant effort on your part to accomplish the competency requirement.
- Includes a bibliography of sources investigated outside of the course materials.
- Has been checked for correct spelling.
- Where appropriate, includes visuals including reproductions and diagrams.
- Is reflective of college level writing.
- Organizes your supportive evidence into relevant paragraphs that address your subject.
- Demonstrates that you are able to integrate the evidence derived from your chosen sources into your argument in Standard English using proper grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure.
- Uses proper quotation form, including introduction of your quotation as well as your commentary following the quotation.
- Has an introduction and concluding paragraph.
- Contains proper APA citation form for in-text references and for the bibliography.

### Assessment Criteria for Online Discussion Participation

In the online discussions you clearly and consistently link what you are learning in the course to your real life experiences.

Specifically, in order to receive credit for your participation in the online discussion parts of the course it is important that:

- You are able to contribute to the online discussions in a collegial fashion. Especially you may begin your contributions with addressing your peer students, may maintain a kind and collegial tone and close with your signature.
- You regularly demonstrate good “listening” skills and active inquiry skills in the online discussions. This means that you pay attention with openness to the commentary of others and you offer constructive and interested commentary, whether in the form of questions or statements.
- You contribute your own original ideas to the online discussion in ways that facilitated learning for other people.

### Online Discussion Instructions

You are expected to actively participate in informal online discussions with your classmates and the instructor when they are required by the syllabus. "Active participation" means that you read and contribute to the online discussions. This discussion is “informal” in the sense that it is meant to encourage interested discussion. It is expected that you follow accepted standards of English spelling, grammar and usage, although you will not be assessed for these particular characteristics when you are on the discussion board. These discussions are a place for you to exchange your reflections with the others in the class about what you are learning.

The discussions will be organized into forums around the particular assignment you are studying each week. You may be asked by the instructor to take leadership in a certain group for a certain time of the course. Further instructions you will receive then from the instructor. Every student will receive a weekly note, if his or her participation in each forum is estimated as outstanding, sufficient or insufficient. In any case you will have the opportunity to comment on the opinion of the instructor. The majority of the forums will be open only for two weeks.

You should contribute your responses to the particular assignment for that particular discussion heading which will be posted. Directions are provided with each assignment. They must be followed according to the due dates given. Principles of good practice for participating in online discussions should be adhered to when it comes to responding to the contributions of other people in the class. These "principles" will be provided in the Online Participation Guidelines section in this study guide.

## Course Grading Scale

A = 95 to 100	A- = 91 to 94	B+ = 88 to 90
B = 85 to 87	B- = 81 to 84	C+ = 77 to 80
C = 73 to 76	C- = 69 to 72	D+ = 65 to 68
D = 61 to 64	F = 60 or below	INC

If you wish to take this course on a Pass/Fail basis, you must make and announce that decision by the end of the 2nd week of class.

## Percent distribution of assignments

Assignment	%
Participation in Discussions	25
Observing our Categories of Folk Art (Five examples)	20
Completed outline of "How to Analyze a Work of Folk Art"	15
Field Report	15
Final Paper	25

## Online Participation Guidelines

The following guidelines may encourage you to be active and critical in your participation, only together we will make this course a significant and pleasant learning experience:

- Participation is essential, so please connect to the course every day or at least every second day.
- Post your response to the discussion assignments in the first part of the week, in the second part of the week post comments to the other students.
- Discuss critically, give support to your peers, provide own ideas and experiences, challenge ideas of others or just make a comment that you read the posting.
- The role of the instructor, to make it easy for you to interact, to promote significant discussion, to give feed back on your postings and offer help where needed.
- This is not an independent study course, but a paced online group learning experience. This study guide indicates 6 to 11 hours per week of your time to be spent on this course of ten weeks.
- Please accept the challenge to work with others, to construct knowledge in negotiation with others. Working individually on the assignments and just posting them might not lead to significant knowledge and skills.

Some difficulties at the beginning of an online course are quite normal; solving them is part of every distance learning

experience.

[Top](#)

## Policies

### Academic Integrity

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If an instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

### Disability Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. The Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) determines appropriate accommodations through consultation with the student. For certain learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders, the Productive Learning Strategies Program (PLuS) determines the appropriate accommodations. See the instructor for more information or call OSD at 773-325-7290 (phone) or 773-325-7296 (TTY); or call PLuS at 773-325-1677.

### Incomplete Grades

The intent of the Incomplete grade is to allow students extra time to complete their final assignments. This need arises because, in the closing weeks of the course, they have an event of significant magnitude that adversely affects their ability to complete the course, e.g. serious illness, death in the family, overseas deployment, or natural disaster.

You must request an incomplete grade in writing two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75 percent of the coursework, and you have such an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.

If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing work within the next two quarters (excluding summer). Incompletes not finished by the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) will automatically become an F grade on your transcript.

Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee.

NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

## Protection of Human Subjects

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>.

Demonstrating the acquisition of competences in this course can involve “interactions”—interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as “research” with “human subjects” and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning’s Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

1. The information you collect is EXCLUSIVELY for the purpose of classroom discussion and will NOT be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will EVER use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
2. You assess and ensure that no “harm”—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.
3. The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
  - a. If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an “informed consent” document. For information on creating an “informed consent document” see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>.

[Top](#)

## Course Expectations

### Time Management and Attendance

SNL’s online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than “face to face” courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour “face to face” course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

## Your Instructor's Role

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate "office hours" when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

## Your Role as a Student

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

## Credits

*This course was designed and produced by Linda Hightower and staff at the Center for Distance Education of the School for New Learning of DePaul University.*

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[Top](#)