



## HIST561-01E – Material Culture

*This section meets a requirement for the Graduate Certificate in Public History.*

**T 4:30 – 7:10pm Ferguson 124**

**COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2026**

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Dr. Mylynka Cardona

- *Please address me as either Professor Cardona or Dr. Cardona*

**Office Location:** Ferguson 146

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 4-6 pm & Thursdays 9-11 am – by appointment

**Go here to schedule an appointment:**

- [https://calendly.com/dr\\_cardona/30min](https://calendly.com/dr_cardona/30min)

**University Email Address:** [mylynka.cardona@etamu.edu](mailto:mylynka.cardona@etamu.edu)

- *Please email me via D2L*

### COURSE INFORMATION

#### Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

##### Required Books

- Brotton, Jerry, *Four Points of the Compass: The Unexpected History of Direction*, (Atlantic Monthly Press, 2024), ISBN-13 978-0802163684
- Harvey, Karen, *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, Routledge (2017), ISBN: 978-1138928671
  - Available as an e-book through Waters Library - <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tamu/detail.action?docID=5049732>
- Edney, Matthew. *Cartography: The Ideal and Its History*, Chicago University Press (2019) ISBN: 9780226605685
  - Available as an e-book through Waters Library - <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tamu/detail.action?docID=5543875>
- Garver, Ellen Gruber. *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance*, Oxford University Press (2012), ISBN: 9780195390346

*The syllabus/schedule is subject to change.*

- Available as an e-book through Waters Library - <https://academic-oup-com.proxy.tamuc.edu/book/1810>
- May, Rachel. *An American Quilt: Unfolding a Story of Family and Slavery*, Pegasus Books (2019), ISBN: 978-1643132365
- Parker, Philip. *The Atlas of Atlases: Exploring the most important atlases in history and the cartographers who made them*, Liber Historica (2022). ISBN: 978-0711268050
  - Available as an e-book through Waters Library (but this is a beautiful book that you may want to own in hardcopy) - <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tamu/detail.action?docID=7101488>
- Petto, Christine Marie, *When France Was King of Cartography: The Patronage and Production of Maps in Early Modern France (Toposophia: Thinking Place/Making Space)*, Lexington Books (2007), ISBN: 978-0739117767
- Thrower, Norman, *Maps & Civilization: Cartography in Culture and Society*, Third Edition, University of Chicago Press (1996), ISBN: 978-0226799742
  - Available as an e-book Through Waters Library - <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tamu/detail.action?docID=432305>
- Wigan, Kären, *Territorial Imaginaries: Beyond the Sovereign Map*, University of Chicago Press (2025), ISBN: 9780226839004
  - Available on [Amazon](#) OR Go to the publisher's website for lots of access options: <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/T/bo244151757.html>

#### Optional Texts and/or Materials -

- Notebook and pen/pencil for in-class note taking and assessments
- **Additional Materials will be posted electronically (D2L) or distributed in class**

#### **Course Description**

HIST 561 - Material Culture Analysis for Historians

Hours: 3

This course offers an introduction to material culture, specifically focused on understanding how to study and interpret human-produced objects. Students will learn how to "read" these items as primary sources. Students will engage with different kinds of material (e.g., architecture, artwork, maps, cookware, furniture) and craft historical arguments based on them; key debates in contemporary scholarship will also be examined. Pre-requisites: None

#### *Student Learning Outcomes*

Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. **identify** the major approaches to the field of material culture; and
2. **apply** Public History skills by interpreting maps, globes, and atlases as material culture

*Student learning outcomes 1-2 will be assessed through the written work for the class.*

### Instructional Methods

This instructional format for this class is in-person. We will hold course meetings in our assigned classroom. These course meetings will consist of interactive discussions. These course meetings will not be recorded. Remote attendance is offered and is synchronous with the in-person section. Additional course materials will be available through D2L under the content tab. The course schedule is organized by week, with written assignments being due by Sunday (11:59 PM) unless otherwise indicated. All readings should be completed by the Tuesday meeting of the week they are listed in preparation for in-class discussion.

### Departmental Orientation and Guides

The history department has uploaded orientation materials to the department's history major D2L shell (HIST 500). These materials are available to assist you in learning the basic skills, professional norms, and departmental expectations for history majors. Please consult them as needed throughout the semester. All materials submitted for the course should follow the History Department style guide and the information presented in the department's orientation available through the D2L majors page. Failure to comply with these expectations in an assignment may negatively impact your grade.

### Classroom Participation

Students are expected to contribute to classroom discussions. Thoughtful participation is not necessarily the same as talking frequently. It means demonstrating a knowledge of the material, a willingness to think critically, and, most importantly, a willingness to learn from others. Humility and trust are essential virtues in the classroom. Students are encouraged to engage not only with the professor and the material, but also with each other.

### GRADING

**Grading:** This course is based on the 100-point system. All assignments are worth 100 points. I do not round up. If you earn an 89.9 you will receive a B for the course.

Final grades are determined on the following scale:

100 –90 = A, 89 –80 = B, 79 –70 = C, 69 –60 = D, 59 and below = F

Your grades for written work will be determined based on the following rubric:

- A: Mastery of reading and class material; factual accuracy; thoughtful, historical argumentation demonstrating ability to synthesize and/or some originality of thought; technically clean; proper citation format
- B: Good to excellent command of most reading and class material; accuracy; good level of historical argumentation; reasonable thesis statement; proper citation format
- C: Good command of class material; accuracy; ability to articulate a historical point of view, even if it is not compelling or is poorly reasoned; some errors in citation format
- D: Poor command of required assignments; errors; ahistorical or narrow reasoning; poor citation format

Assessments: There will be several assessments of your progress in this course including your college professionalism and course engagement, eight (8) reading response papers, one (1) in

discussion lead, and one (1) cartography paper in this course. The assignment details and rubrics will be covered in separate handouts.

Cartography Paper:	25%
In-class discussion lead/author presentation	5%
Reading analysis/course engagement:	40%
<u>Reading response papers (8):</u>	<u>30%</u>
TOTAL:	100%

### Descriptions of major assignments and examinations:

#### Reading Response Papers

Of each of the assigned books, students will write a two-page response paper, *to be handed the day before the class for which the book is assigned*. These papers should analyze the goals, methodologies, and arguments of the readings, and relate them to previous course readings and discussions *as applicable*. **Students will participate in a discussion board at least one-hour before each class to help launch the discussion.** Assignment specifics will be in the assignment in D2L. (*This will be used to assess SLO 1*)

#### In-Class Author Presentation & Discussion lead

Each student will sign up to present as part of a pair on one week's book and author. This requires researching the author's intellectual biography (whose work influenced them, etc.), their previous and subsequent works (if applicable), and reviews of the assigned book (if available), and orally presenting the results in class accompanied by a visual presentation. Each pair will also be responsible for 3-5 leading questions for class discussion. Assignment specifics will be in the assignment in D2L.

#### Cartography Paper

At the end of the semester, students will turn in a cartography paper of at least 15 pages. This paper will utilize at least 8 of the books and 4 of the articles assigned in this reading course. It is up to you to pull together a cohesive argument and support it using ONLY course materials – this is not a research paper and outside materials/research is not allowed. Assignment specifics will be in the assignment in D2L. (*This will be used to assess SLO 2*)

#### Course Engagement and College Professionalism

Engagement with the course material, the instructor, and your peers is an essential component of this course. Engagement will be measured in several ways by continued and sustained class participation, reflecting student engagement with the materials and contributions to class discussions. College professionalism means being a responsible for your work outside of class, coming to class on time, being prepared for discussions and assignments, being respectful of the material and of your classmates, and by timely submission of assignments.

**Be Respectful:** This class is an educational safe zone. It welcomes and respects the viewpoints of students of all sexual orientations and genders as well as all races, ethnicities, religions, social statuses, and abilities. All members of this learning community are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity.

**COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

This schedule will guide you through the semester and indicates when your assignments are due. It should be referred to often. I reserve the right to make adjustments to it during the course of the semester as such circumstances arise.

<u>Week</u>	<u>Class Dates</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings/Assignments Due</u>
		<b>I: What is Course Intro</b>	<b>Material Culture?</b>
1	T: Feb 3		Introduction to course, discussion of format, assignments, readings, discussion boards, and field trips.
2	T: Feb 10	<b>The Culture of Commodities</b>	Appadurai A. "Introduction: commodities and the politics of value." In: Appadurai A, ed. <i>The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective</i> . Cambridge University Press; 1986:3-63.  Kopytoff I. "The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process." In: Appadurai A, ed. <i>The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective</i> . Cambridge University Press; 1986:64-92
3	T: Feb 17	<b>Historians and Alternative Sources</b>	Harvey, Karen. <i>History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources</i> , Routledge (2017) Reading Response  <b>Reading Response Due in D2L: M: Feb 16</b>
4	T: Feb 24	<b>Ephemera</b>	Garver, Ellen Gruber. <i>Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance</i> , Oxford University Press (2012)  <b>Reading Response Due in D2L: M: Feb 23</b>
5	T: Mar 3	<b>Material Culture and uncovering a hidden past</b>	May, Rachel. <i>An American Quilt: Unfolding a Story of Family and Slavery</i> , Pegasus Books (2019)  <b>Reading Response Due in D2L: M: Mar 2</b>
	<b>Mar 9-13</b>	<b>**SPRING</b>	<b>BREAK – NO CLASSES**</b>
		<b>Part II:</b>	<b>Maps as Material Culture</b>
6	T: Mar 17	<b>Finding our way</b>	Brotton, Jerry, <i>Four Points of the Compass: The Unexpected History of Direction</i> , (Atlantic Monthly Press, 2024)

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

			Reading Response Due in D2L: M: Mar 16
7	T: Mar 24	<i>Dr. Cardona's Birthday</i>	<b>Intro to Cartography</b> - Readings in D2L
	<b>F: Mar 28</b>		<b>Last Day to Drop (No refund)</b>
8	T: Mar 31	<b>Cartography in Culture</b>	Thrower, Norman, <i>Maps &amp; Civilization: Cartography in Culture and Society</i> , Third Edition, University of Chicago Press (1996)  Reading Response Due in D2L: M: Mar 30
9	T: Apr 7	<b>Map As Cultural Artifact</b>	Petto, Christine Marie, <i>When France Was King of Cartography: The Patronage and Production of Maps in Early Modern France (Toposophia: Thinking Place/Making Space)</i> , Lexington Books (2007)  Reading Response Due in D2L: M: Apr. 6
10	T: Apr 14	<b>Atlases</b>	Parker, Philip. <i>The Atlas of Atlases: Exploring the most important atlases in history and the cartographers who made them</i> , Liber Historica (2022)  <b>Paper Draft Due</b>
	<b>R: Apr 17</b>		<b>Last Day to Withdraw (no refund)</b>
11	T: Apr 21		<b>Research Day – no class</b>
12	T: Apr 28	<b>Mapping Beyond Western Convention</b>	Wigan, Kären, <i>Territorial Imaginaries: Beyond the Sovereign Map</i> , University of Chicago Press (2025)  Reading Response Due in D2L: M: Apr. 27
13	T: MAY 5	<b>Cartography?</b>	Edney, Matthew. <i>Cartography: The Ideal and Its History</i> , Chicago University Press (2019)  Reading Response Due in D2L: M: May 4
	F: MAY 8		<b>FINAL PAPER DUE</b>

**Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

Using the learning management system D2L and using Microsoft Word

**Instructional Methods**

This class is face-to-face with additional assignments in D2L Brightspace.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

## Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

**Attendance:** Students attend class at their own discretion, but should keep in mind that some assignments are in-class only. Attendance is part of your course engagement – you cannot engage in the class if you are not here. It is your responsibility to come to class prepared for lecture. *This course relies heavily on in-class discussions of the assigned readings. You need to stay on top of the work.* If you miss a class it is your responsibility to gather class notes from a classmate. I do take roll (via seating chart) and if you are in class but not PRESENT, i.e. on your phone or other device, sleeping, etc. you will be counted absent for the day.

**Electronics Policy:** Our class is a time for learning and discussion. Cell phones and other devices should be silent and put away during class – unless otherwise specified for an in-class activity. Airplane mode is preferred. If you are using a laptop/tablet, it should be used solely for note taking. If you are using your devices for something other than taking notes you may be asked to power the device down.

**Student Behavior:** Behavior which may result in your being asked to leave my class includes, but is not limited to: sleeping, talking during lectures, movies or clips, text messaging, gaming, playing with your phone, watching things on your phone, FaceTiming, using electronic devices other than for specified activities, and working on another course's work/homework during my class.

**Expectations for Out-of-Class Study:** Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

### Things to help you succeed:

Do the reading ahead of time: There will be a lot of reading in this course, *none of which is optional.* I will deliver the lecture material under the assumption that you have already read the assigned readings for the week. Be sure to take notes as well.

Face Your Fears: Ask questions in class. I do realize that this can be hard. However, asking questions is the only way to find out information you want to know, and it is likely that your classmates may have the same (or a similar) question.

Make Yourself Known: Showing an interest and letting me know you have an interest will help you understand the material, and help me understand you.

### Interaction with Professor Statement

You are strongly encouraged to interact with me. The more you let me know what is going on with you, the better I can help you. Beyond the classroom, the best way to get in touch with me is through ETAMU email. I am also available during my office hours. If you have a situation arise during the semester that will impede your ability to succeed in the class, COME TALK TO ME SOONER RATHER THAN LATER. I will be better equipped to help you in whatever ways I can the sooner you talk to me. If you wait until the very last minute, my hands will likely be tied and my options will be more limited as far as help is concerned. I can help you get/find the resources you may need on campus or in the community. We can meet in-person or via Zoom.

**Our Librarian:**

Our librarian is Inbar Michael. She is available to assist you in your research, whether it is using the library or identifying and locating sources. Please take advantage of this assistance as you need it. Her contact information is as follows:

Inbar Michael  
Ferguson, Rm 144  
[Inbar.Michael@etamu.edu](mailto:Inbar.Michael@etamu.edu)

**COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES****Classroom Behavior**

All students are expected to observe basic tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies, and Procedures, Conduct). During class time, I expect graduate-level professionalism & course engagement. This means putting away cell phones, and any other forms of distraction, for the duration of the class period (exceptions will be allowed with advance permission of the professor).

Please come to class on time and plan to stay for the entire period. Coming late and/or disrupting the learning environment shows disrespect for me, your colleagues, and the educational endeavor in which you are engaged. If you must leave early, please let me know at the beginning of class.

I encourage you to see me during my office hours, to get to know me, and to keep me informed of any issues you might have that would affect your performance in this class (see above statement on Interaction with Professor).

**AI Use in Courses**

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

#### LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

[https://inside.etamu.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom\\_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu](https://inside.etamu.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu)

### ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@etamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@etamu.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

### COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor.

#### Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

#### Late Work

All written assignments are due as indicated in this syllabus. Late assignments may be accepted at the discretion of the professor and may be assessed a penalty. If you know you will be away when something is due, please notify the professor *in advance or plan to turn the assignment in early*. I can be very understanding and flexible with you, but only if you come to talk to me in advance. To pass this class, all assignments must be completed. Any missing assignments at the end of the course will be given a grade of zero (0).

#### Syllabus Change Policy

*The syllabus is a working document and a guide.* Circumstances and events, including class progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

### Statement on Student Grievances

Students who have questions or concerns about the Instructor's course policies or the conduct either of the Instructor or a classmate should first consult with the Instructor. In the event of a lack of resolution or satisfaction on the matter, the student may bring their concerns to the head of the History Department, Sharon Kowalsky ([Sharon.Kowalsky@etamu.edu](mailto:Sharon.Kowalsky@etamu.edu)). If this does not result in a satisfactory conclusion to the matter, students may bring the issue to the attention of the Associate Dean of Students per procedures outlined on pp. 15-19 of the Student Guide Book.

### University Specific Procedures

#### Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

#### ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

#### Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

#### Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

#### Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

<http://www.etamu.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### **Nondiscrimination Notice**

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

### **East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.etamu.edu/counsel](http://www.etamu.edu/counsel)



<http://telusproduction.com/app/5108.html>