



# BRIT 290 Syllabus

Vegetal Visions: Picturing Plants in British Art & Culture - Spring 2024

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**Instructor** Dr. Judy Bullington

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**Course Meeting Days and Time** TH 1:00-2:15

Jan. 19: London Weekend (Kew Gardens & Chelsea Physic Garden)

**Required Experiential Learning** Feb. 16: North Wales Weekend

**Dates**

Apr. 13: Chatsworth & Eyam Day Trip

Apr. 20: Hampton Court

**Office Hours** TH 9:00-11:00 & By Appointment

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## Catalog Description:

This course is a Fine Arts Special Topics Seminar designed to engage students in interdisciplinary approaches to studies utilizing visual and material culture to explore diversity and global awareness, foster creativity and critical thinking, and develop research and writing skills.

## Special Topic Overview: “Vegetal Visions”

Plant imagery is a fundamental motif in visual art and culture, reflecting the history and ongoing impact of human interaction with the natural world. This thematic course explores past and present aspects of British visual culture through an interdisciplinary lens responding to what plant humanities scholars informally identify as ‘plant blindness’—an inability or cognitive bias that prevents humans from fully recognizing, appreciating, and acknowledging the diversity and importance of plants in our environment. Discussions of the aesthetic representation and experiences of the vegetal world situate the iconic English garden within the context of Victorian plant hunters, colonialism and global trade, foodways, and culinary histories, medicinal and poison gardens, iconography of decorative floral designs on architecture and clothing, intersections between botanical illustrations and science, and the politics of plant-presence in contemporary art. New insights into relationships between humanity and the natural world emerge, which deepen our understanding of the historical dimensions of the current global environmental crisis.

# HARLAXTON



### Credit Hour Policy Statement:

This class meets the federal credit hour policy of 1 hour of class with an expected 2 hours of additional student work outside of class each week for approximately 15 weeks for each hour of credit, or a total of 45-75 total hours for each credit.

### Course Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- analyze works of art as forms of cultural and creative expression characterizing the time and place in which they were created;
- comparatively investigate global and cultural diversity and interconnectedness;
- recognize ideas, forces, and values of the past that have shaped the present;
- explore ways in which tradition and innovation shape and impact human/nature interactions;
- express verbally and in writing connections between works of art and primary texts using active reading strategies and art/design vocabulary;
- assess ideas, values, and perspectives through critical thinking and analytical methodologies of the humanities and/or fine arts;
- develop a significant project from archival research and present with current technologies.

### Methods of Instructions:

In-person classes at Harlaxton with active seminar-style discussion informed by reading and research assignments; project presentation with peer reviews; discussion threads; visits to galleries, museums, and art collections with brief reports, and self-guided learning activities.

### Textbooks and Required Reading:

*Brother Gardeners* by Andrea Wulf

Pdf files and weblinks will be provided through Blackboard for other required reading assignments.

### Course Schedule:

**January 15** -- Classes Start

**March 1-11** -- Midterm Break

**April 23 & 25** ---Final Project Presentations

**April 25** --- Last Day of Classes

**WEEK 1:** Representations of Horticultural Arts & Plants from Early British Art Collections (Anglo-Saxon & Celtic Art; Classical Gardens; Minoan Landscapes, Egyptian Motifs)



**WEEKS 2-4:** Plants & Empire in a Global Britain  
(Plant Hunters; Botanical Art; Colonialism & Gardens; Death & Dyeing Green)

**WEEKS 5-7:** Visual Language of Nature  
(Language of Flowers & Fruit; Shakespeare’s Flora; Green Modernism; Botanical-Inspired Designs in  
British Arts & Crafts; Form & Function of Ornamental Landscapes)

**WEEKS 8-11:** Gardening & Horticultural Arts  
(English Gardens & Shaping of the Cultural Landscape; Physic Gardens & Medicinal Arts; Pleasure Gardens & Social Identity, Romantic Landscape Aesthetics)

**WEEKS 12-15:** Presence of Plants in Contemporary Art  
(Plant Politics; Environmental Crisis; Post-Colonial Narratives; Plant Futures)

**Grading Criteria:**

Final Presentation ..... 30%  
Learning Modules & Assignments.....50%  
Contributions/Participation (discussion, reports, reviews, reflections, in-class engagement, etc.).....20%

**Grading Scheme:**

A-	91-93	A	94-100		
B-	81-83	B	84-87	B+	88-90
C-	71-73	C	74-77	C+	78-80
D-	61-63	D	64-67	D+	68-70
				F	00-60

**GRADING OVERVIEW**

F - Consistently unsatisfactory, incomplete, or missing assignments. Arriving late, leaving early, inattentive, disruptive to others, too many absences. Fails to participate in discussions and critiques. Does not apply vocabulary and concepts introduced in class. Lack of commitment, focus, and effort.

D - Irregular completion and quality of work. Irregular attendance and participation. Minimal effort, lack of commitment and focus. Irregular and unsatisfactory work on exams and projects.



C - Satisfactory to good work. Regular completion of assignments with adequate effort. Keeps up to date with readings. Meets all minimum requirements but without innovation or personal initiative. Little development over the semester. Little quality participation in discussion and critique, limited use of vocabulary and concepts.

B - Good to excellent work. Meets all requirements with initiative and demonstrates commitment through focused work in class, growth over the semester, regular and strong contributions to learning. Participation in discussions indicates comprehension and transfer of learning.

A - Excellent to rare. All work displays great initiative, focus, and creativity. Original ideas that indicate personal exploration and innovation. Leads the class with insightful comments during discussions, astutely applying vocabulary and concepts gained in the course. Consistently outstanding work or major development resulting from dedication and effort. High participation and collaboration in every class and activity.

"I" (incompletes) are not an option for semester abroad courses.

#### **Withdrawal and Attendance policies:**

Harlaxton College expects regular class attendance by all students. Students are considered sufficiently mature to appreciate the necessity of regular and punctual attendance, to accept this personal responsibility and to accept the consequences of failure to attend. When absences occur due to emergency or medical reasons, students are expected to notify their instructors of the absence prior to class or to seek the assistance of the College nurse or a member of the Student Experience Team for help in notifying instructors.

Instructors have the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons upon review of appropriate documentation and professional recommendation supporting such a request. In the event of long-term illness, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow a student to complete a course. In these cases, the Dean will need to approve the long-term nature of the accommodation.

The Dean of Harlaxton College has the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons.

Each instructor is expected to maintain an attendance policy in keeping with the nature of the Harlaxton program and may consider it in evaluating performance in their courses.

#### **Policy Governing Unexcused Absences:**

Harlaxton College operates an attendance policy that is binding on all faculty and students. The number of unexcused absences that are allowed before incurring a penalty is related to the number of times a class meets each week. For courses which meet three times a week, students are allowed a maximum of three unexcused absences during the semester without attracting penalty points. For



courses meeting twice a week two such absences are permitted, and for courses meeting once a week a single absence is allowed. Additional unexcused absences will attract a grade penalty of a third-letter grade (A- to B+).

### **Policy Governing Excused Absences.**

- Excused absences are not given to facilitate student travel independent of College-sponsored travel.
- Students may be permitted to miss class because of participation in academic field trips.
- Instructors must co-ordinate and confirm academic fieldtrips with the Dean, prior to the commencement of the Semester to ensure their inclusion in the Semester timetable.
- Where authorization for an academic fieldtrip is requested after the commencement of the semester, the request must be submitted to the Dean.

The following information is required:

- Purpose and brief description of the official Harlaxton event or academic fieldtrip.
- Dates, location, and times (as applicable).
- Alphabetical list of students involved [Last Name/First Name] along with their student identification number.

If approval is granted:

- Instructors affected will be notified at least one week prior to the class period during which absence is anticipated, or as soon as possible.
- Missed class time due to student participation is to be considered an excused absence.
- The grade of a student may not be lowered in any class due to excused absences.
- It is the student's responsibility - to take the initiative by consulting with their instructors before the absence occurs, and - to do what is required by the instructor to make up all missed assignments and/or examinations.
- Instructors are required to assist students in these occasional situations of excused absences.

### **Honor Code:**

All students at the University of Evansville agree to the University honor code: *I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid, nor will I tolerate an environment that condones the use of unauthorized aid.*



**AI may be used only with prior permission or direction by the instructor.**

- All work submitted in this course must be your own.
- The use of generative AI composition tools, such as those offered by ChatGPT, Google Bard etc. is prohibited in this course except for specific assignments and subject to the instructor's guidelines.
- Work generated by such tools without proper attribution is plagiarism and, thereby, a breach of the University's Plagiarism and Academic Honesty policy.

### **Disability Policy:**

It is the policy and practice of the University of Evansville to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Students should contact Disability Services within the Office of Counseling Services by calling 812-488-2663 to seek services or accommodations for disabilities. Written notification to faculty from Disability Services is required for academic accommodations.

The University of Evansville Disability Services office will share the request for academic accommodations with the Academic Support team at Harlaxton College. Staff members at Harlaxton will meet individually with students to discuss needs and provide additional information related to examinations or other assessments.

Students from partner institutions should provide the appropriate letter of accommodation from their institution to the Academic Support team at Harlaxton College.



### Non-Discrimination Statement

The University of Evansville expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect and civility. Harassing behaviors directed towards any member of our community will not be tolerated. As part of its commitment to non-discrimination, the University specifically prohibits harassment based on any other characteristics set forth in its nondiscrimination statement as follows: including race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, creed or religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status and all federally protected groups/classes. Any form of harassment undermines the mission of the University and negatively impacts the University community as a whole.

### Prohibited Conduct and Confidentiality

The University of Evansville is committed to fostering an atmosphere free from harassment and discrimination. This commitment includes identifying problems that may lead to sexual harassment and misconduct, as well as other forms of harassment and discrimination, by creating an atmosphere in which the entire University community is sensitive to preventing prohibited conduct. Additionally, the University is committed to providing support and resources to individuals who have experienced prohibited conduct. This commitment includes effectively responding when a student, visitor, guest or program participant is the victim of prohibited conduct.

All campus employees, students, and guests are required to abide by the Title IX and Other Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy, the Harassment and Discrimination Policy, and the Consensual Sexual or Romantic Relationships Between Employees and Students Policy. Violation of these policies could result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students and termination for employees.

Faculty members at the University of Evansville are considered “Responsible Employees” under the applicable federal guidelines and the University’s policies. This means that I am unable to offer you confidentiality if you report any incidence of prohibited conduct to me as defined by Title IX statute. If I am made aware of a violation, I am required to report any known information to the Office of Institutional Equity.

You may choose to report the violation yourself the following ways:

Email: · Annie Sills, Assistant Director of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator:

[cs175@evansville.edu](mailto:cs175@evansville.edu) ·

Keith Gehlhausen, Executive Director of HR and Institutional Equity: [kg77@evansville.edu](mailto:kg77@evansville.edu) ·

Title IX: [titleix@evansville.edu](mailto:titleix@evansville.edu)

Phone: 812-288-5261



Online: <https://www.evansville.edu/safety/report.cfm>

You may also choose to speak with a Confidential Resource. Confidential Resources are required to maintain confidentiality and cannot report violations to the Office of Institutional Equity:

#### **University of Evansville**

- Counseling Services: [counselingservices@evansville.edu](mailto:counselingservices@evansville.edu), 812-488-2633
- Health Center Professionals: [healthcenter@evansville.edu](mailto:healthcenter@evansville.edu), 812-488-2033
- University Chaplain: [chaplain@evansville.edu](mailto:chaplain@evansville.edu), 812-488-5262

#### **Harlaxton College**

- College Nurse: Lesley Selby, RGN, +44 01476 403027, [lseyby@harlaxton.ac.uk](mailto:lseyby@harlaxton.ac.uk)
- Counselling Services: [counselling@harlaxton.ac.uk](mailto:counselling@harlaxton.ac.uk)