

**ARTH 5130:
TOPICS IN JAPANESE ART:
Ukiyo-e: Beyond the Great
Wave
Spring 2025**

**Course Prospectus: more details
will be uploaded later in the
summer**

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Course description:

In this seminar we will take a closer look at the prints, paintings, and illustrated books produced in the genre known as “ukiyo-e,” the “pictures of the floating world.” We’ll begin by asking how the “Great Wave” became a global icon and we’ll bust the myth of prints being used as wrapping paper. As we learn the history of the genre, from 1600 to ca. 1850, we’ll also make critical interventions into that narrative, asking how “ukiyo-e” became a genre within a larger artistic sphere; how publishers collaborated with designers to construct artistic personae; how illustrated books contributed to knowledge formations; and how concepts of authenticity and authorship remain critical to its understanding. This course will also consider how internet resources affect our understanding of the work of art.

Prerequisites: Students need not have any Japanese language skills but will benefit from having taken related courses in art history or East Asian Studies. Students with Japanese or other language ability will be expected to do research using those languages. Being curious and engaged is the most important element to bring to this class. Advanced undergraduates and graduate students preferred.

Class structure:

*Students are expected to do close reading and consideration of materials before coming to class; students will also post queries on Canvas in advance and lead sessions. We will meet in the Kislak Center and use original materials as much as possible.

Assignments: to be determined, but may include:

- *Attribution problem: 3-4 pages, typed and double spaced
- *Website addition of attribution problem: short entry + page design
- *Article review (undergrads); book review (grads): 5-6 pages
- *Seminar paper

Course policies: will be described further on final syllabus

- *Required attendance in seminar sessions; accommodations made for illness
 - *Coursework should be on time; accommodations made for illness, travel, etc.
 - *All reading materials will be available on Canvas
- More details soon!