



PH 240
Aesthetics

Semester: Winter, 2015
Days: Tu/Th 2:30-3:45pm
Room: L2084

Number of credits: 3

Prerequisite: PH 125, or permission of instructors

Instructors: S Bonfield / L Schwartz
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Office hours: By appointment

Course Description:

PH 240 Aesthetics (3) B
FA 240 Aesthetics (3) B

This course introduces students to the philosophical issues related to art and the apprehension of beauty. A variety of metaphysical and epistemological concerns will be addressed: What is art? What is beauty? Is art artificial or can it be natural? What is the nature and the role of the artist? Do works of art have meaning and if so, how are these meanings derived? Objectivism, formalism, subjectivism, and expressivism will be explored.

Prerequisite: PH 125 (or permission of Instructor)

Further Course Information:

Important Dates:

First day of classes: January 7, 2015
Registration revision period: January 18, 2015
Last day to request revised examination: March 2, 2015
Last day to withdraw from course: March 20, 2015
Last day to apply for time extension for coursework: March 30, 2015
Last day of classes: April 10, 2015

The textbook, *Aesthetics: a reader in Philosophy of the Arts* (3rd Edition, 2011) is the only required textbook. It is a sampling of primary source materials that will enhance discussion and provide contextual perspective on various art works under examination. Additional readings will be provided weekly on the Moodle Course Site. Please ensure that you have access to this course on Moodle through your student portal.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

It is the aim of the course that students acquire the following skills:

1. To understand and articulate the relevance of philosophy (critical thought) to sentient forms of expression and reception;
2. To gain an appreciation for the substance and style of Western works of art in various media, and to detect interaction or play between structure and surface elements within these works;
3. To categorize different modes of thought (theories and forms of inquiry) about art, for example: ontological/structure or dasein; material and spatial/form; epistemological/art as a way of knowing; and teleological/value-laden, purposeful interpretation;
4. To perceive various narrative strategies or types of cognitive function that link the interpretation of a work of art to human perceptions of space, time, and ethics (concepts such as symmetry/asymmetry, the notion of the dialectic, neuropsychology, and phenomenology);
5. To demonstrate familiarity with the contemplative study and analysis of several artworks of various media and composition, and to apply analysis based on Outcomes 1-4 to these works of art.

(Please refer to assignment rubrics on Moodle course site for specific reference to Learning Outcomes)

Course Outline:

Week 1 (Jan.8/13):

Introduction to modes of artistic expression in Western Culture: Praxis

Doing Aesthetics: Philosophical terminology, Inquiry and Theory fundamentals

Human Perception

Final Exam DAY: April 18

Time: 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Room: A2133

(SEE BELOW*)

PART 1: The Effects of the History of Western Thought on Art and Reception

Week 2 (Jan. 15/20):

The Art of Antiquity

Medieval Art and Spirituality

Renaissance and the flowering of invention (rhetoric, affect)

Week 3 (Jan. 22/27):

Classical forms: language, dramatic structure (comedy/tragedy), and symmetry/asymmetry

Standards of Taste, Judgments about the Beautiful, and the notion of the Sublime

Dialectic Tension in Art

Week 4 (Jan. 29/Feb. 3):

Please note: “MOODLE CLASS” for JAN. 29 – There will be no face-to-face class meeting as this is AMBROSE PROGRAM DAY. We will meet virtually

The Age of Romanticism: ETA Hoffman, and the Supernatural

Schopenhauer and Wagnerian Fusion of the Arts

Arts as Experience

Week 5 (Feb. 5/10):

Expressionism: “Degenerate” Art

Reading the Contemporary (Modernist) Aesthetic: language; music; visual; and space

Week 6 (Feb. 12):

Critical Theory, the Frankfurt School, and neo-Marxist notions of art and culture: art as social construct

READING WEEK: Monday, February 16 – Friday, February 20 – NO CLASSES

Week 6 continued (Feb. 24-26):

The Critical Turn after Adorno: Husserl, Derrida, Merleau-Ponty

Week 7 (Feb. 26-Mar. 3):

The Postmodern Turn: crossing boundaries; kitsch; pop art; feminism; power inversion

The Deconstructionists and the language of the marginalized other
The Anti-Aesthetic

PART 2: Connecting creative expression, the artwork, and philosophical inquiry

Week 8 (Mar. 3-5)

Visual Art in Two Dimensions: drawing, painting, illustration, photography and digital media

The Ethics of Imitation and Representation: flattery, reality, or fraud

Questions about “original”, the “auratic”, and the “reproduced”

Week 9 (Mar. 10-12):

Visual Art in Three Dimensions: representing and occupying Space in Sculpture, Architecture and Installation

The problem of architecture

Week 10 (Mar. 17-19):

The Ontology of Music

Music and Emotion

Music and Affect/Semiotics

Week 11 (Mar. 24-26):

What is Literature?

Literary Hermeneutics

Theatre and Dance as Performance Art

Week 12 (Mar. 31-Feb.2):

Multi-media and mixed genres: opera, music theatre, film and digital performance

Week 13 (Apr. 7-9)

Popular and Mass Art: improvisation, commodification, diversion, crossing boundaries

High and Low Art (Nehamas, Gracyk)

The Degrading and the Redemptive in Art

April 18: 1-4pm*

Creative projects and research: poster presentations and performance

Assessment of Learning Outcomes:

The assessment exercises are intended to achieve the aims of the learning outcomes stated above. There are several types of assessment tools that emphasize writing, analysis, critique and creativity. Equal weight is ascribed to each assessment exercise. Each assignment will be introduced in class, and detailed with an assessment rubric. Please refer to the RUBRICS Section in Moodle for detailed instructions .

1. READING COMPREHENSION:

Online Reading Forum. 10 weekly submissions, based on assigned readings/questions.

Suggested limit: ONE submission per week/MAX. 250 words.

DUE: Thursdays, beginning January 15 (no submission on February 19)

20 marks

2. WORK STUDY:

Four Analytical Exercises (form and style), representing at least 3 different media (5 marks each).

DUE: March 10 (1); March 17 (2); March 24 (3); March 31 (4)

20 marks

3. AESTHETIC INQUIRY

Two short papers that compare/contrast interpretive method or philosophical approach.

Max: 750 words. Topics provided.

Paper 1 DUE: January 29

10 marks

Paper 2 DUE: March 3

10 marks

4. INVESTIGATIVE PAPER: APPLICATION OF AESTHETIC THEORY

Max. 1500 words. Topics to be determined in consultation with instructors.

DUE: April 2

20 marks

5. CREATIVE PROJECT: Poster or Presentation

Topic/Subject matter to be determined in consultation with instructors.

There is no final examination in this course.

Submission of Assignments:

Assignment 1 (forum discussion) will be submitted weekly to the appropriate Forum on Moodle.

Assignments 2, 3 and 4 will be submitted through Moodle to the appropriate Drop Box on or before the due dates specified. Assignments will be accepted in Word or .pdf format. Written work will be submitted to Turnitin, Ambrose University's preferred online platform for source verification. Students are encouraged to submit their written work to Turnitin prior to submission on Moodle to determine appropriate acknowledgment of sources.

Assignment 5 will be presented / performed during the Final Examination block on April 18 (1-4pm).

Attendance:

Attendance is Mandatory. Please communicate with instructors no later than 24 hours prior to class for any excused absences.

Evaluation:

Please see **Assessment** (above) for the weighting of each assignment.

Grade Summary:

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
95%	A+	Excellent
90%	A	
82%	A-	
78%	B+	Good
75%	B	
70%	B-	
67%	C+	Satisfactory
63%	C	
60%	C-	
57%	D+	Minimal Pass
52%	D	

52% or less F

Failure

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform College-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system.

Textbook/Primary Source Readings:

Goldblatt, David, and Lee B. Brown. (2011). *Aesthetics: A Reader in Philosophy of the Arts*. Third Edition. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

A complete bibliography will be provided on the Moodle class site, along with copies of all readings not in the text.

Policies:

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (Cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, it is highly recommended that they forward all messages from the Ambrose account to the other account.

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may to enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty. These courses will not appear on the student's transcript. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a Request to Withdraw from a Course by the **Withdrawal Deadline**, please consult the List of Important Dates. Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. A grade of "W" will appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a **Revised Examination** Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically-enabled activities unrelated to the class during a class session. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Please do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "**Course Extension**" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control".

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.