

GLOBAL AESTHETICS: A Global Learning Course¹



Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Scarbrough
Office: Department of Philosophy, DM 340B
Email: escarbro@fiu.edu
Office hours: [escarbro.appointv.com](https://www.appointv.com/escarbro)

Course Number: PHI4841
Time: 1:30-4:50 pm Tues and Thursdays
Location: Student Academic Success Center 251
<https://fiu.zoom.us/my/escarbro>

Course Description:

This class is a brief introduction to aesthetics (the philosophy of beauty) with a focus on aesthetic traditions around the world. Most classes in philosophical aesthetics are Eurocentric, focusing on traditions starting with Plato and Aristotle and ending with contemporary aesthetics in the analytic tradition. This course is different in that we will be focusing on non-European aesthetics. Aesthetic traditions from around the world will be discussed as well as topics such as globalization and cultural appropriation.

Objectives & Student Learning Outcomes:

General Learning Objectives:

Your skills will be developed and tested in three ways:

- (1) **Reading Comprehension:** involves close reading all the assigned texts;
- (2) **Philosophical Writing:** involves completing a variety of written assignments designed to teach you how good philosophical writing differs from other familiar types of writing;
- (3) **Class Discussion:** involves actively, respectfully engaging with your peers and instructor about philosophically complex, abstract theories that have implications for how we should make choices and live our lives.

Success in this course requires you to prepare yourself for class discussion by reading critically, to defend your own views with reasons and arguments, and to give a good faith effort to develop your philosophical skills, both verbally and in writing.

Global Learning Course Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, the student:

- (1) Will become aware of aesthetic traditions other than their own, and be able to explain the interrelatedness of global aesthetic traditions. (Global Awareness)
- (2) Will acquire the ability to assess various artworks and artifacts from multiple cultural perspectives. (Global Perspective)
- (3) Be prepared to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving involving artistic expression, including issues in public funding for art, and cultural appropriation in the arts. (Global Engagement)

¹ This is a Discipline-specific Global Learning course that counts toward your graduation requirement.

Active Learning Strategies:

I will engage students with artistic works, controversial ethical discussion topics, and case studies through class discussion, and out-of-class assignments linked from the course CANVAS page. Students will post on our video blog FlipGrid, engage in aesthetic appreciation outside the classroom (perhaps posting on our course Instagram), and work in teams to answer challenges.

Required text, recording, and other resources:

For this course, you will need dependable internet access. The materials used in this course are posted to our CANVAS. You are responsible for regularly consulting online material on CANVAS.

We have one ZOOM session scheduled since we have a guest speaker (on May 18th). All other sessions you are required to be physical on campus unless the University deems it unsafe to do so. This is scheduled to be an in-person class. Social distancing measures are in place and I advise you to wear a mask while indoors. We will have some of our classes outdoors.

You will also have to become familiar with FIU's library website, as we will be using the *Oxford Handbook in Aesthetics*, which can be accessed for free online through the library's website.

You will have to become familiar with FlipGrid, and some of the options for projects require other technical skills such as creating MP3s and MP4s, and geo-tagging.

Grading Policy:

You are graded on the merit of your work (not your effort). If you believe you have been graded unfairly, I am willing to look over your work again, but be aware that I will re-evaluate it and provide you with a new grade. This means that there is a chance that your grade may go down because I may decide that I was too generous the first time. My late assignment policy can be found on our CANVAS shell under the module "Student Resources."

Safe Zone Statement:

I am part of the Safe Zone Ally community here at FIU. This means I am part of a network of trained FIU faculty/staff/students who are available to listen and support you in a safe and confidential manner. As a Safe Zone Ally, I can help connect you with resources on campus to address problems you may face that interfere with your academic and social success on campus as it relates to issues surrounding sexual orientation/gender identity. My goal is to help you be successful and to maintain a safe and equitable campus.

Commitment to Disability Access:

It is my moral and legal obligation to provide students with disabilities accommodations to help them succeed in my classroom. I take this responsibility seriously. You need not disclose to me your disability, but I can work with you to provide accommodations to help you succeed. You may also choose to work with the Disability Resource Center. The Disability Resource Center collaborates with faculty to provide inclusive learning environments. More information may be found at the DRC's website: drc.fiu.edu.

Commitment to Diversity:

I am committed to diversity in the classroom. I aim to foster a classroom environment that maximizes all of our potentials for learning. I believe these commitments are expressive of FIU's diversity statement: "We commit ourselves to building an academic community whose members represent and embrace diverse cultures, backgrounds and life experiences that reflect the multicultural nature of South Florida and the Global Society. Our goal is to build an intellectually vibrant climate that sustains the inclusiveness and engagement of our diverse community." If I am falling short of these goals, feel free to come talk to me about it during office hours.

Evaluation Criteria:

Grading Scale: A = 93-100%, A- = 90-92%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B- = 80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C = 73-76%, C- = 70-72%, D+ = 67-69%, D = 63-66%, D- = 60-62%, E = 59% and below

Assignments:

In-class Presentation on a Reading - 15 points (15%)

On the first day of class, you will sign up to present on one of our assigned or recommended readings. The dates of the presentations are on the sign-up sheet and you must be reading by your assigned class time. Three point will be allocated for you to come to see me **BEFORE** presenting your project in class so I can give you feedback on it. Your presentation should have: (1) A brief explanation of a key concept from the text via powerpoint (4 points) (2) Two discussion questions for the class (4 points) and (3) A class activity (4 points) (and 3 points for coming to see me during office hours before your presentation). The class activity may be a Kahoot of 3 questions but I encourage you to get creative a do something else. You will be required for part 2 to manage class discussion (call on students, clarify questions about your text, etc.)

Participation - 15 points (15%)

Participation involves answering questions, asking questions, correctly answering poll questions, and working in teams on discussion prompts. You will be provided with a participation assessment you will have to hand in at the end of class. This will ask you to track your participation and class preparedness throughout the course. 5 points of the 15-point participation grade is reserved for you handing in this progress report.

Memos - 5 points (5%)

Throughout the course I will ask you to demonstrate your knowledge of one of the assigned articles. These "memos" can take many forms, but may include: FlipGrid video responses to an article, in-class quiz on an assigned reading, or bringing an object for discussion to class.

"Monday" Projects (3 projects, each 15 points) 45 points (45%)

Detailed project instructions can be found on our CANVAS page > ASSIGNMENTS. There are four options, with four separate deadlines. You must complete three out of four of the following:

Definitions of Art	-Due Monday May 17 th 11:5p pm
Food as Art	-Due Monday May 24 th 11:59 pm
American Non-Eurocentric Art	-Due Monday June 7 th 11:59 pm
Choose a Non-Eurocentric Non-American Tradition	-Due Monday June 14 th 11:59 pm

All of these projects are due via CANVAS and their instructions can be found there. You must be willing to share you projects during class time. "Best in Show" (best project per assignment) will be awarded +3 extra credit points.

Final Paper OR Final “Monument” Project - 20 points (20%)

You will have the choice of writing a more traditional final short paper for this class (5-10 pages) or participating in the “Monument” project we began week 2. Both options are due June 18th by 6 pm. More details will be given in class on both options.

Your responsibilities:	My responsibilities:
-Make an effort to attend class (which means communication when something goes wrong)	-Make an effort for class to be accessible to everyone
-Read / listen to comments on your work	-Provide comments in timely manner
-Check in on your grades on a weekly basis	-Quickly report grades on GRADEBOOK
-Attend office hours (and you’re required to do so for your presentation)	-Have enough office hours for everyone
-Communicate with me when you have a question about the class (CANVAS message, Office Hours, or DISCUSSION post)	-Provide answers in a timely manner. If I don’t respond to your CANVAS message within 24 hours, something is wrong and resend it.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND VIDEOS

-readings are to be completed before class the day the reading is assigned-

MODULE	TOPIC	READING / WATCHING / LISTENING REQUIRED
WEEK 1: May 12 Tuesday	Introduction	(We will read together in class): -Ledy, "Cleaning One's Room as Aesthetic Experience" (PDF)
WEEK 1: May 14 Thursday	Definition of Art?	-Stecker, "Definitions of Art" (PDF) - Philosophy Tube: Intro to Aesthetics (video link)
WEEK 2: May 18 Tuesday	Non-Art Objects: Monuments (class will be via Zoom)	-“You Want a Confederate Monument? My Body is a Confederate Monument” (NYT Article) <u>Look at some examples of future/counter-monuments:</u> -Black Quantum Futurism, Reclamation: Space-Times (artist statement) -Karyn Olivier, The Battle is Joined (artists statement)
WEEK 2: May 20 Thursday	Non-Art Objects: Food	-Tefler, "Food as Art" (PDF) (I've also made a video explaining part of the article and some thoughts here) - Borghini, "Food of the People, by the People, for the People: Cooking as Public Art" (text link)
WEEK 3: May 25 Tuesday	Cross-Cultural Aesthetics: Ontologies of Art	-Dutton "But They Don't Have Our Concept of Art" (PDF)
WEEK 3: May 27 Thursday	Cross-Cultural Aesthetics: Etiquette and the Post-Colonial	-Coleman "Cross-Cultural Aesthetics and Etiquette" (PDF) -Appiah, "The Post Colonial and the Aesthetic" (PDF)
WEEK 4: June 1	American non-Eurocentric Traditions: Indigenous Aesthetics	-Indigenous Aesthetics (PDF, read all three short articles)
WEEK 4: June 3	American non-Eurocentric Traditions	-Cespedes-Cortes and Taylor, "Tienes Culo? How to Look at Vida Guerra"(PDF)
WEEK 5: June 8	Non-Western Traditions: Yoruba Aesthetics	-Yoruba Background from Calliope Sisters (PDF) -"Understanding Yoruba Art and Aesthetics" (PDF)

WEEK 5: June 10	Non- Western Traditions: Rasa Theory (South East Asia)	- Lopes, "Feeling for Freedom" (PDF) - " In Good Taste: The Aesthetics of Rasa " audio lecture (audio link)
WEEK 6: June 15	Japanese Aesthetics	-Saito, "The Moral Dimension of Japanese Aesthetics" (PDF)
WEEK 6: June 17	Presentations / Javanese Gamelan Music	-Walton "Aesthetic and Spiritual Correlations in Javanese Gamelan Music" (PDF)

**Additional Readings (for our presentations) by date
(all readings PDF on Google Drive except linked text)**

Please write your name next to the article you want to present. Once you write your name next to that article highlight that article in yellow so no one else picks it. Please remember your article presentation date as that is the date you will be required to present by.

I have highlighted a few articles in pink – those are my favorite ones I hope someone chooses!

May 11 - Introductions

(no slots available)

May 13- Definitions of Art

1. Tolstoy, “What is Art?”(Expressivism)
2. Bell, “Form in Modern Painting” (Formalism)
3. Weitz “The Role of Theory in Aesthetics” (Anti-Theory person)
4. Dickie, “What is Art?” (Institutionalism)
5. Mag Uidhir and Magnus “Art Concept Pluralism” (Pluralism)(selection)

May 18 - Monuments

1. Nguyen, “Monuments as Commitments” (PDF)

May 20 - Food

1. Korsmeyer, “Delightful, delicious, disgusting”
2. Strohl, “On Culinary Authenticity”
3. Liao - Bittersweet Food

May 25 Cross-Cultural Aesthetics: Ontology

1. Lopes, “Art without Art” (PDF)
2. Blocker, “Is Primitive Art Art?”
3. Monsere, “Non-Western Art and the Concept of Art: Can Cluster Theories of Art Account for the Universality of Art?”

May 27 - Cross-Cultural Aesthetics: Etiquette

1. Shiner, “Primitive Fakes, Tourist Art and the Ideology of Authenticity”
2. Heyd “Rock Art Aesthetics and Cultural Appropriation”
3. Higgins, “Global Aesthetics”

June 1- Non-Eurocentric American Aesthetics: Indigenous Art

1. Sterling Holywhitemountain on Blood Quantum, “Native Art” and Cultural Appropriation ([Text link](#))
2. Dissanayake “The Core of Art: Making Special”
3. Higgins “Comparative Aesthetics”

June 3 - Non-Eurocentric American Aesthetics: Body Beautiful

1. Jacobs “The Bronze Age Revisited: The Aesthetics of Sun Tanning”
2. Perlmutter, “Miss America: Whose Ideal?”
4. Eva Kit Wah Man “Female Bodily Aesthetics, Politics, and Feminine Ideals of Beauty in China”

June 8 - Non-Western & Non-Eurocentric Traditions: Yoruba

1. Ngzewu “African Art in Deep Time: De-Race-ing Aesthetics and De-racializing Visual Art”

2. Wingo "African Art and the Aesthetics of Hiding and Revealing" BJA 1998

June 10 - Non-Western & Non-Eurocentric Traditions: Rasa

1. Higgins, "An Alchemy of Emotions: Rasa and Aesthetic Breakthroughs"
2. Selections from "A Rasa Reader" (primary text) - early theorists
3. Selections from "A Rasa Reader" (primary text) - Abhinavagupta
4. Selections from "A Rasa Reader" (primary text) - Rasa circa 1200, Early Modern World

June 15 - Non-Western & Non-Eurocentric Traditions: Japanese aesthetics

1. Chung "Moral Cultivation: Japanese Gardens, Personal Ideals, and Ecological Citizenship" JAAC 507-518
2. Saito, "Japanese aesthetics of packaging"
3. Wilson, "The Japanese Tea Ceremony and Pancultural Definitions of Art"

June 17 - Non-Western & Non-Eurocentric Traditions: Javanese Music

(no slots available)