

PHI 3800 U02: Aesthetics
Fall 2016 Philosophy
Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Scarbrough
Class: T/TH 3:30-4:45
Location: Owa Ehan 100
Office Hours: T/Th 11:45-1:45 DM340B
(and by appointment)
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Course Description:

This class is an introduction to aesthetic theory. While we will spend a considerable amount of time discussing paintings and other objects you would see at a museum, we will also discuss the aesthetics of film, nature, and human beauty. Some of the many questions that will be asked in this class include:

- I. **Beauty:** What is beauty? Is beauty objective reality, or is it merely "in the eye of the beholder" -- i.e. a subjective psychological response that reveals nothing about the real world?
- II. **Art:** What is art? How do we distinguish an art object from other artifacts? What role does/should art play in society? Who should get to choose public art? Why do fakes and forgeries bother us so much?
- III. **Emotions/ Film:** What's the role of the emotions in art? In film? Why do we get scared when we watch a horror movie (if we know it is fake)? Why do we still find these movies scary after multiple viewings? Why do we enjoy feeling scared, repulsed, etc.?
- IV. **Nature:** Is our aesthetic experience of nature different in kind than our experience of art? Do we do something (morally/aesthetically) inappropriate if we view nature the way we view a beautiful landscape painting? Can aesthetic arguments be made to protect nature?
- V. **Human Beauty:** When we say a person is beautiful, what do we mean? Physical beauty? A beautiful soul? How is our perception of human beauty shaped by our culture? By erotic desire? How does gender, race, and sexual orientation inform our concept of human beauty? Is our concept of beauty historically contingent or evolutionarily based?

Course Objectives:

It is the objective of this course to acquaint the student with aesthetic theory both as a way of enriching the student's exchange with art as well as the broader culture. Your skills will be developed and tested in three ways:

- (1) **Reading Comprehension:** involves carefully, closely 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 (this is a Gordon's Rule course);
- (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.

Learning Objective: It is the aim of this class to equip the student with the tools necessary to make informed and intelligent judgments about art and culture.

Student Conduct & Academic Integrity:

I take academic honesty extremely seriously and will pursue sanctions against any student(s) caught engaging in any form of academic misconduct, in accordance with the **FIU's Code of Academic Integrity**, as well as the definition of plagiarism, readable in the Student handbook. Both the Code and the Handbook are available here:
https://ugrad.fiu.edu/academic_misconduct/Pages/Home.aspx

Ignorance of policies regarding academic misconduct does not constitute a legitimate excuse for inappropriate behavior.

Disability Accommodations:

Students with disabilities should contact Disabled Resource Center (Modesto Maidique Campus) at 305-348-3532 or visit their website to request accommodations at <http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/student-success/disability-resource-center/request-accommodations/index.php> . Please present the letter of accommodation to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for the class.

Grading:

Late work will be penalized at 10% a day (or part of a day) unless you have made prior arrangements with me. You may not make up exams, in-class presentation or participation grades without prior consent of instructor or documented illness/emergency. In cases of *documented* illness or emergency, contact me as soon as possible to make arrangements.

Attendance and Participation 15%: You are required to attend class sessions. Attendance includes being awake, alert, and prepared. If you miss more than 3 unexcused classes your final grade will be penalized. Attendance includes being prepared with questions. To that end please come to class with two questions written down. These might be collected as part of your participation grade. Questions may be purely for clarification, or may be intended to criticize the argument presented. Participation is vital to your success in this class. You are being graded on the quality of your contribution to the class.

Leadership Project 20%: Everyone in the class must sign up for a slot to be the discussion leader for a particular reading. As a discussion leader you will have prepared questions about the reading, and must relate the reading to an aesthetic experience of your choice (e.g., public artwork, perfume, favorite piece of music, etc.) You may even want to prepare an activity for the class. Get creative!

Final Paper 35%: There will be one assigned final paper. This paper should be 4-6 pages in length, typed and double-spaced and turned in on the last day of class. It will take the form of a critical examination of a text selection to be given in class. You must demonstrate not only an understanding of the article, but also include a critical appraisal as well. The instructor must approve paper topics, and 10% of the grade is reserved for handing in an outline. More information about the format of these papers and outlines will be given in class.

Three Quizzes 30%: There will be three in-class examinations. Each will be worth 10% of your final grade. The first two will only cover 1/3 of the class materials. The final quiz will be cumulative and will occur during our examination period.

Grade	Points Per Credit Hour
A	4.00
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
D	1.00
F	0.00

Tentative Lesson Plan*

Date / Topic	Assignment Due
Tues, Aug 23 Introduction	No assignment: personal introductions and syllabus overview
Thurs, Aug 25 Introduction	Scruton, <i>Beauty</i> , Chpt 2 selection (I will provide a PDF) We will read selections from Plato's <i>Symposium</i> in class
Tues, Aug 30 Introduction	Scruton, <i>Beauty</i> , Chapter 1: Judging Beauty (I will provide a PDF while you wait for your books to come in)
Thurs, Sep 1 Theories of Beauty	Kant, Selections from the <i>Critique of the Power of Judgment</i> (http://www.denisdutton.com/kant_third_critique.htm) (Recommended <i>Beauty</i> , Chapter 6: Taste and Order)
Tues, Sep 6 Theories of Beauty	CLASS WILL BE HELD AT THE FROST MUSEUM Hume, Selections from <i>Of the Standards of Taste</i> (http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/hume1757essay2.pdf)
Thurs, Sep 8 Theories of Beauty	Burke, Selections from <i>A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful</i> (https://blogs.warwick.ac.uk/files/rovsupperclub/burke_sublime_and_the_beautiful.pdf)
Tues, Sep 13 Theories of Beauty / Appreciating Nature	Catherine Wilson, "Another Darwinian Aesthetics" (selections)(PDF) Scruton, <i>Beauty</i> , Chapter 3: Natural Beauty
Thurs, Sep 15 Appreciating Nature	Allen Carlson, "Aesthetic appreciation of the natural environment" (AA)
Tues, Sep 20 Appreciating Nature	Noel Carroll, "On being moved by nature" (AA)
Thurs, Sep 22	Malcolm Budd, "Models of nature appreciation" (AA)

* I reserve the right to add to / eliminate / change the readings assigned in this course.

Appreciating Nature	
Tues ,Sep 27	Donald Crawford, “Art & Nature: Some Dialectical Relationships” PDF
Appreciating Nature	Recommended: Yuriko Saito “The Aesthetics of Unscenic Nature” (1997) PDF
Thurs, Sep 29	FIRST QUIZ
Appreciating Nature/ Art Appreciation	Scruton, <i>Beauty</i> , Chapter 5: Artistic Beauty
Tues, Oct 4	Tolstoy, <i>What is Art?</i> (http://web.csulb.edu/~jvancamp/361r14.html)
Art Appreciation	
Thurs, Oct 6	Dewey, Selections from <i>Art As Experience</i> (http://thenewschoolhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Dewey-ArtasExperience.pdf)
Art Appreciation	
Tues, Oct 11	Bell, selections from (http://philosophy.lander.edu/intro/articles/bell-a.pdf)
Art Appreciation	
Thurs, Oct 13	Arthur Danto, “The Artworld” (http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/visualarts/Danto-Artworld.pdf)
Art Appreciation	
Tues, Oct 18	Transcripts of Tilted Arc Hearing (AA) Hilde Hein “What Is Public Art? Time, Place, and Meaning” (AA)
Public Art	
Thurs, Oct 20	Gregg M. Horowitz, Public art/public spaces (AA)
Public Art	*PROJECT TOPICS DUE

Date	Assignment Due
Tues, Oct 25	
Public Art	<i>F is for Fake</i> (movie we watch in class)
Thurs, Oct 27	Alfred Lessing, “What is wrong with a forgery?” (AA)
Fakes and Forgeries	
Tues, Nov 1	Denis Dutton, “Artistic Crimes” (AA)
Fakes and Forgeries	*PROJECT PLAN DUE

Thurs, Nov 3 Fakes and Forgeries	Carolyn Korsmeyer, "Aesthetic Deception: On Encounters with the Past" (PDF)
Tues, Nov 8 Horror	Noel Carroll, "Why Horror?" (AA)
Thurs, Nov 10 Horror	Berys Gaut, "The paradox of horror" (AA)
Tues, Nov 15 Human Beauty	SECOND QUIZ Scruton, <i>Beauty</i> , Chapter 2 (Human Beauty), Chapter 7 (Art and Eros)
Thurs, Nov 17 Human Beauty	Ted Cohen, "Personal Style" (PDF)
Tues, Nov 22 Human Beauty	Jo Ellen Jacobs, "The Bronze Age Revisited: The Aesthetics of Sun Tanning" (PDF)
Thurs, Nov 24 NO CLASS	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Tues, Nov 29 Human Beauty	Anne Eaton, "Bodily Taste and Fat Oppression" (forthcoming)
Thurs, Dec 1 Human Beauty	Sheila Lintott and Sherri Irvin, " <i>Sex Objects and Sexy Subjects: A Feminist Reclamation of Sexiness</i> " (forthcoming)
Friday, Dec 2	PAPERS DUE @ 6:00 pm
Tuesday Dec 6 FINAL EXAM	FINAL EXAM , 2:15-4:15 Owa Ehan 100

*Grades will be posted on December 15th .