

# SYLLABUS: ART 475 Aesthetics

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Spring 2006

**I. COURSE TITLE**

**ART 475**

*Aesthetics*

**3 semester hours**

**II. PREREQUISITES**

None.

**III. TEXTBOOK**

Brand, H. & A. Chaplin. (1999). Art and Soul: Signposts for Christians in the Arts.  
Publisher: Solway.

Schaeffer, F. A. (1973). Art and the Bible. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

**IV. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Contemplative study of reactions to art based on value theories. Question-centered approach used to investigate assumptions about art and its role in society.

**V. RATIONALE**

Philosophical inquiry is essential to intellectual growth and development. Since art is a form of communication that reflects values and belief systems of individuals and cultures, it is important to examine assumptions and presuppositions about art in general. The art student should be challenged to reflect on how the visual image impacts the viewer as well as the ethical and moral implications of the artist's design decisions. An understanding of basic philosophical assumptions as they relate to the humanist world view and the Christian world view is foundational to an understanding of the relationship between art and society and the role of the artist in society.

**VI. LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

The major goal of this class is to empower art students to function as a professional who understands the relationship between aesthetic theory, world views, and the aesthetic preference of individuals and groups.

- A. The student will investigate the relationship between art and values.
- B. The student will explore established criteria used for judging a work of art with specific reference to mimetic, expressionistic, formalistic, and pragmatic aesthetic theories.
- C. The student will be able to compare/contrast various concepts inherent in the essentialist - contextualist debate.
- D. The student will be able to relate intrinsic and extrinsic value theories to specific works of art.
- E. The student will be able to describe the four-step approach in critically analyzing a

work of art. The steps are: description, formal analysis, interpretation, and evaluation.

- F. The student will be able to discuss how the viewer, the artist, and the art object relate to aesthetic issues.
- G. The student will be able to compare/contrast the relativist position and the objectivist position.
- H. The student will explore ways in which aesthetic issues are interwoven with political and theological issues.
- I. The student will be able to discuss the issue of censorship and freedom of speech as they relate to artistic freedoms and responsibilities.
- J. The student will investigate the relationship between art and the Christian faith.

## **VII. COURSE TOPICS**

The major topics to be considered are:

- A. The Aesthetic Problem
  - 1. Aesthetics as a branch of philosophy
  - 2. Elitist view towards art
  - 3. Populist view towards art
- B. World Views
  - 1. Humanistic
  - 2. Christian
- C. Critical Discrimination
  - 1. Truth
  - 2. Relativism
- D. Historical Perspective
  - 1. Second Commandment
  - 2. Iconoclasts
  - 3. Iconophiles
- E. Contextualist Versus Essentialist
- F. The Aesthetic Imperative
  - 1. Major and minor themes in art
  - 2. Bezalel
- G. Tertullian
  - 1. Art as a frill
  - 2. Art as essential
- H. Relationship between the fall of man and the arts
- I. Objectivist versus Relativist Position
- J. Marks of Truth in Art
  - 1. Durability
  - 2. Unity
  - 3. Integrity
  - 4. Inevitability
- K. Definition of Beauty
- L. Art as prophetic versus art as a barometer
- M. Aesthetic Stewardship

- N. Censorship in a democratic society
  - 1. Freedom of speech
  - 2. Pornography versus art
- O. Impact of the Reformation on the Arts
  - 1. Luther
  - 2. Calvin
  - 3. Zwingli
  - 4. Bach
  - 5. Handel
  - 6. Durer
  - 7. Rembrandt
- P. Art in the Bible
  - 1. The Ten Commandments
  - 2. The Tabernacle
  - 3. Solomon's Temple
- Q. Efland's Four Aesthetic Theories
  - 1. Mimetic
  - 2. Pragmatic
  - 3. Formalistic
  - 4. Expressionistic
- R. Art Criticism
  - 1. Description
  - 2. Formal Properties
  - 3. Interpretation
  - 4. Evaluation

## VIII. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

Methods and activities for instruction will include:

- A. Lecture/discussion
- B. Art History Research
- C. Art Criticism Activities
- D. Critical Analysis of Art Works
- E. Formal Debate
- F. Video Tapes
- G. Group Discussion

## IX. ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Reading Assignments
- B. Class Participation in Discussions
- C. Research: Providing Relevant Articles to the Topic for Discussion
- D. Preparation for and Presentation of Debate Topic
- E. Writing Assignments

## X. EVALUATION

The student will be responsible for the following:

- A. Class Participation / Discussion 10%

B.	Written Examinations	50%
C.	Formal Debate, Research & Writing Assignments	40%

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TOTAL = 100%

## XI. REFERENCES

- A. Bibliography
- Apostolos-Cappadona, D., ed. (1992). Art, creativity, and the sacred: An anthology in religion and art. New York: Crossroad.
- Collingwood, R.G. (1964). Essays in the philosophy of art. Bloomington, IN: University Press.
- Dewey, J. (1934). Art as experience. New York: Minton, Balch and Company.
- Dewey, J. (1939). Intelligence in the modern world; John Dewey's philosophy. New York: Modern Library.
- Dillenberger, J. (1986). A theology of artistic sensibilities: The visual arts and the church. New York: Crossroad.
- Dillenberger, J. (1969). Secular art with sacred themes. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.
- Dillenberger, J. D. (1998). The religious art of Andy Warhol. New York: Continuum.
- Dillenberger, J. (1989). The visual arts and Christianity in America: From the colonial period to the present. New York: Crossroad.
- Eisner, E.W. (1972). Educating artistic vision. New York: McMillan.
- Goodman, N. (1976). Languages of art: An approach to a theory of symbols. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett.
- Langer, S.K. (1953). An introduction to symbolic logic. New York: Dover Publications.
- Langer, S.K. (1953). Feeling and form; a theory of art. New York: Scribner.
- Langer, S.K. (1967). Mind; an essay on human feeling. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press.
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- Langer, S.K. (1957). Problems of art; ten philosophical lectures. New York: Scribner.
- Martin, F.D. (1972). Art and the religious experience: The "language" of the sacred. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press.
- Read, H.E. (1967). Art and alienation; the role of the artist in society. New York: Horizon Press.
- Read, H.E. (1936). Art now: An introduction to the theory of modern painting and sculpture. New York: Harcourt, Brace.
- Read, H.E. (1958). Education through art. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Read, H.E. (1955). The grass roots of art; lectures on the social aspects of art in an industrial age. New York: G. Wittenborn.
- Read, H.E. (1951). The meaning of art. New York: Pitman Publishing Corp.

- Read, H.E. (1965). The origins of form in art. New York: Horizon Press.
- Rudner, R. & Scheffler, I., editors. (1972). Logic & art: essays in honor of Nelson Goodman. Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill.
- Schaeffer, F.A. (1973). Art and the Bible; two essays. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.
- Schaeffer, F.A. (1969). Death in the city. Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press.
- Schaeffer, F.A. (1968). Escape from reason. London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship.
- Schaeffer, F.A. (1968). Escape from reason: A penetrating analysis of trends in modern thought. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.
- Scruton, R. (1979). The aesthetics of architecture. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Smith, R.A. (1966). Aesthetics and criticism in art education: problems in defining, explaining, and evaluating art. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally.
- Smith, R.A. (1970). Aesthetic concepts and education. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Smith, R.A. (1992). The arts, education, and aesthetic knowing. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Tolstoy, L. (1960). What is art? Translated from the Russian original by Aylmer Maude. New York: Liberal Arts Press.
- Veith, G.E. (1994). Postmodern times: A Christian guide to contemporary thought and culture. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

B. Other References (videotapes, etc that are Library or Department holdings)

Video:

- Michelangelo: Artist and man. (1994). New York, NY: A&E Television Networks.
- Schaeffer, F.A. (1995). A Christian manifesto. Fort Lauderdale, FL: Coral Ridge Ministries.