

Department of Art Syllabus

- I. ART 475 *Aesthetics*, 3 Credit Hours
- II. PREREQUISITES
None
- III. TEXTBOOK
Barrett, T. (2011) *Criticizing Art: Understanding the contemporary* (3rd ed.) New York: McGraw-Hill.
Schaeffer, F. (2006). *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 worldview and the Christian worldview is fundamental to an understanding of the relationship between art and society and the role of the artist in society.
- VI. LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES
During the study of the relationship between aesthetic theory, worldviews, and the aesthetic preference of individuals and groups, the student will:
 - A. Investigate the relationship between art and values.
 - B. Explore established criteria used for judging works of art with specific reference to mimetic, expressionistic, formalistic, and pragmatic aesthetic theories.
 - C. Be able to compare/contrast various concepts inherent in the essentialist-contextualist debate.
 - D. Be able to relate intrinsic and extrinsic value theories to specific works of art.
 - E. Be able to describe the four-step approach in critically analyzing a work of art.

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

VII. COURSE TOPICS

- A. The aesthetic problem
- B. Worldviews
- C. Critical discrimination
- D. Historical perspective
- E. Contextualist vs. Essentialist
- F. The aesthetic imperative
- G. Tertullian
- H. Relationship between the fall of man and the arts
- I. Objectivist vs. Relativist
- J. Marks of truth in art
- K. Definition of beauty
- L. Art as prophetic vs. art as a barometer
- M. Aesthetic stewardship
- N. Censorship in a democratic society
- O. Impact of the Reformation on the arts
- P. Art in the Bible
- Q. Efland's four aesthetic theories
- R. Art criticism

VIII. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

- A. Lecture/discussion
- B. Art history research
- C. Art criticism activities
- D. Critical analysis of artworks
- E. Formal debate
- F. Video
- G. Group discussion

IX. ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Reading assignments
- B. Class participation in discussion
- C. Research: Providing relevant articles to the topic for discussion
- D. Preparation and presentation of debate topic
- E. Writing assignments

X. GRADING SCALE

See Department of Art Syllabus Addendum for Grading Scale and Evaluation.

XI. REFERENCES

Apostolos-Cappadona, D. (1992). *Art, creativity, and the sacred: An anthology in religion and art*. New York: Crossroad.

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Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as experience*. New York: Minton, Balch, and Co.

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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. (1998). *The religious art of Andy Warhol*. New York: Continuum.

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Eisner, E. W. (1972). *Educating artistic vision*. New York: Macmillan.

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.

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- Schaeffer, F. A. (1969). *Death in the city*. Chicago, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.
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- Scruton, R. (1979). *The aesthetics of architecture*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University 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.