



Philosophy of Art and Aesthetic Experience in Rome

PHIL 277 – Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. Stefano Giacchetti

M/W 3.45-5.00 – Office hours M/W Noon-1pm (by appointment)

E-Mail: sgiacch@luc.edu

SUMMARY

Short Description: This course will explore one or more of the following philosophical questions in aesthetics: What is art? What is good art (art evaluation or critical theory)? What is beauty? What is it about human nature that allows us to experience beauty?

Outcome Statement: Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of the various approaches to the philosophical study of beauty and the arts.

THIS COURSE AND THE UNIVERSITY CORE CURRICULUM

Knowledge Area(s) satisfied:	Philosophical Knowledge
Skill(s) Developed:	Critical Thinking Skills and Dispositions
Values Requirement(s) satisfied:	None

CORE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge Area (Philosophical Knowledge):

In addition to the general competencies associated with the Philosophical Knowledge area, students in this course will:

1. Learn how beauty as a major philosophical question has been examined by major philosophers in western philosophy. They will be able to explain, to contrast, and to compare the presentations of beauty by major historical figures such as Kant, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Adorno and Marcuse. Students will be tested on these historical views, will apply them to art in oral and written exercises, and will compare/contrast them in written assignments.
2. Learn about the way philosophers have analyzed beauty. In this competency, students will examine beauty, not as a major historical philosophical question, but as a major problem central to philosophical inquiry. They will learn the “elements” of beauty and the contributions of

beauty to the human experience. Students will write a series of essays presenting the “elements” of beauty and the place of beauty in the human experience.

3. Examine the theoretical foundations of the nine basic arts. They will be able to explain the ontological roots of each art (the uniqueness of each art form) and the philosophical object of each art (the elements employed by the art to realize its uniqueness).

4. Evaluate philosophical arguments on beauty, to compare the philosophers’ views (with each other and with the student’s view), and to challenge simplistic and naïve viewpoints. They will do this by analyzing the arguments of others and providing their own arguments. This will be accomplished via written assignments.

Skills (Critical Thinking Skills and Dispositions):

Students will develop the skills necessary to:

1. Comprehend and summarize the meaning of varying forms of communication
2. Analyze relationships among statements, questions, and concepts
3. Evaluate various points of view
4. Generate new ideas and proposals.

These competencies will be developed by reading primary philosophical texts on aesthetics, applying philosophical concepts to works of art, comparing various aesthetic philosophies, and developing and critiquing each other’s philosophy of aesthetics. Students will develop their critical thinking skills through essays and oral presentations.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Full Course Description: This course will explore one or more of the following philosophical questions in aesthetics:

What is art?

What is good art (art evaluation or critical theory)?

What is beauty?

What is it about human nature that allows us to experience beauty?

More specifically, the course focuses on fundamental philosophical writings on art, artists, and the social significance of aesthetics. Crucial concepts such as beauty, harmony, creativity and judgement of taste will be analyzed in the theoretical framework of modernity and supported by an insight into some of the most representative works of art in Rome.

We will start with a selection of paragraphs from Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, which will provide us with the terminological tools for analyzing aesthetics. Through his writings we will be able to clearly define an appropriate use of such concepts as “beautiful,” “pleasant,” “good” and “sublime.” An insight of Italian Renaissance art will support his perspective.

We will then analyze sections of the third book of Schopenhauer’s most important work, *World as Will and Representation*, in which he outlines his conception of art as the model for an ethical behaviour. The analysis of Italian Baroque music will help us in understanding his definition of music as “language of the will.”

The third part of the course will focus on the section four of Nietzsche’s *Human, All Too Human*, a

work which immediately relates to Schopenhauer's ideas, proposing a new interpretation of the origins and function of art. Nietzsche's idea of art as "exaltation of life" will be related to classical Roman architecture and to the raising of 20th century artistic movements.

In the final part of the course we will analyze the works on aesthetics of two of the most influential members of the so called "Frankfurt School"; Adorno and Marcuse. Through their writings we will define the social relevance of art as the model for a utopian interpretation of future. To support their perspective, we will focus on contemporary artistic movements such as "futurism," "abstractionism" and the "atonal" musical composition.

Required Texts:

- Kant's *Critique of Judgement*. (available online)
- Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation. Vol.I* (available online)
- Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human*. (available online)
- Marcuse's *The Aesthetic Dimension*.

Assessment Components:

Student's final grade will be based on:

- Two in-class tests: Midterm and Final (40% of the final grade each).
- In-class presentation and participation (20% of the final grade). Students will be requested to make a presentation (15-20 min.) for one of the scheduled readings assigned.

Grading Policy:

The following grading scale will be applied for determining the final grade:

Presentation: A+=20; A-=18; B+=17; B=16; B-=15; C+=14; C=13; C-=12; D+=12; D=11; F=10

Midterm and Final (each): A=40; A-=37; B+=36; B=34; B-=33; C+=32; C=30; C-=29; D+=27; D=26; F=24

Final Grade: A = 94-100; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87-89; B = 84-86; B- = 80-83; C+ = 77-79; C = 74-76; C- = 70-73; D+ = 67-69; D = 60-66; F = 59 and below

Attendance Policy:

Students should plan to regularly attend the class, since we will often broaden the topics contained in the texts to contemporary issues, and since this class is mainly intended to the rousing of students' personal thoughts and ideas.

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy:

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.

- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

This course meets twice a week, thus a total of two unexcused absences will be permitted. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade, for every absence after the “approved limit”.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines.

Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards here:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml. You are responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism according to the LUC Student Handbook.

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes

Course Schedule:

09/02 Introduction

09/04 Kant §1 to §5

09/09 “ “ §43 to §47

09/11 “ “ §48 to §49

09/16 “ “ §50 to §52

09/18 “ “ §53 to §54

09/20 Movie

09/23 Schopenhauer Ch. 30 to 32

09/25 “ “ Ch. 36

09/30 “ “ Ch. 37 & 38

10/02 “ “ Ch. 39

10/07 “ “ Ch. 52

10/09 Midterm Exam

10/21 Introduction to Nietzsche

10/23 Nietzsche §145 to §162

10/28 “ “ §163 to §190

10/30 “ “ §191 to §215

11/04 “ “ §216 to §223

11/06 Slide show

11/11 Introduction to Marcuse

11/13 Documentary

11/18 Marcuse Ch. I

11/20 “ “ Ch. II

11/25 “ “ Ch. III & IV

11/27 “ “ Ch. V & Conclusions

12/02 Study Day

12/04 Study Day

Final Exam