

Philosophy of Art

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THEME AND TOPIC OF COURSE

“When I speak of poetry, I am not thinking of it as a genre. Poetry is an awareness of the world, a particular way of relating to reality.” - Andrei Tarkovsky

“Works of art take the form of imaginative creations that can be brought to everyday experience as a way of ordering and illuminating it.” - Gordon Graham

A general working definition: Philosophy entails the humble and hopeful quest for meaning, enabled through a human desire for wisdom directed toward truth, honed through the skills of phenomenological sensitivity, rational inquiry, and good conversation among friends, and provoked by that which transcends our immediacy.

This course aims to cultivate the attentiveness necessary to dwell with works of art, and the thoughtfulness necessary to understand the value and significance works of art can play in human experience. This course surveys the major theories and several thinkers in the philosophy of art (i.e. aesthetics.) The course is primarily a philosophy course that seeks to understand and grapple with the host of issues raised by the phenomena of works of art, artistic production and aesthetic experience across a variety of media. The philosophical traditions drawn upon include both historical and contemporary analytical and continental philosophy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, each student will:

1. demonstrate a familiarity with the language and concepts relevant to the field of philosophical aesthetics so as to speak and write philosophically about art.
2. demonstrate through informal and formal written and oral communication a critical understanding of specific issues, major theories, and thinkers important in contemporary philosophies of artistic production and aesthetic experience.
3. demonstrate the ability to debate effectively, clearly, and creatively ideas and arguments relevant to the course through structured oral presentations.
4. contribute to the education of one's fellow students and professor through active and regular participation in class.
5. to become more nearly human.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- * Graham, *The Philosophy of Art*
- * Merleau-Ponty, *The World of Perception*
- * Dustin & Ziegler, *Practicing Mortality*
- Pallasmaa, *Eyes of the Flesh*

In addition to these texts (available at the bookstore), students will also be required to read and comment on scholarly articles made available through the term, as well as engage specific works of art. Course materials are available at the class website:

<http://Philosophiablog.net>

FORMAT

In class time will be spent roughly half in lecture and half in discussion, with regular student presentations and guest lectures from a host of different artists. Regular attendance and participation in the class is required to pass the class. More than two absences will negatively affect one's grade. Regardless of other work, more than 6 absences will result in failure of the course.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

All assignments must be completed to achieve a passing grade. The assignments include

1. *Debates and Presentations* (30% of final grade) Students will work in small groups to participate in two class debates and one formal presentation that leads other students through a discussion. Each member of the group will turn in a short paper explaining their critical engagement of the ideas in their presentation.
2. *Exams*: (40% of final grade) There will be two take-home exams in the class, each worth 20% of your final grade.
3. *Final Paper*: (15% of final grade): There will be one final paper for the class along which will require that you integrate your own thinking with research about some topic in the philosophy of art. Senior art majors may connect their final paper to the artists statement they are using for their senior show. Each students will also write a short review of another students paper.
4. *Participation*: (15% of final grade) Students are expected to participate consistently throughout the semester by contributing to class discussions, demonstrating comprehension of readings, taking regular quizzes, and completing informal writing assignments on the online blog for the course.

ETHICS POLICY

Classroom Behavior

North Park University is a Christian Liberal Arts Institution. As such, we expect our students and faculty to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity. Therefore, each student is expected to uphold high ethical standards inside the classroom. The classroom should be an environment for learning. Therefore, behavior that is disruptive, which belittles another or which discourages others from achieving their academic goals has no place in this classroom. In a word, you are called to *respect* your fellow students, your professors, and yourself.

Academic Misconduct

When you turn in an assignment and take credit for it, it must be your own work. If it is not, you have committed academic misconduct.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is representing the work of someone else as your own. Most commonly this occurs by copying from a textbook or other source and failing to give proper credit to the author. You may avoid this problem by always using quotation marks whenever you use someone else's exact words and by always giving references whenever you quote from or paraphrase another author. For example, if you read a secondary source on Heidegger's *Being and Time* to discover how to interpret the primary text, and use that idea in your paper, you must give credit to where you received the idea. Citing sources does not make a paper weaker, but rather strengthens it by showing that you are in dialogue with other scholars. Please read through the section in your Writing Handbook on plagiarism.

Cheating

If you give or receive unauthorized aid while completing any of the requirements for this course, you have cheated. Giving answers during an exam, writing a paper for another student or copying another student's work are all forms of cheating. Assistance from the writing lab, talking with a professor or fellow student, or forming a study group before an exam are all acceptable forms of aid.

Penalties

The penalties for violation of this ethics policy will range, at the discretion of the instructor and North Park University, from having to redo assignments, to failing the course, to an appearance before the Dean, and in some cases expulsion.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

Work Turned in Late

Late work is defined as work turned in after the class session on the day the assignment is due.

Quizzes and In-class Writing: Quizzes and in-class writing assignments may not be retaken or turned in late.

Exams: Exams are due at the assigned time. No exceptions. Late exams will not be accepted.

Debate and presentation: Any student absent from a debate or presentation day will receive a zero for debate/presentation performance. The debate summary paper may be turned in on the day of the debate or before. Late summaries will be penalized 10 points a day.

Final Paper: The final paper will be penalized 10% for each full day it is late after the announced due date.

Use of Student Work in Class

The instructor will on occasion use excerpts from student work as examples for class discussion. For example, a student answer from a midterm exam might be distributed to help others learn from the strengths and weaknesses of that answer. If you object to your work being used in this way, please inform the instructor.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Center for Academic Services at (773) 244-5737, advising @northpark.edu, or stop by the office located on the 2nd floor of the Student Services Building. Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. For further information please review the following website: <http://northpark.edu/ada>.

FINAL PROVISIO

The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus at any time should it be warranted by the demands of sound pedagogy. Changes to the syllabus will be announced in class. In any event, the posted, e-text versions of the syllabus and schedule of classes are authoritative, taking precedence over any printed version.