

PHIL 238 Aesthetics

Winter 2019

Course Outline

Class Start Date & End Date

January 7 – April 1, 2019

Class Meeting Time, Location, and Room

Mon. 1:15-4:00pm St. Margaret Bourgeoys

Instructors Name: Dr. Ryan N.S. Topping
Office: 2-02
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Course Description

An introduction to the concept of beauty as it has been developed by classical philosophers, mediated through various fine arts, and cultivated in the sacred arts in the West.

Course Objectives

1. That students grasp the basic principles of aesthetics as articulated by the classical Western philosophical and theological tradition;
2. That students gain a rudimentary knowledge of how these principles have been manifested and made articulate through representative fields of the fine arts (chiefly music, architecture, and painting);
3. That students develop skills in the close reading of, articulate speaking about, and persuasive writing upon philosophical texts and arguments.

Course Assignments and Evaluation

- 1) **Quizzes and class participation 30%**
- 2) **Mid-term presentation 20%**
- 3) **Essay 25%**
- 4) **Final exam 25%**

Textbooks

1. John Paul II "Letter to Artists" any edition; can be found at www.Vatican.va.
2. Josef Pieper, *Leisure the Basis of Culture*, forward by J. Schall (Ignatius Press) ISBN-13: 978-1586172565
3. Plato, *Symposium*, trans. ed. A Nehamas and Paul Woodruff (Hackett): ISBN 0-872220-076-0
4. Josef Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (Ignatius Press)
5. Selections from the *Council of Trent* and *Vatican II* will be given as handouts or may be taken from the web.
6. Denis McNamara, *How to Read Churches: A Crash Course in Ecclesiastical Architecture* (Rizzo/Random House) ISBN-13: 978-0847835980
7. Wassily Kandinsky, trans. Sadler, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (Dover) ISBN-13: 978-0486234113
8. Ryan N.S. Topping, *The Elements of Rhetoric: How to speak and write clearly and persuasively* (Angelico) ISBN 9781621381969
9. Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*, any edition

Recommended Reading

The set readings (see above) will well occupy our time.

Course Requirements

(1) Quizzes and class participation 30%

Quizzes will examine factual material, and will test both your ability to recollect and exegete key passages of the texts studied (4x 5% = 20%). Each class students will be expected to submit a handwritten excerpt from a text under review plus a question or reflection based on that text.

(2) Mid-term presentation 20%

Each student (likely as part of a team of 2) will offer one major presentation on either sacred architecture, music, or painting (10%). Following the presentation, the student will lead a 30 minute discussion (10%). Topics and dates will be discussed by the second week of class.

(3) Essay 25%

Date and themes will be discussed in class. Refer to Topping and Strunk and White for stylistic and structural matters.

(4) Final exam 25%

The exam will cover basic themes arising from texts. More information will be given one week prior to the exam.

Course Schedule

Part 1: Classical Accounts of Beauty

- Week 1. (Jan 7) Intro: Why are modern churches so ugly?/JP II “Letter to Artists” (please bring read)
2. (Jan 14) Plato, *Symposium* 172a-199c (pp. 1-39)
3. (Jan 21) Plato, *Symposium* 199c-end (pp. 39-77)
4. (Jan 28) Pieper, *Leisure the Basis of Culture* parts 1-2 (pp. 15-42) Leisure, and worship, as the foundation of art; definitions by Aristotle and Thomas; utility vs contemplation
Quiz 1: JP II and *Symposium*
5. (Feb 4) Pieper, *Leisure* parts 3-end (pp. 43-76)
Sloth (acedia) vs festivity; the world of total work; the necessity of the Sabbath; leisure only completed in the act of worship
6. (Feb 11) Aristotle, *Poetics* Chapters 1-7 and Plato’s *Republic* Bk 3, 393c-403d (Bloom trans. pp 72-82)// Plotinus, *Enneads* Book 1.6; overview of part 2 of course.
Quiz 2: *Leisure*
7. (Feb 18) **No class.** The Hallowed Feast of “Family Day” followed by Reading Week

Part 2: Beauty in the Tradition of Sacred Arts

8. (Feb 25) Sacred Music I:
Selections: *Council of Trent* (selections) and Vatican II *Sacro Concilium* (select.)//
Presentation: “From Gregorian Chant to ‘We’re Building a City of God’”
9. (March 4) Sacred Music II:
Ratzinger, *Spirit of the Liturgy*, 13-23; 136-158 //
Presentation: Students
Quiz 3: Plato, Trent, and Vatican II on sacred music
10. (Mar 11) Sacred Architecture I:
McNamara, *How to read Churches* (selections); Ratzinger, *Spirit*, 53-74//
Presentation: An overview of Sacred architecture
11. (Mar 18) Sacred Architecture II:
McNamara, *How to read Churches* (selections); Ratzinger, *Spirit*, 74-92//
Presentation: Students
12. (Mar 25) Sacred Painting I:
Kandinsky, *The Spiritual in Art*, first half (1-22); Ratzinger, *Spirit*, 115-36//

Presentation: Students

Quiz 4: Sacred architectural styles

13. (Ap 1) Sacred Painting II:
Kandinsky, *The Spiritual in Art*, second half (23-56); Ratzinger, *Spirit*, 23-35//
Review
14. (Ap 8-12) Exam week; **Final Exam**

Recitations:

1. "This is what it is to be led aright, or be led by another, into the mystery of Love: one goes always upwards for the sake of this Beauty, starting out from beautiful things and using them like rising stairs..." (*Symposium* 211c)
2. TBA
3. "The Church recognizes Gregorian chant as being specially suited to the Roman liturgy. Therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services. Other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations so long as they accord with the spiritual of the liturgical action..." (*Sacrosanctum concilium* 116)
4. TBA

General Academic Information

Late Submission Policy.

All assignments, unless otherwise noted, are due at the beginning of class on the specified day. Late assignments are docked 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g. B to B-) per day, excluding Sundays and Holy Days, up to a maximum of 5 days after which the assignment will be considered incomplete.

Course Attendance

No credit will be given for a course if the student has been absent, for any reason whatever, from one-third or more of the lectures and/or seminars scheduled for the term. Likewise, no credit will be given if term assignments or other assignments are or remain incomplete.

Leave of Absence and Policy for Incompletes

Extensions to an incomplete grade may be granted in extenuating circumstances, but may not exceed 16 weeks following the end of the course. Students who fail to complete course work by the agreed deadline will have a grade assigned which is based on work completed.

Academic Integrity

Acts of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) are subject to an appropriate penalty. The grade "F" may be assigned to a student guilty of such acts by the professor of the course in which the infraction occurred. A second offense against academic integrity renders the student liable to automatic dismissal from NTC. Further details are available in the Student Handbook in the Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Grievances

Students may appeal grades received; the procedure is outlined in the Student Handbook in the Grade Appeal Policy. For other grievances, students will refer to the Student Grievances Policy also outlined in the Student Handbook.

NOTE: The GPA is computed on the basis of cumulative grade point (letter) values, not percentage values. All courses are included in this calculation except those exceeding degree requirements and/or received as transfer credits from other recognized institutions.

Grading System

Undergraduate Studies C.Th., Dip.Th., B.Th.			Graduate Studies M.T.S., M.Div., M.Th., G.C.C.S.A., M.R.E.		
Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point	Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent	A+	4.0	Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0		A	4.0
	A-	3.7		A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3	Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0		B	3.0
	B-	2.7		B-	2.7
Adequate	C+	2.3	Adequate	C+	2.3
	C	2.0		C	2.0
	C-	1.7		C-	1.7
Marginal	D+	1.3			
	D	1.0			
Fail	F	0.0	Fail	D+	1.3
				D	1.0
				F	0.0

Written Assignments - Style and Format

Newman Theological College requires that all written work be submitted in acceptable academic format and style. Please note the following regulations:

Regulations

Research papers, book reports, article summaries, reflection papers, and essays should be double-spaced, printed on one side only, and submitted on white, 8.5" x 11" paper.

A standard type style, such as Times New Roman, with a 12-point font size, must be used. The instructor will specify the most recent edition of the style manual to be used:

1. Kate Turabian, "A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
2. Joseph Gibaldi & William Ahters, eds., "MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers" (New York: Modern Language Association of America).
3. American Psychological Association "Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association" (Washington: APA Publications).

Copies of these standard references may be purchased in the NTC bookstore.

Ignorance of standard form is not considered an acceptable excuse for deviation from required standards of format and style.

Academic Regulations

The following Academic Regulations are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Changes in Registration: Add/Drop/Withdraw Notice
- Course Work
- Final Examination Schedule
- Incomplete Grade Policy
- Inclusive Language

Related Academic Matters

The following Related Academic Matters are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Grade Reports & Posting
- Glossary of Academic Terms

Other Related Policies

The following policies are located in the Student Handbook for your reference:

- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Grade Appeal Policy

Recording of Lectures

Audio or video recording of lectures, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior consent of the instructor. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Student Services, contact Doreen Bloos at 780-392-2450 ext. 2212; Email doreen.bloos@newman.edu .