

**SYLLABUS FOR PHILOSOPHY 4304**  
**AESTHETICS AND CREATIVITY**  
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**I. DBU Catalog Description:**

An examination of the principles involved in the production, interpretation, and criticism of works of art, as well as basic principles of Christian aesthetic theory. Illustrative material from various artistic disciplines will be utilized.

**II. Course Data**

Professor: Dr. David Naugle  
Days and Time: MWF, 8: 00-8: 50 am  
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Office and Office Hours: Strickland 213, MWF afternoons, 1: 30-5: 00 pm

**III. Course Goals**

There are three marks of a great person:

- One who is a great thinker;
- One who is a great lover;
- One who is a great doer.

**A. Intellectual Objectives:**

- ❖ To understand the substance and content of the discipline of aesthetics, its primary concerns and questions, issues of methodology, major aestheticians and their viewpoints in the history of aesthetics, and to comprehend and critique the aesthetic tradition in light of a Christian framework.
- ❖ To analyze the cogency of arguments deployed in defense of aesthetic positions and viewpoints, and to clarify the use and meaning of terms and concepts associated with these arguments as evidenced by class discussion, written work, and course examinations.
- ❖ To grasp of the biblical foundation and framework for artistic endeavor and the aesthetic experience of humanity as *imago Dei*, and to develop a profound awareness of the central role and purpose of the arts and the aesthetic dimension in the corporate life of the Church and in the individual life of the Christian believer.

**B. Emotional Objectives:**

- ❖ To gain an appreciation for the task of aesthetic reflection on the artistic realm in the philosophic and Christian traditions, and develop an awareness of the omnipresence of beauty, and the significance of aesthetic experience in general as a fundamental characteristic and mode of human life and experience.

- ❖ To develop a deep appreciation for the Christian affirmation of the arts, and learn to rejoice in the artistic and the aesthetic domains as an integral dimension of ecclesiastical and Christian life.
- ❖ To establish theoretical connections between aesthetics and other academic disciplines, and to be able to recognize the aesthetic component that is present in every human enterprise and experience (beauty of mathematical theorems or of well executed play in volleyball, etc.)

#### **B. Volitional Objective:**

- ❖ To challenge and encourage you to pursue the task of developing the aesthetic “attitude” in your personal life intellectually and practically (learning and doing) as art-maker and as audience with a view to the enrichment of your overall human experience.

“In the ordinary course of study, I fell upon a certain book of Cicero, whose speech almost all admire, not so his heart. This book of his contains an exhortation to philosophy, and is called *Hortensius*. But this book altered my affections, and turned my prayers to Thyself, O Lord; and made me have other purposes and desires.” —St. Augustine, *Confessions*, III. IV.

### **III. Course Requirements, Grading, and Teaching Methods**

"Reading maketh a full man;  
Conference [conversation] a ready man;  
Writing an exact man!"  
—Francis Bacon, *Of Studies*

#### **A. Course Requirements:**

1. **Reading** (20%): You are required to read the assigned readings in the books and handouts. You will report on whether or not you have completed the assigned readings with a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ on the following two dates (the material must be read in its entirety to receive credit; each is worth 10% of your total grade): March 10 and May 3.
2. **Seminar presentation** (10%): Each student will be responsible for an analysis/synthesis of ONE major text studied this semester. This paper is to be an interpretation and evaluation of the content and argument of either the entire piece or a portion of the piece, focusing on crucial ideas and arguments. Each paper must be type written, double-spaced, copied and passed out to the class on the day of presentation. You will need to be prepared to respond to questions and comments from class members and your instructor.
3. **Weekly Insights** (14%): Each student will present a 2-3 page paper on Fridays in which fundamental insights and evaluations (positive and negative) on the text being considered for that we are set forth. Each of these installments is worth 1% of your total grade. You are not responsible for this assignment the week you present your seminar paper. We will use Bloom’s taxonomy as basis for these papers: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation.
4. **Research paper** (20%): Each student will choose an appropriate topic in aesthetics on which to do in-depth research and writing. Each paper must meet the

expectations of a senior level research effort in terms of resources used, format, content, documentation (MLA or Turabian), and length (12-15 pages). Research must include material retrieved from the Internet (see bibliography below for some possibilities). A prospectus of your paper contain a thesis statement, outline, and bibliography will be due right after Spring Break. Due May 1.

5. **Tests** (36%): A mid-term (Mar 10) and final (May 8) will be given in this course, essay format. Each worth 18% of your total grade.

**B. Grading:** (tougher for upper level philosophy students)

- A- = 92-94; A = 95-97; A+ = 98-100 % **Excellent:**  
Excellent = top notch, superior, first rate/class, exceptional, superlative; paper and tests; class attitude, attendance, note taking, participation, posture, interest, etc.  
Comprehensive excellence is needed for a superlative grade in this course.
- B- = 83-85; B = 86-88; B+ = 89-91%: **Above average**
- C- = 74-76; C = 77-79; C+ = 80-82%: **Average**  
Average = mediocre, commonplace, ordinary, passable, fair, run-of-the-mill, tolerable, so-so, mid point between extremes of excellence and failure.
- D- = 65-67; D = 68-70; D+ = 71-73%: **Below average**
- F = 64% and below: **Failure**  
Omission or lack of satisfactory performance of action or task, inadequate, unsuccessful, inferior, impassable, etc.

**C. Pedagogy:** class will be conducted in seminar format. See Appendix for details.

**IV. Textbooks (other handouts will be provided):**

- ❖ Plato, *Two Comic Dialogues: Ion and Hippias Major*. Trans. Paul Woodruff. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983. Abbrev: TCD
- ❖ Aristotle, *Poetics*. Trans. Richard Janko. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983. Abbrev: P
- ❖ John Navone, S. J., *Toward a Theology of Beauty*. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1996). Abbrev. TTB
- ❖ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*. Trans/Commentary Walter Kaufmann. New York: Random House/Vintage, 1967. Abbr. BT
- ❖ Gesa Elsbeth Thiessen, ed. *Theological Aesthetics: A Reader*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. Abbrev. TA

**V. Extra-curricular Requirements for Phil 4304 Students:**

- ❖ Friday Symposium: February 24. Dr. Bill Edgar, "Revenge of the Aesthetic: The Decline and Reemergence of Beauty."
  - This will be followed by a special musical presentation by Dr. Edgar: "An African-American Musical Journey, from Slavery to Early Jazz." This is an illustrated lecture on the development of jazz out of the spiritual, blues, ragtime and other folk musics of the enslaved Africans, with special emphasis on their Christian experience.

- Dr. Edgar's lectures are a part of the Paideia College Society/Honors College Student Conference- Feb. 24-25.
- ❖ Kimbel Art Museum, Friday night, Mar 3. Dinner and then guided tour of the special exhibit: "Gauguin and Impressionism." Free for students in this class. For info: <http://www.kimbellart.org/exhibitions/future.cfm?id=123>
- ❖ Cinematic Confabulations (film night), Friday night, April 21. Details TBA.

## VI. Tentative Course Schedule

### Week 1:

Dates: Jan 18, 20  
Introduction to Course and Aesthetics

### Week 2:

Dates: Jan. 23, 25, 27  
Text: John Navone, *Toward a Theology of Beauty*  
Insights due, Friday, 27<sup>th</sup>. Friday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

### Week 3:

Dates: Jan. 31, Feb, 1, 3  
Texts: *Ion* (31), *Hippias Major* (1, 3)  
Insights due, Friday, Feb 3. Friday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

### Week 4:

Dates: Feb. 6, 8, 10  
Text: Poetics  
Insights due, Friday, Feb 10. Friday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

### Week 5:

Dates Feb. 13, 15, 17  
Text: Augustine, handout  
Insights due, Friday, Feb 17. Friday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

### Week 6:

Dates: Feb. 20, 22, 24  
Text: Augustine continued, pp. 29-33, 42 in *Reader*.  
Insights due, Friday, Feb 24. Friday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

### Week 7:

Dates: Feb. 27, Mar. 1, 3  
Text: Aquinas, handout, *Summa Theologica* I q. 39 a. 8; I-2 q. 54 a. I, and *Comm Div Names* c. IV. Lectio 5  
Insights due, Friday, Mar, 3. Friday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

### Week 8:

Dates: Mar. 6, 8  
Text: Aquinas, *Reader*, pp. 88-92  
Insights due, Wednesday, Mar. 8. Wednesday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

❖ **MID-TERM EXAM, MARCH 10! \*\*\*\*\*READING REPORT #1 DUE**

**Week 9:**

Dates: Mar. 20, 22, 24

Text: Luther and Calvin, Reader, pp. 130-42; 144-45

Insights due, Friday, Mar. 24. Friday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 10:**

Dates: March 27, 29

Text: Kant, Reader, p. 186-89

Insights due, Wednesday, Mar. 29. Wednesday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 11:**

Dates: April 3

Text: Hegel, Reader, pp. 190-96

Insights due, Monday, April 3. Monday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 12:**

Dates: April 10, 12

Text: Kierkegaard, Reader, pp. 196-201

Insights due, Wednesday, April 12. Wednesday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 13:**

Dates: April 17, 19, 21

Text: F. Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*

Insights due, Friday, April 21. Friday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 14:**

Dates: April 24, 26, 28

Text: Begbie, Reader, p. 249-52, Wolterstorff, handout

Insights due, Friday, April 28. Friday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 15:**

Dates: May 1, 3

Text: Barth, Reader, pp. 315-19; von Balthasar, pp. 320-25

Insights due, Wednesday, May 3. Wednesday presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

❖ **RESEARCH PAPER DUE MONDAY, MAY 1.** \*\*\*\*\*Reading Report #2 due May 3

**Week 16:**

Date: Monday, May 8, 8: 00-10: 00 pm

Text: **FINALEXAM!!!** Graduating seniors take final on Friday, May 5.

Our excuse for our aesthetic failure has often been that we must be about the Lord's business,  
the assumption being that the Lord's business is never aesthetic!

—Clyde S. Kilby, *Christian Imagination*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY: See suggested readings in the Thiessen Reader.**

**Classroom Policies and Procedures**

**Dr. David Naugle**

**I. Absences and Tardiness**

- Students are expected to come to class regularly and be on time.

- Each student is allowed a maximum of three unexcused absences for MWF classes, and two unexcused absences for TTh classes per regular long semester without grade penalty. This number will be calculated proportionately for other semesters (short summer and winter terms, long summer and winter, mini terms, etc.). According to the DBU catalog, students cannot miss over 25% of classes & pass the course.
- Additional unexcused absences and habitual tardiness will result in a **significant grade reduction** which will be determined at the discretion of the professor. No credit is given for attendance, but excessive absences can be the basis for lowering the final grade at the discretion of the professor.
- Excused absences must be approved by the professor; in some cases, a note from a proper authority may be required. Students who will be away from class for an extended period of time (e.g., for emergencies, medical problems, military service, varsity sports, work related matters, etc.) are expected to notify and explain the situation to the professor. Failure to do so may result in grade reduction.

## II. Papers, Tests, Printers, and Academic Misconduct

- Students are expected to turn assigned work in on time, that is, during the class period for which it is assigned. Papers (essays, term themes, etc) will be accepted late, **but they will be penalized 10 points per day they are late, including weekends if there is no proper excuse for its tardiness.** For example, a paper due on a Wednesday, but not turned in until Friday will be docked 20 points. A paper due on a Friday, but not turned in until Monday will be docked 30 points.
- Students are also expected to take tests on the day they are assigned. In case of a *real* emergency (*severe* illness, accident, etc.), a student may take a test late without penalty (a note from a proper authority may be required to verify the emergency). Unexcused absences on the day of testing will result in 10 point grade reduction per day until the test is taken weekends included. Students must make the necessary arrangements with the professor to make up the test *as soon as possible*.
- **Papers will not be accepted that are printed with a used, worn out ribbon that renders the paper virtually unreadable.** Students are responsible for having their paper printed in such a way that the words are clear, dark, and clearly discernible.
- Incidents of cheating, plagiarism (presenting someone else's work as your own), collusion, abuse of resource materials, and computer misuse will be dealt with according to the guidelines in the 1999-2001 DBU catalog on page 79-82, and current schedule of classes, p. 21

## III. Financial Aid, Disabilities, and Posting of Final Grades

- **Financial Aid:** Students who are receiving federal, state, or institutional financial aid who withdraw or add hours during the semester may have their financial aid adjusted because of the withdraw or addition. This change in schedule may affect the aid they are receiving during the current semester, and could affect their eligibility for aid in the future.
- **Disabilities:** The student has the responsibility of informing the course instructor of any disabling condition which will require modifications to avoid discrimination. DBU provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aid to individuals with disabilities as defined under law, who are otherwise qualified to meet the institution's academic requirements. It is the student's responsibility to initiate any request for accommodations. For assistance call Sonya Payne @ 214-333-5125.

- **Posting of Final Grades:** Each faculty member has the right either to post or not post final course grades for each class. Final course grades provided to a student by a faculty member may not be relied upon as official. Official grade reports can be obtained only through the DBU Registrar's Office. The DBU undergraduate and graduate catalogs state that "all accounts must be paid in full before a student can receive grade reports." Students are not permitted to telephone the professor, contact the dean's office, or use email to inquire about their final grade. Please understand that this policy is for the purpose of protecting the privacy of student's grades.

#### IV. Classroom Attitude and Demeanor

Students are expected to exemplify proper classroom behavior, attitudes, and etiquette including such things as:

- **Sitting up straight**
- Listening attentively
- **Taking notes**
- Remaining focused
- Doing your very best
- Participating enthusiastically

Students are not allowed to:

- Talk or chatter disruptively, slouch or take a nap
- **Work on material for other classes while class is in session**
- **Read extraneous material while class is in session** (Newspaper, Sports Illustrated, Cosmo, etc.)

Phones and pagers:

If possible, please adjust all phones and pages so they will not disturb class proceedings. If possible, please wait until the class is completed or until there is a break to attend to calls and pages. Emergency situations are, of course, excepted.

Based on your instructor's personal judgment, **Final Grades** will be influenced by how well students comply with the above attitudes and expected behavior. Remember: you are no longer in middle school or high school! When controversial topics are being discussed in class, before you speak out, you should (1) make sure you understand the ideas being presented, (2) learn something from them, (3) and then learn how to criticize them constructively and with civility. Also, make sure comments or questions **pertain to the subject matter** under consideration.

#### V. The New GPA Grading System:

A+..... 4.00	A ..... 4.00	A- ..... 3.67
B+..... 3.33	B ..... 3.00	B- ..... 2.67
C+..... 2.33	C ..... 2.00	C- ..... 1.67
D+..... 1.33	D .....1.00	D- ..... 0.67
F ..... 0.00		

#### Appendix: The Seminar

### **Definition of 'Seminar'**

1. A small group of advanced students in a college or graduate school engaged in original research or intensive study under the guidance of a teacher who meets regularly with them to discuss their reports and findings. A course of study so pursued. A scheduled meeting of such a group. 2. A meeting for an exchange of ideas; a conference, a conversation on salient intellectual topics.

### **What the seminar mode of teaching and learning is not:**

1. It is not primarily focused on the teacher.
2. It is not primarily for the purpose of dispensing information, filling the empty minds of students with the contents of the mind of the teacher.
3. It is not primarily a rigorously didactic situation where the teacher lectures.
4. It is not primarily a note-taking situation, though students will want to write down important things discussed in class.
5. It is not typically a test-taking educational environment, for students in this context learn through intensive reading, discussion, research and writing.
6. The classroom is not arranged in a typical setting, with teacher up front and students lined up in desks in rows; rather desks are in a circle, square, or rectangle to facilitate face to face interaction.

### **What the seminar mode of teaching and learning is:**

1. It is a community of mutual learners, teacher included, where each participant is a vital component and contributing member of the studying, teaching, and learning process.
2. It is a community of learning in which the teacher serves as a guide, coach, facilitator and mentor for students in the learning process.
3. It is an education setting that employs the Socratic method called *maieutics* so that through the reading of texts, questions and answers, discussion, and debate, truth is born in the minds and hearts of each participant.
4. It is an educational environment that creates a bond of mutual respect student to student, student to teacher, and teacher to student.
5. It is a classroom situation that absolutely depends for its success on the faithful, weekly preparation of each member of the learning community, requiring that all read the material well, respond with questions and insights, and come prepared to engage fellow classmates in constructive dialogue.
6. It is an education situation that employs and improves the liberal arts of reading, writing, thinking, speaking, understanding, etc.



