

PHI 336: PHILOSOPHY OF ART AND BEAUTY, 3 CR.  
SUMMER 2018  
TUES. AND THURS. 9:00 AM – 12:15 PM  
NOTRE DAME HALL 243

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Dr. Catherine Homan  
Office Location: Fidelis Hall, 329  
Phone: (414) 930-3013  
E-mail: [homanc@mtmary.edu](mailto:homanc@mtmary.edu)  
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12-2, and by appointment, Fidelis 329

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is art anyway? Does it have to be beautiful? Does it have to be in a museum? Can art be dangerous? Through an examination of a variety of artist practices and philosophical approaches to art and aesthetics, this course will focus on four primary questions:

1. What counts as art? – Is there a canon? How has the canon been established? How have certain groups been marginalized? What does it mean to be marginalized or “other”?
2. Who counts as an artist? – Are there gender, race, and socio-economic presuppositions to questions regarding artistic genius? Could nonhuman animals be considered artists?
3. How is and ought art or the artist to be evaluated? – Is taste related to class? Are standards of beauty universal?
4. What role does art have in society, ethics, or education? – Are there economic presuppositions that determine art’s purpose? How do different communities understand the role of art?

COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, students will be able to

- identify, explain, and pose thoughtful questions of several philosophical theories of art,
- understand and appreciate a diversity of perspectives regarding art and philosophy of art,
- articulate and argue well for a position in class, online, and in written assignments, and
- demonstrate an understanding of theoretical content through oral presentations.

COURSE TEXTS

*Aesthetics: A Comprehensive Anthology*, ed. Steven M. Cahn and Aaron Meskin. Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2008. ISBN 978140515432.

All other texts will be on eLearning.

Other texts will be posted on E-Learning. You must bring the assigned text with you each class period in a format with which you can actively read.

## MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY MISSION

Mount Mary University, an urban Catholic university for women sponsored by the School Sisters of Notre Dame, provides an environment for the development of the whole person. The University encourages leadership, integrity, and a deep sense of social justice arising from a sensitivity to moral values and Christian principles.

Mount Mary commits itself to excellence in teaching and learning with an emphasis on thinking critically and creatively. The baccalaureate curriculum integrates the liberal arts with career preparation for women of diverse ages and personal circumstances; the programs at the graduate level provide opportunities for both men and women to enhance their professional excellence.

## MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY VISION STATEMENT

Mount Mary University is recognized as a diverse learning community that works in partnership with local, national and global organizations to educate women to transform the world.

## DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Mount Mary University and the Department of Philosophy are committed to an educational environment that affirms the uniqueness, diversity, and integrity of all students. Similarly, the well-being and success of each student in this course are important to me. I will do my best to ensure that students from all backgrounds and perspectives will be served equitably. The diversity that students bring to this class will be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful and inclusive of the many identities of students in terms of gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. Thus, I encourage students registered in the course to discuss their learning styles and comprehension requirements with me.

Mount Mary University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which stipulates that the University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations; please see me or

- Marci Ocker, Student Success Center, Haggerty Library, Room 124.
- Phone: 414-930-3368
- Fax: 414-930-3700
- Email: [ockerm@mtmary.edu](mailto:ockerm@mtmary.edu)

If you require any particular accommodations, please meet with me so we can work together to make optimal arrangements. Please bring your letter of accommodation to our meeting. All information will be held in the strictest of confidence.

In addition to formal assignments listed below, there are a few other requirements:

- ***Come to every class.***
  - Attendance is required for each class. There may be legitimate reasons to miss class, but because this is an accelerated class, there can be no more than one absence

without significant penalty to your final grade. When you miss class, it is *your* responsibility to inquire about the material covered or assignments missed.

- ***Come to class on time.***
  - Late arrivals are disruptive and jeopardize your own ability to follow the class. Three late arrivals count as an absence. If you do arrive late, please be as unobtrusive as possible upon entering.
- ***Come prepared.***
  - Before class, read the text carefully and make note of any questions or ideas. Have your textbook, notes, and something to write with ready at the start of class. Some of the material may be difficult, but it is up to you to meet the challenge. I will do my best to help you understand the material, but you must make a good faith effort to do the work.
- ***Be respectful.***
  - Being respectful means listening attentively and making a good effort to engage with your classmates and me. Please wait for opportunities for group work instead of having side conversations. There is no excuse for rude, disruptive, aggressive, or dismissive behavior toward your classmates or me even if you have a differing opinion. Cell phones must be out of sight during class unless arranged otherwise.
- ***Strive for open communication.***
  - We have a joint responsibility to make the class the best it can be. If you're having difficulties keeping up with the material, participating in class, or have other concerns or recommendations, please come to my office hours or make an appointment with me as soon as possible. If something is working well, let me know that, too!

#### ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. In-class Performance	15%
2. JiTTs (Just in Time Teaching)	10%
3. Art Field Notes	15%
4. Essays	25% (10%, 15%)
5. Class Facilitator	15%
6. Final Project	20%

#### 1. IN-CLASS PERFORMANCE

This course will be conducted more as a seminar, so participation from everyone is imperative. When you contribute to discussion, other students' learning is enhanced. I expect students to come to class having completed the assigned readings and with the texts in hand. Participation means not simply speaking for the sake of speaking, but contributing to the development of class discussion on comments or questions. As a fairly shy person, I understand that it can be difficult to participate verbally. I urge you to try anyway and I will also make a special note of active listening. Please also remember that participation includes respect, so disruptive behavior such as talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early, and the use of cell phones won't be tolerated. Pop quizzes may be given in class occasionally and will count toward the participation grade.

## 2. JITT (JUST IN TIME TEACHING) RESPONSES

The JITT responses enable students to prepare better for class by working through the text ahead of class to determine both what they understand and where they have questions and for me to be able to see this ahead of time in order to tailor the class to address questions, confusions, and interests more effectively. Thus, the responses are a *shared responsibility* between the students and me. For each class session, students must respond to a particular prompt over the assigned reading. Each response has three parts:

- 1) a thesis statement articulating what the author's primary argument is,
- 2) an answer to a provided question, and
- 3) a question, whether in terms of clarification, explanation, or implication, that you have regarding the text.

You must also include a complete citation for the text in your response!

The responses should only take about ten minutes to complete, but it's imperative that they are done with care. **Responses must be submitted via eLearning by 7am the day they are due. No late responses will be accepted except in unique circumstances, such as a family emergency, and with prior arrangement.**

Responses will receive a grade of 1, 2, or 3. A grade of 1 means some attempt is given, but the response is incomplete. 2 means the response meets the basic requirements, but the thesis is weak or vague, the short answer is too brief, there is no direct reference to the text, or there is seemingly little effort put into the question posed. A 3 means the thesis is well-developed, the short-answer is complete and refers directly to the text, and the question posed is thoughtful. The lowest grades will be dropped from the final total.

## 3. ART FIELD NOTES

One of the main claims of art is that it enables us to experience things we might not otherwise be able to experience. The goal of the art field notes is for you take notice in your day-to-day life by recording instances of those things you encounter that are art, beautiful, disgusting, or ugly. You can keep the field notes in whatever format you choose, whether it be on your phone, in a notebook, a website, podcast, computer file, etc. Whatever format, you must still be able to orally, and ideally visually or audially, share those experiences with the rest of the class.

The diary has three components:

- 1) a weekly record of your experiences of different art objects or aesthetic experiences
- 2) on Thursdays, we will all share our findings with one another
- 3) on the following Tuesday, you will submit a one-page paper that a) explains a text or concept from the previous week and b) applies that theory to one of your diary entries.

## 4. ESSAYS

The essays will be critical analysis and response papers of 900-1500 words (approximately 2-3 pages), typed and double-spaced. The essays provide you the opportunity to demonstrate familiarity with the texts by answering a particular prompt, which I will provide you. Students are welcome to come up with their own prompt, but it must receive my approval ahead of time. This

assignment connects to learning goal of being able to identify, explain, and pose thoughtful questions of several philosophical theories of philosophy of art; compare and distinguish substantively among at least two theories; analyze contemporary issues through the lens of a particular theory; and articulate and argue well for your own position in written assignments. More specific guidelines for the essays will be discussed in class.

The first essay will be due on July 12th and the second July 26th. ***Papers should be submitted BOTH in hard copy and on eLearning by the start of class. Please be sure to include your ID number, but not your name, to facilitate anonymous grading.***

N.B.: Wikipedia, Sparknotes, and other sources can be helpful for preliminary background research, but they will not help you significantly beyond this. You'll need to demonstrate original thought and provide your own analysis of different arguments. Have confidence in your own abilities, and if you need more help, see me. All sources, including those consulted for background absolutely must be cited properly.

#### 5. CLASS FACILITATOR

Because this course will follow more of a seminar format, each student will be responsible for facilitating the class discussion for one day. The facilitation must last for at least twenty minutes and needs to cover only one section of the text. The facilitator should both clarify ideas and raise questions for discussion. It is better to facilitate a detailed, close discussion of one element of the text rather than trying to summarize the entirety of the reading in twenty minutes.

**Each student will provide a one- to two-page discussion document for the class. You must email me the document by 6 p.m. the night before the presentation so I can make copies for the class.** The document should 1) introduce the day's reading, 2) explain key philosophical concepts and ideas of the thinker or text assigned, 3) refer directly to quotations and passages in the text, and 4) raise at least three questions for class discussion. These questions can be to clarify, challenge, assess significance, etc., of the reading, e.g.: Is Plato correct? **Each student must meet with me to discuss her presentation at least two days ahead of time.** A schedule will be determined in class.

#### 6. FINAL PROJECT

The final project is your opportunity to provide an answer to a question regarding philosophy of art and beauty. It is up to you what question you address. To answer your question, you have the opportunity either to

1. create a work (an artwork, piece of music, podcast, dialogue, short story, video, etc.) and provide a 1100-1500 word written analysis and explanation of the work that draws on one of the theories we discussed this semester. Or,
2. write a 1500-1800 word research paper analyzing a theory or contemporary issue in philosophy of art and beauty.

Both project formats require a proposal for the project (paragraph length is sufficient), which must be submitted via eLearning by **Tuesday, July 26**. The proposal should articulate the question you

will be asking, some suggestions of how you will answer it, and which project format you have chosen.

Final projects are due by **Tuesday, August 8**. Students may include a photograph, video, or audio file of their works if they wish to retain the original.

Presentations should be 2-5 minutes long. The written component will be graded according to the rubric provided for writing assignments.

**Project Breakdown for Option 1:**

Proposal	10%
Creative work	25%
Paper	65%

**Project Breakdown for Option 2:**

Proposal	10%
Paper	90%

**GRADING STANDARDS**

- A, Expert: The work primarily demonstrates especially skillful and in-depth understanding, analysis, synthesis, and insight
- B-A/B, Proficient: The work primarily demonstrates competent understanding, analysis, synthesis, and insight with some depth
- C-B/C, Apprentice: The work primarily demonstrates basic understanding, analysis, synthesis, and insight, but requires further development
- D. Novice: The work primarily demonstrates incomplete or inaccurate understanding, analysis, synthesis, and insight;

Please also see the detailed rubrics on our course site to see how the essays and final paper assignments will be assessed.

Your grades will be recorded on our class site. I am happy to discuss outcomes and strategies for maintaining or improving your development in the course in person. If you have a question about a particular grade, I ask that you first read through my comments and criteria and then schedule an appointment with me to discuss it.

**LATE WORK**

Late response papers are not accepted, except in very particular circumstances. For other written assignments, you have a one-day free extension, no questions asked, and it is up to you when you use it. After two days, if I have still not received your work, you must meet with me to discuss your ideas and put a plan for completion in place. Late work without that meeting will not be accepted.

**COMMUNICATION**

Students are expected to check their Mount Mary email accounts regularly. The best way to contact me is via email. I will generally respond to all emails within twenty-four hours, except possibly on weekends. I will respond to emails before 8pm, so do not wait until the last minute to contact me.

Emails between us, as well as among your classmates, are professional correspondences and should reflect that degree of formality. Please be sure to include a subject line, greeting, and signature. Remember, too, that a “thank you” goes a long way. I am more than happy to answer questions or bounce around ideas, but try first to verify whether your questions have already been answered in the syllabus or other course materials. So, before you send an email, ask yourself, 1) Did I already check the syllabus?, 2) Did I check eLearning?, 3) Have I asked a classmate, or can I ask at the beginning of the next class meeting? If your question is more substantive, please send it along.

Grades may not be discussed via email, so please come by office hours or set up an appointment instead. Appointments for office hours are not necessary and you’re strongly encouraged to drop in to see me, if even to just say hello.

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Mount Mary is an academic community dedicated to the intellectual and social and ethical development of each of its members. As members of this community we all are responsible for maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect and honesty.

Standards for academic integrity provide a structure for the creation of an academic environment consistent with the values of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the mission. In keeping with these goals, all students are expected to strive for integrity, in academic and non-academic pursuits. Acts that involve any attempt to deceive, to present another’s ideas as one’s own, or to enhance one’s grade through dishonest means violate the integrity of both the student and University.

Academic dishonesty in any form has a negative impact on the essential principles of the Mount Mary Community. Therefore, such acts are treated as a serious breach of trust.

A faculty member has the right and authority to deal with academic dishonesty in his or her classroom; however, a student who commits multiple violations against academic integrity shall be subject to administrative disciplinary action as described in the Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy and Procedures.

*Copies of the full Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy and Procedures are available through the office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The policy and procedures are included in the Mount Mary Student Handbook, the Undergraduate Bulletin and online at [mtmary.edu/handbook.htm](http://mtmary.edu/handbook.htm) and [my.mtmary.edu](http://my.mtmary.edu)*

## COURSE CALENDAR

Please complete assignments before the date listed. Be sure to bring all texts to class.

What is art and who is an artist?

### Week One

June 26 Introduction

Art and Expression

June 28 Leo Tolstoy, "What is Art?" A 233-242  
R.G. Collingwood, "The Principles of Art" A 282-295

Art and Form

### Week Two

July 3 Clive Bell, "Art" A 261-9  
Susanne Langer, "Feeling and Form" A 317-326

July 5 Meet at Milwaukee Art Museum at 10am  
Dewey "Art as Experience" A 296-316

Art, Institution, and Canon

### Week Three

July 10 Arthur Danto, "The Artworld" A 417-425  
George Dickie, "What is Art? An Institutional Analysis" A 438-444  
Scott Manning Stevens, "The National Museum of the American Indian and the Politics of Display" on eLearning

July 12 Cynthia Freeland, "Gender, Genius, and Guerrilla Girls" on eLearning  
Anna C. Chave, "Dis/Cover/ing the Quilts of Gee's Bend, Alabama" on eLearning  
**First Essay Due**

### Week Four

July 17 David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste" A 103-112  
Shahidha Bari, "The Puzzle of Beauty," bookmark on eLearning

July 19 Immanuel Kant, "Critique of Judgment" A 131-160  
Tobin Siebers, "Disability Aesthetics" on eLearning

Art and Society

### Week Five

July 24 Yuriko Saito, "The Moral Dimension of Japanese Aesthetics" on Blackboard  
Dorinne K. Kondo "The Aesthetics and Politics of Artisanal Identities."  
In class: watch *Jiro Dreams of Sushi*

July 26 Marcia Muelder Eaton, "The Aesthetic and the Ethical" on eLearning  
Mary Devereaux, "Beauty and Evil: The Case of Leni Riefenstahl's Triumph of the



Will” on eLearning  
**Second Essay Due**

Week Six

July 31

Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” A 327-339

In class: watch *Exit Through the Giftshop*

August 2

Ben Davis, “Ways of Seeing Instagram” bookmark on eLearning

Kylie Budge, “Objects in Focus: Museum Visitors and Instagram” on eLearning

Carolyn Miranda, “Kara Walker on the bit of sugar sphinx she saved, video she's making” bookmark on eLearning

Week Seven

August 8

Project Presentations, final discussion