

# PHIL5314: CONTEMPORARY AESTHETICS

TR 11:00-12:20 TR, Eng-Phil 264

## Instructor

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## Course Description

In this course, we will focus on contemporary philosophical problems in the arts, with particular focus on the interrelated roles played by art, artist, and audience, as well as by society at large. We will seek to answer such questions as: What makes art, art? How are the various arts different? How are they alike? Who is the artist? Who is the audience? Who determines what properties a work has, and if it is any good? Is art the proper subject of ethical inquiry? How should we think of government sponsorship and censorship of the arts?

## Readings

Some of the readings for this text are in the course textbook:

Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen, *Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art: The Analytic Tradition* (Blackwell, 2004).

Other readings will be made available in PDF format.

## Course Requirements

Your final grade will depend on the percentage you earn of the total points possible in the class:

A+: 97-100; A: 94-96; 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: 64-66; D-: 60-63.

## Assignments

You must complete two short assignments during the course of the term. One or both may be short (8-10 page) response papers on some particular reading(s) in the course. Papers are due within two weeks of that reading being discussed in class. Papers cannot be written on any of the readings in the final three classes of the term. In lieu of one response paper, you may elect to give a short (20-30 minute) presentation in class on the reading(s) to be discussed that day. Presentations should outline the reading and present issues for discussion. If you choose to do a presentation, you must provide at least one week's notice. Each short assignment is worth 20% of your final grade.

Term papers are due on the final day of class, and are worth 40% of your final grade. Papers should be between 25 and 30 pages in length and should be written on some topic covered in the course of the term. Students should make an appointment with me to discuss their papers earlier in the term.

*Papers will not be accepted via e-mail or fax.*

## Participation

The final 20% of your grade is your participation grade. Participation includes doing the assigned readings *before* the class in which the reading shall be discussed, taking active part in class discussion, putting serious effort into your papers, and attendance. See also "Classroom Courtesy" below.

### Special Accommodations

- Students with disabilities that require special class or exam accommodations must present a form from AccessTECH Disability Support Program specifying the details during the first week of classes. Their offices are located in 335 West Hall. See [www.accesstech.dsa.ttu.edu](http://www.accesstech.dsa.ttu.edu).
- You will not be penalized for any absences due to religious observances. However, it is your responsibility to inform me in advance of any intended absences for religious observance *as soon as possible* so that we can make other arrangements. As well, it remains your responsibility to have read the material assigned for that day and to obtain any notes from one of your classmates for classes missed.

### Classroom Courtesy

Please be courteous to your fellow students and avoid unnecessary disruptions. Arrive on time, leave on time, and *turn off your cell phone during class*. Note that if your cell phone rings during class, *I will answer it*. Laptops are permitted in class, but please do not abuse this privilege. Text-messaging is *not* permitted during my class. If you are seen text-messaging during class-time, your participation grade will be deducted 1 point. This is your only warning.

### The Writing Center

Particularly for new philosophy students, I strongly recommend that you work on your paper with a writing tutor. The Writing Center offers *free assistance* in room 175 of the Philosophy and English Building. See <http://english.ttu.edu/uwc01>.

### Academic Integrity and Irresponsibility

I take incidents of academic misconduct *very seriously*. These include but are not restricted to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and fabrication. Penalties are dependent on the nature of the misconduct, and may involve disciplinary proceedings with the Student Judicial Programs. Knowing what constitutes academic misconduct is *your responsibility*. If you have a concern about what constitutes academic dishonesty *prior to turning in an assignment*, please see me, and I will be happy to help you. For more information, see <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/studentjudicialprograms/academicinteg.php>.

### Course Schedule

\* Readings listed in **bold** are included in the Lamarque/Oslen collection. All others are provided as PDFs.

Topic	Date	Readings
Introduction	(Th) Jan 16	Intro
Definition	(Tu) Jan 21	Leo Tolstoy, "What Is Art?"; Clive Bell, "Art as Significant Form"
	(Th) Jan 23	Paul Ziff, "The Task of Defining a Work of Art"; <b>Morris Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics"</b>
	(Tu) Jan 28	<b>Arthur C. Danto, "The Artworld"</b> ; <b>George Dickie, "The New Institutional Theory of Art"</b>
	(Th) Jan 30	George Schlesinger, "Aesthetic Experience and the Definition of Art"; <b>Monroe C. Beardsley, "An Aesthetic Definition of Art"</b>
	(Tu) Feb 4	<b>Jerrold Levinson, "Defining Art Historically"</b> ; Berys Gaut, "'Art' as a Cluster Concept"
Ontology	(Th) Feb 6	Amie Thomasson, "The Ontology of Art and Knowledge in Aesthetics"; David Davies, "The Primacy of Practice in the Ontology of Art"
	(Tu) Feb 11	Richard Wollheim, Selection from <i>Art and Its Objects</i> ; <b>Joseph Margolis, "The Ontological Peculiarity of Works of Art"</b>
	(Th) Feb 13	Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"; Nelson Goodman, <i>Languages of Art</i> , Ch. 3

	(Tu) Feb 18	Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Toward an Ontology of Artworks"; <b>Jerrold Levinson, "What a Musical Work Is"</b>
	(Th) Feb 20	<b>Gregory Currie, "Art Works as Action Types"; Darren Hudson Hick, "Ontology and the Challenge of Literary Appropriation"</b>
	(Tu) Feb 25	Andrew Kania, "Making Tracks: The Ontology of Rock Music"; Sherri Irvin, "The Ontological Diversity of Visual Artworks"
Aesthetic Properties	(Th) Feb 27	Leonard B. Meyer, "Forgery and the Anthropology of Art; <b>Jack W. Meiland, "Originals, Copies, and Aesthetic Value"</b>
	(Tu) Mar 4	David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste"; Immanuel Kant, Selection from <i>The Critique of Judgment</i>
	(Th) Mar 6	<b>Frank Sibley, "Aesthetic Concepts"; Frank Sibley, "Particularity, Art, and Evaluation"</b>
	(Tu) Mar 11	<b>Kendall Walton, "Categories of Art"; Philip Pettit, "The Possibility of Aesthetic Realism"</b>
	(Th) Mar 13	John Bender, "Supervenience, and the Justification of Aesthetic Properties"; Darren Hudson Hick, "Aesthetic Supervenience Revisited"
	(Mar 18, 20 Holiday)	<b>No Classes</b>
Interpretation & Intention	(Tu) Mar 25	T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent"; W.K. Wimsatt & Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy"
	(Th) Mar 27	Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author"; Michel Foucault, "What Is An Author?"
	(Tu) Apr 1	Hirsch, "In Defense of the Author"; Daniel Nathan, "Irony, Metaphor, and the Problem of Interpretation"
	(Th) Apr 3	Gregory Currie, "Work and Text"; Noël Carroll, "Art, Intention, and Conversation"
	(Tu) Apr 8	<b>Jerrold Levinson, "Intention and Interpretation in Literature"; Berys Gaut, "Interpreting the Arts: A Patchwork Theory"</b>
	(Th) Apr 10	<b>Stein Haugom Olsen, "Literary Aesthetics and Literary Practice"; Peter Lamarque, "The Death of the Author: An Analytical Autopsy"</b>
Art & Society	(Tu) Apr 15	Noël Carroll, "Moderate Moralism"; <b>Berys Gaut, "The Ethical Criticism of Art"</b>
	(Th) Apr 17	James C. Anderson & Jeffrey T. Dean, "Moderate Autonomism"; Matthew Kieran, "In Defence of the Ethical Evaluation of Art"
	(Tu) Apr 29	Maureen Dowd, "Unruffled Helms Basks in Eye of Arts Storm"; Mary Devereaux, "Protected Space: Politics, Censorship, and the Arts"; Richard Meyer, "The Jesse Helms Theory of Art"
	(Th) May 1	Richard Serra, "Art and Censorship"; Richard Shusterman, "Aesthetic Censorship: Censoring Art for Art's Sake"
	(Tu) May 6	Noël Carroll, "Can Government Funding of the Arts be Justified Theoretically?"; Joel Feinberg, "Not with My Tax Money: The Problem of Justifying Government Subsidies for the Arts"