

Philosophy and the Arts

Philosophy 320, Spring 2022

Instructor: Jeffrey A. Bell, Ph.D.

Time: 2:00–3:15pm TTh, in Fayard 239

Office Hours: 9-11:00am MW, W 3:30-5pm, or by appointment, in Fayard 355C.

Phone: 549-3918

Email: jeffrey.bell@sclu.edu

Course web page: on moodle, but additional resources and links to helpful sites can be had at:

<https://jeffreyaBell.net/>

Click the Teaching tab and then on the link to this course.

Required Reading:

Aesthetics: A Comprehensive Anthology, edited by Steven M. Cahn and Aaron Meskin (rental text)
Multiple on-line readings

Course Objectives

This course will examine a number of the efforts to explain and account for the nature of art, for what makes an object a work of art, the characteristics of such objects, and whether there are any cross-cultural constants with respect to the nature of artistic activity as distinct from other activities. These and other questions will be examined alongside discussions of particular artistic genres. In this course we will discuss literature/poetry, music, painting, film, and architecture.

Course Requirements

There will be one midterm exam (20%), a final (20%), a written assignment (40%), and a class presentation (20%). The first of two possible written assignments is to be 4 pages long (1000 words, no less). This paper is to discuss any of the artistic genres that will be discussed in class and relate it to one of the philosophical arguments from the text. The second written assignment (1500 words) is to be on a topic of your choosing that is relevant to the course. You may also elect to write one 2500-word essay on a topic of your choice. This paper will be worth 40% of your grade. If you write the two papers (1000 and 1500 word papers), they will both combine to total 40% of your grade. In the 1500-word and 2500-word papers **you must make notable reference to, and cite from, course readings** (i.e., Cahn text and/or any of the online readings), and these papers are also research papers so **must also cite an outside source**, meaning a scholarly text or suitable resource (e.g., film, etc.). **Papers that do not do either of these will not be accepted.** Note the paper requirements at the [paper requirements](#) link for this course. I strongly recommend that you pre-approve your topics. If you use a computer word processing program, keep a copy of your work on a backup disk and back up your files regularly. Loss of a computer file will not be accepted

as an excuse for not turning in work on time. The deadlines are the same for everyone. No exceptions. **Exams and papers will be marked down a full letter grade for each day they are late.** The two exams will have a section of short answer questions, passage interpretations, and an essay question. I will post a study sheet a few days prior to each exam. Exams will be closely monitored and checked for plagiarism. It is your responsibility to know what plagiarism is and to avoid it. Anyone caught cheating or turning in plagiarized work will fail the course and will be reported to appropriate university officials.

Attendance Requirements

Class participation is an integral part of the course. Failure to attend class regularly will harm your final grade, **and any student with more than five unexcused absences will automatically fail this course.** **Note: the readings for this course will also be supplemented with lectures, and material from these lectures will appear on the exams.** Students who are not listed on the official class roll are not properly registered for the course, will not be allowed to attend class, and will not receive a grade for the course under any circumstances. Students bear the responsibility for ensuring that they are listed on the official class roll. Students with disabilities: If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Office of Student Life, Room 203, Student Union.

Student behavior/classroom decorum: Free discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable. Examples may include routinely entering class late or departing early; use of cellphones; repeatedly talking in class without being recognized; talking while others are speaking; or arguing in a way that is perceived as "crossing the civility line."

Grading:

At the end of the semester, all students who have completed all the requirements listed above will have a certain number of points out of a hundred (e.g., possible of 20 on midterm, 20 on final, 40 on paper(s), and 20 on presentation). Students with a grade between 90-100 will receive an A, 80-90 a B, 70-80 a C, 60-70 a D, and below 60 an F. Incomplete (I) grades: University policy states that the grade of "I" (incomplete) will be given only for work which is of passing quality at examination time but which, because of circumstances beyond the student's control, is not complete. This means, first of all, that

students may receive an “I” grade only in the case of sudden dire emergencies, such as severe and prolonged illness or injury requiring lengthy hospitalization. Students may not receive an “I” grade for prolonged absences over which they do have some control, such as incarceration or court-ordered rehabilitation for chemical dependency. Secondly, instructors may give a student an “I” grade only if the student has completed all required assignments with due dates prior to the date of the emergency, with a passing grade. In those rare and extraordinary cases in which an “I” grade is given, the instructor and student must complete an “I” Contract form in the department office and obtain the department head’s approval. No “I” grades can be given after the end of the final exam period. Students who receive “I” grades must follow the procedure for removing the “I” described in the current *Southeastern General Catalogue*, or the grade will become an “F”.

Posting Grades:

During the semester grades will not be posted for this class. All graded assignments will be returned in class, or directly emailed to the student, as soon as they are graded. I am required to keep final exams on file for a year following completion of the course. Final course grades will be posted on Leonet. Do not call the department office or the instructor’s office to ask about grades—it is illegal to give such information over the phone.

Reading Assignments

- Jan 19 Introduction
- Jan 24 Kristeller, “Introduction,” 3-15
- Jan 26 Plato, “Ion,” 16-23
- Jan 31 Aristotle, “Poetics,” 41-56
- Feb 2 Third Earl of Shaftesbury, “Characteristics...”
David Hume, “Of the Standard of Taste” 103-12
- Feb 7 St. Augustine, “De Musica,” 64-71
Hanslick, “Beautiful in Music,” 217-221
- Feb 9 Levinson, “What a musical work is,” 479-493
Kivy, “Emotions in Music,” 628-636
- Feb 14 Music discussion
- Feb 16 Burke, “Origin of our ideas of the Sublime”
113-122
- Feb 21 Schiller, “Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man,” 170-179
- Feb 23 Kant, “Critique of Judgment,” 131-160.
- Feb 28 Mardi Gras break. No Class.

- Mar 2 Heidegger, “Origin of the Work of Art,”
344-357
Study guide for midterm posted.
1000 word papers due.
- Mar 7 Bazin, “Ontology of Photographic Image”
(online)
Bazin, “Myth of Total Cinema” (online)
- Mar 9 Film (400 Blows)
- Mar 14 finish film and discussion
Review for midterm
- Mar 16 Dickie, “What is Art?” 426-437
Danto, “The Artworld,” 417-425
Take home midterm posted
Take home midterm due no later than
March 18, 11:59pm.
- Mar 21 Benjamin, “Art in the age of...” 327-343
Greenberg, “Modernist Painting” (online)
Avant-garde art discussion
- Mar 23 Online lecture.
- Mar 28 Croce, “Aesthetics,” 270-281
Collingwood, “The Principles of Art,” 282-295
- Mar 30 Dewey, “Art as Experience,” 296-316
Last day to withdraw from classes: April 1
- Apr 4 Tolstoy, “What is Art?” 233-242
- Apr 6 Adorno, “Aesthetic Theory,” 358-369
- Apr 11 Carroll, “Historical Narratives and the
Philosophy of Art”
Carroll, “Architecture and Ethics” (online)
- Apr 13 Guyer, “Philosophy of Architecture”
parts 1 and 2
(online)
Architecture discussion
- April 15 – April 22 Spring Break.
- Apr 25 Class presentations
- Apr 27 Class presentations
- May 2 Class presentations
- May 4 Class presentations
Review
2500/1500 word papers due.
Take home finals posted
- May 12 (Thursday) **Final Exams due by 11:59pm**