

Course ID:	Course Title:	Spring 2022
FA 240	Aesthetics	Prerequisite: None
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Delivery:	Online, synchronous	Instructor:	Dr. Christina George	First Day of Class:	Monday, May 16
Days:	M-F; T-SA	Email:	christina.george@ambrose.edu	Last Day to Add/Drop:	End of the First Day of Class (5/16)
Time:	1:00-4:30 (MDT)	Phone:	503-481-4888	Last Day to Withdraw:	End of the Last Day of Class (5/28)
Room (Zoom ID):	840 194 9942 (Password emailed to all students)	Office:	N/A	Last Day to Apply for Coursework Extension:	End of the Last Day of Class
		Office Hours:	Via Zoom; by appointment	Last Day of Class:	Saturday, May 28

Important Dates and Information

For a list of all important dates and information regarding participating in classes at Ambrose University, please refer to the Academic Calendar at <https://ambrose.edu/academic-calendar> .

Course Description

FA 240 Aesthetics (3) B

This course introduces students to the philosophical issues related to art and the apprehension of beauty. A variety of metaphysical and epistemological concerns will be addressed: What is art? What is beauty? Is art artificial or can it be natural? What is the nature and the role of the artist? Do works of art have meaning and if so, how are these meanings derived? Objectivism, formalism, subjectivism, and expressivism will be explored.

Note: This course is cross-listed as PH 240

Program Outcomes

1. **Epistemology:** This course introduces students to the study of aesthetics insofar as it deepens one's understanding of how one can know, think, and learn. The course will include an introduction to the history of the discipline and will give students a foundation for continued study within the discipline and the deepening of their critical thinking skills, irrespective of their academic major.
2. **Methodology:** Through a careful examination of select primary sources (including but not limited to art, music, nature, and philosophical writings on aesthetics), students will cultivate intellectual and practical tools by which they can apprehend the main arguments and points of view central to this discipline. They will also develop an enriched understanding of how the study of aesthetics pertains to their study of related academic disciplines.
3. **Content:** This course will introduce key and representative content from the discipline of aesthetics, without presumption of complete coverage, giving students a foundation for continued study within the discipline and contributing to their basic cultural literacy.
4. **Communication:** This course will provide students with ample opportunity and customized guidance as they learn to develop an increased capacity for rigorous inquiry, discussion, speaking, and writing.
5. **Formation:** This course provides a meaningful introduction to many points of intersection between Christianity and the field of aesthetics, giving students ways to bring their Christian faith and fundamental moral convictions into conversation with their intellectual lives, and modelling the same.

Expected Learning Outcomes

By course completion, students will:

1. Understand the ways in which the study of aesthetics pertains directly to the study of how we think/know and will also be able to articulate an introductory history of the discipline from its inception until present day.
2. Utilize primary tools within the sphere of aesthetics to further their understanding of art, beauty, and one's apprehending of these. These tools will include learning to ask meaningful and constructive questions, comparing different points of view within a framework for continued learning, and learning to recognize the relevance of these philosophical questions insofar as they pertain to everyday life.
3. Be able to interact with key works of art, writings on beauty and art, musical works, and contemporary displays of art criticism in such a way which demonstrates both cultural literacy and increased curiosity for the relevance of the discipline.
4. Be able to define key terms with clarity and will also be able to demonstrate a thoughtful and mature understanding of art, beauty, criticism, artistic expression, and taste insofar as they pertain to the study of aesthetics.

5. Be able to speak about the way in which these philosophical and artistic questions pertain to daily life and relate to their understanding of God and the community which surrounds them.

Textbook(s)

1. *Aesthetics: The Classic Readings*, ed. David E. Cooper. 2nd ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2019.
Note: print copies and eBook versions are available through the bookstore. These can be purchased through the bookstore or online. The eBook is also available through the link in the Moodle course page. (This eBook copy is available for free for 12 hours before requiring purchase).
2. C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*. Available as an electronic text at the following link:
<http://www.samizdat.qc.ca/cosmos/philo/AbolitionofMan.pdf>
3. Additional readings may be provided by instructor.

Course Schedule

Note: schedule of topics is subject to change. All changes will be announced as needed.

Date	Topic(s)	Related Assignments
M (5/16) Week 1 core topic: What is art?	Introduction to course: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class introductions • Overview of logistics (syllabus, due dates, Moodle, etc.) Introduction to aesthetics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The history of aesthetics • Baumgarten, <i>Aesthetica</i> and G.W.F. Hegel, <i>“Introduction to Aesthetics”</i> • Is aesthetics relevant today? 	Note: Please look ahead to see which readings and related discussions will be due at the beginning of each class session.
T (5/17)	What is art? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we mean by “Art”? • What is an artist? • Is there bad art? • R.G. Collingwood, <i>The Principles of Art</i> • Charles Batteux, <i>Les beaux arts réduits à un même principe</i> • Martin Heidegger, “The origin of the work of art” from Lectures 1 and 2 • F.W.J. Schelling, <i>Philosophy of Art</i> 	In-class discussion: Plato’s <i>Republic</i> . (ACR*, pp. 11–26) * <i>Aesthetics: The Classic Readings</i>

W (5/18)	<p>Beauty: In the Eye of the Beholder?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty: necessary or extra? • Does “good” art require beauty as a characteristic? • How do we know what is beautiful? • Plato: <i>Symposium</i> • Coomaraswamy, <i>The Dance of Siva</i> 	<p>In-class discussion: Plotinus, <i>Enneads</i>, ACR, pp. 57–65.</p> <p>In-class: <i>Architectural Digest</i> project</p>
Th (5/19)	<p>Art and being human: Changing Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impressions vs. Reality • The element of control in art-making • Expressionism in art • The Abstract in art and music 	<p>In-class discussion: Mo Tzu, “Against music” and Hsun Tzu, “A discussion of music” in ACR, 46–54.</p>
F (5/20)	<p>Nature: Is It Art?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophy of art vs. philosophy of nature (are they compatible?) • Nature versus representation of nature • Beauty and experience versus contemplation <p>Outdoor lab (reflection due Tuesday, 5/24)</p>	<p>In-class discussion: Ronald Hepburn, “Aesthetic appreciation of nature”, ACR pp. 321–335.</p> <p>Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artist Showcase • Question List, part 1
M (5/23)	NO CLASS—Victoria Day	
T (5/24)	<p>Art and meaning: audience response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art and emotion • Art as experience? (John Dewey) • Aesthetic judgment (Kant) <p>Week 2 core topic: How (should) I respond?</p>	<p>In-class discussion: Tolstoy, “On Art”, ACR pp. 198–209.</p> <p>Due: Outdoor Lab Reflection</p>
W (5/25)	<p>Taste: truth or preference?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Goût</i> debate (in-class) • Taste and the self • “Christian” taste? • Aesthetic standards in worship? • Social media and the self • The French Encyclopedists: Voltaire, Montesquieu, d’Alembert 	TBD
TH (5/26)	<p>C. S. Lewis: <i>The Abolition of Man</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Men without chests” • Cultivating taste • Practice and virtue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C.P.E. Bach and J.J. Quantz • Practical implications 	<p>In-class discussion: Lewis, <i>The Abolition of Man</i> (parts 1 and 2, pp. 1–25 in eBook)</p>

F (5/27)	Changing terms; cultural implications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we view the past? • Criticism in the public sphere • Course wrap-up 	In-class discussion: Lewis, <i>The Abolition of Man</i> (part 3, pp. 28–40 in eBook) Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aesthetics in the Everyday • Question List, part 2
SA (5/28)	Open office hours; final project help and last details.	Final Project Due: Saturday, July 9 at 11:59pm.

Requirements:

In-class expectations:

- Please call in to the Zoom meeting promptly at the start of each class. (Unless arranged beforehand with the instructor, 20 minutes late to class=1 late arrival, and 2 late arrivals=1 absence). See remainder of attendance policy below.
- All participants are expected to have their camera turned on for the duration of each class session. Note: since each person is calling in from a different location and may feel uncomfortable having the camera on, please feel free to use virtual backgrounds to enhance privacy.
- This is a discussion and collaboration-centric class. Thus, participation is expected from each student in all class sessions and comprises a significant part of your grade.
- Please refrain from cell phone use and other distractions during our active class time.

Attendance:

Given the short duration of this course, each student may miss 1 class session without penalty or confirmation from instructor. Completion of corresponding assignments must be arranged with the instructor. Beyond this single absence, any missed class sessions must be cleared with the instructor *before* the start of class and will only be granted in the case of family emergency, extreme illness, personal emergency, or pre-approved college obligations. Arrangements to make up missed work from missed class sessions must be arranged before the start of the missed class. Students must communicate with the instructor for *every* class period missed, even if these are consecutive. Each absence beyond what is outlined above will result in a grade deduction of half a letter grade from the final course grade.

Assignment Details and Related Expectations:

1. Some course assignments are collaborative and/or completed during class sessions, while other assignments are take-home assignments. In the event that you must turn in a written essay or similar submission, please submit a Word document or PDF via Moodle (rather than sending via email). This will ensure you get credit for your assignment.
2. Late work: All assignments are due in class, or by the beginning of class (depending on the nature of the assignment). Late work will only be accepted for full credit within the context of prior communication with the instructor.

Assignment Details: *

(Details for each assignment will be posted in related assignment within Moodle course page.)

*While these are the expected assignments for the course, there may be slight changes as the course progresses in order to accommodate an optimal workflow for students individually and the class as a whole. Any changes will be announced in Moodle in advance.

1. Daily reading and group discussion

- This grade pertains to your involvement in daily discussions on required readings. Each discussion will be led by the instructor, but the success of the activity is dependent upon your involvement. As such, you are expected to have read the assigned essay(s) and to be prepared to add your own questions and consideration to the discussion. These discussions may be 30 minutes or greater in length, so you should have ample opportunity to participate. It is expected that each student has a different personality and level of comfort with this activity, so your success is chiefly dependent upon your own effort and growth throughout the course.
- Rubric:
 - 5= participant speaks more than 10 times and engages the discussion with curiosity.
 - 4=participant speaks 5-10 times and engages the discussion with curiosity.
 - 3= participant speaks less than 5 times and is not actively involved in the discussion or does not seem to have read the text.
 - 1-2=participant does not engage with the discussion and does not demonstrate any familiarity with the text.
- Participation grade submitted daily. (5 points possible)

2. Architectural Digest Project

- This will be a collaborative, in-class project, wherein each student will be part of a small group of 3-4 students.
- Each group will be assigned an issue of the preeminent design journal, *Architectural Digest*, for study. Groups will take note of and prepare to share many of the fundamental principles intrinsic to our study of aesthetics which they detect throughout these journals. Questions helpful for examination include: “What does the marketing of this particular object communicate about our desires as human beings?”, “What is taste?”, “What is style”, “What does it mean to be an artist?”, “Does this magazine appeal to the everyman, or only to the elite?” Each student will be expected to share his or her own insights from this study. Since this project will occur in-class, no outside preparation will be required.
- Digital copies of these issues are available in the assignment directions in Moodle.
- Due date: In-class on Wednesday, 5/18. (10 pts)

3. Artist Showcase

- The definition of the term “artist” has undergone many changes in common linguistic usage over the last centuries. The purpose of this project is to investigate a relatively contemporary relationship between

the artist and his/her art. Whether in the context of visual art, musical composition, film production, etc., it has become increasingly common for the artist to provide an “artist statement” which gives the listener or observer insight into the artist’s motivation for creating their art, or their intention for the manner in which their art ought to be apprehended/received by an audience.

- For this project, find 3 “artist statements” by living artists (musical, visual art, architects, poets, filmmakers, playwrights, etc.). What can you observe about their motivation, artistic process, communication of desired meaning or interpretation (if any)? In 300 words, briefly describe the artist, summarize their statements, and include your observations. Submit via Word doc or PDF on Moodle and come prepared to share your findings with the class.
- Due date: Friday, 5/20 by 1:00pm.
- Grade based on:
 - Adherence to general assignment guidelines (25 pts.)
 - Quality of observations (50 pts.)
 - Preparation to share with class (25 pts.)

4. Art and Nature: Outdoor Lab

- This project is a response to our class dealing with the tensions which exist between a philosophy of art and a contemplation of natural beauty.
- Process:
 - Spend 1 hour outside, in a place of your choosing. (You could go on a hike or remain in your own backyard). The important thing is to be alone and observe your experience and your surroundings.
 - Consider our discussion of Ronald Hepburn’s “Aesthetic appreciation of nature,” as well as the works of art depicting natural scenes we examined.
 - Reflect on your experience of your surroundings and take some notes documenting this experience. Would you consider your natural surroundings to be art? Why or why not? Do you see anything you would consider to be ugly? How does this affect your experience? Is everything you see natural, or is some of it man-made? How does this affect your perception of it? What does it *feel* like to be surrounded by nature? Do you feel as though you are a part of it, or do you feel detached or separate? Do you experience other people around you? If so, how does your solitude juxtaposed with this awareness of others affect your experience in the moment? Is it like being near others in an art museum, or is it different? How? Did anything from our discussion of Hepburn’s text influence your experience?
 - Document as many of your own observations as you can (minimum: 15 different thoughts, reflections, observations). Don’t be satisfied with easy answers...try to push the bounds of your own curiosity.
 - Your reflections may be documented in the following ways:
 - You may write on scratch paper, provided your handwriting is legible (and upload a jpg of your notes to Moodle)
 - You may type up your notes into a document and upload to Moodle via word doc or pdf.
 - You may record a voice-memo and email it to me if you prefer to reflect “on-the-go” in real time.
- Due date: Tuesday, May 24 by 1:00pm.

5. Aesthetics in the Everyday

- Throughout the two weeks of this course, we have been discussing the ways in which these questions or principles pertaining to aesthetics pop up in everyday life. This project will simply comprise a list of places where you have seen people comment on beauty, art, taste, style, design, etc. Great places to look are social media, marketing for different products (everything from clothes to cars, to household items), movies, etc.
- Submit your list of observations via Word doc or PDF. Aim for 10 “discoveries.”
- Due date: Friday, May 27 by 1:00pm.

6. Question list (submitted in 2 parts)

- One of the most effective tools we will practice throughout this course is asking questions, rather than making statements which assume we already know the answer. This is helpful not only for our experience as we apprehend specific works of art or beauty, but also as we practice interacting with the mode of thought and dialogue which belongs to philosophical inquiry.
- At the end of each week, you will be asked to submit a list of questions you have written down throughout the week (you may think of these while interacting with the required readings, class discussions, lectures, or thoughts which come to mind during your own free time. You need not try to answer these; rather, encourage yourself to be rigorously curious.) Aim for a minimum of 20 questions per week.
- Due date(s): Friday (5/20) at 1:00pm (first submission) and Friday (5/27) at 1:00pm (second submission).

7. Final Project: “Is it art?”

- Your final project for this class will be a defense of a particular work in which you will make a case for whether or not it ought to be considered “(good?) art”.
- What to submit: an image of the work of visual art (or recording if it is a musical work) and a paper which details your argument (submit as PDF). Your paper should be approximately 2,000 words, double-spaced, in Times New Roman, formatted according to *Chicago Manual of Style* (we will go over this in class for those of you who have not yet formatted a paper using Chicago style).
- Parameters for your argument include:
 - The use of 7-10 arguments or criteria for what makes something “(good?) art” from the readings or authors we have discussed in class. You should interact with these ideas from at least 5 different authors. Prepare to cite their ideas clearly in your footnotes.
- Note: you will not be graded on your particular position with respect to the work of art. Rather, your paper will be evaluated for the quality of your interaction with the work itself and the authors/ideas you are using for support. For this project, you are the philosopher and the critic!
- Due date: Although our class concludes on Saturday, May 28, you will have until Saturday, July 9 at 11:59pm to submit your final project.

Grade Summary:

Grade percentages according to assignment type:

In-class discussion on core daily reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily textual discussions on assigned reading (5 pts daily) 	30%
Other in-class assignments include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakout groups/discussions (10 pts.) Daily <i>Architectural Digest</i> project (10 pts.) 	20%
Take-home assignments include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artist showcase (100 pts.) Art and Nature: Outdoor lab (10 pts.) Aesthetics in the Everyday (10 pts) Question lists (submitted in two parts) (40 pts.) 	30%
Final Project (100 pts.)	20%

Grading Scale:

94-100 A	76-79 C+	60-62 D-
90-93 A-	73-75 C	0-59 F
86-89 B+	70-72 C-	
83-85 B	66-69 D+	
80-82 B-	63-65 D	

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Ambrose University Important Policies & Procedures:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions.

Exam Scheduling

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a *Revised Final Exam Time Application* to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; or 2) the scheduled final examination slot results in three consecutive examination periods. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class. Please refer to your professor regarding their electronic etiquette expectations.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/academics/academic-calendar>

Privacy

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Coursework Extensions

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and registrar. Normally, Course Extension Applications will be considered only when all of the following conditions are met:

- the quality of prior course work has been satisfactory;
- circumstances beyond your control, such as an extended illness or death of a family member, make it impossible for you to complete the course work on time; and
- you submit *Coursework Extension Application* to the Office of the Registrar on or before the deadline specified in the Academic Schedule.

If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course. A temporary grade of TX will be assigned until a final grade is submitted in accordance with the new deadline. A final grade of F will apply to:

- all course work submitted after the end of the semester unless a coursework extension has been granted; and all course work submitted after the revised due date provided by an approved extension to coursework.

Academic Success and Supports

Accessibility Services

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to

determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Ambrose Writing Services

Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/sas/writing-services>

Ambrose Tutoring Services

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at ambrose.edu/wellness.
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See <https://ambrose.edu/student-life/crisissupport> for a list of staff members.

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888