



Course Syllabus

Course	PHIL 1307 <i>Introduction to Philosophy of Art</i>
Professor	Dr. Andy Amato
Term	Fall 2023
Day & Time	Main Lecture: Mon & Wed 11:00-11:50am
Location	GR 3.302

Professor Contact Information & Email Protocol

The best way to contact me is by email: andy.amato@utdallas.edu I will check email periodically throughout the day, Monday through Friday. I will try to respond promptly, but please allow at least twenty-four hours (excluding weekends). Before emailing, please follow this protocol: 1) *consult the syllabus* to see if it addresses your concern, if you don't find what you need, then 2) *contact your TA* and see if they can assist you, and if neither of those steps resolves your issue, then please feel free to 3) *contact me*. Further, when sending an email make sure you: a) *properly address it* (for example, "Dear Professor Amato" or "Hi Dr. Amato" etc.) b) *include your name, class, and section information*, and c) *try to be as clear and concise as possible*. You must tell us who you are and what class you are in so that we can help you. And remember that this is formal communication with your professor, not casual conversation via direct messaging—*treat it accordingly*. If you do not follow this protocol, we will simply refer you to this portion of the syllabus. My office hours will be on Tuesday from 3-4pm and by appointment. My office is JO 5.704

Discussion Section & Teaching Assistant Contact Information

Section	Meeting Time	Location	Teaching Assistant	Email
201	Fri 11-11:50am	SLC 2.202	Justin Bensinger	justin.bensinger@utdallas.edu
202	Fri 1-1:50pm	CB 1.219	Justin Bensinger	justin.bensinger@utdallas.edu

Your TA, Mr. Bensinger, will provide you with his office hour information during your first discussion section.

Course Description for PHIL 1307

What *is* art? What does it *do*? What does it *mean*? What *role* does art play in society? Does it tell us something about nature or the human experience that science cannot? What is the relationship between art and beauty? Is beauty merely a subjective experience or judgment? Is it simply something culturally relative? Or can beauty be something universal? Can ideas or theories or arguments be beautiful? Can beauty show us *truth*? Can beauty or art help preserve society? Can beauty or art be *revolutionary*? And how do we even talk about art in a philosophical way? These are the sorts of questions this course will ask. To help us answer these questions we will read a wide selection of philosophers and examine a variety of artworks. Additionally, our class discussions will attempt to apply the philosophy we read to the artworks we view in order to become better interpreters of art.

Required Text (*you need a physical copy*)

- Stephen David Ross, *Art and Its Significance: An Anthology of Aesthetic Theory*, 3rd Revised Ed. (SUNY, 1994) ISBN-13: 978-0791418529

Recommended Text

- Cynthia Freeland, *But is it art? An Introduction to Art Theory* (Oxford, 2002) ISBN-13: 978-0192853677

NOTE: You must obtain the **Required Text** and bring it to class with you.

COURSE CALENDAR

Part I The Greeks, Beauty, Love

WEEK 1
8/21 & 9/23

Topics, Activities, & Assignments

- Syllabus Review
 - General Discussion about Art
 - The Greeks, Philosophy, and Beauty
 - Plato on Art, Imitation, and Truth
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Your Weekly Readings

Art and Its Significance (AIS)
AIS, Plato, pp. 32-44

WEEK 2
8/28 & 8/30

Ancient Aesthetics

- Plato on Love & Beauty
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AIS, Plato, pp. 56-63

- Discussion Board 1 OPENS at 12am on Tues 8/29
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Wed 8/30
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- Quiz 1 OPENS at 12am on Sat 9/2
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Sun 9/3

Part II Empiricism & Idealism

WEEK 3
9/4 & 9/6

British Empiricism

Hume and Taste

AIS, Hume, pp. 78-92

WEEK 4
9/11 & 9/13

German Idealism

Kant and Judgment

AIS, Kant, pp. 121-7
(sections: 32-38)

- Discussion Board 2 OPENS at 12am on Tues 9/12
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Wed 9/13
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WEEK 5
9/18 & 9/20

German Idealism

Kant and Judgment

AIS, Kant, pp. 128-38
(sections: 46, 48-9, 56-7, 59)

WEEK 6
9/25

German Idealism

Schiller on Aesthetic Education

Schiller, excerpt from *Letters Upon
The Aesthetic Education of Man* (handout)

9/27

Hegel Realizing Spirit

AIS, Hegel, pp. 147-53

- Discussion Board 3 OPENS at 12am on Tues 9/26
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Wed 9/27
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WEEK 7
10/2 & 10/4

American Transcendentalism
Emerson's Poet

Emerson, *The Poet* (handout)

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- Quiz 2 OPENS at 12am on Sat 10/7
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Sun 10/8

Part III
Existentialism, Phenomenology, and Hermeneutics

WEEK 8
10/9 & 10/11

Existentialism
Nietzsche & the Dionysian
Life Affirmation & Style

AIS, Nietzsche, pp. 162-7
and handout

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- Discussion Board 4 OPENS at 12am on Tues 10/10
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Wed 10/11

WEEK 9
10/16 & 10/18

Phenomenology
Heidegger on Art & Truth

AIS, Heidegger, pp. 254-80

WEEK 10
10/23 & 10/25

Hermeneutics
Gadamer on Kant, Heidegger, and Prejudice

AIS, Gadamer, pp. 350-61, 365-70

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- Discussion Board 5 OPENS at 12am on Tues 10/24
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Wed 10/25

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- Quiz 3 OPENS at 12am on Sat 10/28
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Sun 10/29

Part IV
Critical Theory

WEEK 11
10/30 & 11/1

Critical Theory
Benjamin on Mechanical Reproduction

AIS, Benjamin, pp. 526-38

WEEK 12
11/6 & 11/8

Critical Theory
Marcuse & The Aesthetic Dimension

AIS, Marcuse, pp. 548-57

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- Discussion Board 6 OPENS at 12am on Tues 11/7
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Wed 11/8

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- Quiz 4 OPENS at 12am on Sat 11/11
and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Sun 11/12

Part V
Postmodernism, Feminist Theory, and Conceptual Art

WEEK 13
11/13 **Postmodernism**
Lyotard on Postmodernism *AIS*, Lyotard, pp. 561-4

11/15 **Feminist Theory**
Anzaldúa on ethnocentrism and art Anzaldúa (handout)

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- Discussion Board 7 OPENS at 12am on Tues 11/14 and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Wed 11/15

WEEK 14
11/20 & 11/22 **FALL BREAK / THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

WEEK 15
11/27 **The Futurists**
Marinetti on Futurist Painting *AIS*, Marinetti, pp. 665-9

11/29 **Conceptual Art**
Sol Lewitt on Conceptual Art *AIS*, Lewitt, pp. 691-2

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- Essay written in-class during your final Friday Discussion Section on 12/1 (you must bring an 11 x 8.5 Blue Book)
 - Quiz 5 OPENS at 12am on Sat 12/2 and CLOSES at 11:59pm on Sun 12/3

WEEK 16
12/4 & 12/6 **Group Presentations**
Group Presentation
Concluding Remarks

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- Group Presentations on Mon 12/4 and Wed 12/6 (each group will have its own 6-7 minute timeslot)

Course Requirements & Evaluations Criteria:

Four factors will be used to determine the student's final grade: 1) Seven online **Discussion Boards** (eLearning); 2) Five **Quizzes** (eLearning); 3) one **Essay** (in-class); and 4) a **Group Presentation** (in-class).

You can earn a maximum of **1,000 points** in the course:

Discussion Boards (7)	350 points (50 points possible for <i>each</i> Discussion Board)
Quizzes (5)	500 points (100 points possible for <i>each</i> Quiz)
Essay	100 points
Group Presentation	50 points

Grade Scale/Key:

Letter	Percentage	Points Earned
A+	100%	1,000 points
A	90-99%	900-999 points
B+	89%	890-899 points
B	80-88%	800-889 points
C+	79%	790-799 points
C	70-78%	700-789 points
D+	69%	690-699 points
D	60-68%	600-689 points
F	00-59%	000-599 points

Note: The final grade (point total) will be rounded up at .5

Example: A total of 795 points, or 79.5%, will be rounded up to 80%, or “B”

*At the end of the semester do **not** ask for a higher grade than you’ve earned.*

More Information about Assignments:

- 1) **Discussion Boards:** *students will post at least FIVE times for each Discussion Board in eLearning* (there will be seven discussion boards in total). The first post (or “reply”) for each Discussion Board will be in response to the prompt (or question), while the second through fifth posts will be responses to other students. **Each of the five posts must be at least 100+ words to get full credit.** Each post/reply is worth 10 pts (up to a maximum of 50 pts for all five), though students are encouraged to post as many times as they would like beyond the five required. **To get full credit:** it must be clear that, whatever your position or argument, your posts are informed by the readings. If you are not referencing the readings or engaging other students, **you will not get credit for this assignment.** Each discussion board will OPEN on a Tuesday at 12:00am and CLOSE 48 hours later on Wednesday at 11:59pm (sharp). See the Course Calendar for specific due dates.

To sum up:

- FIVE posts in total for *each* of the FIVE Discussion Boards
 - Each post must be at least 100+ words
 - First post replies to the prompt itself, second through fifth posts respond to other students
 - Your posts must reference/use the assigned readings and engage directly with your peers
- 2) The five **Quizzes** will be online through eLearning, multiple choice, and will be based upon the lectures and assigned readings. Quizzes will be released (“**OPENS**”) at 12:00am on the scheduled date, a Saturday, and be available for 48 hours, closing (“**CLOSES**”) at 11:59pm 48 hours later on a Sunday. Most Quizzes will have **10 questions** and a **30-minute time limit**. Some will have 5 questions and a 15-minute time limit. See Course Calendar for specific dates.
 - 3) The **Essay** will occur during the second to last week of the semester. It will be *written in class* during the last Friday Discussion Section (12/1). Students will have 45 minutes to compose a 750-word essay. **Students must bring an 11x8.5 Blue Book** (which are available at the UTD bookstore and library). *The essay must be legible.* Students will be shown a work of art—a painting or a poem or a video of a performance, etc.—and then they must analyze and interpret that work of art using **one or more key ideas from three different thinkers** we’ve read over the course of the semester. Students must briefly explain each of the key concepts they are using and compose an intellectually defensible interpretation of the work of art by using those key concepts. This is a closed notes and closed book assignment. The essay (Blue Book) must be turned in at the end of the discussion section.

- 4) The **Group Presentation** will be both a critical and creative response to the course material throughout the semester and will attempt to answer the following question:

What role should art play in society?

Each group will be comprised of 5 students. The presentation should make use of 3 different thinkers we studied. The presentation should demonstrably involve all group members equally and run 6-7 minutes (no less than 6, no more than 7). Presentations will occur on the last two days of class and every group will give their presentation on the day assigned to them. Example projects might include: one-act plays, short films, games, interviews (journalistic or satirical), interactive websites, etc. No power point presentations, collage posters, etc. **Each group must submit:** 1) a document clearly listing each group member's name and role within the project (i.e., who did what), and, *if* there is an online or electronic/digital component to the project, and, if the project has an online element, 2) a universally recognizable file/format for the project and/or a reliable link to a website hosting the project, etc.

Make Up Work & Extra Credit: *There is no "make-up work" or "extra credit" opportunities.* However, students may request to submit ONE *replacement essay* for any assignment they underperformed on. This essay would replace either one Quiz grade (worth up to 100 points) OR one Discussion Board (worth up to 50 points) of their choice. No reason needs to be provided. The replacement essay cannot be used for the Essay or the Group Project. The request must be received by your TA before 11:59pm on 12/4 (although this request can be made earlier). The professor or TA will customize and provide a prompt specifically for the student corresponding to the material covered for the quiz grade OR discussion board that they wish to replace. This essay must be a minimum of 750 words (though students should ideally aim for closer to 1,000 words) and cite from the assigned course materials using MLA or Chicago rules of style. This essay is due at the start of class on 12/6. *Late essays will not be accepted.* Full credit is not guaranteed; rather, the essay will be awarded a number of points commensurate with its merits. The class policies on plagiarism and cheating apply for the replacement essay.

Electronic Devices: Unless a student has been granted an accommodation by the AccessAbility Resource Center (ARC), the use of electronic devices during class is prohibited—no phones, laptops, headphones, earbuds, e-readers, etc. After one warning, students will be considered in violation of Section C 18 and 19 of the Student Code of Conduct.

NOTE: Plagiarism, including use of **ChatGPT** or any **artificial intelligence**—or *any form* of cheating on *any* assignment for this course, including replacement essays—is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will be reported. Students who violate these rules will ***automatically fail the course.*** What you turn in must be your own work. There are no exceptions and ignorance is not an excuse.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance and participation are required. Students who *miss 7 classes (including discussion sections)* will have their final grade reduced by one letter. Students who *miss 12 classes* will ***automatically fail the course.***

So, In a Nutshell...

HOW THIS COURSE WORKS

- You are expected to obtain a **physical copy of the required text** for this course and read it in accord with the dates outlined in the Course Calendar above where the readings for each week are specified, along with assignments. We will provide handouts for any readings not included in the required text, which must also be brought to class.
- You are expected to **attend class**, be on time, having **completed the assigned reading**, with the **appropriate text or handout**, and **non-electronic note-taking materials**.
- There will be **Seven Discussion Boards** requiring five 100+ word posts, **Five Quizzes**, **One Essay**, and **One Group Presentation**—*you are responsible for completing these assignments*.
- To get full credit for assignments you must **follow the instructions** for each assignment (see above) and **complete each one before it is due**.
- If you have **any questions**, check the syllabus first—again, ***check the syllabus first***—to see if it has what you're looking for. If it doesn't, contact your TA. If you still need help, feel free to contact me and follow the **email protocol** outlined above under Professor Contact Information.
- Keep an eye out for announcements from the professor and check your email regularly.

Additional Resources

Student Code of Conduct

<https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

<https://studentaccess.utdallas.edu>

Students in Recovery

<https://recovery.utdallas.edu>

This syllabus may be revised at any time to reflect beneficial or necessary adjustments and/or corrections. Students will be alerted if any such adjustments or corrections are made and a revised syllabus will be posted and made available for them.