

REL 338
CHRISTIANITY AND THE ARTS
SPRING, 2004

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Office Hours: MWF 1:00-3:00 pm
 TTH 8:00-9:30 am
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PURPOSE

The course is designed to help the student experience and reflect upon the interaction among religion (specifically Christianity) and the wide variety of the arts. The overall intention is to ask the question of the relationship between the human experience and expression of the “beautiful” and the human search for meaning. The student will be introduced to the role of religion in art, architecture, literature, music, drama, and dance, as well as the importance of these arts for religious expression.

TEXTS

Frank Burch Brown. *Good Taste, Bad Taste, and Christian Taste: Aesthetics in Religious Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2000

There will be numerous supplementary articles assigned throughout the semester. These articles will be provided by Dr. Smith.

REQUIREMENTS

1. A 5-7 page paper, typed and double-spaced, in which the student addresses the questions with which the first month of the course has dealt: What is the relationship between the aesthetic and the spiritual? In what ways do the search for religious meaning and an artistic sense interact? We will discuss these questions throughout the first several weeks of the course. The paper is due **February 5**, and will count 25% of the final grade.
2. Each student will be assigned to a small group, each of which will be composed of a cross-section of persons from the various academic disciplines represented in the class roster. Each of the groups will prepare a course project in which the theological themes found in the Sundays of Lent and Holy Week (which, conveniently, fall during the semester) are to be addressed from the perspective of one or more of the arts. The small groups will be formed during the first week of the course and each group should begin its work early in the semester. The results of each group’s work should take the following forms:

- a. A formal paper (typed and double-spaced) of at least 5-10 pages, which will be due **April 1** . The paper should include:
 - The group’s collective understanding of the theological (and liturgical) issues found in the assigned lectionary readings
 - A copy of the “artistic” efforts of the group as they have expressed their understanding of the theological and liturgical issues
 - An explanation of how the theological and liturgical issues are addressed in the final product from the group

The paper will count 25% of the final grade.

PLEASE NOTE: The grade assigned for each project is a **group** grade. Each member of each group will receive the same grade on this assignment. This means each member of each group needs to take responsibility for the total efforts of the group. Each student should hold her or his fellow group members responsible for active participation in the final product.

- b. Each group will be given a class session during the period **April 6-20** in which to present its project to the entire class. In other words, if a play has been written, it should be performed; if art works have been prepared, they should be shown and explained; if music has been composed, it should be played, etc.

The presentation of the group project will, once again, receive a group grade. Each member of each group will be assigned the same grade, based upon the effectiveness of the group presentation. This part of the group project will count 15% of the final grade.

3. A final statement of 3-5 pages (typed and double-spaced) in which the student reflects on the significance of the arts and their influence on the Christian faith (and vice versa). In other words, as a result of this course, how do you now view the relationship between Christianity and the arts? This statement is due on **April 22** (the last day of the course) and will count 10% of the final grade.
4. A final examination, scheduled for **April 26, 10:15-12:15 pm**. The examination will be in essay format and will count 25% of the final grade.

In addition to the regular classroom work, there will be field trips scheduled throughout the semester. We will visit the Dali Museum and the Florida International Museum in St. Petersburg, area churches to study stained glass windows and architecture, our own Annie Pfeiffer Chapel, as well as other places of interest. These field trips will provide an experiential supplement to our classroom work and are opportunities to see the arts in action. They are **not** required course work, but students are urged to try to take advantage of this experience.

EXPECTATIONS

1. Attending **all** classroom sessions and labs is required for all FSC students this course is no exception. Because this course will rely on various audio-visual resources and in-class discussion and small group work, the student simply cannot learn what is presented in the course without being present. Any student absent from class for more than the equivalent of one week of class sessions (without sufficient excuse) will have his or her final grade lowered by one letter; any student missing more than the equivalent of 25% of the class sessions will automatically fail the course.
2. The photocopying of course readings beyond the Brown text will be bound in book form and will have a nominal fee which will be charged to each student. If the student does not pay the required fee in a timely manner, the student's final grade for the course will be withheld until such payment is made in full.
3. All written work will be subject to the same standards of clarity, grammar, syntax, and sentence structure as other papers assigned in courses at FSC.
4. Whenever possible, attempt to use inclusive language, especially when discussing subjects that affect all persons.
5. All written assignments will be due on the day assigned for their completion. No late assignments will be accepted without compelling reasons.
6. **Students with Disabilities** Florida Southern College does not have a special program for students with learning disabilities; however, reasonable accommodations may be requested in this course by students who have documentation of a disability on file in the ACADEMIC SUPPORT OFFICE located in Ordway 134, phone 4196. "It is the responsibility of the student to make his or her condition known to the college, to take the initiative in requesting desired appropriate accommodations, and to have the pertinent diagnostic tests or other professional evaluations to verify the need for academic accommodations." **A release statement signed by the student is required each semester before documentation and recommended accommodations can be shared with a student's instructors.** It is the student's responsibility to **meet with the instructor** to determine which of the recommended accommodations can be made in each class.

CLASS SCHEDULE

	DATE	SUBJECT	READING
Jan.	13	Introduction and Housekeeping	
	15	Defining Aesthetics	Harper's, 18-19

			Eaton 1-13 Harris 120-141
	20	Aesthetic Value and Taste	Eaton 125-147 Brown Prologue and Ch. 1
	22	Symbol and Metaphor in Religion	Tillich 75-98 Crossan 4-22
	27	Metaphor as Shattering and as Reconstruction	Morton 147-175
	29	Ways of Knowing	Wink 17-34 Groome 139-151 Loder 29-63
Feb.	3	The Aesthetic and the Spiritual	Coleman 183-197
	5	FIRST PAPER DUE Toward the Aesthetic- Class Discussion	
	10	Art, Creativity, and the Faith	Brown, Ch. 2 & 3
	12	Art and Christian Taste	Brown, Ch. 4&5
	17	Sanctifying Space	Brown, Ch. 7
	19	Cathedrals and Houses of Worship	Rambusch 205-211 Sittler 212-216 Wright
	24	Literary Vision and Religious Awareness	Brown, Ch. 8
	26	Poetic Vision	Brooks 100-107 Wilder 108-114
March	2	Theatre and the Church	Bennett 11-47
	4	Liturgical Theatre	
	8-12	SPRING BREAK	
	16	Music and Truth	Brown, Ch. 6

18	Music as Expression of Faith	Eaton 53-72
23	Dance as Religious Art	Kirk 103-115
25	Liturgical Dance and Other Forms of Dance	De Sola 95-102
30	SMALL GROUP WORK	
April 1	SMALL GROUP WORK GROUP PROJECTS DUE	
6-20	GROUP PRESENTATIONS	
22	Course Evaluation FINAL STATEMENT DUE	
26, 10:15 am	FINAL EXAMINATION	