Universitat de Lleida

DEGREE CURRICULUM

LITERARY AESTHETICS

Coordination: DOMÍNGUEZ RUÉ, EMMA

Academic year 2019-20

Subject's general information

Subject name	LITERARY AESTHETICS
Code	101291
Semester	1st Q(SEMESTER) CONTINUED EVALUATION
Typology	

Degree	Course	Character	Modality
Bachelor's Degree in English Studies	3	OPTIONAL	Attendance-based

Course number of credits (ECTS)	6
Type of activity, credits, and groups	

Activity type	PRAULA		TEORIA	
Number of credits	3	3	3	3
Number of groups	0	1	0	1

Coordination	DOMÍNGUEZ RUÉ, EMMA
Department	ENGLISH AND LINGUISTICS
Teaching load distribution between lectures and independent student work	60h class 90h independent work
Important information on data processing	Consult this link for more information.
Language	English
Distribution of credits	3 theory + 3 practice

Teaching staff	E-mail addresses	Credits taught by teacher	Office and hour of attention
DOMÍNGUEZ RUÉ, EMMA	emma.dominguez@udl.cat	2	Thursday and Friday from 13h to 14h
PUJOLRAS NOGUER, ESTHER	esther.pujolras@udl.cat	4	

Learning objectives

- Understand the main ideas of a text pertaining to the field of the philosophy of art and be able to explain and summarize the contents in a clear and understandable way.
- express the main points and / or the basic concepts of specific texts in the field of aesthetics in a coherent way.
- express themselves orally and in writing with the corresponding grammar correction and fluidity, while using the appropriate structures, styles and vocabulary.
- understand and relate abstract concepts and extract logical conclusions.
- work in groups and interact in an oral or written way with other classmates.
- Understand the main ideas of a text pertaining to the field of the philosophy of art and be able to explain and summarize the contents in a clear and understandable way.
- expose in an oral way the main points and / or the basic concepts of specific texts in the field of aesthetics in a coherent way.
- express themselves orally and in writing with the corresponding grammar correction and fluidity, while using the appropriate structures, styles and vocabulary.

Competences

- ***General Competences:***

  - CG3: show creativity and initiative

  - CG6: work in group and manage interpersonal interaction

  - CG13: apply theoretical knowledge to practice

- ***Specific Competences:***

  - CE14: analyse the interaction between history, society and cultural production in English

Subject contents

Part 1 - Introduction and General Concepts

i. Aesthetics: Etymology and Typology
ii. Towards an Understanding of Aesthetic Value and Judgement
iii. Art and Knowledge
iv. Contemporary scholarly reflections on Aesthetics

Part 2 - Seminal Works in the Field of Aesthetics

a. Plato: *Symposium*
b. Aristotle: *Poetics*
c. Edmund Burke: "On the Sublime and Beautiful". (1756)
d. David Hume: "Of the Standard of Taste". (In *Four Dissertations,* 1757).
e. George Santayana: from *The Sense of Beauty.* (1896)

Part 3 - Beginning Aesthetics

i. But … What Is Art?
ii. Art: Emotion and Representation
iii. Criticism: Description, Interpretation & Evaluation

Part 4- Literary Aesthetics: some Approaches

1. The Aesthetics of Modernism: Auerbach's Western Elegy and the Path Towards Postmodernism.

2. The Limits (and Excesses) of Postmodernism and the Rise of a Postcolonial Aesthetics: Otherness, Mimicry & Manichean Allegory.

3. Towards an Aesthetics of Trauma: Immigration, Exile, War, Historical Responsibility.

4. Whiteness and Aesthetics: Discoursing Otherness.

5. An Aesthetics of Violence? Children & War; Rape.

6. Mourning as Aesthetics: The Right to Mourning and the Configuration of Grievable and (Un) Grievable Bodies.

7. Acts of memory: The Aesthetics of Re-membering.

8. Unromantic Nature: The Emergence of an Eco-critical Aesthetics.

Methodology

The methodology for this course will combine theoretical sessions, tutorials, independent work and oral presentations. The course involves a workload of 150 hours distributed as follows:

- Contact Hours: 60h (including lectures, oral presentations and tutorials).

- Independent Study: 90h (including preparation for exams, reading of primary and secondary sources, essay writing, and preparation for oral presentation).

Teaching and Learning Activities:

- Lectures provide an introduction and overview of Aesthetics and its literary approaches.
- Practice sessions explore the approaches to literary Aesthetics in greater detail through analysis and discussion of selected works.
- The written assignment and the oral presentation will help students put into practice the formal and research conventions of academic work in context.
- Tutorials are intended to guide and supervise students' work during the course, where the teacher is available at the times specified for individual guidance.

Evaluation

Evaluation procedures will consist of four parts, each of which will amount to 25% of the final mark. All parts are designed to provide evidence of the competences expressed by the study plan as well as to offer students the possibility to display their different abilities and talents.

- **Exam 1 – 25 points**

This written exercise is intended to assess students' knowledge and understanding of the main critical approaches to Aesthetics and its application to the field of literary studies that have been discussed in parts 1,2 and 3. The exam will consist of 10 short questions.

- **Oral Presentation 1 – 10 points**

This oral presentation will consist of a 10 to 15-minute talk in which students are intended to choose a literary text that, in their opinion, may represent, illustrate or subvert the aesthetic principles proposed by any of the authors discussed in part 2 and 3 of the course. In order to appreciate the significance of this work and the relevance of the aesthetic principles selected, students must therefore be able to identify, describe and interpret the literary work in terms of its expressive properties, and to assess, or make judgements about the work's aesthetic value and relevance according to the author chosen. While assessing the students' ability to articulate and synthesise ideas in spoken English, the presentation also allows students to share the results of their research with the rest of the class.

Assessment Criteria for the Oral Presentation:

The following criteria will be taken into account, all of them amounting to 10 points:

- The student shows s/he has understood the concepts dealt with in class: up to 2 points
- The student shows capacity to interpret ideas explained in class and is able to apply them to the chosen literary work / aesthetic approach: up to 2 points
- The student can describe the literary work / aesthetic approach and its relevance in a clear and coherent way: up to 2 points
- The student is able to make judgements about the qualities of the literary work of his / her choice: up to 2 points
- The student can express him/herself fluidly without excessive hesitation, without the need to read from a text, and with an acceptable command of grammar and vocabulary: up to 2 points

- **Essay: Theory in Practice – 25 points**

Students are required to write an essay on the following topic: ***"A Personal Approach to The Nature and Evolution of the Concept of Aesthetics."*** This essay, which should be based on the material read and analysed during part 4 of the course, is intended to evaluate the students' comprehension of the prescribed texts, their creativity and their ability to articulate and synthesise ideas. At the same time, the essay is intended at familiarising students with research tools and methods while assessing their ability to articulate and synthesise ideas in academic English.

Assessment Criteria for the Essay:

The following criteria will be taken into account, all of them amounting to 25 points:

- The student shows s/he has understood the concepts dealt with in class: up to 5 points
- The student shows capacity to interpret ideas explained in class and is able to apply them to the concepts on Aesthetics discussed in class: up to 5 points
- The student can express his / her ideas in a clear and coherent way: up to 5 points
- The student is able to make critical judgements about main concepts in Aesthetics: up to 5 points
- The student can express him/herself fluidly, with an acceptable command of grammar and vocabulary: up to 5 points

- **Reflective Journal – 25 points**

The aim of the "Reflective Journal" is to allow students to reflect on, offer arguments and think critically about Literary Aesthetics from a personal perspective. Students will be asked to submit a journal whereby their personal approach to the field of Literary Aesthetics will be assessed via their subjective interpretations of five themes that configure Part 4 of the subject. In contrast with the essay, whose nature is purely academic, the "Reflective Journal" offers students a space in which the most subjective aspect of literary criticism can emerge. The "Reflective Journal" should be understood as a personal assessment of Literary Aesthetics developed and carried out after students have been immersed in the topic of Literary Aesthetics in class sessions.

Assessment Criteria for the Reflective Journal - 25 points:

The following criteria will be taken into account, all of them amounting to 25 points:

- The student shows s/he has understood the concepts dealt with in class: up to 5 points
- The student shows capacity to interpret ideas and concepts analysed in class and, simultaneously, s/he can reflect on and question some of these ideas and concepts from a personal perspective: up to 10 points
- The student can argue and defend her/his critical position in a coherent and solid way: up to 5 point
- The student has a command of grammar and vocabulary that allows her/him to express complex ideas and conceptes: up to 5 point

Class Participation - 15 points:

Students are required to participate actively in class discussions. That means that it is absolutely necessary for students to have read the reading assignments before the class sessions so that they can demonstrate that they already have a basic knowledge of the main contents.

The course is evaluated thorugh continuous assessment. Students who combine their studies with a full-time job they have the right to request an alternative assessment within 5 days from the beginning of the semester. For information, send an email to academic@lletres.udl.cat or speak to the staff at Secretaria de Lletres.

Bibliography

For Sections 1 & 2:

- Beardsley, Monroe. “History of Aesthetics”. *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. (London: MacMillan, 2006).
- Cahn, Steve and Aaron Meskin. *Aesthetics: A Comprehensive Anthology*. (London: Blackwell, 2008).
- Marwick, Arthur. *A History of Human Beauty*. (London, England: Hambledon, 2004)
- Valentine, John M. *Beginning Aesthetics: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art.* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006).
- Beadsley, Monroe. “Aesthetic Experience Regained”
- Skees, Murray. “Kant, Adorno and the Work of Art”

For Section 3:

- Aristotle. *Poetics.*Available at <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/poetics.html>.
- Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. Available at <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/b/burke/edmund/sublime/>
- Hume, David. "Of the Standard of Taste". Available at <http://www.mnstate.edu/gracyk/courses/phil%20of%20art/hume%20on%20taste.htm>
- Plato. *Symposium.*Available at<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/symposium.html>
- Santayana, George. *The Sense of Beauty*. Available at

  <http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1545963&pageno=2>

For Section 4:

- Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", from *"Lenin and Philosophy" and Other Essays*. Monthly Review Press, 1971. https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm
- Caruth, Cathy. *Unclaimed Experience. Trauma, Narrative, and History.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Davies, David. *Aesthetics and Literature. London:* Continuum, 2007
- Dyer, Richard. *White.* London & New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Fanon, Frantz. 1952. *Black Skin, White Masks.* London: Pluto Press, 2008.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *The Poetics of Postmodernism*. London: Routledge, 1988.
- Korsmeyer, Carolyn. *Gender and Aesthetics: An Introduction*. London: Routlege, 2004.
- LaCapra, Dominick. *Writing History, Writing Trauma.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- McHale, Brian. *Postmodernist Fiction*. Routledge, 1987.
- Gullette, Margaret Morganroth. *Aged by Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Mortimer, Jeylan T., and Michael J. Shanahan. *Handbook of the Life Course*. Springer, 2006.
- Said, Edward. 1978. *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient.* London: Penguin Books, 1995.
- Young, Robert J.C. *Colonial Desire. Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race.* London & New York: Routledge, 1995.