

# Beauty and Belief

Syllabus  
RS 1020A 570 - 1179  
Fall Semester 2019-20  
UWO / King's / SPS

Instructor: Name: Fr. Denis Grecco, Ph.D  
Office: St. Peter's Seminary  
Hours: Thursday 9:30-10:30 am (Carter Library Commons)  
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Phone: 519-432-7340

Location: Tuesday 8:30 - 10:30 in Broughdale Hall Room 112  
Thursday 8:30 - 9:30 in Wemple Building, Room 174

Description: An exploration of Christian beliefs through a study of various medium including paintings, icons, sculpture, church architecture, liturgical and devotional acts and their implication for religious faith and imagination.

## Learning Outcomes:

*The student should have knowledge of:*

- a. Many features of beauty and its expression in a variety of paintings from the Christian tradition and secular art.
- b. The expression of the Christian tradition through the works of arts from the Renaissance to the modern period.
- c. Criticism that impacts the viewing of artistic compositions and its significance for religious belief.

*The students should have the ability to:*

- d. To see with an attentively trained eye the beauty that emerges from contemplation of sacred and secular paintings.
- e. Think reflectively and write descriptively about particular works of art as to draw forth their evocative power.
- f. Develop a habit of mind that perceives proportion and integrity from a synthesis of diverse elements in a work of art.

## Class Format:

Class will be a mix of lecture and study of artworks. Come prepared to share your comments, questions, and insights as we probe together the designated works of art for each class. Attendance and thoughtful contribution to the class conversations are valued and will be considered in grading for participation.

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## Dates & Topics:

Sept 5	Faith, Art and Culture	Oct 22	Mid-term Exam
Sept 10	Reflection on Visual Images		
Sept 12	Descriptive Means of Visualizing		
Sept 17	Questioning the Composition		
<u>Part I: Creation: Nature's Beauty</u>			
		Oct 24	Inner Conflict
		Oct 29	Evil & Ugliness
		Oct 31	Christ on Trial
Sept 19	Night Sky	Nov 12	Christ Crucified
Sept 24	Wilderness	Nov 14	Lamenting Loss
Sept 26	Colours		
Oct 1	Mystical Landscapes		
<u>Part II: Incarnation: Beauty's Embodiment</u>			
		Nov 19	Mary Magdala: 'Noli me tangere'
		Nov 21	Thomas: 'Touch and believe'
Oct 3	Faces & Icons	Nov 26	Peter: Healing Presence
Oct 8	Luminous Bodies	Nov 28	Disciples: Supper at Emmaus
Oct 10	Postures of Prayer & Mercy	Dec 3	Revelatory Thresholds
Oct 15	Tableaux of the Christian Body	Dec 5	Exam Preparation
Oct 17	Gothic Church Architecture		

## Required Course Reading:

1. John O'Donohue. *Beauty: The Invisible Embrace*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2005.
2. Readings on the OWL course website.

## Recommended Texts:

Joseph M. Williams and Joseph Bizup, *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. Twelfth Edition. Boston: Pearson, 2017.

## OWL:

Artworks will be posted on OWL and made available after class. Students are required to read the text and the articles on OWL. The text and articles have been chosen with care to elucidate some of the central features of beauty in the field of Christian belief. Read them carefully and attentively.

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## Syllabus

RS 1020A 570 - 1179

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### Methods of Evaluation:

1. Descriptive Papers: Three brief descriptive papers are required; each paper is to be 2 to 3 pages, double-spaced and 12 point. For each paper the student is required to write a detailed appreciation of a designated artwork chosen from the thematic section of the course under consideration. Further instructions on how to write the descriptive papers will be delivered in class. Staple the pages of your essay in the upper left hand corner. Papers will normally be returned within 7 days.

Descriptive Paper # 1: Due: Oct 10 Your choice from Part I: Creation: Nature's Beauty

Descriptive Paper # 2 Due: Oct 31 Your choice from Part II: Incarnation: Beauty's Embodiment

Descriptive Paper # 3 Due: Nov 28 Your choice from Part III: Sin & Grace: Beauty's Paradox

2. Midterm Exam: The midterm exam will consist of a set of questions based on the readings and classroom lectures.
3. Participation: Grading for participation includes attendance, active participation by making thoughtful contributions to the class discussion on the artworks and the designated readings; listening well to the contribution of others, and responding respectfully. The following is a guide to participation:
  - Level 1: ( 60 +) Participation in class discussion is minimal.
  - Level 2: ( 70 +) Participation in class is average; student puts in a good effort to discuss their understanding of the reading.
  - Level 3: ( 80 +) Participation in class is above average; student is prepared and contributes to a deeper understanding of the reading.
  - Level 4: ( 90 +) Participation is outstanding. The student is exceptionally well-prepared for class, inspired, motivated and draws out the contribution of others without dominating the discussion.
4. Final Exam: The final examination will take the form of questions that you will be asked to answer in essay form. It will provide you with an opportunity to tie together the various threads of the course arising from the artworks, readings, lectures, questions, and discussions.

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## Grading:

10%	Attendance & Participation	
15%	Midterm Exam.....	Oct 22 2019
45%	Three Papers	<u>Due Date</u>
	(15%) First Paper.....	October 10 2019
	(15%) Second Paper.....	October 31 2019
	(15%) Third Paper.....	November 28 2019
30%	Final Exam.....	(See Exam Schedule)

Graded assignments will be returned to students in class. Grades will not be made available through e-mail. Access to final grades is through the UWO website. No texting or use of electronic devices in class except for the purpose of the course. Notify the instructor of your absence from class (e-mail preferred). Emails will be answered as soon as possible from Monday to Friday.

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### University Regulations taken from Western University Academic Calendar:

#### **Accommodations for Tests/Examinations:**

Students are responsible for seeking accommodation with appropriate documentation, prior to writing tests/ examinations, if they are of the view that their performance may be affected by extenuating circumstances.

#### **How to Request Academic Accommodation – King's Students:**

(<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/courses-enrolment/exams-and-tests/medical-accommodation/>)

#### **UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:**

([http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf)) Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

<https://www.eng.uwo.ca/files/undergraduate/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

#### **Support Services:**

Information about Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development (formerly Services for Students with Disabilities) at King's is available at

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

# Beauty and Belief

## Syllabus

RS 1020A 570 - 1179

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For emotional/mental health assistance see: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

The website for Academic Services at King's University College is <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-support/>

Students who are in emotional/mental health distress should refer to Mental Health@Western: <https://uwo.ca/health/services/students/index.html> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

University Students Council provides many valuable support services for students (including the health insurance plan) <http://westernusc.ca/services/>.

### **Accommodations for Religious Holidays:**

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_religious.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf)

NOTE: Students who have a Sabbath or Holy Day that conflicts with tests or exams must give written notice for accommodation by the deadlines noted in the policy above (minimum two weeks for term tests and examinations, and one week for mid-term tests).

A calendar of religious holidays may be found here: <https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

### **Remembrance Day Policy:**

That two minutes of silence be observed on November 11 and 11:00 a.m. throughout the university and that, where this is not possible, two minutes of silence be observed between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon.

That students be permitted to be absent from class to attend a Remembrance Day Services, provided the instructor is informed in advance of the intended absence.

### **Statement on Use of Electronic Devices:**

Use of Electronic Devices:

You are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations.

Use of Laptops in the Classroom:

King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of laptop computers can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of laptops by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using laptops for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct. See [https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/studentLife/conduct/code\\_of\\_conduct\\_2003.pdf](https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/studentLife/conduct/code_of_conduct_2003.pdf)

Inappropriate use of laptops [or smart phones] during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords."

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### **Statement on Academic Offences:**

King's is committed to Academic Integrity.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. <http://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/terms/plagiarism.html>

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

### **Copyright re: Course Material**

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty Members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a Faculty Member. Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member is interested in posting a student's answers or papers on the course web site he/she should ask for the student's written permission. (Commercial use of Course material - <http://umd.edu/legal/commercial.html>)

### **Mailbox re Submission of Late Essays/Assignments ONLY:**

Only late essays/assignments not handed in at class may be dropped off in the drop box, located between the inner doors of the Cardinal Carter Library. Essays dropped into the mailbox will be picked-up twice per day: once in the morning (9:30 a.m.) and in the afternoon (4:00 p.m.). All essays dropped off after 4:00 p.m. will be date-stamped the following business day. Essays should be placed in an envelope addressed to the professor with the course code and student number clearly indicated.

### **Class Cancellations:**

All reported class cancellations are posted at: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-life/service-disruptions/>

Revised November 13, 2018 by S. Pearson