In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Creative Arts. Courses in this category focus on appreciation and analysis of creative artifacts and works of human imagination. Courses involve the synthesis and interpretation of artistic expression and enable critical, creative, and innovative communication about works of art.

The proposed course must contain all elements of the Foundational Component Area. How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

We consider the philosophical aspects of the phenomenon of fine art. As part of this consideration, we demonstrate works of art and encourage students to appreciate them as defining products of our shared human imagination; we explore and analyze ideas about the arts as signals of human nature and human experience as those ideas have been put forth by central philosophers in our and other traditions. We interpret the arts as expressions of fundamental values about core human issues: life, death, beauty, comedy, tragedy. We look at beliefs about art as syntheses of the cultural periods in which those beliefs were expressed and as ways of influencing those beliefs. We consider the fundamental philosophical ideas often put forth in the arts, and how those ideas have been used to transform means of expression in cultures and across cultures. We explore, in particular, the philosophical nature of art and the arts in cultures other than those of the West, cultures distant from us in time and space. We require students to submit creative papers of their own, critically examining the relationship between philosophy of art, and to communicate innovatively in class discussion and in discussion with the instructor outside of class.

Core Objectives

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

The proposed course is required to contain each element of the Core Objective.

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

We challenge students to develop critical thinking about the philosophy of art in several ways. First, we require speculative creative thinking about the relationship among ideas, cultures, and artistic expression. Students will demonstrate the capacity to originate ideas of their own as part of each writing assignment, and to explore individual reactions to topics not necessarily contained in lectures or course materials. They will be asked to break down groups of ideas and to juxtapose them to each other logically and analytically, also to make judgements about works of art in relationship to their various cultural periods and individual themes. But they will also be asked to put ideas together, to come up on their own with synthetic generalizations about how a difference in philosophical thinking about art correlates with a difference in artistic theme and technique.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

The course requirement includes three substantive (7-12 page) writing assignments, either on topics suggested by the instructor or of the student’s own choosing. The format demands that original ideas about the philosophy of art be developed at length and correlated with original interpretations and expressions of works and ideas. Oral communication is stressed through demanding class discussion and instructor feedback during office hours,
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as well as through in-class group presentations. The course includes screen displays of works of art from many different periods and cultures, so that the communication of ideas is not limited to the written text of readings and student papers.

Teamwork (to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal):

We require students to make, in groups, a joint presentation on an artistic work or period not covered in lecture or in reading. The result will be that they will be impelled to consider and react tolerantly to each other’s intuitions as well as to support each other in an appearance in front of the entire class.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

We challenge students to develop not only an understanding of the Western tradition in art and aesthetics (from the Neolithic period to the present), but also of the visual and musical traditions of China and India. Every attempt is made to view art and the philosophy of art as expressions of cultural, political, and individual choices made in all of these cultures. Art appears as a way of drawing together and symbolizing the responsible decisions by which a people or a region constitutes itself as a unity. We consider the local, country-wide, and worldwide ramifications of art as protest, art as a mode of governing, art as expression of fundamental metaphysical views, art as cross-cultural communication, and art as a part of contemporary global culture, and students will draw on their own experiences in life in order to participate reflectively in this consideration.

Please be aware that instructors should be prepared to submit samples/examples of student work as part of the future course recertification process.