



Syllabus

From Goethe to Adorno: Introduction to Aesthetics - 32823

Last update 20-09-2017

HU Credits: 2

Responsible Department: german, russian & east european studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof Birgit Erdle
DAAD Walter Benjamin Chair

Coordinator Email: birgiterdle@aol.com

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday, 14:30 - 16:00, and by appointment

Teaching Staff:
Prof Birgit Erdle

Course/Module description:

In the 18th century, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten established the philosophical discipline of aesthetics, to stand alongside the discipline of logic as a distinct branch of philosophy. He regarded aesthetics as a theory of sensuous cognition. This was new: the idea that not just reason, but our senses, too, could generate knowledge and understanding, that sensory and rational perception had equal value. Immanuel Kant thought of aesthetics in terms of experience. His theory of aesthetic experience forms the basis of an approach to aesthetic experience as something that happens between object and subject, not within the subject alone. At the same time, Kant places emphasis on the form of the object.

The course will introduce the theory of aesthetic experience and the questions involved. Reading will include Baumgarten, Kant, Mendelssohn, Goethe, Nietzsche, Adorno, and also a number of literary texts. A core aspect will be temporality.

Course/Module aims:

The course will introduce the theory of aesthetic experience and the questions involved.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Understand and be familiar with core texts of aesthetic theory (18th to 20th century)

Critically discuss arguments, thought figures and issues raised in those texts

Understand and contextualize the term 'sensuous cognition'

Explain and contextualize categories like 'judgment' and 'taste'

Discuss aesthetic theory in a historical perspective

Reflect on the moral and political implications of aesthetic values like 'beautiful', 'ugly', 'disgusting'

Interpret primary texts and critically evaluate arguments in secondary texts

Attendance requirements(%):

80%

*Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: 2 hours seminar
student presentations*

Course/Module Content:

Reading will include:

Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten,

Immanuel Kant,

Moses Mendelssohn,

*J.W. Goethe,
Friedrich Nietzsche,
Theodor W. Adorno,
and also a number of literary texts*

Required Reading:
primary and secondary literature will be provided

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 40 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 30 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 30 %
Activity in seminar discussion

Additional information: