

This course will focus on **The Artistic Encounter with the Divine in the Monotheistic (particularly Christian) World**. We will explore primarily poetry and prose fiction, but also visual art, drama, film, music and dance. Topics we will investigate, as portrayed in the arts, include: the nature of the divine; the human relationship with the divine; the nature of evil; the problem of evil in a divinely Acreated@ universe; the operation of providence in human affairs; the problem of free will, choice and action versus predestination, fate and accident; the after life; issues surrounding judgment and redemption (merit versus unearned grace); ethics/morality; the feminine in the divine; difference between religion and faith; ways religion changes in response to changing secular world; artist as Creator - sacrilege/responsibility/vehicle for the divine; religious art; art as religion; art as religious propoganda (the politicization of the divine); what does the total absence of spirituality look/sound like.

Required Texts: Dante=s *Inferno* / Milton=s *Paradise Lost* / William Blake=s *Songs of Innocence and Experience* / Goethe=s *Faust Part I* / Thomas Mann=s *Death in Venice* / Flannery O=Connor=s *Everything That Rises Must Converge* / Miriama Ba=s *So Long a Letter*

You will have one final exam, will write one paper, and will complete a power point project to be explained in class. Every Monday we will begin class with a ten-minute writing assignment based on a prompt I will give you concerning the reading due for that week. Thus, you must read thoroughly and thoughtfully. We will base our discussion on that writing. The second day of every week will be devoted to music, visual art, dance, film, etc. Missed prompts may be made up, but will lose a grade.

Grades: 25%=in-class writing/participation  
25%=first paper, 5-8 pages (due March 21)  
25%=project (due April 23)  
25%=final exam (take home)

Week one (1/16-19)	Dante, 1 <sup>st</sup> half (Order/Chaos. Why do people need religion, or art?)
Week two (1/22-26)	Dante 2 <sup>nd</sup> half (The Nature of The Divine )
Week three (1/29-2/2)	Milton Books 1&2 (The Nature of Evil)
Week four (2/5-2/9)	Milton Books 3&4 (The Nature of Goodness)
Week five (2/12-2/16)	Milton Books 5&6 (Divine and Artistic Purposes - Artist/Creator Intention)
Week six (2/19-2/23)	Milton Books 7&8 (The Relationship of Empirical Knowledge to Revealed Knowledge, Reason to Faith, Merit to Grace, Craft to Inspiration, Technique to Vision)
Week seven (2/26-3/2)	Milton Books 9&10 (Relationship of Free Will to Divine Foreknowledge)
Week eight (3/5-3/9)	Spring Break
Week nine (3/12-16)	Milton Books 11&12 (Art and Religion as Transformative/Transcendent Experience.)
Week ten (3/19-3/23)	Blake (Artist as Prophetic Voice) <b>PAPER DUE WEDNESDAY</b>
Week eleven (3/26-3/30)	Goethe 1 <sup>st</sup> half (The Role of Profound Malaise/Melancholy in the Spiritual and Creative Journeys)
Week twelve (4/2-4/6)	Goethe 2 <sup>nd</sup> half (The Feminine in/and The Divine)
Week thirteen (4/9-4/13)	Mann (Can Truth Change? What, if anything, can change it and how?)
Week fourteen (4/16-4/20)	O=Connor , 3 stories only, TBA (Apocalyptic Notions, and/or Towards Authentic Art and Spirituality)
Week fifteen (4/23-4/27)	Miriama Ba (Cycles/Transformations) <b>PROJECT DUE MONDAY</b>
Week sixteen (4/30)	recap (The complex artistic encounter with The Divine) <b>EXAM PASSED OUT</b>

Because classes will consist mostly of conversation about the material encountered, please be sure to arrive having read the assignment thoughtfully, and ready to share ideas. You should take notes on the discussions. You will need them to study for the Final Exam, which will be designed around whatever emerges in class. Also, it is as important to listen as to speak. Civil discourse is mandatory. We will respect the ideas of others, question those ideas in the spirit of dialogue, and expect our own ideas to be reflected upon and debated in the same spirit. Our goal is an honest, impartial exploration of the ways in which art and religion intertwine, for the purpose of enriching our understanding of both these areas of human experience. Part of your grade will reflect your degree of engagement in this project.

Attendance is required in a class like this. If you aren=t there, you=ll miss everything. Art is transitory, as is stimulating discussion. You are permitted two unexcused absences. After that, I will lower your grade by 2 of a letter grade for each absence. 90% of getting through school is showing up. Two tardies = one absence. Get to campus early for easier parking, and study here.

See the Catalogue for a description of Arts 310 and its purposes, and for policies regarding disabilities and plagiarism.

This syllabus is a work in progress. You are responsible for keeping up with the changes that will occur.

Finally, I am convinced that Arts 310 and the Humanities series, are the most important courses you will take at UNCA. Other courses may prepare you for specific activities; these courses help you understand yourself in context of and in contrast to all experience. These courses help you be aware of your Aself@ in relationship to the natural, social and spiritual realms B and place you in a rich and complex historical and cross-cultural matrix. You will get out of this course what you bring to it. It is my hope that you will Aget@ a deep and satisfying sense of what it is to be that sometimes base, sometimes lofty, always full of potential (for good or ill) creature: The Human. Enjoy the journey! - Ann