

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 created 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 propaganda (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*

You will have one final exam, will write two papers, and will complete a power point project to be explained in class. Every Monday we will begin class with a two-page 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 your ideas. 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 week eight)
25%=second paper, 5-8 pages, and power-point project (due week fifteen)
25%=final exam (take home)

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

Because classes consist mostly of conversation about the material encountered and your written prompts, please be sure to arrive having read the assignment thoughtfully, and ready to share ideas. 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. Your grade will reflect your degree of engagement in this project, and your level of improvement in the ability to communicate ideas effectively in writing.

Attendance is required in a class like this. If you are not present, you will miss everything. Art is transitory, as is stimulating discussion. You are permitted two unexcused absences. After that, I will lower your grade by - 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 yourself in relationship to the natural, social and spiritual realms 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 get 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