A student who completes 3.0 credits of Arts & Ideas / ILSA should be able to do the following:

1. Articulate the value of the arts studied and their impact on the self and others
2. Recognize cultural, historical, spiritual, and/or political aspects of the arts studied
3. Define and articulate the concepts, methods, and organizing principles of the arts studied

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

Important Dates: https://registrar.unca.edu/fall-2015-academic-calendar

Preparation: We read a lot in this course, and at the beginning you should make a commitment to complete the assignments and to think about what you have read. We will not cover the same amount of material each class, so I encourage you to look and read ahead. You are required to bring your books to class.

Communication: our communication outside of class and office hours will be through your UNCA email account. Please check it daily.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: University of North Carolina at Asheville is committed to making courses, programs and activities accessible to persons with documented disabilities. Students requiring reasonable accommodations must register with the Office of Academic Accessibility by providing supporting documentation. All information provided will remain confidential. For more information please contact the Office of Academic Accessibility at (828) 232-5050 or academicaccess@unca.edu or visit them in the OneStop Student Services Center. You should let me know at the beginning of the semester what accommodations you will need.

Cell phones, IPhones, IPads, computers, etc. Please silence all electronic devices before class so that they do not distract you or those around you. If there is a situation that requires you to be accessible, please let me know in advance. There will be occasions when we want to look something up, and I may ask you to use your tech item for that purpose. If you

Tests and Quizzes: You will have one final exam (take-home, identifications, essays), will write two papers, and will complete a power point project to be explained in class. Every week we will begin one class with a quiz from the reading due for that week. Thus, you must read thoroughly and thoughtfully. We will base our discussion on your ideas about the week’s theme. The second day of every week will be devoted to music, visual art, dance, film, etc. Missed quizzes may not be made up.

Participation: 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. The grading scale will be as follows: A (Excellent) = Contributes regularly and enthusiastically to every class; sets agenda for class discussion and moves it forward; states ideas clearly; supports ideas and opinions with specific evidence from the text or elsewhere; follows up on own ideas and refines them; takes the lead in engaging others in discussion; recognized by peers in class. B (Good) = Contributes good spiritedly to nearly every class discussion; does not dominate; states ideas clearly; supports ideas and opinions with general evidence from the text or elsewhere; always maintains an active presence in the class; sometimes engages others in dialogue; known to peers in class. C (Average) = Contributes sporadically to class discussion; offers relevant ideas and opinions, but digresses from the point easily; does not support ideas and opinions with evidence from the text; little follow up or refinement of ideas; speaks declaratively and rarely engages others in dialogue; little known by peers in class. D (Below Average) = Occasionally tardy; physically present and actively listens, but contributes very little to class discussion; or contributes in disrespectful or dismissive ways; discourages group discussion; unknown to peers in class. F (Failing) = Absent; tardy; obviously and frequently unprepared and inattentive; or offers unproductive comments and belittles the contributions of others.

Grading scale: Grades will include plus and minus. The percentages are as follows: A=93-100, A-=90-92, B+=88-89, B=83-87, B-=80-82, C+=78-79, C=73-77, C-=70-72, D=below 70, F=below 60.

Attendance: 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 1/2 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. Documented legal or medical emergencies may be an exception. If it snows, either classes will be cancelled or will operate on a delayed snow schedule. You can locate this information either by calling the Snow Line (828) 259-3050 or by looking at the UNCA website. Our individual late start schedule is posted on the UNCA web site.

Plagiarism: All of you will be held to the standards of academic honesty as described in the 2014-2015 catalog, which can be found on UNCA’s website as Catalog, under the heading “Academic Regulations and Procedures” and subheading “Student Responsibilities,” where academic misconduct is discussed. A breach of academic honesty will result in, at the very least, the unacceptability of the work under question; and at the very most, expulsion from the university. Cheating is antithetical to the spirit of intellectual curiosity – the heart of our learning project.

Preventing Sexual Harassment: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. UNC Asheville’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the University but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to any University Responsible Employee – which includes most faculty and staff -- who will report the incident; contact Dr. Jill Moffit, UNC Asheville’s Title IX Administrator, at (828)232-5658; or report anonymously at https://police.unca.edu/anonymous-report. For more information regarding Title IX and resources concerning sexual harassment and its prevention please visit https://police.unca.edu/title-ix.

See the Catalogue for a description of Arts 310 and its purposes.

Syllabus: This syllabus is intended as a guide and may be changed as we move through the semester. You are responsible for keeping up with the flow. Please get the phone number of a fellow class member for contact info. You are also responsible for every reading listed below, whether or not it is fully discussed in class. All readings should be completed by the first class of each week.

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 “self” in relation 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! - AD

Grades:  
25% = in-class quizzes/participation (roughly 15/10% at instructor discretion)  
25% = first paper (thoughtful response and analysis), 5 pages (due week six)  
25% = second paper (research & personal reflection), 6-8 pages, and power-point project (due week 12)  
25% = take home final exam (Due at date and time of regular final – check UNCA website)

Week one (8/19)  Dante, 1st half (Order/Chaos. Why do people need religion, or art?)
Week two (8/26)  Dante 2nd half (The Nature of The Divine)
Week four (9/9)  Milton Books 5, 6, 7, & 8 (Divine and Artistic Purposes - Artist/Creator Intention)
Week five (9/16)  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 six (9/23)  Milton Books 11&12 (Art and Religion as Transformative/Transcendent Experience.)
PAPER #1 DUE WEDNESDAY
Week seven (9/30)  Blake (Artist as Prophetic Voice)
Week eight (10/7)  Goethe 1st half (The Role of Profound Malaise/Melancholy in the Spiritual and Creative Journeys)
Week nine (10/14)  Fall break and catch-up
Week ten (10/21)  Goethe 2nd half (The Feminine in/and The Divine)
Week eleven (10/28)  Mann (Can a Personal Truth Change? What, if anything, can change it and how?)
Week twelve (11/4)  O’Connor, 3 stories only, TBA (Apocalyptic Notions, and/or Towards Authentic Art and Spirituality) – PAPER #2 and PROJECT DUE WEDNESDAY
Week thirteen (11/11)  your projects
Week fourteen (11/18)  your projects TAKE HOME EXAM PASSED OUT