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First-Year Seminar Descriptions for Spring Term 2022

First-Year Seminars offer every Dartmouth first-year student an opportunity to participate in a course structured around independent research, small group discussion, and intensive writing. Below you will find a list of the courses being offered next term.

Re-order by Class Hour

Art History

ARTH-07.02-01 Paris in the 19th Century

Hour: 12 **Instructor:** Kristin O'Rourke

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Paris in the 19th Century

Course Description: This course will examine the city of Paris as the artistic capital of the nineteenth century, looking at artists and art production in the mid-late nineteenth century. We will focus on the movements that made up the category of "modern" art: Realism, Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. We will contrast traditional forms of art-making with avant-garde art production in both high art and popular culture. We will examine aspects of contemporary life that affected subject matter, style, technique, and meaning: the invention of new media (photography), urban planning and the modernization of Paris, and the political and social situation in France and Europe. We will look at painting, prints, photography, architecture and films as we consider how "Paris" evolved into its modern form. The course is designed to develop your critical thinking, looking, and writing throughout the term. Assignments include visual analysis, guided research, and critical responses to the readings and films. We will use peer review and revisions to help improve your writing.

This course will also encourage discussion of visual materials as well as readings, and each student will develop a powerpoint presentation and final paper based on a topic of his/her choice.

Textbook(s)Required:

No textbook required.

Biology

BIOL-07.02-01 Biology: Politicized Topics

Hour: 9L **Instructor:** Brittany Calsbeek

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Fact or Fiction? Politicized Topics in Biology

Course Description: This course will explore the fact and fiction underlying politically hot topics that have biology at their core. The majority of the course will be focused on written and oral debates on topics including: climate change, genetic engineering, stem cell research, human evolution and antibiotic resistance. Students will hone their ability to think critically, to construct well-written and effective arguments, and to separate fact from fiction when controversies relating to biology arise in public forums.

Textbook(s)Required:

No Textbook required

Comparative Literature

COLT-07.09-01 Litofthe Colonial Encounter

Hour: 10A **Instructor:** Ayo Coly

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Colonial and Postcolonial Dialogues: Literatures of the Colonial Encounter

Course Description: This course examines the implication of literature in the colonial encounter and the literary representations of this event. We will read classical texts of European colonialism in dialogue with postcolonial texts from Africa, the Caribbean and Asia. We will begin with an exploration of the literature of empire and look at the ways in which colonialism shaped some canonical European texts. We will then study the range of literary responses emerging from French and British colonies in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. Our study will be organized around the themes of representation, identity, power, race, gender, and resistance. Readings include Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson*, Aime Cesaire's *A Tempest*, William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Maryse Conde's *Windward Heights*, Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, and Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*.

Textbook(s)Required:

All readings will be provided by the instructors and will be posted on Canvas.

English

ENGL-07.43-01 Race and Popular Music

Hour: 10A **Instructor:** Patricia Stuelke

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Race and Popular Music

Course Description: In this class we will write and revise essays about the racial dynamics of popular music in America, exploring musical forms such as blackface minstrelsy, Tin Pan Alley, the blues, rock'n'roll, country, and postfeminist pop. We will investigate the relationship between racial identity and popular music; study how artists and communities (particular African American ones) have used music as form of resistance; examine the role of racial borrowings and appropriations in musical history; and discover how factors such as history, geography, and political economy shape how music fans imagine their beloved artists' authenticity, as well as that of their fellow fans. Over the course of the term, you will write about music drawing on a variety of historical contexts and theoretical approaches; in your final essay, you will research and analyze a particular musical audience of your choosing.

No required textbooks available

ENGL-07.49-01 Secret History

Hour: 11 **Instructor:** Alysia Garrison

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Secret History

Course Description: From Donna Tartt's campus novel *The Secret History*, to the meteoric rise of the #MeToo movement, this course invites students to think about "secret history"—first emerging in long eighteenth-century literature—as a non-coercive form of critique with broad resonance for social practices of truth-telling and whistleblowing in our cultural present. The course has three objectives: 1) To read and write about secret history in seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century literature to understand some of its key formal and aesthetic qualities; 2) To think about the uses of secret history as a social and political form in our cultural and literary moment; 3) To consider secret history at Dartmouth College as an alternative to official Dartmouth culture through methods that might include research in Rauner Special Collections; interviews; critical speculations; or the imagination of new worlds scaled to appropriate sizes and frames of mind. While the bulk of the class will focus on techniques of close reading and writing, we will also situate stories in cultural and conceptual media to promote critical thinking and hone research skills. In your final project, you will learn how to incorporate materials from Dartmouth's culture and history to explore a research problem of your choice. Writing assignments will consist of three short formal essays and a final research paper along with informal assignments to encourage the habit of daily writing. Through collaborative workshops, students will participate in peer critique and revise drafts of papers. Regular attendance is essential. We will use a few x-periods on specific dates.

Textbook(s)Required:

Procopius, *The Secret History* (Penguin, 2007) ISBN: 978-0140455281 Donna Tartt, *The Secret History* (Vintage, 1992) ISBN: 978-1400031702 Leonara Sansay, *Secret History*; or, *The Horrors of St. Domingo* (Broadview, 2007) 978-1551113463 Umberto Eco, *Foucault's Pendulum* (Mariner, 2007) ISBN:

978-0156032971 Jill Lepore, selections from *The Secret History of Wonder Woman* (Vintage, 2015)
ISBN: 978-0804173407

ENGL-07.52-01 Freud & Culture

Hour: 3B **Instructor:** Azeen Khan

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Sigmund Freud and the Contemporary Cultural Imagination

Course Description: Sigmund Freud is perhaps one of the most significant thinkers of the late 19th and 20th century. His work has influenced numerous artists, literary theorists, psychoanalysts, philosophers, writers, and his thought has made its way into culture. Our everyday references –in conversation, on television, and in other forms of media—to the unconscious, the oedipal complex, the work of dreams, trauma, the drive, and the return of the repressed, owe to this psychoanalytic legacy. This first-year writing seminar is an introduction to the cultural writings of Freud, in which Freud the psychoanalyst acts as a cultural critic. He uses his psychoanalytic findings to reflect on the way in which culture is organized; the role of history and religion in the life of man; the uses and impossibility of war; and the role of repression in the progress of civilization. These writings also introduce us to some of Freud’s most important concepts: sexuality, affect, the unconscious, and the drive. Throughout the course of the semester, readings of Freud’s work will be supplemented by episodes of *Game of Thrones*.

Textbook(s)Required:

No required textbooks.

ENGL-07.58-01 Literatures of Human Rights

Hour: 10 **Instructor:** Ingrid Becker

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Literatures of Human Rights

Course Description: This course introduces students to the relationship between literature and human rights by surveying key texts in both fields from the sixteenth century to the present. While human rights are often read through legal documents and declarations, this class will complement the political and juridical traditions of human rights by exploring the ways in which human rights discourses have been defined and advanced through literary texts. Throughout the term, we will pose such questions as: what exactly are human rights, and how have they been allocated to particular groups and denied to others at different historical periods and in different regions of the world, from settler colonialism and slavery in the Americas, to the Holocaust in Europe and military dictatorships in Latin America, to global human rights issues in the contemporary? In what ways does literature have a particular capacity to create feelings of empathy and collective recognition necessary to support human rights claims? What strategies do works of art use to bear witness to human rights violations and to compel their audiences to act against injustice? What are the possibilities and limits of aesthetic representation in the face of atrocity and trauma? Can literature offer a reparatory function that legal documents alone cannot

achieve? In our search for answers, we will examine a range of literary genres, from autobiography and epistolary narrative to drama and poetry.

In addition to developing an understanding of literatures pertaining to human rights, students will build upon the skills they've developed in WRIT 5 and WRIT 2-3 to hone their abilities in scholarly dialogue and literary critical writing, including incorporating research on a contemporary human rights issue into an argumentative essay.

No required textbooks available

ENGL-07.58-02 Literatures of Human Rights

Hour: 2 Instructor: Ingrid Becker

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Literatures of Human Rights

Course Description: This course introduces students to the relationship between literature and human rights by surveying key texts in both fields from the sixteenth century to the present. While human rights are often read through legal documents and declarations, this class will complement the political and juridical traditions of human rights by exploring the ways in which human rights discourses have been defined and advanced through literary texts. Throughout the term, we will pose such questions as: what exactly are human rights, and how have they been allocated to particular groups and denied to others at different historical periods and in different regions of the world, from settler colonialism and slavery in the Americas, to the Holocaust in Europe and military dictatorships in Latin America, to global human rights issues in the contemporary? In what ways does literature have a particular capacity to create feelings of empathy and collective recognition necessary to support human rights claims? What strategies do works of art use to bear witness to human rights violations and to compel their audiences to act against injustice? What are the possibilities and limits of aesthetic representation in the face of atrocity and trauma? Can literature offer a reparatory function that legal documents alone cannot achieve? In our search for answers, we will examine a range of literary genres, from autobiography and epistolary narrative to drama and poetry.

In addition to developing an understanding of literatures pertaining to human rights, students will build upon the skills they've developed in WRIT 5 and WRIT 2-3 to hone their abilities in scholarly dialogue and literary critical writing, including incorporating research on a contemporary human rights issue into an argumentative essay.

No required textbooks available

Environmental Studies

ENVS-07.15-01 Future of Food

Hour: 10 Instructor: Sarah Smith

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: The Future of Food

Course Description: Modern agriculture causes extensive environmental damage and is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. These environmental changes – depleted soil, extreme temperature and precipitation patterns, and increased pressure from crop pests – are in turn putting a strain on the ability of this modern agricultural system to provide nutritious food for our growing world population. While there is no one solution to this massive problem, there are many proposed technological innovations, ecologically based solutions, and consumer choices that can help mitigate some of the problems we have with our current system. In this course, we will explore these solutions as we try to envision what the Future of Food might look like. Students will read current opinion and research from the popular press and scientific literature. Assignments include a self-reflection, a journalistic piece on the results of an agriculture-related scientific study, a research paper delving deeper into a potential solution to the problems with our agricultural system, an oral presentation, and a final essay synthesizing our course material into a vision for the future of food. We will spend ample course time discussing all aspects of writing, including revising student writing and finding and evaluating source material.

Textbook(s)Required:

No textbook required.

ENVS-07.15-02 Future of Food

Hour: 11 **Instructor:** Sarah Smith

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: The Future of Food

Course Description: Modern agriculture causes extensive environmental damage and is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. These environmental changes – depleted soil, extreme temperature and precipitation patterns, and increased pressure from crop pests – are in turn putting a strain on the ability of this modern agricultural system to provide nutritious food for our growing world population. While there is no one solution to this massive problem, there are many proposed technological innovations, ecologically based solutions, and consumer choices that can help mitigate some of the problems we have with our current system. In this course, we will explore these solutions as we try to envision what the Future of Food might look like. Students will read current opinion and research from the popular press and scientific literature. Assignments include a self-reflection, a journalistic piece on the results of an agriculture-related scientific study, a research paper delving deeper into a potential solution to the problems with our agricultural system, an oral presentation, and a final essay synthesizing our course material into a vision for the future of food. We will spend ample course time discussing all aspects of writing, including revising student writing and finding and evaluating source material.

Textbook(s)Required:

No textbook required.

ENVS-07.17-01 Nature-based Solutions

Hour: 10A **Instructor:** Morgan Peach

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Nature-based Solutions

Course Description: Nature-based solutions (NbS) leverage ecosystem processes to help us adapt to global change. By viewing NbS through the interdisciplinary lens of environmental studies and along a social-ecological-technical spectrum, we will understand and conceive of plausible NbS. We will ask: (1) What ethics and theory support NbS? (2) What is key to NbS adoption today? (3) How can NbS contribute to a just, resilient trajectory for society? In each of the three course units we will engage with diverse environmental literature, including philosophy, creative nonfiction, and scientific articles. Our learning process will involve step-wise, iterative writing, ranging from short reading responses for each class meeting, to weekly workshops and synthetic reflections, to a culminating final paper for each unit. The course will develop your understanding of entangled social-ecological problems (e.g., climate change, food and water security, environmental justice), empowering you to propose plausible NbS as the seeds of a good Anthropocene.

Textbook(s)Required:

No textbook required.

Film Studies

FILM-07.20-01 International Cinema & WWII

Hour: 2A **Instructor:** Jeffrey Ruoff

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: International Cinema & World War II – History and Memory

Course Description: The cinema plays a pivotal role in creating and defining our understanding of the past. Through viewings and close analysis of classic international films, this course will explore historical representations of the Second World War. We will consider how the war has been remembered and interpreted in the films of different European, Asian, and North American countries. In addition to examining expressions of competing political ideologies and the ways in which the conflict transformed national film industries, the course will focus on postwar representations of the Holocaust and the atomic bombings. Films shown will be mostly works of fiction by internationally recognized directors, but will also include documentaries and animated films.

No required textbooks available

Geography

GEOG-07.19-01 The Black South

Hour: 2 Instructor: Darius Scott

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: The Black South

Course Description: From Antebellum plantations to emerging mass incarceration, the United States South has long been a site of prototypical racial violence. The region has also seen transformative collectivity and creative expression that ameliorate the conditions of racial marginalization. The Black South will task students with researching and writing about the South as a cultural landscape of intertwining Black life and anti-black violence. In line with the interdisciplinary progression of current Black Geographies research, course materials will include films, academic articles, and the literary narratives of acclaimed wordsmiths such as Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, and more contemporary writers. While the course will maintain a regional focus, skills learned will enable students to better resist the allure of neat, oversimplified answers and to analyze the racial geographies of many different places. Students will develop sustained critical analysis skills through three consecutive writing assignments: a proposal, place narrative, and final research paper.

Textbook(s)Required:

No book order

German

GERM-07.07-01 Babylon Berlin

Hour: 2A Instructor: Veronika Fuechtner

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Babylon Berlin

Course Description: This interdisciplinary first-year seminar investigates representations of the city of Berlin from the early 20th Century to the 21st Century. We will read philosophers of urbanity, investigate architecture and analyze autobiographical texts. Literary readings as well as films will lead us to discuss the deployment of specific genres or characters in connection with changing experiences of the urban and Berlin's shifting political geographies. Among others, we will debate gender and the city, German reunification, the beginnings of the gay rights movement, Berlin as the center of the German colonial empire, German-Jewish cultural life, the rise of fascism, and migrations from Turkey and Syria.

Students will learn how to research a bibliography, how to develop and edit a research paper, and how to conduct peer-reviews. Students will be introduced to research methods and tools relating to different genres, in particular film, art, autobiography, literature, and theory. They will learn how to use the

library, how to work with relevant research databases, how to put together a research bibliography, how to summarize and present an argument, and how to write and revise a research paper in several stages. They will also learn how to work collaboratively on their writing in peer-review sessions, and they will learn how to provide constructive feedback. They will reflect on their writing process throughout the seminar.

No required textbooks available

Government

GOVT-07.03-01 Media and Politics

Hour: 12 **Instructor:** Deborah Brooks

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: The Media and American Politics

Course Description: The variety of media sources covering politics has expanded substantially in recent years: online-only news, satire-based news, social media forums such as blogs, and other types of newer media now exist alongside more traditional media sources such as newspapers and television news hours. In this seminar, we will explore how the media influences the nature of politics and political knowledge in the United States. Some of the questions we will examine include: How does the rise of new media affect the public's understanding of politics? Are market forces pushing media outlets away from objective, in-depth, fact-based political reporting? How prevalent is partisan bias in the news media? How do journalists and politicians vie for control of the news? How powerful can the media be in anointing (or destroying) candidates? Students who are devoted to improving their paper-writing abilities are encouraged to take this class, as we will spend about half of our classroom time discussing the media and about half of our time discussing writing and associated seminar abilities. Students will write and revise two 5-6 page analytical papers during the term; additionally, a class-produced blog about the media and politics will give us the opportunity to contrast formal and informal genres of writing and argumentation.

Textbook(s)Required:

There are no books required for this course

History

HIST-07.19-01 Medieval Paris

Hour: 10A **Instructor:** M Cecilia Gaposchkin

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Medieval Paris

Course Description: In the thirteenth century, the city of Paris was the most exciting, forward-looking, cosmopolitan city in Medieval Europe. This course looks at the politics, ideology, people, and topography, arts, university, and social life of medieval Paris in the thirteenth century. In this period Paris became the capital of the French monarchy and the most powerful kingdom in Europe, the home of the great University of Paris, and the birthplace of Gothic art and architecture. We will pay particular attention to the royal court of Louis IX (1226-1270) and its relationship to culture and society.

This class is above all an introduction to scholarly investigation, writing, and research. My primary goal is for students to gain an understanding of how to read historical sources, how to ask historical questions, and how to write in scholarly dialogue within the historical discipline. We will thus read primary sources with a view of asking questions of those sources, and secondary scholarship with a view of understanding the argument, and how those arguments are in dialogue with other arguments. I also want you to fall in love with medieval Paris.

Textbook(s)Required:

1. Chazan, Robert, Jean Hoff, and John Friedman. *The Trial of the Talmud, Paris, 1240. Mediaeval Sources in Translation.* Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies 53, 2012. ISBN-10 : \u200E 088844303X. ISBN-13 : \u200E 978-0888443038
2. Joinville, Jean of, and Geoffrey of Villehardouin. *Chronicles of the Crusades.* Trans. Smith, Caroline. London: Penguin, 2008. ISBN-10 : \u200E 9780140449983. ISBN-13 : \u200E 978-0140449983
3. Baldwin, John W. *The Scholastic Culture of the Middle Ages, 1000-1300. Civilization and Society Topic Series.* Lexington, Mass.: Heath, 1971. ISBN-13: 978-0881339420. ISBN-10: 0881339423

HIST-07.27-01 Power, Piety, Politics

Hour: 2 Instructor: Pamela Voekel

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Power, Piety, and Politics in Latin America

Course Description: Over the past fifty years, organized religious groups have influenced politics in both Latin America and the United States in unprecedented ways. How do we explain this religious revival of actors from across the political spectrum? This course will examine the relationships among religion, politics, economics, and shifting racial and gender configurations in the Americas. Religion's connection to the rise and persistence of the economic regime known as neoliberalism will be a central concern. Race, gender, religion and other complex social structures rarely respect national and regional boundaries, and many religious movements have built elaborate transnational networks. When the computer eclipsed the car as the paradigmatic object of labor in the late twentieth century, religious responses to the new economic order were among the most dramatic developments, and this course will zoom in on some of the most influential social movements of the past fifty years. In keeping with Dartmouth's mission as one of this country's top liberal arts colleges, we will spend considerable time improving your ability to read academic work and primary sources critically and write up your findings in clear, engaging prose. Course work consists of intensive preparation for our lively discussions; one four-page paper; two five-page papers; and two group writing projects, a manifesto and a sermon. Students will engage in intensive peer review both inside and outside of class, and will organize creative

presentations that convey critical writing advice to their classmates; in past years, these ten-minute presentations have involved song, dance, theater, art, rousing manifestos against verbiage, and short videos.

Textbook(s)Required:

All materials will be available on Canvas.

HIST-07.35-01 Imperialism in Cuba & PR

Hour: 10 **Instructor:** Jorell Melendez-Badillo

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Imperialism and the War of 1898 in Cuba and Puerto Rico

Course Description: The War of 1898 reshaped the international geopolitical order. It was a global phenomenon that allowed the nascent United States Empire to stretch its arms around the world and take Spain's former position as the "empire where the sun never sets." While this seminar uses a transnational lens, it focuses on the origins, developments, aftermaths of the war from the perspectives of Cubans and Puerto Ricans. It explores the ways these two Caribbean countries went from being Spain's last two colonial possessions in Latin America to attaining independence after three decades of war, in the case of Cuba, while Puerto Rico is still the world's oldest colony.

As a history seminar, this course will encourage and help you develop critical thinking skills. The historical trade is not just based on accessing the past through documents, but also on using our imaginations to craft narratives while using a wide range of sources to sustain our arguments. Since this course is also a writing seminar, we will discuss and think about strategies to write our ideas in an accessible way for our readers. To do so, students will experiment with different methods from the historians' intellectual tool kit: scrutinizing primary sources, analyzing content, and crafting narratives.

As a writing seminar, the course will be interactive, and student-scholars are expected to actively participate in the collective production of knowledge. In every class, there will be time allocated to discuss that day's topic and the assigned readings, as well as the writing process. That is, Prof. Meléndez-Badillo will not only focus on the course's topics through brief lectures but he will also help students interrogate how the readings were written, their intended audiences, and how students can critically engage with them to formulate their own arguments.

Textbook(s)Required:

None.

Italian

ITAL-07.08-01 What is (Italian) Cinema?

Hour: 12 **Instructor:** Matteo Gilebbi

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: What is (Italian) Cinema?

Course Description: Cinema is a form of expression that, by integrating different media and disciplines (including writing, music, dance, theater, architecture, fashion, etc.) creates something that is beyond the sum of its parts. But how does cinema integrate all these other media into something new? What are the specific tools needed to read, understand, and critically analyze this multifaceted form of expression, and how can we use them effectively?

In this course we will tackle these questions through an exploration of Italian cinema. Italian filmmakers played a pivotal role in advancing the language of cinema, via both technical and narrative experimentation. While Italian films are, of course, artifacts of a specific culture, they also transcend national boundaries and influence cinema around the world. At the same time, Italian filmmakers have always been avid watchers and attentive critics of foreign films – in particular, French, German, Russian, Japanese, and American – which, in turn, left a mark on their work. For these reasons, we will watch and analyze five Italian films to explore what cinema in general is and does. Importantly, the critical tools acquired in this course will help you tackle the complexity of other texts and develop a critical reading of those texts.

Finally, critical analysis of films, like that of any other text, should not happen in a vacuum. Watching a film with a critical eye, like doing any critical reading, is a social interaction. For this reason, this course is organized as a student-led seminar and all writings rely on peer-reviews. In this class you will become part of the same learning community: we will take responsibility for collaborating, sharing each other work and reflections, and respect each other opinions.

Students will submit three major writing assignments: Paper 1 (2000-word minimum), Paper 2 (2000-word minimum), and Final Paper (3000-word minimum). Each of these three papers will go through two revisions after students receive peer feedback on the first draft and after I give feedback on the second draft. I will also give feedback on the final version of each paper. The writing process for the Final Paper will also include a short presentation in class, followed by a Q&A aimed at receiving additional feedback from the entire class.

No required textbooks available

Jewish Studies

JWST-07.02-01 Jewish American Lit FYS

Hour: 2A **Instructor:** Klaus Milich

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Jewish American Literature: From Its Inception to the Present

Course Description: The history of Jewish American literature is a history of many literatures. It reflects the broad variety of historical, political, social, and cultural experiences that Jews from very different

places and backgrounds brought to the United States. The course will focus on selected topics, motives, and literary strategies of Jewish American literature from its tangible beginnings in the late 19th century to the present. Starting from discussions on how to define Jewish American literature, the texts and movies will coalesce around (1) the linguistic, religious, and political repercussions of Jewish immigrant life (Hebrew-Yiddish-English, Judaism, Zionism); (2) American modernism as an opportunity to escape the confinements of Shtetl culture and Jewish Ghetto life; (3) Jewish-African American relations and experiences in a multicultural society; (4) Jewish American identity in the context of the counterculture, the civil rights and the women's movement; (5) literary responses to historical calamities such as the Holocaust, the Rosenberg trial, McCarthyism and the cold war era.

Textbook(s)Required:

*****TEXTS TO BE PURCHASED • Abraham Cahan. *Yekl and the Imported Bridegroom and Other Stories of the New York Ghetto*, Novella, (1896) New York: Dover Publications; New Edition, ISBN 0486224279, \$ 10.93 (also available online and free of charge – via The Gutenberg Project) • Philip Roth, *The Plot Against America*. Novel Vintage International, (2004) ISBN-10: 1400079497, \$ 11.99 • Anya Ulinich, *Lena Finkle's Magic Barrel*, Graphic Novel, (2014) ISBN 9780143125242, \$ 22 *****
TEXTS AVAILABLE ON CANVAS • Gertrude Stein, "Melanctha," Short Story (1909) (also available online and free of charge – via The Gutenberg Project) • Isaac Bashevis Singer, "Gimpel the Fool," Short Story (1953) • Bernard Malamud, "The Magic Barrel," Short Story (1958) Movies and documentaries will be available on Canvas

Linguistics

LING-07.07-01 The World's Englishes

Hour: 10A **Instructor:** Christiane Donahue

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: The World's Englishes

Course Description: Why are writing courses most often assumed to be "English class"? In our networked globalized world, what language abilities do we need, and how do these abilities connect to college writing? We will study the nature of language and the demands globalization is placing on our speaking and writing abilities. We will consider the value of translation, "translingual" strategies for composing, and the ways in which multilingual capabilities are a resource and a challenge in communication. You will explore your own language resources (no advanced language ability required, though it is welcome), the place of languages in globalized communication, the linguistic rules of language activities such as codeswitching, and the importance of linguistic and rhetorical adaptability in successful writing today. We will read essays by authors such as sociolinguists Edgar Schneider, Rajen Mesthrie, and M.M. Bakhtin, applied linguists such as Ilona Leki and Braj Kachru, and writing studies scholars such as Suresh Canagarajah, Bruce Horner, or Maria Jerskey. From these readings we will develop linguistic and critical literacy methods for studying the ways in which Englishes are evolving and what this means for 21st century communication.

We will work on your writing every day, in relation to reading and in interaction with questions of language. Coursework will include many short informal writing pieces and "discussion board" work, two more formal essay projects with several revisions, frequent peer review and conferencing, and a final project that will focus on an issue of your choice from the various subjects we cover. You will have the option to produce a multimodal project in place of one essay.

Textbook(s)Required:

Williams, Joseph and Bizup, Joseph. *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*. Pearson, 4th or 5th edition, either is fine.

ISBN for 4th ed. 978-0205830763, ISBN for 5th ed. 978-0321953308.

Prendergast, Catherine (2008). *Buying into English: Language and investment in the new capitalist world*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. ISBN: 978-0-8229-6001.

Middle Eastern Studies

MES-07.01-01 Arab Revolutions

Hour: 10A **Instructor:** Ezzedine Fishere

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Arab Revolutions: Democratization, Despotism and Dependency

Course Description: This course explores the long struggle of Arabs to build independent and democratic states. After long cycles of revolutions and repression, the Arab World still suffers from despotism and dependency, and its people still yearn and struggle for freedom and good governance. Why have Arab revolutions failed? Are Arabs condemned to live under tyranny or is there hope for those who seek democratic, accountable governments and rule of law?

To answer this question, we will dig into the complex political and cultural realities of the Arab World. We will read about old and new Arab revolutions; from Prince Abdul-Qader's armed revolt in Algeria (1832-1847); Egypt's multiple revolutions (1882 and 1919); Lawrence of Arabia's Arab revolt (1914-1918); the bleak revolution of Palestine (1936), all the way to the Arab Spring of 2011 and its subsequent collapse into civil war and despotism. The readings cover these revolutions and the deep dynamics that shape Arab societies and states. As such, this course introduces students to the politics and culture of one of the most turbulent regions of our world.

Yet this is a writing seminar. Good writing, which also means good reading, constitutes the core of our learning process. Information technology has made data available to all, at a fingertip. But it doesn't teach us how to read, understand, analyze, compile this data or relate its various parts to one another. It doesn't teach us how to express our understanding—or lack thereof—of this data. A writing seminar, building on Writing 5, is an opportunity for students to learn how to dissect a text, identify its argument(s), structure, demonstration, and how to process these learnings and express them in writing.

How to construct an analytical (research) question and an argument? And how to write our arguments/ideas/questions in a clear, concise, coherent and cohesive manner?

Textbook(s)Required:

N/A

MES-07.05-01 History of Arabic Language

Hour: 3A **Instructor:** Samantha Wray

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Arabic from Past to Present: History of the Arabic Language

Course Description: In this course, we will survey the history of Arabic and allow that to inform our understanding of the current fascinating linguistic situation across the Arabic speaking world. We will explore several questions such as: Are the modern dialects descended from Classical Arabic? Is Modern Standard Arabic dying? Through the course, we will focus on three major aspects of Arabic and its diverse community of speakers. First, we will learn about the foundations of Arabic grammatical and philological tradition and use it as the primary lens to study the structure of the Arabic language. We will then examine Arabic through modern linguistic theory and compare these perspectives with historical traditions. Finally, we will engage with the ideologies surrounding the multiple dialectal varieties of Arabic, which serve as both liturgical and administrative languages, as well as languages of thought, conversation, and artistic expression. Students will produce several pieces of writing including synthesizing readings focusing on the Arabic language, and original research on a topic of their choice.

No required textbooks available

Native American Studies

NAS-07.07-01 Great Stories Mistold

Hour: 9L **Instructor:** Jeremy Mikecz

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: The Greatest Stories Ever Mistold: Debunking Myths of Early American Encounters from Columbus to the Pilgrims

Course Description: The first sustained encounters between Indigenous Americans, Europeans, and Africans after 1492 changed the world. To some historians, they represent the most consequential series of events in world history. Since most histories of European invasions and conquests have been written by the invaders themselves, much of the details of what happened have been shrouded by myth and propaganda. We will examine ways to separate history from myth to construct new histories. We will analyze how our understanding changes when Indigenous, African(-American), and other alternative histories are examined, with a particular focus on the period between 1492 and 1700.

In this First-year Seminar, a writing-intensive course, students will learn how to read, research, write, and think like a historian. More specifically, they will examine, discuss, critique, modify, and apply historical methods to reconstruct previously marginalized or silenced histories. Such approaches draw on methods developed in Native American and Indigenous Studies, African American Studies, and Gender Studies, as well as by non-academic historians and historical recordkeepers. Students will hone these skills through three principal course activities: reading seminars, writing workshops, and inquiry-based lessons. In developing these skills, students will read and evaluate research by historians and other authors seeking to rethink early colonial encounters in the Americas. In reading these texts, we will focus on how these authors read, think, and write about history; details about the content of the texts will be secondary. Thus, the readings chosen for the course will be those that pointedly address or serve as innovative examples of historical methods (although we may also read a few influential but poor examples of historical research and writing).

No required textbooks available

Physics

PHYS-07.08-01 Aliens in Fiction & Nonfiction

Hour: 9L **Instructor:** Marcelo Gleiser

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Us and Them: Aliens in Fiction and Nonfiction

Course Description: The possibility of extraterrestrial life, in particular, intelligent extraterrestrial life, has fascinated cultures throughout history and is, today, a central topic of scientific research. "Aliens" have been represented in literature and film both as benevolent and malevolent creatures, divine and monstrous. This course will investigate the cultural and scientific roots of these polar representations and how they evolved from the seventeenth century onwards. Through a critical analysis of fictional and non-fictional texts and a representative sample of movies, we will examine how the fictional alien mirrors shifting social and scientific values. Readings will include texts by Kepler, de Fontenelle, Voltaire, H. G. Wells, Arthur C. Clarke, Olaf Stapledon, Carl Sagan, and Ursula Le Guin.

Textbook(s) Required:

The Dancing Universe, Marcelo Gleiser, ISBN 978-1584654667 # Olaf Stapledon (1937), Star Maker (Wesleyan University Press 2004; ISBN 0819566934) # Arthur C. Clarke (1968): 2001, A Space Odyssey (Roc Books, 2000; ISBN 0451457994) # Carl Sagan (1985): Contact (Pocket, reissue edition, 1997; ISBN 0671004107);

Psychological & Brain Sciences

PSYC-07.02-01 Brain Evolution

Hour: 2A **Instructor:** Richard Granger

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Brain Evolution

Course Description: What's in a human brain, and how did it get there? How are brains built via genetic and developmental mechanisms? What makes one brain different from another, between species and within species? What makes populations different from each other? Who are our ancestors, and what was their evolutionary path to us? How did human brains get to their enormous size? How do brains differ from other organs? What mechanisms are at play over evolutionary time? The course will entail studying and writing about scientific findings in the field as well as controversies. There will be four writing assignments, and an in-class presentation, each reporting on aspects of articles in the scientific literature.

Textbook(s)Required:

**Recommended (not required): Principles of Brain Evolution, Edition 1, Sinauer Press, by G. Striedter ISBN-13: 978-0878938209 Approximate Cost via Amazon: \$123.95 (new hardcover)/\$55.70 (used)

*Other purchasing options include ordering directly ordering through Oxford University Press: Use promo code asai2022 to receive 20% off of their Oxford University Press textbook order at www.oup.com/us/he or by calling (customer service 1-800-445-9714)

Spanish

SPAN-07.08-01 Cognitive Don Quixote

Hour: 12 **Instructor:** Paul Carranza

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: *Don Quixote* and Cognitive Theories of Literature

Course Description: *Don Quixote* is the story of a man who loses his mind by reading literature. This course will use Cervantes' masterpiece to examine theories of the human mind and how it engages with literature. We will read selections of both Part I and Part II of *Don Quixote* together with critical works about it. The study of Cervantes' novel will allow us to learn about the exciting field of cognitive literary studies. We will devote special attention to learning about theory of mind—the ability of readers and literary characters to attribute emotions to others—necessary to literature and life. We will also examine cognitive approaches to film by analyzing adaptations of *Don Quixote* such as Terry Gilliam's *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote*. All readings and lectures will be in English.

Textbook(s)Required:

Cervantes, Miguel de. *Don Quixote*. Translated by Edith Grossman. Harper Perennial, 2005. ISBN-13: 9780060934347. \$19.99

Theater

THEA-07.01-01 Theater for Social Change

Hour: 11 **Instructor:** Mara Sabinson

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Theater for Social Change

Course Description: This course will trace particular developments in American and Western European Theater from the First World War through the present. Artists and theater groups under consideration will be those whose work has focused on contemporary social conditions and the potential of performance to effect social change. In addition, students will experiment with developing scripts and performances based on current events. Readings will include selections from the writings of Erwin Piscator, Bertolt Brecht, The Federal Theatre Project, Harold Pinter, Augusto Boal, etc. as well as newspapers, news magazines, and other media sources. In addition to creative and critical writing, students will be assigned one major research project. Emphasis will be on class participation.

Textbook(s)Required:

none

THEA-07.01-02 Theater for Social Change

Hour: 2 **Instructor:** Mara Sabinson

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Theater for Social Change

Course Description: This course will trace particular developments in American and Western European Theater from the First World War through the present. Artists and theater groups under consideration will be those whose work has focused on contemporary social conditions and the potential of performance to effect social change. In addition, students will experiment with developing scripts and performances based on current events. Readings will include selections from the writings of Erwin Piscator, Bertolt Brecht, The Federal Theatre Project, Harold Pinter, Augusto Boal, etc. as well as newspapers, news magazines, and other media sources. In addition to creative and critical writing, students will be assigned one major research project. Emphasis will be on class participation.

Textbook(s)Required:

None

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality**WGSS-07.01-01 Gender in Science Fiction**

Hour: 9L **Instructor:** Douglas Moody

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: He, She, or It: Reconstructing Gender in Science Fiction

Course Description: Speculative or "science" fiction has often been the domain of male writers, however, a number of feminist writers of speculative fiction have created alternative worlds and explored social issues in their fiction in order to challenge concepts of gender, genetics, sexuality, and the seeming intractability of patriarchal societies. In this class we will explore these worlds of resistance, which confront our current conceptions of gender as we boldly go where no person has gone before. Some of our primary readings include: Margaret Atwood, Octavia Butler, Donna Haraway, Ursula LeGuin, Marge Piercy, and Joanna Russ.

The students will read, view, discuss, critique, and conduct research on both fiction and non-fiction texts, as well as consider science fiction films and television programs. There will be three "analytical papers," which are based on the literature, critical essays, films, and television programs we will discuss and analyze, and at the end of the term the students will write one extensive (12 – 15 page) final paper that is research-based. We will have regular writing workshops during the term, in which most of the class time will be used to discuss the writing process and drafts of the students' papers, and during these group work activities the students and I will often share strategies about the writing process and research strategies. There will often be peer review exercises during the writing workshops and I expect that the students' papers will go through a process of prewriting, writing, and revising before they submit the final versions of their papers. Students will archive all of the drafts of their papers and final versions of their papers in a web-based portfolio.

Textbook(s)Required:

Piercy, Marge. He, She, and It Fawcett Books, 1993 ISBN-13: 978-0449220603 Atwood, Margaret. The Handmaid's Tale Random House, 2017 ISBN-13: 978-1784873189 LeGuin, Ursula. The Left Hand of Darkness, 50th Anniversary edition ISBN-13: 978-0441478125

WGSS-07.20-01 Gender & US Militarism

Hour: 3A **Instructor:** Tyler Monson

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Gender & U.S. Militarism: Woes in Warfare

Course Description: In the late summer of 2021, the United States military effectively concluded its war and occupation in Afghanistan and Iraq in time for the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11th, 2001. On this momentous occasion which honors the memories of lives lost in the attacks here and there, we are also called upon to take stock. What has the long durée of U.S. militarism in the Middle East accomplished? Has the threat to "our way of life" been squelched? Are the women and children of Afghanistan and Iraq better off because of U.S. intervention? Have we advanced liberal notions of "freedom" and "democracy" meaningfully to justify the violence done in their name? Truthfully, these military occupations have ended in a whimper, with low-public approval and ambiguous (or worse) answers to these questions. Such an ending is not dissimilar to the U.S. war in Vietnam nearly 50 years ago. Through deep, considered readings of cultural and political texts by

government leaders, public intellectuals, the press, and nonconformists, including government statements/addresses, legislation, media commentary, literature, dissident manifestos, anti-war zines, and visual art, we will study U.S. militarism over the last 50 years, with emphasis on the wars in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

This course employs interdisciplinary research practices, theories, and methodologies, such as transnational feminism, indigenous critique, and queer of color critique, to explore and interrogate U.S. military ideology, for example, the role of masculinity in the imperialist venture, the recruitment of women, LGBT, and transgender citizens, compulsory military service for all genders, and drones and other non-human war tactics, and to envision alternatives to violent, expensive, and unjust warfare. The final project, for instance, will ask students to draw from our readings, discussions, and their research to address pressing issues in the U.S. military including transgender inclusion, all-gender compulsory selective service (the draft), sexual assault, and use of drones and spyware.

Textbook(s)Required:

Tim O'Brien - The Things They Carried ISBN-13: \u200E 978-0544309760 Phil Klay - Redeployment ISBN-13: \u200E 978-1594204999

Writing Program

WRIT-07.22-01 Technology and Sport

Hour: 9L **Instructor:** Rachel Obbard

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Technology and Sport at the Crossroads

Course Description: "Technology and Sport at the Crossroads" is a First-year Seminar that engages students in in-depth study of this complex, interdisciplinary topic through reading, research, discussion, and composition. In this course, we will examine engineering innovations in sport and their role in reflecting and shaping social values. We will read and discuss scientific (peer-reviewed) papers and scholarly essays on engineering, ethics and the philosophy of sport. Coursework will include: (1) short informal writing pieces, (2) a group presentation on a major ethical theory as a lens for examining the impact of technoscience in sport, (3) two essays with multiple revisions, and (4) a multimedia project examining how technology is used by stakeholders in sport to engage in the social debate. The major essays will be a literature review paper on the applied science or engineering behind a specific sports technology, and a scholarly essay that examines the intersection of that technology with sport and society.

Textbook(s)Required:

none required for purchase

WRIT-07.28-01 Team Communication/Identity

Hour: 2A **Instructor:** Svetlana Grushina

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Team Communication & Identity: One Team, Two Teams, Red Team, Blue Team

Course Description: Though teams are all around us, from work, play and education to healthcare, leisure and travel, many people struggle to thrive in team environments. At the same time, the ability to work in a team, alongside strong written communication, is a top most sought-after attribute by employers, according to the 2019 Job Outlook survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. This course will help you grow and excel in both of those important areas. We will explore the challenges and opportunities of team dynamics by focusing on the role of language and communication as well as ways in which identity, culture, conflict, and power matter in teams.

You will engage with the course theme through a series of writing assignments that build on each other, from reflecting on your own past team experiences to conducting and analyzing interviews for your final research project. There will be in-class writing workshops, peer review, multiple types of feedback, revision opportunities, individual and small team presentations, and other activities that will build your writing and team-related knowledge, expertise, and confidence.

Textbook(s)Required:

No required books to purchase. Readings will be made available through course Canvas site.

WRIT-07.30-01 The Female Detective

Hour: 11 **Instructor:** Colleen Lannon

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: The Female Detective: Gender-Bending in the Mystery Genre

Course Description: Detective fiction is generally considered a conservative genre. It addresses doubt and uncertainty (Who committed the crime? Why? Will she or he strike again?) and once the crime is solved, it replaces that doubt with certainty and assurance; the status quo is reinstated. What happens, then, when the historically male sleuth is replaced by a female detective? What possibilities are opened by it? Is the status quo reinforced or challenged? This course will examine the female detective alongside her masculine counterpart, starting with the early days of Sherlock Holmes's "sisters" and then proceeding through American hard-boiled fiction and selections from the golden age of British crime fiction. Finally, we will examine the new wave of female detective fiction that began in the '70s and '80s as well as the emergence of the sub-genre of queer/lesbian detection in the 1990s. Readings will include selections from authors such as Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, Dashiell Hammett, Sue Grafton, and Katherine V. Forrest.

Formal assignments will include three essays and an in-class presentation. In addition, there will be daily informal writing assignments that reinforce concepts introduced in class. Throughout the course, a

strong emphasis will be placed on writing as a process involving multiple drafts and collaborative feedback. The overall goal of the course is to help students develop the intellectual abilities they need to succeed in an academic environment. This includes sharpening their critical reading and thinking skills; understanding the elements of argument and how to shape a persuasive essay; learning how to engage with the work of other scholars; writing effective prose; and revising for clarity.

Textbook(s)Required:

Grafton, Sue. *A is for Alibi*. St. Martin's Griffin, 2005. ISBN: 978- 0312353810.

Forrest, Katherine V. *Murder at the Nightwood Bar*. Spinsters Ink, 2011. ISBN: 978-1935226673.

WRIT-07.32-01 Free Speech on College Campus

Hour: 9L **Instructor:** Ellen Rockmore

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Free Speech on the College Campus

Course Description: Who is allowed to say what on college campuses? This is the question this course seeks to answer. We will look at the philosophical foundations of the right to free speech and why it is considered essential to liberty and democracy. We will also read well known Supreme Court opinions defining the legal parameters of the first amendment, particularly as it pertains to “hate speech.” We will then turn to the specific forum of the university, where values such as equality, inclusion, and pedagogy may sometimes come into tension with the value of free speech. We will read arguments both for and against limiting the free speech rights of students and faculty. The course will survey the history of attempts to regulate speech on campuses, including early 20th century disputes between university benefactors and professors, the hate speech codes of the 1980’s, as well as present controversies over free speech on college campuses. Students will discuss and write about contemporary conflicts, such as protests over invited speakers, or Donald Trump's recently issued Executive Order on Combating Anti-Semitism. Assignments will include written responses to readings, written analyses of contemporary problems, and arguments for or against disciplinary action in hypothetical -- or actual -- cases. Some writing assignments will be done in stages, with opportunities for feedback and revisions.

Textbook(s)Required:

No required books to purchase.

WRIT-07.34-01 Contemporary Ethical Issues

Hour: 3B **Instructor:** Ann Bumpus

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Contemporary Ethical Issues

Course Description: Do you wish you had a better grasp on the arguments for and against physician-assisted suicide? abortion? animal rights? In this course, students will learn in depth about a couple of topics of contemporary moral interest. Sources will include academic papers, magazine and newspaper articles, films, and interviews. The course will focus on close reading and on constructing and evaluating arguments. Class time will be devoted largely to discussion, debate, and peer review of written work. Assignments will include two argumentative essays, a research paper, participation in a debate, and a persuasive speech.

Textbook(s)Required:

Living Ethics, ed., Russ Shafer-Landau, Oxford U Press First or Second Edition is fine. Rental is fine.

WRIT-07.35-01 Sound Surveillance & Cinema

Hour: 10A **Instructor:** Samuel Carter

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: All Ears: Sound, Surveillance, and Cinema in the Americas

Course Description: We often think about surveillance, which is derived from the French for “watching over,” solely in visual terms. But the ear can operate alongside or even in place of the eye when it comes to gathering information and drawing inferences. This course asks what such a shift from the scopic to the sonic reveals about the ways we understand surveillance, and to do so it turns to narratives in a medium where we can also listen in: cinema. As we examine portrayals of auditory observation and monitoring in films from Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, and the United States, we will consider surveillance in this new key of the acoustic and interrogate how listening can engage in its own forms of surveillance that reproduce divisions based on race, gender, and class. Accompanying works ranging from *The Conversation* (1974) to *Sorry to Bother You* (2018) will be readings regarding sound, surveillance, and cinema. Student writing will address these materials in informal weekly responses as well as in progressively longer formal assignments that require the careful analysis of specific scenes and that emphasize substantial forms of revision across multiple drafts.

Textbook(s)Required:

No books required to purchase.

WRIT-07.36-01 Mad Women

Hour: 3A **Instructor:** Rebecca Clark

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Mad Women

Course Description: What makes a mad woman? And why are we always hiding her in the attic? In this course, students will hone their writing and discussion skills as they visit with some of the great mad women of literature, film, and popular culture: from ancient Greek tragedy’s most infamous filicidal

mother to “hysterical” teens committed the psychiatric ward; from the Gothic novel’s mad woman in the attic, to the postmodern manic pixie dream girl; and all the crazed crones and manic monstresses in between. Students will critically read and write their way through a fittingly eccentric collection of texts spanning the genres of fiction, poetry, memoir, and essay in order to examine how madness, broadly construed, has been and continues to be diagnosed, treated, and narrated across time, place, and discipline. Throughout, will think about the ways in which gender, sex, race, and disability impact and are impacted by narratives of monstrosity, mania, hysteria, and rage.

In this writing course, students will produce approximately 32 pages of written work through a gradual process of drafting, editing, reviewing, and revising. We will work on reading critically, posing analytical questions, crafting and supporting well-reasoned arguments, and developing research skills. The course will culminate in an original research paper.

Textbook(s)Required:

Barnes, Djuna. *Nightwood*. Any edition.

Morrison, Toni. *Sula*. Any edition.

Wang, Esme Weijun. *The Collected Schizophrenias*. Any edition.

WRIT-07.37-01 Anthropogenesis

Hour: 10A **Instructor:** Christopher Drain

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Anthropogenesis—Culture, Cognition, Ritual, & Technics

Course Description: In this seminar we will deal with the question of human origins (i.e., "anthropogenesis"). In staking out this investigation, we follow late philosopher Bernard Stiegler and Soviet psychologist L.S. Vygotsky in positing the following proposition: Homo sapiens is interesting only insofar as it leaves the bounds of purely biological determination. In other words, we are cultural-historical animals, and our specific development relies on the mediating role of cultural devices and cognitive scaffolds. But what exactly are these devices and scaffolds? And how do they function not only in relation to the quantitative amplification of prehuman capacities but also their qualitative transformation? In formulating answers to these questions, we will look to work from philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and cognitive science, while also considering insights from literary theorists, psychoanalysts, and classicists.

As a writing seminar, we will critically examine the rhetorical structure of our texts and workshop analytic and argumentative compositions to learn the contours of academic prose in an interdisciplinary context. Shorter written assignments will scaffold the development of a research paper. Students should expect to draw on peer and instructor feedback throughout the term.

Textbook(s)Required:

Freud, S. *Totem and Taboo*. W.W. Norton & Co., 1990. ISBN: 978-0393001433.

Tomasello, M. *A Natural History of Human Thinking*. Harvard University Press, 2018 reprint edition.

ISBN: 978-0674986831.

All other readings available online.

WRIT-07.37-02 Anthropogenesis

Hour: 3B **Instructor:** Christopher Drain

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Anthropogenesis—Culture, Cognition, Ritual, & Technics

Course Description: In this seminar we will deal with the question of human origins (i.e., "anthropogenesis"). In staking out this investigation, we follow late philosopher Bernard Stiegler and Soviet psychologist L.S. Vygotsky in positing the following proposition: Homo sapiens is interesting only insofar as it leaves the bounds of purely biological determination. In other words, we are cultural-historical animals, and our specific development relies on the mediating role of cultural devices and cognitive scaffolds. But what exactly are these devices and scaffolds? And how do they function not only in relation to the quantitative amplification of prehuman capacities but also their qualitative transformation? In formulating answers to these questions, we will look to work from philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and cognitive science, while also considering insights from literary theorists, psychoanalysts, and classicists.

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Textbook(s)Required:

Freud, S. *Totem and Taboo*. W.W. Norton & Co., 1990. ISBN: 978-0393001433.

Tomasello, M. *A Natural History of Human Thinking*. Harvard University Press, 2018 reprint edition.

ISBN: 978-0674986831.

All other readings available online.

WRIT-07.38-01 Cultures of Self-Loathing

Hour: 9L **Instructor:** Min Young Godley

Requirements Met: WCult: None; Distrib: None

Description:

Title: Cultures of Self-Loathing

Course Description: In an age dominated by the language of positivity, self-care, and empowerment, negative emotions such as self-loathing are taboo, or at best viewed as obstacles that individuals must

overcome in order to be successful and happy. But what if self-loathing is about more than an individual deficit and, in a sense, doesn't even reside in the "self"? What if it has something to teach us about what we value, and can therefore shed light on larger problems in our culture and society that would otherwise go unheeded? This course explores self-loathing in a number of perspectives: as "ugly feelings," as moral perversion, as social pathology, and as internalized oppression. Then, expanding our perspective to interpersonal relations, we will examine how self-loathing also manifests in such forms as blame and resentment, playing a hidden role in politics that includes racism, sexism, body shaming, and so on. Finally, we will interpret the shifting ethical stakes that are expressed in resentment and self-loathing and appraise their value as criticism.

Textbook(s)Required:

Larsen, Nella. *Passing*. Penguin Classics, 2003. ISBN: \u200E978-0142437278.