First-Year Seminar Course Descriptions Winter 2025

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.

Winter 2025

Instructor: Joseph Aguado
Course Title: Haunting Memories: The Holocaust and its Representations
Description: These are some of the questions that we will be asking ourselves in this course. How do we deal with painful memories from the Holocaust? Will we be able to represent them, to cope and to learn from them, and to appease their haunting effects, perhaps to put them aside once and for all, without forgetting? Can we remember extreme experiences like those coming from Holocaust survivors without being engulfed by the horrors they portray? We will be reading texts by Wiesel, Levi, Kertész, Améry, Sebald, and works by critical thinkers like Adorno, Agamben, Butler, Todorov, Finkielkraut, and Bauman. In a continent where war, exile, extermination, and political and cultural repression have been so pervasive over the centuries, one way of grounding a new European project for the future could be based on the full acknowledgement of the unavoidable historical legacy of the Holocaust. Europeans must place at their center the unforgettable memories of the shared atrocities of the European experience. These memories, this willingness to make the horrors of past part of today's projects, will imply the effort to construct an idea of Europe with the ashes of what has been most essential to the continent up to our times, as the indispensable tool that diverts us from the road leading to extermination and the concentration camp.

Instructor: Ben Barnes
Course Title: Leaving our Mark: How Humans Shape the Geologic Record
Description: When the International Union of Geological Sciences recently rejected a proposal to define an Anthropocene Epoch, it sparked fresh debate over humans' impact on our planet. Our species has undeniably influenced Earth's biodiversity, landscapes, and climate, but will this activity be preserved in the geologic record, and if so, how? In this class we will explore the evidence in the rocks for ancient catastrophes, from the warming which nearly extinguished life as we know it, to the asteroid impact which ended the Age of the Dinosaurs. Based on these analogs, we

will predict what signals of human activity will be preserved in the rocks, and how geoscientists in the distant future might use these to reconstruct the global climate change playing out in our lifetimes. Throughout the term, students will craft their own reconstruction of a geologic event as a research paper, write an op-ed on the relevance of an Anthropocene Epoch for general audiences, and develop a scientific proposal for how and where to mark the boundary of the "human era" in the rock record. We will use class time to edit and discuss our writing in a collaborative environment and engage in debates over the ultimate geologic legacy of humans.

Instructor: Michelle Clarke
Course Title: Plutarch's Guide to Leadership
Description: This seminar examines one of the earliest and most influential guidebooks to leadership ever written: Plutarch's Lives of the Eminent Greeks and Romans. We will read it carefully, with a view to surfacing the wisdom it contains about the opportunities and dangers associated with this critically important form of public service. As we will see, Plutarch instructs through example, developing vivid portraits of both good and bad leaders and inviting us to ponder exactly what separates the one from the other. Instead of focusing on specific leadership techniques or strategies, Plutarch emphasizes the significance of character – who a person is, as shaped by nature, education, and circumstance. Accordingly, we will discuss the traits that effective leaders will tend to have and why it is so important to have them.

Instructor: Sienna Craig
Course Title: The Values of Medicine
Description: This course considers the values that shape the practice of medicine. Through immersive engagement with materials from Rauner Special Collections dating from the 15th – 21st centuries, inclusive of Dartmouth's medical school archives, we examine the ethical formation of physicians, the social construction of medicine's gaze onto and into humanity, and the social lives of medicines. We use the research and writing tools of ethnography – structured observation, interviews, reflective writing, archival exploration, and sociocultural analysis – to examine the cultural roots and contemporary expressions of "western" biomedicine. Sections focus on the social history of anatomical knowledge; the gendering of medicine through midwifery and the rise of obstetrics as a field; the family doctor across lines of race, class and geography; the relationship between body and mind with respect to "mental" illness; and the production of medicines as therapeutic objects. Student work in the course includes curating, in teams of four, their own virtual exhibit – this year focused on epidemic disease at previous moments in history.

Instructor: Heidi Denzel
Course Title: Longing and Belonging: Diversity in the Media
Description: The mass media are cultural instruments that imagine, establish, and

negotiate identities. They shape civil societies and their policies and influence how people see themselves and others. As a communicative stimulus, media characterizations influence perceptions of who should be included and who should be excluded in communities of cultural citizenship. From Hitler to Hollywood, Kafka to ""Tribes of Europa"", we will analyze several media genres and discuss the role of religious, linguistic, and social minorities as fictional characters, writers, directors, and producers. We will investigate what tactics different forms of counter-narratives use and where they are produced. Do media activist organizations like the Multi-ethnic Media Coalition and the European Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom, social justice campaigns like #OscarsSoWhite, and over-the-top content platforms like Netflix create new possibilities of inclusion? We will approach the topic of diversity in the media from various angles and will consult scholarship from multiple disciplines.

Instructor: Carolyn Dever
Course Title: Reading Jane Austen
Description: Through in-depth analysis of four major novels published by Jane Austen (1775-1817), Reading Jane Austen will examine the strategies Austen deploys to navigate issues of personal agency and social mobility on behalf of her female protagonists. Throughout the course, we will focus on questions of novelistic form and narrative voice to build context for understanding how Austen engages women's social agency in all its contemporary possibilities and impossibilities. In addition to our very close work on the novels, we will screen at least one film adaptation of each of the novels; students will lead the class discussion on "film days." I will ask you to approach the relationship between literary texts and film representations as a constructive dialogue: you should think about these films as strong commentaries on, and reinterpretations of, Austen's novels. Like the directors of these films, you will produce analytical work that offers strong commentary and interpretation of Austen's novels; hence "reading Jane Austen." Writing assignments for the course will include four papers focused directly on the novels, as well as a brief response paper for each film screening, focused on the director's artistic choices as an interpreter of Austen.

Instructor: Aden Evens
Course Title: Literature of the Machine
Description: This course asks what machines are and how they are represented in literature. Examining a variety of texts but primarily novels, we will discuss changing conceptions of the machine over the past two centuries and explore the fears and hopes about technology expressed in those texts. Readings will include Franz Kafka, H.G. Wells, Kurt Vonnegut, J.G. Ballard, Mark Leyner, Angela Carter, David Foster Wallace, and short stories. If there is room, these fictions will be supplemented by readings in philosophy and literary theory. We may also consider some films that

engage with machines (eXistenZ or 2001: A Space Odyssey for example), and may even include other kinds of texts such as computer games or hypertexts.

Instructor: Stuart Finkel
Course Title: Prisonhouse or Brotherhood of Nations? The Peoples of the Former Soviet Union in History, Literature, & Film
Description: The immense geographic area encompassed by the Russian Empire until 1917 and after this the USSR covered, as one early Soviet film proudly asserted, "One Sixth of the Earth." In a country marked by great national, religious, and cultural diversity, the question of how to reign over this complex multinational empire perplexed both the Tsarist and Communist regimes. While the Soviet government, in particular, claimed to be fostering a "brotherhood of peoples," it was often accused instead of creating a "prisonhouse of nations." In this course we will examine the historical events and transformations affecting the many peoples that lived in this vast expanse, as well as the representation of their experiences in literature, film, and other cultural forms. We will investigate 19th century Russian imperialism, tsarist state policy toward non-Russian groups, and the formation of national identities in the eventful period leading to the overthrow of the Romanov monarchy in 1917. We will then explore the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics within the context of Revolution and Civil War and follow the evolution and contradictions of nationality policy up to the Soviet collapse in 1991.

Instructor: Coleen Fox
Course Title: Into the Wild
Description: The US Wilderness Act of 1964 states that wilderness exists “where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor and does not remain.” This straightforward definition obscures the ambiguity and controversy surrounding both the idea of wilderness and its expression on the landscape. In this class, we will draw on personal narratives, scientific research, literature, and policy documents to explore the historical context and contemporary debates concerning wilderness in the US and around the world. We will investigate the idea of wilderness at a variety of scales, from the personal to the global. At the personal scale, we will focus on the transformative power of journeys into the wilderness. At the national and global scales, we will analyze the science, discourse, and politics of wilderness protection.

Instructor: Jeffrey Friedman
Course Title: Intelligence and National Security
Description: This seminar explores challenges and controversies of U.S. intelligence analysis. Almost all important issues in intelligence are surrounded by secrecy and uncertainty. It is inherently difficult to know “what works” in intelligence, to define “good” analysis, or to make sound recommendations for improvement. Specific

controversies we examine include the September 11 terrorist attacks, assessments of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs, and CIA methods of "enhanced interrogation." Students draft, peer review, and revise three short (5 page) essays analyzing these controversies, and then expand one of those documents into a longer (8-10 page) research paper. In discussing conceptual and practical issues surrounding the study of intelligence, we engage broader debates about what it means to analyze high-stakes decisions in a manner that is both rigorous and useful.

Instructor: Alysia Garrison
Course Title: Secret History
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.

Instructor: Kate Gibbel
Course Title: Visual Poems
Description: This course will look at poems in relationship to images: from ekphrasis (poetry that describes a visual work of art) to concrete poetry to experiments with the line and shapes of sentences. How, we will ask, do we experience the visual field of the page? How do we understand words as shapes (and shapes as meaning)? What is an image and how can it be represented? How can words and images collaborate? What possibilities do these interactions make for their readers? In this course, you will produce at least 9,000 words of your own literary criticism through a process of drafting, editing, peer review, metacognitive processing, and revision. We will work

on reading closely, writing critically, and crafting well-researched, engaging essays about poems. The course will culminate in an 8-9-page analytic paper.

Instructor: Levi Gibbs
Course Title: Singers as Social Symbols in Asia and Beyond
Description: Around the world and across time, professional singers and their songs stand at the crossroads of differing politics and perspectives. This writing-based seminar explores how a singer can symbolize different things to different people, giving rise to discussions of a range of cultural politics. Examining case studies from pop superstar Teresa Teng to Indian legend Lata Mangeshkar, from Beyoncé to BTS, we will focus on how interdisciplinary scholars of popular music develop, test, and refine ideas through writing, conduct research, build arguments, revise drafts, and engage with readers. Some of the topics covered will include how race, gender, and class are negotiated through performance, and the connections audiences draw between singers' lives and their art.

Instructor: Reighan Gillam
Course Title: Afro-Latin American Visualities
Description: Outside of Africa, the majority of people of African descent live in Latin America, specifically Brazil. In this class we will examine Black visual cultural production and representation in Latin America. Students will learn how to write about, interpret, and analyze film and visual culture. Additionally, we will examine the social and cultural context that inform the production and meaning of these films and visual culture.

Instructor: Lewis Glinert
Course Title: Jerusalem: Vision and Reality
Description: Jerusalem has always mesmerized minds—Royal City of Solomon, mystical core of the world, site of a foretold apocalypse, twice razed to the ground, focus of Jewish messianic dreams, since 1948 once more a Jewish capital city but still savagely fought over. In this course, we will sample the symbolism of Jerusalem in Jewish, Christian and Islamic intellectual and artistic expression, from the Bible down to the present. Why has this city evoked such passions? Assessment will be by three papers analyzing academic and creative course readings, with an emphasis on clarity, concision and grasp of content.

Instructor: Jason Houle
Course Title: Sociological Perspectives on Social Stratification and Inequality in the United States: A Century of Continuity and Change
Description: When we think about social inequality, it's tempting to view it as the inevitable byproduct of effort, where those at the top are rewarded for their perseverance, and those at the bottom should work harder to "pull themselves up by

their bootstraps." In this class, we will interrogate these naïve assumptions and explore sociological understandings of social stratification and inequality in the context of 20th and 21st century United States. We will specifically focus on how sociologists write, craft arguments, and develop and test theories about social inequality. As part of this process, you will learn how to write (and read) formal sociological research papers, such as those that appear in academic journals, and how to package these ideas to public audiences (such as op-eds). Substantively, we will focus on a range of topics, including (but not limited to): social mobility, poverty and social welfare policies, race and gender stratification, the causes and consequences of rising wealth and income inequality, and the changing face of inequality before and after the Great Recession.

Instructor: Jennifer Jerit
Course Title: Does Democracy Work?
Description: Ordinary people are a crucial part of a democracy—in terms of their beliefs and attitudes as well as the political actions they do or do not take. Indeed, some scholars go so far as to describe voters as the starting point of a democracy. But are citizens up to the task? This first-year seminar investigates the topic of voter competence, which refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that support a functioning political system. We will consider what is required of citizens in a modern democracy and discuss the standards by which we evaluate how well people fulfill their democratic duties. Course readings focus on public opinion and political behavior in the American context. As part of the first-year writing program, this course involves analytical writing and small group discussions. Students will write and revise two 3-page papers with significant class time devoted to writing challenges and giving/receiving feedback in peer groups. The seminar also involves a final 6-page paper.

Instructor: Alexis Jetter
Course Title: Women and Global Journalism
Description: This course will focus on the contributions of women journalists in the US and around the globe to coverage of human rights, geopolitics, war, freedom of speech, violence against women, reproductive rights, health, educational opportunity for girls/women, sex slavery/trafficking, climate change and the environment, religion, artistic freedom and other critical issues. Three writing assignments will include a personal narrative, a radio commentary and a feature-length profile or investigation, using original reporting, that sheds light on a social justice issue. Two drafts of each writing assignment are required. We will also hold regular workshops on reporting and writing.

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Instructor: Emily Kane
Course Title: Reimagining the Myth: Paris in Literature and Film
Description: In the Western imagination, the idea of the city of Paris is almost always linked to romance. While couples dream of future Parisian honeymoons or vacations, in reality, living and becoming in the "city of love" are a good deal more complicated than the romanticized version with which we are so familiar. What does it mean to live in Paris, to have a "Parisian" identity? In what ways might history (the trauma of World War II, for example, or the French wars of decolonization) play a role in the construction of these identities? What roles do gender, culture, immigration, and economic status play in incubating these identities in this particular, almost mythically idealized place? Students will concentrate on three formal writing assignments, including one close reading or sequence analysis, then learn to incorporate these readings into longer literary analyses. They will also work on incorporating secondary sources into their final papers.

Instructor: Steve Kangas
Course Title: Pompeii in Antiquity and in the Modern Imagination
Description: Suddenly destroyed in 79 C.E. in the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, Pompeii was rediscovered in the middle of the 18th century. Since then it has been thoroughly explored and studied and has produced many outstanding monuments of ancient art and architecture that present us with a time capsule of sorts. In this seminar we will study some of these works and explore the perspectives of visual analysis, iconography, as well as various approaches to art-historical interpretation. We will also address the inspiration that Pompeii offered to modern writers, artists, and film-makers. Students will become familiar not only with the site of Pompeii and its environs but also with basic aspects of Greco-Roman antiquity and its reception since the 18th century. Throughout the term students will be encouraged to become more careful and aware readers of scholarly materials. They will learn how to use the library, conduct research and incorporate it into their own work, as well as write coherently about culture, with a focus on art. By the end of the term, students should be able to compose meaningful questions about objects and images and engage with

visual information both orally and in writing. Furthermore, they will have gained experience in undertaking, as well as responding to, peer-review, a process that often strengthens one's writing.

Instructor: Ted Levin
Course Title: The Power of Music
Description: Why is music powerful and what are the sources of its powers? From the Pythagorean "music of the spheres" and Plato's inventory of the ethical attributes of musical scales and modes to Siberian shaman drumming, Sufi "trance music," and contemporary debates about the "weaponizing" of music, the powers attributed to music have inspired a broad range of philosophical speculation, scientific and pseudoscientific analysis, and critical writing. The aim of the course is to illuminate some of the ways in which music's powers have been explained and described in various times, places, and cultures as well as to develop a critical vocabulary for speaking and writing about music from an evidence-based perspective. In short weekly papers, students will critique musical works and performances (both live and recorded) as well as offer their own critical interpretations of selected texts about music. Each class member will develop a longer critical essay or music performance project due at the end of the term that addresses a course-related topic of personal interest. Weekly listening/viewing assignments are drawn from a range of global musical sources.

Instructor: Kathryn Lively
Course Title: Managing Your Emotions From the Outside In
Description: Drawing on insights from sociology to psychotherapy, this is an interdisciplinary course on managing one's emotions. The purpose will be to 1) examine how social norms and cultural expectations tell us we should feel, 2) investigate the consequences of adhering to these norms, and 3) better understand why particular strategies related to mindfulness and therapy work. Students will produce common writing assignments (e.g., experiential essays, critical reflection, library research papers, peer review, etc.) encountered social science classes and develop a stronger appreciation of how emotion operates in both the external and internal world.

Instructor: Yi Lu
Course Title: Misinformation: A Chinese History
Description: Why does misinformation exist and persist, how does it spread and divide, and what can we do to combat them? Treating words such as "information" as concepts with their own history, this course explores the unstable relationship between truth and politics using Chinese history as case study. From Marco Polo's fabled journey in the 13th century to the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic, you will examine techniques for controlling information, including secrecy, censorship, propaganda. From printing press to generative AI, you will also explore the role of technology and

the social publics they have created. As an introduction to historical reading, writing, and research, the course features source analysis, guided research, peer reviews, and draft revisions; by the end, you will not only complete an independent research project, but also acquire critical information literacy for our "post-truth" era.

Instructor: Kristina Lynch
Course Title: Observing: Observing the Physics of Our Natural World
Description: Understanding the natural world around us begins by observing it. Galileo, Newton, Faraday, Curie, Birkeland, Feynman, and Rubin each worked to explain their observations in terms of physical laws, beginning with recording their observations. Writing is a tool for recording and understanding these observations; it is a tool for clarifying thought processes and problem-solving. We will explore examples of observational writing, from early science observations such as Galileo's, to modern travel writing (Jan Morris, Patrick Leigh Fermor) and essay writing (E B White, John McPhee). We will study the different structures writers use to organize their observations on the page into a coherent logical order, and to organize their thoughts for problem-solving. In writing, we will explore the distinctions between writing what you see, and what you think you see; we will use writing to make, record, and interpret observations; and, overall, we will use writing to clarify thought processes and problem-solve. Our course design will build toward a long-format essay centered on a half-term long direct observation chosen and made by each student of some physical-world topic. Assignments include one shorter-format essay and a second, longer paper with presentation; both will be initiated with tentative structures and first drafts. The writing process will be iterative, and feedback will be provided via peer review and professor input. Daily and in-class writing exercises will help students develop their science writing, peer-editing, and problem-solving skills.

Instructor: Michael McGillen
Course Title: Literature and Urban Spaces
Description: The representation of city life and urban spaces has been a perennial concern for writers from the nineteenth century to the present. This course will explore how urban spaces are "written" in literature—whether through strategies of mapping that seek to provide order or as labyrinths to be navigated by walking. If in the modern world the city serves as a social laboratory, literature turns to multiperspectival narration to represent mass culture, the anonymity of the individual in the crowd, and the emergence of new forms of identity. The fragmentary nature of city life also gives rise to new literary forms such as aphoristic writing, sketches, and other "short forms" that reflect the prevailing modes of perception of the city dweller. Exploring how literature configures urban space in the nineteenth-century industrial age, in the metropolis of modernism, and in the post-colonial cities of a globalized world, the course will reflect on the city as a space for new gender roles and a

plurality of cultures, but also as a site of anonymity, placelessness, and alienation. Readings include works by Dickens, Balzac, Poe, Baudelaire, Rilke, Kracauer, Woolf, Benjamin, Joyce, Baum, Barnes, Novo, Mehta, and El Said.

Instructor: Paul Meaney
Course Title: Analyzing Medical Imaging: Developments and Controversies
Description: Medical imaging has evolved significantly over the last 100 years and has transformed modern medical practice. Today, very few clinical decisions are made without relying on information obtained with contemporary imaging modalities. The future of medical imaging may be even more promising. New technologies are being developed to observe the structural, functional, and molecular characteristics of tissues at ever-finer spatial scales. In this first-year seminar, we will write as a way to explore the use of imaging to screen for disease. We will also explore the costs to the health care system of routine application of imaging technology and the benefits of the information provided by medical imaging. Students will be required to read, present, and discuss materials in class and write papers analyzing the development, uses, and benefits of medical imaging. The papers will progress incrementally in complexity from a short paper to a research paper.

Instructor: Sandra Mefoude Obiono
Course Title: Medicine and Power in Colonial Francophone Africa & Islands
Description: The history of health and healing in Francophone Africa and the islands is plagued/crossed with stories of trypanosomes, moral decay, witch doctors, medical philanthropy, etc. Why does this history occupy such a central role in our understanding of Africa's pasts, and how does inform us about colonial medical encounters and today's relationships with Western medicine from a global perspective? While researchers have developed a savant literature on the topic, writers, filmmakers and other artists have revisited some major events and figures, responding back to empire with satire and raw honesty. This course allows for the exploration of that literature as both a source of knowledge about medicine and as a catalyst for reflection about medical (mal)practices, "witchcraft", politics and power during colonial times. As the course engages with the Medical Humanities, it also seeks to bring students to contemplate how we communicate about foreign cultures, spaces, and the perception of Africa and the islands – at large – as diseased places or mere paradises. The assignments will consist of written and oral presentation of arguments on topics including colonial medicine politics, missionary medicine, medical blunders, Indigenous healing traditions… 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. We will also hold a workshop on finding resources and writing. All sources are in English.

Instructor: Eric Miller
Course Title: Franz Kafka: Parable and Paradox
Description: Franz Kafka (1883-1924) wrote parables of the paradoxes, of the absurdity, of modern existence and consciousness. His stories and novels both depict and enact our most urgent questions, our deepest fears, our inchoate hopes. Kafka is arguably the greatest writer of the 20th century, and he is certainly its most influential, but was almost completely unknown to the general public until a good quarter century after his death, and first became widely known, not in his native German, but in English translations. In this course we will read two of Kafka's three novels, as well as a broad selection of his shorter works. All the readings will be accompanied by handouts, mainly in the form of "Questions for Further Thought", whose purpose is to stimulate analysis and discussion, and to help students become active participants in the process of interpreting texts. The fundamental format for the class meetings is that of seminar discussions. Important material concerning historical and biographical background, as well as particular schools of interpretation, will be introduced in the handouts and woven into the class discussion in the form of mini-lectures, as and when the need arises. The aim of the readings, of the supporting materials, and especially of the seminar discussions is for students to hone their abilities to think clearly, critically, creatively, and bravely about the goals we have, the assumptions we make or fail to make, the traps we fall into, the lessons we can learn, when we engage with and try to make sense of very difficult literary works.

Instructor: Doug Moody
Course Title: Transforming Public Space: Mural Art in Mexico and the United States
Description: Since the early twentieth century, mural art in urban landscapes and institutional spaces in Mexico and the United States have been the sites of extraordinary creativity and intense controversy. These are the concrete canvases where stories are told, identities are asserted, and communities are imagined. This course begins with a focus on the work of José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros, who began their careers in Mexico, but who also produced significant and highly politicized art in the US. We will analyze many reproductions of Rivera's and Orozco's art and view documentaries and feature films that illustrate aspects of their lives. We will study how their work has influenced later generations of Latinx mural and graffiti artists in the United States. Throughout the term, we will consider many issues related to the arts, race, revolution, power, and oppression, and explore how these and other societal themes are presented in the work of Orozco,

Rivera, Siqueiros, and other artists, both Mexican and American. This is a writing intensive class, and you will research and write about various artistic and social movements of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in Mexico and the United States. The ultimate goal of the course is to work together as a collective group of scholars and to produce critical thinking, significant research practice, and writing assignments that demonstrate some of your most sophisticated academic work to date.

Instructor: Carey Nadell
Course Title: Politicized Topics in Biology
Description: This course will explore the fact and fiction underlying politically contentious topics that have biology at their core. The majority of the course will consist of written and oral discussion of topics including climate change, genetic engineering, vaccine policy, and antibiotic resistance mitigation. One short essay (1000 words) will be assigned for each of these topics, and feedback will be provided through peer review and professor input. Students will also compose a final 2000-word essay on a topic of their choice.

Instructor: Kristin O'Rourke
Course Title: Mythology and Art
Description: This writing course will examine mythology and its representation in major works of literature and art from the ancient world to the contemporary. We will focus on myths from antiquity (Greece, Rome, Assyria), reading primary texts in translation as well as contemporary writings, and look closely at how these gods and goddesses, mortals and heroes are represented visually in different media and over time. We will be particularly concerned with what literary descriptions and visual imagery of human foibles, extreme emotion, gender and social roles, and social behaviors can tell us about our own historical moment. We will divide the course into sections, such as: religious and reverential treatment of myth in the ancient world, the humanism of the Renaissance, the satirical and critical versions of the 19th century, the postmodern engagement of the 21st c. We will explore history, politics, and gender as well as learn about various art media, including sculpture, painting, and prints. The class would approach the material and issues through a series of case studies, class discussion, and writing assignments. We will make use of the Hood Museum collection. The class will include a final presentation and research project.

Instructor: Reiko Ohnuma
Course Title: The Struggle For Liberation: Women, Monasticism, and Buddhism
Description: Within the context of ancient India, where women's religious roles were defined solely in terms of marriage and motherhood, the Buddhist tradition was revolutionary in allowing women to "go forth from the home to the homeless life"—that is, renounce both marriage and motherhood, shave their heads, take a vow of lifelong celibacy, don androgynous-looking monastic robes, and become fully

ordained nuns, following the Buddhist monastic path and living within a community of like-minded women. Yet in spite of this revolutionary move, Buddhism in India was a profoundly patriarchal religious tradition that remained deeply ambivalent about its Order of Nuns—consistently subordinating the nuns to the monks and eventually allowing the nuns' order to die out, while the Order of Monks continued to flourish. As Buddhism spread to other parts of the world, the legacy of this ambivalence toward women leading a monastic life has resulted in Buddhist nuns occupying a wide variety of different statuses—both official and unofficial—throughout different parts of the Buddhist world. This First-year Seminar will examine the relationship between women, monasticism, and Buddhism through an interdisciplinary and transnational perspective. We will begin in ancient India by examining the founding of the Order of Nuns; the monastic lives, spiritual poetry, and struggles of early Buddhist nuns; and the decline and death of the nuns' order in India. Then we'll move on to explore a wide range of topics from throughout the Buddhist world—such as the economic and political power of the nuns' order in parts of East Asia; the death of the nuns' order and the phenomenon of low-status "unofficial" nuns throughout much of Southeast Asia; the difficult lives of novice nuns in Tibet and the Himalayan region; the increasing phenomenon of Western nuns; and the feminist possibilities (or impossibilities) inherent in Buddhist doctrine. The term will conclude with a sustained look at the contemporary global movement to re-establish the valid ordination lineage for nuns throughout the world—a movement in which the voices arguing "for" and "against" are not always what one might presume them to be. Writing assignments include three five-page papers (two subject to revision) and an annotated research bibliography.

Instructor: Joanna Rapf
Course Title: Women and Comedy in Film
Description: This seminar focuses specifically on women in film comedy in the United States, from the early twentieth century to the present day. In exploring this subject, students will be asked to think and write about what cultural factors have led some to argue that women aren't funny, and why the field of comedy has traditionally been dominated by men. We will interrogate Hollywood's hegemony by calling attention to and studying the attitudes women endorse, the roles women play, and the stereotypes they reinforce or challenge. With an emphasis on writing, students in this class will be asked to keep a journal dealing with specific topics each week. There will also be three papers of increasing complexity: a response paper, an argument, and a substantial research paper, the topic of which will be developed with the instructor around the middle of the term. With all three, there will be ample opportunity for revision. Through close "readings" of films, students should not only improve their writing, but also their visual literacy. Our approach encourages a reassessment of f ilm

history and new ways of thinking about the potential women have for influencing society through laughter. A society without laughter is not a free society.

Instructor: Robby Zeinstra
Course Title: Writing History with Non-Human Animals
Description: In 1962, anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss wrote that animals are "bon à penser" or "good to think with." Since then, generations of social scientists have followed Levi-Strauss' guidance to better understand interspecies societies and ecologies. While not entirely evading the humanities, "animal studies" remains in its infancy in the field of history. This course introduces students to history writing which takes seriously the role of non-humans in human lives. With no regional or temporal specificity, this seminar will examine the role of non-human actors in human history. Students will learn to think with animals, and therefore effectively write with animals. Through animals, this seminar repositions humans and their history in an interspecies world. As a writing course, this is not effectively a "history of animals," but rather aims to develop students' historical writing and understanding by expanding actor categories and thinking critically about what is and isn't considered historical evidence, as well as exploring the potentials and limits of interspecies humanities writing. Students are expected to evaluate an interdisciplinary range of animal studies literature, gather and analyze primary and secondary sources, think and write historically, and engage collectively in the production of historical knowledge.