

Spring 2021 Special Topics/Opportunities

Anthropology and Sociology Department

ANTH-251-A The Rise of Cities

Humans relied on hunting and gathering practices for tens of thousands of years before the development of agriculture. Then, in several parts of the world, arose the “Neolithic Revolution,” where plant and animal domestication began. A more reliable, intensifiable food supply meant humans could both stay in one place and create surpluses, giving rise to settled communities and cities. These urban civilizations had larger populations, unique architecture and art, systems of government, recording systems, different social and economic classes, and new divisions of labor. How and why did these changes take place? What was urban life like in the earliest cities across the globe? Archaeological evidence for changes in human economic and social organization will be discussed using case studies of ancient cities from the Near East, Mesoamerica, East Asia, Africa and South America. This course provides context for understanding the rise of urbanism in the past as well as in today's world by exploring processes and worldviews that continue to draw global populations into cities. *No prerequisites. (Possible SS and GN)*

ANTH-251-B Biological Anthropology

What does it mean to be human? Human beings are culture-bearing animals but also biological ones. What effect does the cultural system have on the biological and vice versa? This course deals with this question for the evolution and adaptations of ancient and modern humans. Students in this course explore the theories of human evolution. Thus we will study evolutionary theory and genetics to compare humans with our ancient precursors and our closest non-culture bearing cousins, the Great Apes, investigating the clues to the evolution and the diversity of Homo sapiens. Students will also come to understand variation in modern humans in various climates and regions, and explain how variation in biological form—skin color, body form, eye shape, variation in growth patterns, menarche, disease, sexual behavior, and “race”—is affected by biological and cultural factors. *No prerequisites. (Possible SS and GN)*

SOC-260-A Sociology of Pandemics

The COVID-19 pandemic is the most visible and recent in a string of global health crises that call attention to the vulnerabilities of life in our interconnected world. As international agencies, governments, nonprofit organizations, and individuals all wrestle with questions of how best to plan for, identify, and respond to the threats posed by such global pandemics, sociology offers unique perspectives on their social and cultural dimensions. Drawing on medical sociology and science and technology studies, the Sociology of Pandemics explores how it became necessary to anticipate the emergence of such global crises, how societies assess and cope with danger and disaster, and how pandemics relate to broader questions of health and health equity. *No prerequisites. (Possible SS, DN, and O)*

Art & Art History Department

ART-150-A History of Art I: Ancient to Medieval

This course surveys art & architecture from the Paleolithic and “antiquity” through the Gothic period (approx. 1250 CE). The class includes a variety of works from ancient Mesopotamia and the Near East, the ancient Americas, Egypt, Greece, and Rome as well as those of the Early Christian to Medieval periods of Europe. An interdisciplinary approach will be taken. *3 hours per week plus museum trips. 4 semester hours. (A, H)*

ART-250-A Art of the Ancient Andes

Through the art and architecture of the ancient cultures of the central Andean region of South America, this course considers a variety of artworks—from the earliest mummification to the stonework of the Inka—within the contexts of geography and environment, artistic process, sociopolitical status, ritual and performance, sacred space, and landscapes. Special attention will be given to textile materials and weaving as well as works in regional museum collections. *Open to all students, no pre-requisites required; suitable for first-year students and students new to art history. (A, H)*

ART-250-B/350-B A Visionary Aesthetic: Shamanism & the Art of the Ancient Americas

Did the trance experience and visions of shamans affect how artworks looked? How did ancient American artists solve the visual problem of representing ambiguity, paradox, and flux? This course investigates whether and how shamanic experience influenced the art and cultures of the ancient Americas. Using visual and archaeological evidence, as well as ethnographic accounts and modern artistic renditions of visions, we will consider a variety of artworks from Mesoamerica, Central and South America. *Open to all students, no pre-requisites required; suitable for first-year students and students new to art history. (A, H)*

Biology Department

BIO-150-A /ENV-112-A Climate Change Biology

The climate is changing. Higher average temperatures, increasing weather extremes, and altered patterns of precipitation are already observable, and the forecast isn't good. This course will explore the consequences of climate change for life on Earth, and will emphasize how changes in temperature, atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration, and water availability affect the physiology, behavior, and ecology of organisms, including humans. Students will have the opportunity to consider their obligations in the context of climate change as they learn about solutions to the climate change problem. They will also engage in the scientific process by conducting laboratory and field-based research projects investigating how live organisms respond to changes in climate. *It is intended for non-science majors and satisfies the Scientific inquiry/experimentation requirement (S). 3 hours per week/4 semester hours.*

BIO-350-A Introduction to Freshwater Biology

This lecture/lab combination course will introduce students to lakes, streams, rivers, marshes, bogs and other freshwater habitats and the communities of organisms that inhabit them. Current issues at the intersection of freshwater biology and society will be discussed. Students will have the opportunity to visit a freshwater habitat and will learn techniques used in the evaluation of water quality in freshwater ecosystems. Prerequisites BIO 101 and 102 or permission of the instructor. This course can be used to replace BIO 336 in the marine science minor. Students may not take BIO 336 and this course.

Two field trips to Hunsberger Woods that will last until 5 PM. 4 credits

Chemistry Department

CHEM-340-A Medicinal Chemistry

Medicinal chemistry employs basic principles of organic chemistry, cell biology, biochemistry, and pharmacology to understand how synthetic and naturally occurring biologically active compounds function in living organisms. In turn, discoveries about the mechanism of drug action in an organism are used to design new and improved pharmaceutical agents. This course will provide students with an overview of small-molecule drug discovery, design, and development. Targets for drug discovery will be discussed, as well as considerations of drug optimization with respect to the biological target and drug metabolism. Case studies and student presentations may also include the IND application, human clinical trials, and NDA review process. This course will be of particular interest to those considering a

career in the pharmaceutical industry or medicine. *Prerequisite: CHEM-208 or permission of instructor.. Meets for the first half of the semester. 2 semester hours*

CHEM-340-B Structure and Spectroscopy

A study of the fundamental aspects of the various forms of spectroscopy through the structural examination of a variety of chemical compounds. The course will emphasize major spectroscopic techniques, such as NMR, IR, MS, and UV-vis. In depth analysis of the spectra and their relation to structure determination will be emphasized. *Prerequisite: CHEM-208 or permission of instructor. Meets for the second half of the semester. 2 semester hours.*

East Asian Studies

EAS-299-A/FS-250-A East Asian Film

An introduction to the national cinemas of China, Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea, with emphasis on films that are considered to be particularly influential or significant. The films, ranging from “popular” entertainment to the “avant-garde”—including historical epics, anime, and films centering on martial arts, political and social issues, and relationships—will be analyzed in terms of how they function as machines for the production of social, cultural and political meaning, not only in their specific national contexts, but also with regard to formalistic aspects of cinema. Special attention will be paid to representations of gender and sexuality. Among the films to be studied will be films by Fifth Generation Chinese filmmakers (such as Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige), martial arts films from Hong Kong (with such stars as Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan and Chow Yun-Fat), *anime* and genre films from Japan (including films by Kurosawa Akira and Miyazaki Hayao), and recent films, including *Oldboy*, from the booming South Korean film industry. By the end of the course, students should have a fundamental knowledge of some of the most important directors, movements, and genres of East Asian cinema since World War II, and be prepared to engage in further viewing and study. All films shown with English subtitles. Please note that many films will contain violence and sexual situations. Films will be available streaming or in the cloud. *No prerequisites. This course fulfills the G or GN requirement for the core curriculum. 3 hours lecture per week. 4 semester hours (H, GN)*

Education Department

EDUC-346-A Rethinking College: Ideas, Debates, and Practices in Liberal Education

This course offers the Ursinus community a chance to inquire together into ongoing ideas, debates, and practices in liberal education. In addition to exploring foundational and contemporary theories of liberal education, the course will cover a wide range of current debates and issues related to liberal education, such as diversity & inclusion, budgeting & finances, admission, career and post-graduate preparation, and changing pedagogical practices. Questions this class will explore include: *What makes a liberal education distinct from other forms of higher education? What does it mean to have a questions-based core curriculum? How can colleges balance free speech while also creating an equitable and inclusive environment? How are changing demographics and conditions in the USA and the world affecting policies and practices in colleges like ours?* Guest speakers from across Ursinus will join the class to share insights into the ideas that drive their decision-making. Class members will have an opportunity to pursue more focused study in areas of higher education of particular interest to them. There are no prerequisites for this class, but it is recommended for sophomores and above. The class will also be open to both faculty and staff.

English Department

ENGL-104W-A Television and the Short Story Cycle

In the age of Netflix and binge watching, television's pervasiveness shapes how we understand stories. From the 22-minute sitcom formula of *The Office* to “Golden Age” dramas like *Mad Men* and *The Wire*, TV's episodic structure offers narrative possibilities different from novels or films. Similarly,

short story cycles—such as Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street* and Jennifer Egan's *A Visit from the Goon Squad*—use a collection of short stories to tell a larger narrative, often across a large span of time and multiple character perspectives. This course will discuss television as a cultural and literary text to explore the ways it informs our approach to literature and serial storytelling. We will study both television and short story cycles to explore the relationship between them and the possibilities of episodic narratives. You will engage with these concepts by learning to write original analysis in thesis-driven papers. *Course limited to first- and second-year students. No pre-requisites. 4 credit hours.*

ENGL-209C-A Memoir Writing

Memoir is a form of creative non-fiction: creative because it draws on multiple forms—fiction, poetry, lyric essay, and journalism; nonfiction because it draws on true personal experience. Through topics as varied as waitressing, middle school, jail, junk, losses and gains, mysteries and adventures, this workshop course offers a chance to explore meaning within your personal terrain and shape your voice on paper. You will learn to craft original work rooted in personal experience with attention to the larger world. You will make extensive revisions based on workshop responses from peers and the professor. *No pre-requisites. 4 credit hours. (A)*

ENGL-209P-A Philly Word

Students in Philly Word will chronicle their exposure to Philadelphia's literary culture and articulate its meanings, using fact-based, interpretative, and creative writing forms. As they engage fact-based sources as well as interview subjects, the students will practice creative nonfiction processes for writing about their experiences. They will develop a dialogue about the links between literary culture and community through blogs or vlogs. Readings, writing exercises, short research assignments, and attendance at cultural events will prepare them to create an anthology of lyrical essays. *No pre-requisites. 4 credits/3 hours per week. (A)*

ENGL-250-A The Black Phantasmic

This course traces the phantasm—as in apparition, spirit, ghost, or hallucination—as a recurring figure in literature authored by black writers from Africa and its diasporas. We hone in on the phantasm as a motif that signifies blackness as a condition of being shadowed by death. We also ponder it as a black aestheticization of afterlives that trouble present and future worlds of the living, including hauntings by or reincarnations of the ostensibly buried pasts of racial slavery and colonialism. Though the phantasm is usually a visible but incorporeal being, we also encounter en fleshed specters whose embodiment represents a vexed relationship to existence, to space, and to time, whether past, present, or future. Assigned authors may include Ama Ata Aidoo, Charles Chesnutt, Tananarive Due, Saidiya Hartman, Nalo Hopkinson, Toni Morrison, and Helen Oyeyemi. *Pre-requisite: CIE 100 or permission of the instructor. 4 credit hours. (H)*

ENGL-320-A Shakespeare and Gender

Most Shakespeare plays feature women trying to exercise power in a world run by men. When things go well, we get a comedy and a happy ending. When they don't go well, we get a tragedy. Either way, though, women are always moving across gender boundaries or into non-binary spaces or roles in order to advance a cause. This is a standard Shakespeare course, then, but also a theory-heavy excursion into gender, then and now, with some attention to the interplay of the literary (plays) and the non-literary (medical and legal discourse, popular opinion, and yes, theory, from Butler to Barthes to Ambroise Paré, that famous French barber-chirurgion of the sixteenth century). We will read a mix of comedies and tragedies. Graded material includes response papers, short formal papers, digital collaboration in groups, and a final research project. Counts as Pre-1800 Colloquium. *Prerequisites: ENGL 290W and at least one English course numbered 220-250. 4 credit hours (H)*

ENGL-325-A Literary Revisions

Do writers of the late 20th and early 21st centuries tell stories differently because they have different cultural assumptions from storytellers of the past? Is it even possible to adapt old stories for a modern

audience, without making major changes to the original? Drawing on the work of reception theory and of postcolonial and gender criticism, this course will consider how – and why – contemporary writers retell the stories of the past only to transform them, an examination that will clarify our own cultural imperatives. The course will pair classic texts of earlier centuries with recent rewritings. Possible pairs include Bronte’s Victorian classic *Jane Eyre* and Jean Rhys’s Caribbean rewriting *Wide Sargasso Sea*; Gloria Naylor’s *Mama Day* and its Shakespearian source text *The Tempest*; Virginia Woolf’s Modernist classic *Mrs. Dalloway* and Michael Cunningham’s reconsideration *The Hours*; Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* and one of its many retellings, possibly a youtube series; Angela Carter’s (and Disney’s) rewritings of Grimm’s fairy tales. The course texts will include at least one pair of texts selected by students, and possibly a novel/film combination. Counts as a Post-1800 Colloquium. *Prerequisites: ENGL 290W and at least one English course numbered 220-250. 4 semester hours. (H)*

Environmental Studies Department

ENV-112-A/BIO-150-A Climate Change Biology

The climate is changing. Higher average temperatures, increasing weather extremes, and altered patterns of precipitation are already observable, and the forecast isn’t good. This course will explore the consequences of climate change for life on Earth, and will emphasize how changes in temperature, atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration, and water availability affect the physiology, behavior, and ecology of organisms, including humans. Students will have the opportunity to consider their obligations in the context of climate change as they learn about solutions to the climate change problem. They will also engage in the scientific process by conducting laboratory and field-based research projects investigating how live organisms respond to changes in climate. *It is intended for non-science majors and satisfies the Scientific inquiry/experimentation requirement (S). 3 hours per week/4 semester hours.*

ENV-350-B Fuels and the Environment

A survey and analysis of energy in the context of the fuels that humans use to generate it and the environmental effects of those fuels. This includes current and potential energy sources in the form of fossil, nuclear, and renewable fuels. We will review facets of each, including extraction to storage to transport to energy generation, feasibility, benefits and drawbacks, and effects on ecosystem and public health. Our analyses of these fuels will incorporate knowledge and methods from multiple disciplines. This course counts as an intermediate synthesis with interdisciplinary data analysis and problem-solving for the Environmental Studies major or minor. *Prerequisite: ENV-100 or permission of the instructor. 3 lecture hours and 3 laboratory and/or field hours per week.*

Film Studies

FS-250-A/EAS-299-A East Asian Film

An introduction to the national cinemas of China, Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea, with emphasis on films that are considered to be particularly influential or significant. The films, ranging from “popular” entertainment to the “avant-garde”—including historical epics, anime, and films centering on martial arts, political and social issues, and relationships—will be analyzed in terms of how they function as machines for the production of social, cultural and political meaning, not only in their specific national contexts, but also with regard to formalistic aspects of cinema. Special attention will be paid to representations of gender and sexuality. Among the films to be studied will be films by Fifth Generation Chinese filmmakers (such as Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige), martial arts films from Hong Kong (with such stars as Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan and Chow Yun-Fat), *anime* and genre films from Japan (including films by Kurosawa Akira and Miyazaki Hayao), and recent films, including *Oldboy*, from the booming South Korean film industry. By the end of the course, students should have a fundamental knowledge of some of the most important directors, movements, and genres of East Asian cinema since World War II, and be prepared to engage in further viewing and study. All films shown with English subtitles. Please note that many films will contain violence and sexual situations.

Films will be available streaming or in the cloud. *This course fulfills the G or GN requirement for the core curriculum. No prerequisites. 3 hours lecture per week. 4 semester hours (H, GN)*

FS-253-A/MCS-351-A Hollywood Stardom

This course will examine the role of stars in the history of Hollywood film. We will investigate how film studios went from not publicly naming their performers, to tightly controlling their stars' images and carefully promoting them to moviegoers, to relying on stars to sell movies and thus negotiating hefty paychecks and profit-sharing deals through talent managers. In addition to considering how stars function within the film industry, we will also study celebrity culture more broadly. Why do we care about celebrities, what do they mean to us, and why do so many people despise celebrities who are "famous for being famous"? While our primary focus will be on film stars, we will also consider music and television as star-making platforms.

FS-265-A Documentary Film Ethics

Documentary films purport to represent the real world, but they are also stories told for a purpose. This course will examine documentary film from early film actualities to contemporary reflexive nonfiction films in their historical contexts in order to consider the kinds of ethical questions their directors and producers must ask. The course is divided into three parts, each of which asks a question central to ideas about how we should live together: 1. What is the filmmaker's responsibility to the subject? 2. What is the filmmaker's responsibility to the truth? and 3. What is the filmmaker's responsibility to the audience? *3 hours lecture and a two-hour screening per week. 4 semester hours. (O, H)*

History Department

HIST-350-A From the Barrel of a Gun: Gender, Race, and Power

Of the various technologies of violence that have been employed to do harm (no matter whether for offensive or defensive purposes), firearms have held unique esteem in various societies. Their function in a given culture, the laws and norms that regulate them, and the everyday ideas and beliefs about them all provide insight into constructions of gender and race in ways that illuminate the unique formation and evolution of multiple nation-states. Whether used to settle a land, subdue a perceived enemy, or to defend one's self and one's people from multifaceted forces of tyranny (imagined or real), people have viewed firearms as central in their ability to self-perceive, empower, protect, and oppress. This course will compare the histories of firearms in the United States of America and Southern Africa from moments of colonization through the twentieth century. It will provide students with an opportunity to learn about the development of firearms while devoting specific attention to the ways that various populations have used them to guide constructions of race and gender. Also of significance is how those constructs have been governed by legal statute and authoritarian will. Besides developing an understanding of specific technologies and their varied functions in the distinct societies in focus, we will analyze the obligations of states, as well as the rights and responsibilities of subjects and citizens who are bound to them, in relation to notions about freedom and equality, protection, autonomy, and individual and empowerment.) *No prerequisites, but first-year students need instructor's permission to take 300-level history courses. 3 hours per week. 4 semester hours. (H)*

HIST-450W-A Global Migrations

Why and how have people migrated to different locations throughout history? How did people navigate their experiences, and remember their migration history? How have diaspora communities impacted their new homelands, but also the peoples they left behind? How have the terms 'refugee' and 'migrant' developed historically as political categories? This course will examine these questions and more as we take a deep dive into the topic of migration from a global perspective. Topics include the Atlantic slave trade, Cold War-era movement of peoples, the post-Arab Spring 'migration crisis,' and more. We will explore how cultural, social, diplomatic, religious, racial, and gender histories are interwoven into the study of global migration. *CCAP Prerequisite: HIST-200W and at least one 300-level history course; or permission of the instructor. 3 hours per week. 4 semester hours.*

Interdivisional Studies

IDS-050-A Entrepreneurial Mindset: Idea, Skills & Action for Value Creation

This course is designed to introduce students to the frameworks and methods of entrepreneurial thinking in order to develop an entrepreneurial mindset. Students from all disciplines explore the basic concepts in processes of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurial action. This course will be especially relevant to students planning to enter the BEAR Innovation competition. This course will develop oral and written communication skills with an emphasis on persuasive communication in an academic context. Students concentrate on the entrepreneurial process through experiential learning exercises. A variety of instructional techniques will be used, including group projects and visiting entrepreneurs. The course may include readings, videos, and entrepreneurial enterprise simulations. This course provides the foundation for further project exploration and development in summer work.

IDS-301-A Problem Solving And Analysis with Python

The Python programming language is ubiquitous across engineering, the sciences, and digital humanities, largely because of the low barrier to entry and its extensive community support and development efforts, making it a natural starter language for data processing and automation. As such, this course will serve as an introduction to the Python programming language and its applications, suited for those with no prior programming experience. Students will learn basic programming paradigms in Python, such as variable manipulation, loops, and methods, in the service of myriad interdisciplinary applications in the sciences and digital humanities, including digital audio/image analysis/synthesis, steganography (data hiding), particle simulations of celestial bodies, music analysis, genome similarity measurements, and web scraping / text analysis. The course will culminate in an individual project related to a question of interest to the student.

Mathematics & Computer Science Department

CS-472-A Analyzing And Transforming Digital Music with A Computer

This course will take a broad overview of how to represent, analyze, and morph/transform musical audio with a computer. On the analysis end, students will train a computer to automatically figure out what notes a person is playing, to "tap a virtual foot" to the beat, to discover repeated sections such as verse/chorus, and to identify a song from small clips of audio (the so-called "Shazam algorithm"). On the synthesis/transformation end, students will create programs such as vocoders (e.g. "talking guitars") and autotuners (i.e. "I Am T-Pain"), and they will implement algorithms to automatically time warp and align different versions, or "cover songs," so that they can be compared side by side, even when the timing is different.

The only prerequisites for this course are Math 111 and CS 173 or IDS 301, or the equivalent. This course will consist of numerous programming exercises in the Python language, and there will be no exams.

Media & Communication Studies Department

MCS-275-A UCTV News

Have you ever wanted to launch a weekly news program at a small liberal arts college? This course offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build a news program by gathering, editing, and presenting regularly scheduled newscasts at Ursinus. No pre-requisites. *Four semester hours.*

MCS-275-B From the Stage to the Studio

Let's go to the theater...on your laptop? In this course, you will learn how to film and broadcast live theater and dance performances at Ursinus! No pre-requisites. *Four semester hours.*

MCS-351-A/FS-253-A**Hollywood Stardom**

This course will examine the role of stars in the history of Hollywood film. We will investigate how film studios went from not publicly naming their performers, to tightly controlling their stars' images and carefully promoting them to moviegoers, to relying on stars to sell movies and thus negotiating hefty paychecks and profit-sharing deals through talent managers. In addition to considering how stars function within the film industry, we will also study celebrity culture more broadly. Why do we care about celebrities, what do they mean to us, and why do so many people despise celebrities who are "famous for being famous"? While our primary focus will be on film stars, we will also consider music and television as star-making platforms.

MCS-375-A Political Communication

Why would a politician make a TV ad about her childhood? Can a candidate "win" a debate without making any good arguments? How can *Saturday Night Live* affect an election? What does Donald Trump accomplish with his Twitter feed?

This course is an overview of the field of political communication, including campaign advertising, debates, speeches, and candidates' and officeholders' uses of the news. We'll examine questions like these through a history of presidential elections in the television age, starting with 1952 and continuing to the present. In the latter portion of the course, we will analyze the 2020 campaign, with a particular focus on identifying which rules and norms of American political communication were broken, and why and how that mattered. *Four semester hours.*

MCS-375-B Self-Help & Therapeutic Culture

While we are profoundly social beings, humans – historically and today, in the US and in many other cultures – have valued individualism, especially as it is linked to concepts of freedom and self-determination. As culture's storytelling system, media tell stories about the self, our powers of mind to shape reality, and can-do, plucky persistence. Self-help is a pervasive, multifaceted belief system that people apply to most realms of human experience, from sports to stocks, from birth to death. In this class we will engage self-help historically, theoretically and as a set of embodied practices. Students will undertake applied group research projects, testing the impact of self-help advice on themselves. We will analyze classic bestselling self-help books, contemporary podcasts, and self-care products. We will consider the ways in which this focus on the self is intertwined with late capitalism and how its more simplistic and insidious forms contribute to contemporary social ills, while its more robust and positive forms help people heal and manage precarity. *Four semester hours.*

MCS-375-C/POL-399-A**American Conservatism: From Political Theory to Fox News**

A team-taught, interdisciplinary exploration of American conservatism. How do some of American conservatism's leading intellectuals and activists explain its basis and objectives? What have outside observers and critics had to say about it? And how does it play out on the ground and in the conservative media sphere? We will look at the contested question of what conservatism is, along with particular issues in conservative thought and practice, such as economics, nationalism, race, family, higher education, and the rise of Donald Trump. *Four semester hours.*

MCS-375-D/FS-265-A Documentary Ethics

Documentary films purport to represent the real world, but they are also stories told for a purpose. This course will examine documentary film from early film actualities to contemporary reflexive nonfiction films in their historical contexts in order to consider the kinds of ethical questions their directors and producers must ask. The course is divided into three parts, each of which asks a question central to ideas about how we should live together: 1. What is the filmmaker's responsibility to the subject? 2. What is the filmmaker's responsibility to the truth? and 3. What is the filmmaker's responsibility to the audience? *Three hours lecture and a two-hour screening per week. Four semester hours.* (O, H).

Modern Language Department

Spanish

SPAN-340-A Of Conquistadores and Zombies

What is the meaning of text? According to its etymological origin, the word “text” comes from woven, fabric, and tissue, which provides a broad and complex semantic field for the critical work that implies the very act of reading. Reading a text under an exhaustive gaze means, consequently, understanding and apprehending the multiple warps and wefts that it contains. In this class we will do the task of reading critically, that is to apprehend the significant threads that make possible for a text to acquire all its meanings. This also implies that a “text” does not refer exclusively to the written or literate culture. A text could be a painting, a photograph, a movie, a song, or an advertising poster since any of these objects are embedded in cultural meanings. Thus, supported by critical texts and authors (Michel Foucault, Hayden White, Edmundo O’Gorman, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui or Gayatri Spivak), we will begin by critically reading foundational texts of the Spanish-American culture, such as the fragments of Christopher Columbus’s diary, which will reveal that Columbus never “discovered America” and that this idea rather comes from a peculiar way of writing history. But we will also read selected excerpts from the chronicles of the conquest as well as the chronicles written by indigenous and *mestizo* chroniclers such as Guamán Poma de Ayala and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega in order to understand the different ways in which the “encounter of the Old and the New World” was signified by both Spaniards and indigenous writers. From there, we will explore indigenous texts and paintings from the 18th century; texts written by travelers and by women in the 19th and 20th centuries; crucial texts of the Latin American *vanguardia* that embrace the impact of technology and modernity in both writing and painting. Then, we will arrive at the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st by analyzing testimonies, popular songs, and films such as *zombie* movies to grasp the representations of the violent experience known as the “colonial wound”, which crosses real and symbolic borders in Latin America and the US. Nothing is more urgent in these times than to learn how to read and think critically to dismantle any fallacy that appears disguised as “truth,” and that is the ultimate goal of this course. *4 semester hours.*

Neuroscience

NEUR-350-A/PSYC-475-A Seminar: Biological Bases of Learning

The brain allows organisms to have an incredible capacity to acquire information about the world and to encode, store, and later retrieve that knowledge, but what is the biological basis of learning and memory? How does the brain come to learn whether a stimulus is annoying, rewarding or neutral, and how does remembering how to ride a bicycle differ from remembering scenes from a movie? In this course, students will explore the concept that learning and memory have a *physical* basis that can be observed as biochemical, physiological and/or morphological changes to neural tissue. We will critically read and discuss primary research articles to become familiar with several different types of learning and memory and the experiments that have enabled them to be distinguished. Different cellular and synaptic mechanisms are thought to underlie distinct types of learning and memory. Newly learned information is encoded through changes in the strength of existing neuronal connections or by formation of new connections and/ or elimination of others. We will discuss the molecular and cellular mechanisms that mediate these changes by exploring concepts such as synapse formation, synaptic transmission, synaptic plasticity, neuromodulation and experience-dependent circuit remodeling, among others. With this knowledge, we will discuss how researchers use cutting edge technologies to introduce false memory in animals or enhance learning and memory. Our goal will be to understand the strategies and techniques researchers use to search for the memory trace. *Prerequisites: PSYC-100 and Junior standing. 3 hours per week. 4 semester hours.*

Politics and International Relations Department

POL-299-A Legal Advocacy

The course will focus on developing individual trial advocacy skills. Students will learn how to prepare and present a civil or criminal trial using the American Mock Trial Association case materials. Students will develop courtroom skills and utilize the Rules of Evidence, Rules of Civil/Criminal Procedure, and relevant case law. During the semester, students will learn how to draft and present opening statements, direct and cross examinations, and closing arguments. Students will also learn the procedure for pre-trial motions as well as how to properly raise and respond to objections. No prior experience required.

POL-399-A/MCS-375-C American Conservatism: From Political Theory to Fox News

A team-taught, interdisciplinary exploration of American conservatism. How do some of American conservatism's leading intellectuals and activists explain its basis and objectives? What have outside observers and critics had to say about it? And how does it play out on the ground and in the conservative media sphere? We will look at the contested question of what conservatism is, along with particular issues in conservative thought and practice, such as economics, nationalism, race, family, higher education, and the rise of Donald Trump. *Four semester hours.*

Psychology Department

PSYC-275-A Exploring Autism with Open Minds

Exploring Autism with Open Minds is a discussion-based course exploring the autism spectrum from multiple perspectives. The overall goals of this course are to understand the autism spectrum, to develop a greater appreciation of neurodiversity, and to consider society's obligations to autistic people. *3 hours per week. 4 semester hours.*

PSYC-275-B Psychology of Power and Privilege

Starting from a consideration of power as ability to influence (others, resources, events, etc.) and privilege as unearned advantages resulting from group membership (or assumed group membership), this course draws from developmental, social, and cognitive psychology to examine power and privilege in our own lives and in our society and culture. Power and privilege as related to race, gender, class, ethnicity, and the intersectionality of these areas is considered. In addition to work on several group and individual projects, critical reading and critical thinking of all students is expected in support of a discussion-based format. *Prerequisites: PSYC-100 or permission of instructor. Registration in THEA/GWSS-315-A is required if taken for LINQ credit. 3 hours per week. 4 semester hours. (SS)*

PSYC-275-C Psychology of Trauma, Grief, and Loss

This course explores how loss, grief, and trauma influence psychological development. Topics will include the neurological, cognitive, and behavioral effects on the individual, as well as the larger implications for society. Emphasis will be on awareness and sensitivity with the goal of finding ways to support those affected by traumatic experiences. *3 hours per week. 4 semester hours.*

PSYC-475-A/NEUR-350-A Seminar: Biological Bases of Learning

The brain allows organisms to have an incredible capacity to acquire information about the world and to encode, store, and later retrieve that knowledge, but what is the biological basis of learning and memory? How does the brain come to learn whether a stimulus is annoying, rewarding or neutral, and how does remembering how to ride a bicycle differ from remembering scenes from a movie? In this course, students will explore the concept that learning and memory have a *physical* basis that can be observed as biochemical, physiological and/or morphological changes to neural tissue. We will critically read and discuss primary research articles to become familiar with several different types of learning and memory and the experiments that have enabled them to be distinguished. Different cellular and synaptic mechanisms are thought to underlie distinct types of learning and memory. Newly learned

information is encoded through changes in the strength of existing neuronal connections or by formation of new connections and/ or elimination of others. We will discuss the molecular and cellular mechanisms that mediate these changes by exploring concepts such as synapse formation, synaptic transmission, synaptic plasticity, neuromodulation and experience-dependent circuit remodeling, among others. With this knowledge, we will discuss how researchers use cutting edge technologies to introduce false memory in animals or enhance learning and memory. Our goal will be to understand the strategies and techniques researchers use to search for the memory trace. *Prerequisites: PSYC-100 and Junior standing. 3 hours per week. 4 semester hours.*

Theater and Dance Department

DANC-250-B Intermediate/Advanced African Dance

This intermediate/advanced neo-traditional West African dance course explores the movement, rhythms and cultural context of selected dance traditions from the African Diaspora. The course will provide an active dancing and drumming experience with live African drum accompaniment. In accordance with common West African traditions, students will participate in full community engagement with their classmates and learn the cultural context of each dance and rhythm studied.

DANC-260-A Improvisation: Performance and Composition Techniques

This course is designed to explore the technique of individual and group movement improvisation as a performing art and a compositional tool. Course work will focus on the development of individual expression through structured exercises with influences from a variety of arts disciplines and movements. Students will learn techniques to craft personal movement invention and also practice group improvisational methods for composing moment-to-moment work, all with an ultimate goal of interacting in the present moment with full embodiment and kinesthetic awareness. Course requirement includes weekly readings and writing assignments. This course will also fully explore our current relationship to the digital realm and the expectations that are being placed on movement artists to create through digital means.

DANC-350-A Screendance Seminar

Screendance is at once method of creating composition for the moving image in video work, a practice in video production and editing technology, and an area for theoretical discourse and art criticism. This Screendance Seminar will investigate all three of these areas. Also known as dance for the camera or video dance, screendance has been emerging as an independent art form at the intersection of dance and digital technologies for decades. It is currently growing exponentially during our current times, which have called for adaptations within the field of dance through technological means. Students will view and analyze historical and current examples of screendance and learn to use techniques for compositional framing for the moving image. Students will also experiment with filming and editing technology that is largely available through their own devices to create a final screendance project. This course is not restricted to dancers or dance majors. It will be a beneficial seminar for anyone interested in investigating the intersection of dance, film, digital media, and art practices.

THEA-240-A Theater Production or Design

This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of sound design. The class will focus on creating an environment with sound through the use of Foley, pre-recorded media, and music. Additionally we will explore basic sound technology and tools to create a theatrical sound design. This course is made up of a combination of lectures, class discussions and projects. Class participation is essential to the success of this class. Students will be asked to think critically and express ideas about their work as well as the work of others.

November 16, 2020