

Freshman Seminars

FALL 2013

Sector I - Society

Desire and Demand

Marilynne Diggs-Thompson, House Dean, Riepe College House

Does consumption shape culture or does culture shape consumption? As even the most mundane purchase becomes socially symbolic and culturally meaningful, we can persuasively argue that the concept of "need" has been transformed. Analyzing a variety of physical and virtual consumer venues, the goal of this seminar is to understand and to analyze historical and contemporary issues related to a culture of consumption. We investigate social and political-economic factors that impact when and how people purchase goods and argue that behavior attached to consumption includes a nexus of influences that may change periodically in response to external factors. Readings and research assignments are interdisciplinary and require a critical analysis of global/local linkages. The city of Philadelphia becomes the seminar's laboratory as we ask how have issues of culture, consumption, and global capitalism become intertwined around the world?

Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

ANTH 086 301

Monday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Native People and the Environment

Clark Erickson, Professor of Anthropology

The relationship between the activities of native peoples and the environment is a complex and contentious issue. One perspective argues that native peoples had little impact on the environments because of their low population densities, limited technology, and conservation ethic and worldview. At the other extreme, biodiversity, and Nature itself, is considered the product of a long history of human activities. This seminar will examine the Myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage, the Myth of the Pristine Environment, the alliance between native peoples and Green Politics, and the contribution of native peoples to appropriate technology, sustainable development and conservation of biodiversity.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

ANTH 133 401 LALS 133 401

Tuesday and Thursday | 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Anthropology of Masculinity and the State

Beatrice Jauregui, Andrew W. Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellow, Penn Humanities Forum in Anthropology

This course engages critical masculinity studies through an anthropological lens. In particular, it connects concepts and practices of manhood with politics and statecraft through exploration of the relationships among masculinity, power and violence. We begin with an assumption that masculinities (plural) are culturally and historically imagined and defined. Rather than considering masculinity as simply a way of "being", we approach manhood as modes of "doing", that are mutable, negotiable and often quite fragile. Examining masculinity as a culturally inflected process, as life experience and expectation, and as routinized practice allows us to explore its relationship with politics and governance in new ways that compel going beyond simple truisms like "it's a man's world". In addition to ethnographic and analytical texts, we will also discuss representations of masculinity in film, including popular fiction, as well as documentary and ethnographic films. Our goal will be to deconstruct common ideas about manhood and to develop anthropological concepts of masculinity and gender more broadly in relation to contemporary politics.

ANTH 165 401 GSWS 165 401
Monday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Euro zone crisis – The EU in a Currency War for Survival?

Susanne Shields, *Lauder Institute*, Senior Lecturer

"Let me put it simply... there may be a contradiction between the interests of the financial world and the interests of the political world.... We cannot keep constantly explaining to our voters and our citizens why the taxpayer should bear the cost of certain risks and not those people who have earned a lot of money from taking those risks."

Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, at the G20 Summit, November 2010

In January 1999, a single monetary system united Germany, a core nation, with 10 other European states. Amidst the optimism of the euro's first days, most observers forecast that Europe would progress toward an ever closer union. Indeed, in the ensuing decade, the European Union became the world's largest trading area, the euro area expanded to include 17 member states, and the Lisbon Treaty enhanced the efficiency and democratic legitimacy of the Union. In 2009, Greece's debt crisis exposed deep rifts within the European Union and developed into a euro zone crisis – arguably the most difficult test Europe has faced in the past 60 years. Does the EU have what it takes to emerge from the sovereign debt crisis? Will the European nations find a collective constructive solution that will lead to a fiscal union that implies further integration?

At a time when Germany is increasingly expected to provide leadership to prevent the collapse of the EU, the goal of this seminar is to explore how and why the euro zone has arrived at the situation in which it now finds itself, and to consider how major European euro and non-euro members see the consequences of the crisis for their own role in the EU and what role the United States has to play in the future of the euro zone. Two major issues, the complexity of decision-making within the EU and the challenges to forming a European identity, further compound the issue. Studying different perspectives, the goal is to stimulate thinking about if and how different national identities of European member states and varying political, economic, and cultural climates still pose major obstacles to potential solutions to the crisis.

GRMN 027 301
Tuesday and Thursday | 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Risky Business

J. Sanford Schwartz, *Professor of Medicine, Health Management & Economics*

This freshman seminar on medical decision-making will focus on personal and public medical and health decisions - how we make them and how they can be improved. While in theory medical decisions are in large part both informed and constrained by scientific evidence, in reality they are much more complex. Drawing upon a range of information sources including textbooks, original research and popular media, the seminar will introduce students to the challenges of making personal and public (i.e., policy) decisions under conditions of inherent uncertainty and

resources constraints and how research and scholarship can inform and improve decision-making processes and decisions. Using a variety of highly engaging approaches (in-class discussions, examination of primary research, popular media, simple experiments, expert panel debates) this highly interactive seminar will provide students a strong introductory foundation to medical decision-making specifically and, by extension, to decision making under conditions of uncertainty more generally. The seminar will take a multi-disciplinary perspective, drawing upon knowledge developed from psychology, sociology, economics, insurance and risk management, statistical inference, neuroscience, operations research, communications, law, ethics and political science.

HSOC 032 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Autism Epidemic

David Mandell, *Assistant Professor, Psychiatry and Pediatrics, School of Medicine*

The CDC estimates that 1 in 150 children have autism. Three decades ago, this number was 1 in 5,000. The communities in which these children are identified in ever increasing numbers are ill prepared to meet their needs. Scientists have struggled to understand the causes of this disorder, its treatment, and why it appears to be rapidly increasing. Families, policy makers, schools and the healthcare system have argued bitterly in the press and in the courts about the best way to care for these children and the best ways to pay for this care. In this class, we will use autism as a case study to understand how psychiatric and developmental disorders of childhood come to be defined over time, their biological and environmental causes identified, and treatments developed. We will also discuss the identification and care of these children in the broader context of the American education and healthcare systems.

HSOC 052 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Medical Missionaries and Partners

Kent Bream, *Assistant Professor of Clinical Family Medicine and Community Health*

Global health is an increasingly popular goal for many modern leaders. Yet critics see evidence of a new imperialism in various aid programs. We will examine the evolution over time and place of programs designed to improve the health of underserved populations. Traditionally categorized as public health programs or efforts to achieve a just society, these programs often produce results that are inconsistent with these goals. We will examine the benefits and risks of past programs and conceptualize future partnerships on both a local and global stage. Students should expect to question broadly held beliefs about the common good and service. Ultimately we will examine the concept of partnership and the notion of community health, in which ownership, control, and goals are shared between outside expert and inside community member.

HSOC 059 301

Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Ethics

Milton W. Meyer, *Lecturer in Philosophy*

Three sorts of questions belong to the philosophical study of ethics:

- (a) Practical ethics discusses specific moral problems, often those we find most contested (e.g., abortion, euthanasia, killing noncombatants in war).
- (b) Ethical theory tries to develop systematic answers to moral problems, often by looking for general principles that explain moral judgments and rules (e.g., consequentialism, contractarianism).

(c) Meta-ethics investigates questions about the nature of moral theories and their subject matter (e.g., are they subjective or objective, relative or non-relative?).

We will rigorously investigate all three of these types of questions. A large part of the course will be focused on two highly contentious moral problems, abortion and killing noncombatants in war.

The central aim of the required readings and discussion is a) to develop each question deeply and sharply enough for us to understand why it has been contentious; b) to see what new evidence could change the nature of the problem; and c) to suggest how to seek that further evidence. We will focus on how to read complex contemporary philosophical prose in order to outline and evaluate the arguments embedded with it. This will provide the basis for writing papers in which you defend a position with evidence and arguments.

These skills are central to the practice of Philosophy. This course does not presuppose that students already have these skills. It is intended to teach them and presupposes a willingness on the part of students to do what is necessary to learn them. What this involves is detailed in a note on Penn in Touch called "Success in the Course". You should read this note before enrolling in the course to understand the commitment this course involves.

Graded work: weekly paragraphs on a topic of your choice; three papers in multiple drafts; take-home final exam; class participation.

PHIL 002 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Plato's Republic

Anne Norton, *Professor of Political Science and Comparative Literature*

Plato's Republic is perhaps the most honored text in the canon of political philosophy. For many people, the Western Tradition begins here. Yet it is also a fascinating, puzzling, perverse, occasionally hilarious and always demanding text that is read well beyond the West. In this seminar, we will plan to read one book a week from this unparalleled text, allowing extra time for the text's capacity to provoke questions and its refusal to be governed or confined.

PSCI 010 301

Tuesday | 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Race, Crime & Punishment

Marie Gottschalk, *Professor of Political Science*

Why are African Americans and some other minority groups disproportionately incarcerated and subjected to penal sanctions? What are the political, social, and economic consequences for individuals, communities, and the wider society of mass incarceration in the United States? What types of reforms of the criminal justice system are desirable and possible?

This freshman seminar analyzes the connection between race, crime, punishment, and politics in the United States. The primary focus is on the role of race in explaining why the country's prison population has exploded since the early 1970s and why the United States today has the highest incarceration rate in the world.

The class will take field trips to a maximum-security jail in Philadelphia and to a state prison in the Philadelphia suburbs.

Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

PSCI 010 401 AFRC 010 401

Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Planning to Be Offshore

Srilata Gangulee, *Assistant Dean for Academic Advising*

In this course we will trace the economic development of India from 1947 to the present. Independent India started out as a centrally planned economy in 1949 but in 1991 decided to reduce its public sector and allow, indeed encourage, foreign investors to come in. The Planning Commission of India still exists but has lost much of its power. Many in the U.S. complain of American jobs draining off to India, call centers in India taking care of American customer complaints, American patient histories being documented in India, etc. At the same time, the U.S. government encourages highly trained Indians to be in the U.S.

Students are expected to write four one-page response papers and one final paper. Twenty percent of the final grade will be based on class participation, 20 percent on the four response papers and 60 percent on the final paper.

SAST 057 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Poverty and Inequality

Kristen Harknett, *Associate Professor of Sociology*

In this seminar, we will focus on inequality in the distribution of resources in the U.S. population. We start by examining economic deprivation, addressing questions such as: How is poverty measured in the U.S. and elsewhere? What causes poverty? What are the set of anti-poverty policy approaches that have been tried, and how effective have they been? We then focus on four domains related to economic deprivation: (1) low-wage labor markets, (2) health inequalities, (3) inequalities in educational systems and outcomes, and (4) parenting and family structure. To encourage active engagement with course material, students will be required to complete short written assignments most weeks related to the assigned readings. Students will also be required to write a policy paper related to course topics.

Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

SOCI 041 301

Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Diversity, Technology and the Penn Experience

Janice Curington, *Assistant Dean for Academic Advising*

Penn is diverse in many ways. Let us explore this diversity together and understand its subtleties. How has the word "diversity" evolved over the years? Why is it (at times) such a loaded concept? When, where and how does diversity change within various contexts? What does the concept mean in a university context? How might it change in the future? We will explore different constructions of diversity at Penn. Have new technologies changed the ways in which we perceive culture, communicate and share ideas? Increasingly, we construct notions of ourselves and of others using video and social media in addition to personal experiences. How do such technologies define who we are, and the boundaries we draw to define "us" and "them"? Do sub-cultures thrive now in new ways? How does each student's journey to Penn bring in new perspectives on the university?

Reflections on personal experiences in the context of theories (cultural capital, social capital) will be a core part of this seminar. Readings and research assignments are interdisciplinary and will require critical analysis of both classic and contemporary perspectives. In addition to other assignments, small weekly response papers are due before each class meeting to encourage engaged discussions.

Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

SOCI 041 302

Monday and Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Sector II - History & Tradition

From Alchemy to Nanoscience: A History of Chemistry

Jeffrey Winkler, *Professor of Chemistry*

The imperative to transform matter finds its roots in alchemy and the search for the Philosopher's Stone, which was thought to contain the secret of turning base metals into gold and also the secret of immortality. We will examine the evolution of the way in which people have thought about matter and its transformations, from the manufacture of explosives to dyestuffs to pharmaceuticals and perfumes. We will do some simple experiments that demonstrate some of these principles. We will follow the development of the chemical sciences from the works of early alchemists to Renaissance (Newton and Boyle) and modern thinkers (Priestley, Lavoisier, Dalton, Mendeleev and others). This class, which is designed for non-science as well as potential science majors, will involve discussions on readings, as well as field trips to some Philadelphia locations that are notable in the history of chemistry.

CHEM 025 301

Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Africa in World History

Lee Cassanelli, *Associate Professor of History*

This seminar examines Africa's connections—economic, political, intellectual and cultural—with the wider world from ancient times to the 21st century, drawing on a diverse sample of historical sources. It also explores Africa's place in the imaginations of outsiders—from ancient Greeks to modern-day development 'experts.' Whether you know a lot or almost nothing about the continent, the course will get you to rethink your stereotypes and to question your assumptions about the importance of Africa in world history.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

HIST 106 301

Monday and Wednesday | 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Latin American Perspectives on the Drug War

Ann Farnsworth-Alvear, *Associate Professor of History*

A set of former defense ministers and ex-presidents, including Eduardo Santos and Rafael Pardo in Colombia, Fernando Cardoso in Brazil, and Felipe Calderón in Mexico, as well as sitting presidents Rafael Correa (Ecuador) and Evo Morales (Bolivia), are forcibly expressing a Latin American perspective on the "Drug War." This seminar provides extensive background to current discussions of the commodity circuits of both coca leaf and cocaine, through readings that combine ethnobotany, anthropology, and the history of the Cold War. Comparative readings move from Freud and Halsted to the corporate history of Coca-Cola to current European approaches that center on harm reduction. Seminar participants will gain a sense of the deep-rooted traditions that shape indigenous communities' ability to make political claims about coca leaf while also reading about a contemporary world shaped by violence, illegal trafficking, money laundering, and the financial diversification of trafficking organizations that are, at the same time, terrorist organizations.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

HIST 106 401 LALS 107 401

Tuesday | 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Introduction to Christianity**E. Ann Matter**, *Professor of Religious Studies*

A survey of the classical Christian Traditions (Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, Protestant groups). The basic perspective is phenomenological, but historical and folkloric considerations are also raised. Topics include the symbols of Christian faiths, perspectives on human nature, and views of evil.

RELS 133 301

Monday and Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Sector III - Arts & Letters**August Wilson & Beyond: African American Theatre in Community Context****Herman Beavers**, *Associate Professor of English*

August Wilson built his entire career as a playwright around plays set in Pittsburgh's Hill District. In so doing, he created an entire universe of traumas and triumphs through characters that are both resonant and eloquent. In this freshman seminar, students will read August Wilson's *20th Century Cycle* along with the works of current playwrights who have been influenced by Wilson (such as Tarell Alvin McCraney and Suzan Lori-Parks), plus supporting material on African American theatre, theatre-based community partnerships, and West Philadelphia history. The readings will form the basis of conversations with West Philadelphia residents about their experiences living in the neighborhood. Working collaboratively, students will set out to create a new play inspired by the readings and these conversations. The class will present a draft of the piece at an end-of-semester gathering with community members. Students do not need to have a theatre background prior to this course to register. [See video description](#).

Offered in conjunction with Penn's [Art and Culture Initiative](#).

Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

AFRC 017 402 ENGL 016 402

Monday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

ARTS@Penn: The Afterlife of Things: Art, Objects, and Collecting in the Museums of Philadelphia**Robert Ousterhout**, *Professor of History of Art*

Starting with the Penn Museum and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the seminar will visit major collections of Philadelphia, both to examine the works of art and artifacts (on display and in storage) and to meet with directors, curators, keepers, and collectors. Most meetings will take place in the museums, not in the classroom. While the seminar will provide an overview of the history of art, our discussions on site will focus on changing aesthetics and collecting practices, aspects of display and contextualization, the institution of the museum, thing theory, and the blurred boundaries between ethnography, archaeology, and art history. Students will be expected to participate actively in the discussions and to prepare two written essays (one submitted at midterm, one presented orally at the end of term). [See video description](#).

Offered in conjunction with Penn's [Art and Culture Initiative](#).

ARTH 100 301

Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Spiegel Freshman Seminar in Contemporary Art: Latin American Art at the Venice Biennale

Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw, Associate Professor of History of Art

This course will introduce students to the study of the history of Latin American art by focusing on current trends. Students will travel to Venice, Italy over Fall Break (October 10-13, 2013) to attend the International Biennale. Students will be assigned to research the various Latin American country pavilions and individual artists represented at the exhibition.

No previous knowledge of Latin American studies or art history is required. Students may apply by emailing the professor (gshaw@sas.upenn.edu) with a short explanation of their interest in the subject. Applications will be accepted until July 19, 2013. All students must have a valid United States passport (or a foreign passport and green card) that is valid through June of 2014.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

ARTH 100 401 LALS 100 401

Tuesday | 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Modern Sci-Fi Cinema

Christopher Donovan, House Dean, Gregory College House

Science Fiction has been a cinematic genre for as long as there has been cinema—at least since Georges Melies's visionary *Trip to the Moon* in 1902. However, though science fiction films have long been reliable box office earners and cult phenomena, critical acknowledgement and analysis was slow to develop. Still, few genres reflect the sensibility of their age so transparently—if often unconsciously—or provide so many opportunities for filmmakers to simultaneously address social issues and expand the lexicon with new technologies. Given budgetary considerations and the appetite for franchises, science fiction auteurs face a difficult negotiation between artistic expression and lowest common denominator imperatives, the controversy over Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* (1985) being perhaps the most infamous example. Nevertheless, many notable filmmakers have done their most perceptive and influential work in the scifi realm, including Gilliam, Ridley Scott, Steven Spielberg, David Cronenberg, James Cameron and Paul Verhoeven. This course will survey the scope of modern science fiction cinema, beginning with two films that inspired a rare wave of academic discourse, Scott's *Alien* (1979) and *Blade Runner* (1982), which attracted postmodernists, feminists, and film historians interested in how the works both drew from earlier movements (German Expressionism, Noir), and inspired new ones (Cyberpunk). We will look at smaller, more independent-minded projects, such as Michel Gondry's *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004) and Duncan Jones' *Moon* (2009) as well as risky, massively budgeted epics such as Spielberg's *AI: Artificial Intelligence* (2001) and Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010).

CIMS 016 301

Monday and Wednesday | 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Writing About Art

Susan Bee, Lecturer

The seminar will engage critical issues related to visual arts, with a focus on writing about contemporary exhibitions. Most weeks there will be both a writing assignment and suggested reading. Members of the seminar will visit and review Philadelphia area exhibitions, including shows at the Institute for Contemporary Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and local galleries. In the seminar, students will be able to practice different descriptive and critical approaches to writing about art works. We will also focus on editing and the role of the editor in creating the final written work. There will be ample time given to discuss a wide range of contemporary visual art. [See video description.](#)

Offered in conjunction with Penn's [Art and Culture Initiative](#).

ENGL 016 301

Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Medieval Worlds

Emily Steiner, Associate Professor of English

Twenty-first century folk pride ourselves on thinking “globally” and having at their fingertips information about all people, places, and times. How did people before c.1600 imagine the whole world? In this course we read a variety of medieval and early modern texts that try to take the whole world into account. We will trace the geographical and cultural imaginations of early writers across different genres, from maps, to Islamic, Jewish, and Christian travel narratives, such as the voyages of Marco Polo; to fictive ethnography, such as the account of John de Mandeville (one of Christopher Columbus's favorite writers); to monstrous encyclopedias and books of beasts, such as the *Wonders of the East*; to universal chronicles and crusader romances. Assignments will include weekly responses and a travel journal.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

ENGL 016 302

Monday and Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Emily Dickinson At Large

Max Cavitch, Associate Professor of English

America's greatest writer of extremity, Emily Dickinson roamed the universe like a devil hungry for souls—while remaining, for the most part, at home in Amherst, Massachusetts. To this day, the scary magnificence of her achievement is still unsurpassed. Indeed, even some of the most basic questions about her writing (how much of it is poetry?) have never been satisfactorily answered. And we have yet to take the full measure of her uninhibited contact with the sheer power of things: God, nature, time, language, idealism, markets, the unconscious. In this seminar, our intensive focus on Dickinson's writings will be complemented by our research on the world she inhabited, from the most intimate scenes of composition and friendship to the cataclysms, including the Civil War, that shaped the era. We'll also explore the history of her reception and edition up to the present moment, from her own correspondence and early publications to the latest variorum edition, the new web-based archives, the poets she influenced, and the cutting edge of criticism.

ENGL 016 303

Tuesday and Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Introduction to Manuscripts

Peter Stallybrass, Professor of English

Think of a text by any author before the year 800, and you can know that the earliest surviving complete copies of that text don't really survive. We know about these texts because they were copied by medieval scribes, who wrote in scripts and in languages that the original authors of those texts could not have recognized and would not have understood. This course examines manuscript culture, the culture that not only ensured the survival of the literary legacy of the ancient world, but also molded its presentation, and which created extraordinary literary, scientific and artistic achievements of its own. Using the unique resources at Penn and throughout Philadelphia, this course dives into all aspects of the manuscript book, from how manuscripts were produced to how they were consumed, from how systems of writing developed to how modes of reading changed. The course also looks at the impact of both the printing revolution and the digital revolution on the role of the manuscript in scholarship and society. Each student will be assigned a manuscript, and be expected over the course of the semester to develop a script for a video about it. Penn's libraries provide ample and friendly support for research and video-making.

ENGL 016 304

Monday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

An Artist's Perspective on Contemporary Art

Ken Lum, *Professor of Fine Arts*

This course is focused on the field of contemporary art with particular attention paid to the subject position of the artist in relationship to globalization. Following the collapse of modern art (with its identification with categories of autonomy and a universalizing modernity), contemporary art pursues the particularities of lived experiences in all of its contingencies. Driven by the forces of globalization (including worldwide market interest), contemporary art is also challenged by the dynamics of historization. What are credible artistic responses to the dominant narratives of globalization? How can art articulate lived spaces of sociality (involving issues of identity) and struggle? In what ways are viewers implicated in contemporary art today that are in marked contrast to the past? Contemporary art is not yet defined historically. As a result, it remains open in terms of its directions and interpretations. But undefined as contemporary art may be, a useful tool for a better understanding of contemporary art is through a study of its key thematic preoccupations from identity politics to ideas of embodiment or corporeality through time and space.

FNAR 100 301

Tuesday | 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Fantastic Voyage from Homer to Science Fiction

Scott Francis, *Assistant Professor of French Studies*

Tales of voyages to strange lands with strange inhabitants and even stranger customs have been a part of the Western literary tradition from its inception. What connects these tales is that their voyages are not only voyages of discovery, but voyages of self-discovery. By describing the effects these voyages have on the characters who undertake them, and by hinting at comparisons between the lands described in the story and their own society, authors use fantastic voyages as vehicles for incisive commentary on literary, social, political, and scientific issues.

In this course, we will explore the tradition of the fantastic voyage from Homer's *Odyssey*, one of the earliest examples of this type of narrative and a model for countless subsequent voyage narratives, to science fiction, which appropriates this narrative for its own ends. We will determine what the common stylistic elements of voyage narratives are, such as the frame narrative, or story-within-a-story, and what purpose they serve in conveying the tale's messages. We will see how voyagers attempt to understand and interact with the lands and peoples they encounter, and what these attempts tell us about both the voyagers and their newly-discovered counterparts. Finally, we will ask ourselves what real-world issues are commented upon by these narratives, what lessons the narratives have to teach about them, and how they impart these lessons to the reader.

Readings for this course range from classics like the *Odyssey* and *Gulliver's Travels* to predecessors of modern science fiction like Jules Verne and H. G. Wells and seminal works of modern science fiction like Pierre Boulle's *Planet of the Apes*, Karel Čapek's *War with the Newts*, and Stanislaw Lem's *Solaris*. Though this course is primarily dedicated to literature, we will also look at how films like the 1968 adaptation of *Planet of the Apes* and television shows like *Red Dwarf* and *Futurama* draw upon literary or cinematic models for their own purposes.

This course is meant not only for SF fans who would like to become better acquainted with the precursors and classics of the genre, but for all those who wish to learn how great works of fiction, far from being intended solely for entertainment and escapism, attempt to improve upon the real world through the effect they have on the reader.

All readings are in English.

FREN 200 401 COML 200 401

Tuesday and Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Bad Taste

Catriona MacLeod, *Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures*

"Beauty is not a quality inherent in things: it only exists in the mind of the beholder." (David Hume)

"Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier." (Pierre Bourdieu)

"Kitsch causes two tears to flow in quick succession. The first tear says: How nice to see children running on the grass. The second tear says: How nice to be moved, together with all mankind, by children running on the grass! The second tear makes kitsch kitsch." (Milan Kundera)

Most of us can recognize bad taste as soon as we see it: Harlequin romances, Elvis on black velvet, lawn ornaments. But bad taste also has a history, and kitsch has been identified as a peculiarly modern invention related to capitalism and consumerism. Beginning with a discussion of taste in the eighteenth century (Hume, Kant), we will investigate under what conditions good taste can go bad, for example when it is the object of mass reproduction, and, on the other hand, why bad taste in recent times has increasingly been recuperated as an art form. Categories such as the cute, the sentimental, the miniature, kitsch, and camp will be explored. We will also ask what forms of ideological work have been done by this brand of aesthetics, for example in the connection between politics and kitsch, femininity and the low-brow, or camp and queer identity.

GRMN 011 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

In Praise of the Small in Literature and the Arts

Liliane Weissberg, *Professor of German and Comparative Literature*

We can memorize aphorisms and jokes, carry miniature portraits with us, and feel playful in handling small objects. This seminar will ask us to pay attention to smaller texts, art works, and objects that may easily be overlooked. In addition to reading brief texts and looking at images and objects, we will also read texts on the history and theory of short genres and the small.

GRMN 023 401 COML 023 401

Tuesday and Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Sound Art

Emily Dolan, *Associate Professor of Music*

What is sound art? This curious term became popular in the 1990s and has been used often to refer to works of art incorporating sound that are created for galleries (as opposed to pieces intended for concert performance). Some use the term to refer to expanded sculpture: installations like Tim Hawkinson's *Überorgan* or David Byrne's *Playing the Building*. "Sound art" also has a more flexible and ambiguous use, applied to a wide range art involving sound that does not fall under the category of music: soundwalking, environmental and field recording, noise music, sound design, and circuit bending. This course will examine both the recent history of sound art in conversation with local sound artists, while simultaneously delving into its longer history. We will explore various topics including Aeolian harps and the idea of "nature music," the relationship between sound and architecture, Futurism, musical machines and automata, hyperinstruments, ambient music, John Cage, minimalism, and the history of listening. In early October, the class will visit the Museum of Modern Art in New York for a tour of Soundings: A Contemporary Score, the museum's first major sound art exhibit. Student assignments will include contributing to a class blog, writing a final paper, and producing an environmental recording.

[See video description.](#)

Offered in conjunction with Penn's [Art and Culture Initiative](#).

MUSC 016 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Top 89 Classical Hits

Greg DeTurck, *Lecturer in Music*

Over the coming semester, we will listen to and explicate 89 traditionally famous pieces of classical music. As this is an aural analysis class, most of the analysis worked through in class will be solely by ear (no scores, no historical context given, etc...). The primary purpose of our work will be to refine each student's listening abilities so that they may be able to establish formal structure, motivic development, and compositional design of time-tested masterpieces more quickly and accurately. A side bonus from successful completion of this course will be a new understanding and familiarity with dozens of great classical works that have unquestionably passed the test of time. No prerequisites required, save for a set of inquisitive ears. Four small in-class presentations, frequent short writing assignments and in-class quizzes will determine the final grade.

MUSC 016 302

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday | 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Hearing Africa: Old and New Diaspora

Carol Muller, *Professor of Music*

Using live and recorded performance as the starting point, this seminar will examine the relationship between contemporary Africa and its diasporas through musical performance. Students will engage with ideas about the old (as shaped by slavery) and new (shaped by colonialism, globalization, migration) African diasporas by reading current literature, listening to pieces of the recorded archive, hearing from musicians, attending live performances on campus and in the city of Philadelphia, and writing about them. [See video description](#).

Offered in conjunction with Penn's [Art and Culture Initiative](#).

Cross-Cultural Analysis

MUSC 016 401 AFRC 016 401 AFST 016 401 COML 015 401

Tuesday and Thursday | 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Saints and Devils in Russian Literature and Tradition

Julia Verkholtantsev, *Assistant Professor of Slavic Languages & Literatures*

This course is about Russian literature, which is populated with saints and devils, believers and religious rebels, holy men and sinners. In Russia, where people's frame of mind had been formed by a mix of Eastern Orthodox Christianity and earlier pagan beliefs, the quest for faith, spirituality and the meaning of life has invariably been connected with religious matters. How can one find the right path in life? Is humility the way to salvation? Should one live for God or for the people? Does God even exist?

In "Saints and Devils" we will examine Russian literature concerning the holy and the demonic as representations of good and evil, and we will learn about the historic trends that have filled Russia's national character with religious and supernatural spirit. The master of Russian fantastic writing, Nikolai Gogol, will teach us how to triumph over the devil. Following a great storyteller, Nikolai Leskov, we will delve in the spiritual world of the Old Believers—Russia's persecuted religious non-conformists. In Anton Chekhov's and Leo Tolstoy's stories we will contemplate Russia's ambivalent ideal of womanhood: as a poetic Madonna or as a sinful agent of the devil. Immersed in the world of Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, we will follow the characters in their search for truth, belief and love for people. Leo Tolstoy,

who founded his own religion, will teach us his philosophical and moral lessons. Mikhail Bulgakov will tell us his fantastic and devilish story of the Master and Pontius Pilate and we will see for ourselves that "A man will receive his deserts in accordance with his beliefs."

In sum, over the course of this semester we will talk about ancient cultural traditions, remarkable works of art, and the great artists who created them. All readings and films are in English.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

RUSS 213 401 COML 213 401 RELS 218 401

Monday and Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Theatre in Philadelphia

Rose Malague, *Senior Lecturer in Theatre Arts*

This course will investigate the state of the contemporary, non-profit theatre culture of Philadelphia by examining the history, artistic mission, and current production work of selected city theatre companies. This course will also explore the creative process of theatre-making as undertaken by these theatres through the reading of plays being produced by them this fall, through an analysis of the collaborative contribution of the playwright, director, actors, and designers to the creation of a production, and, finally, through attendance at those productions mounted by the theatre companies under investigation. The members of the class will write individual essays responding to these productions, do research and give group presentations on other Philadelphia theatre companies, and participate daily in a spirited dialogue about the vitality, level of artistic accomplishment, and cultural/social value of contemporary theatre in Philadelphia. [See video description](#).

Offered in conjunction with Penn's [Art and Culture Initiative](#).

THAR 076 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Sector IV - Humanities & Social Sciences

Globalization: Causes and Effects

Brian Spooner, *Professor of Anthropology*

Class sessions will be devoted to discussion of the dynamics of globalization with the objective of illuminating the world-historical context of the changes that are happening around us unevenly in different parts of the world today, and developing critical approaches to the available research methodologies and explanatory theories. Weekly readings will be selected from the major researchers in the field, and students will test their ideas in short research projects of their own on questions arising from the discussions. The overall approach will be historical and comparative. Apart from weekly assigned readings and participation in class discussions, requirements for the course include three short research papers. This is an Academically-Based Community Service Course.

ANTH 155 301

Tuesday | 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Health in Urban Communities

Francis E. Johnston, *Emeritus Professor of Anthropology*

This course will introduce students to anthropological approaches to health and to theories of participatory action

research. This combined theoretical perspective will then be put into practice using West Philadelphia community schools as a case study. Students will become involved in design and implementation of health-related projects at an urban elementary or middle school. As one of the course requirements, students will be expected to produce a detailed research proposal for future implementation.

ANTH 312 401 HSOC 321 401 URBS 312 401

Wednesday | 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Villa Gardens and Villa Life: Cultural and Social Transformations

Raffaella Fabiani Giannetto, *Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture*

An examination of the idea of villeggiatura (villa life) and the ideology associated with countryside gardens and plantations. In the literature on villa gardens across the centuries, from ancient Rome to the 20th century, there emerges a recurrent opposition between the country seen as an occasion for self-improvement versus it being an opportunity for self-indulgence, the representation of social status, and at times the display of opulence and political power. The first instance, which has its roots in the Stoic understanding of agricultural labor as a means of purification and moral gratification, is traceable to the times of the early agricultural writers, Cato and Varro, and re-emerges in the classical culture of early Renaissance Florence and the pre-Palladian villa culture of the Veneto to end with its latest occurrence at the time of Jefferson and the so-called gentlemen farmers in colonial America. The second instance, whose earliest example in the West dates to the time of Imperial Rome, resurfaces in Augustan England, and finds its apotheosis with the great mansions built by American industrialists at the turn of the 20th century.

ARCH 103 301

Monday and Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Katharine Hepburn Films

Suhnne Ahn, *House Dean, Harnwell College House*

Ranked by the American Film Institute (AFI) as the “greatest female star in the history of American cinema,” Katharine Hepburn (1907-2003) lived as originally as so many of the heroines she depicted in her movies. This seminar examines a corpus of films and roles that defined the pioneering Hepburn as an actress, a businesswoman, and progressive thinker. This course will also analyze critical and audience reception to gain familiarity with the historical context in which these films premiered throughout the decades. Hepburn’s career will therefore serve as a prism through which students will discuss issues such as the Hollywood studio system, the McCarthy era, the rise of the television industry, the changing role of women in the 20th century, and civil rights in the U.S. Why was Katharine Hepburn considered so unconventional, outspoken, and defiant during her own time? How was she able to ensure her inimitable and enduring legacy? Included in this course will be a field trip to the Katharine Houghton Hepburn Center at Bryn Mawr College in conjunction with activities from Harnwell College House’s ArtsHouse Residential Program.

CIMS 015 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Copyright and Culture

Peter Decherney, *Professor of English and Cinema Studies*

In this course, we will look at the history of copyright law and explore the ways that copyright has both responded to new media and driven art and entertainment. How, for example, are new media (books, photography, recorded music, film, and the internet) defined in relation to existing media? How does the law accommodate shifting ideas and circumstances of authorship? What are the limits of fair use? And how have writers, artists, engineers, and creative industries responded to various changes in copyright law? A major focus of the course will be the lessons of history for the current copyright debates over such issues as file sharing, the public domain, and fair use.

ENGL 015 401 CIMS 015 401 COML 016 401
Tuesday and Thursday | 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Human Nature and History

Michael Zuckerman, *Professor Emeritus of History*

In this seminar, we will take up the topic of human nature as a gambit for establishing common ground and stimulating a deeper intellectual community among incoming University Scholars. Or perhaps we will work the other way round. Perhaps we will draw upon that deeper community as a way of enriching our conversation as we take up the perennially challenging topic of human nature. Either way, we will engage in a wide-ranging reconnaissance of major theories on the topic. We will examine conceptions of humankind drawn from such disciplines as economics, psychology, religion, literature, linguistics, anthropology, and philosophy. Lurking behind all of our endeavor will be questions of time and place, questions, if you will, of history; is human nature best understood as constant or contingent, stable or changeful with time and circumstance? We should have a lot of fun. (Open only to first year students in the University Scholars Program.)

HIST 104 301
Wednesday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Leonardo da Vinci: Writer, Scientist, Artist

Marina Johnston, *Lecturer in a Foreign Language*

Leonardo is one of the most prominent artists of the Italian Renaissance, but art was not his primary interest. This freshman seminar will explore the figure of Leonardo da Vinci as the author of innumerable notebooks on a great variety of subjects, from fiction to painting, from hydraulic and mechanical engineering, to ballistics, to anatomy, and so on. It is through his writings that we can truly learn to know him. We will learn what he ate and what he read; about the many jobs he held, particularly at the Sforza court in Milan; but especially how art and science are inextricably linked in his thought.

ITAL 100 401 COML 107 401
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday | 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Middle East Through Many Lenses

Heather Sharkey, *Associate Professor of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations*

This freshman seminar introduces the contemporary Middle East by drawing upon cutting-edge studies written from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. These include history, political science, and anthropology, as well as studies of mass media, sexuality, religion, urban life, and the environment. We will spend the first few weeks of the semester surveying major trends in modern Middle Eastern history. We will spend subsequent weeks intensively discussing assigned readings along with documentary films that we will watch in class. The semester will leave students with both a foundation in Middle Eastern studies and a sense of current directions in the field.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

NELC 036 401 CIMS 036 401

Monday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Topics in Philosophy I

Kok-Chor Tan, Associate Professor of Philosophy

In this course, we will explore some central philosophical topics and problems through a reading of some of what we may call the "great books". Some of our assigned texts will be standard philosophical writings (i.e., works that are commonly offered in Western Philosophy courses), such as books by Descartes, Hume and Plato. Others are less-standard philosophical texts as such though of course influential works in their own right. These include works like *Gilgamesh*, *The Bhagavad Gita*, and *The Analects*.

PHIL 010 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Beyond Biology: Enhancing the Human Mind through Technology

Gary Purpura, Assistant Dean for Academic Advising

Some people have claimed that the prevalence of various information technologies in modern society is triggering a radical alteration to the structure of the human mind. The development of cognitive-enhancing drugs and of devices that interface with nervous systems to restore cognitive functioning in brain-damaged people provides further evidence to some of the transformative potential of technology on the human mind. In this course, we will examine the philosophical hypothesis that the human mind is a product of the interaction between biology, technology (broadly conceived), and culture. We will consider whether technologies that enable or enhance human mental faculties are best viewed as proper parts of the human mind or instead as merely external aids/tools. We will also consider the moral issues surrounding the use and accessibility of such technologies. The questions that we consider in this course will get to the heart of what it means to possess a human mind and indeed to be a human being.

PHIL 032 302

Monday and Wednesday | 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Introduction to Acting**Marcia Ferguson**, *Senior Lecturer in Theatre Arts*

Rooted in the system devised by Constantin Stanislavsky, this course takes students step by step through the practical work an actor must do to live and behave truthfully on-stage. Beginning with relaxation and physical exercise, interactive games, and ensemble building, students then learn and put into practice basic acting techniques, including sensory work, the principles of action, objectives, given circumstances, etc. The semester culminates in the performance of a scene or scenes, most often from a modern American play. This course strongly stresses a commitment to actor work and responsibility to one's fellow actors. Practical work is supplemented by readings from Stanislavsky and a variety of other acting theorists that may include Uta Hagen, Robert Cohen, Stella Adler, among others. Students are required to submit short essays over the course of the semester in response to the readings and in preparation for their final scene project.

THAR 120 303

Tuesday and Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Sector V - Living World**Lateralization of Sensation and Emotion: Do we really have two brains?****Richard Doty**, *Professor of Otorhinolaryngology, School of Medicine*

It has long been believed that the two sides of our brains interpret the world in different ways. The left hemisphere is commonly viewed as the verbal hemisphere, whereas the right hemisphere is viewed as the spatial or orientation hemisphere. In this class we will explore the history of how such concepts have come about and examine, in both humans and animals, whether and how the two sides of the brain diverge in interpreting sensory information. We will review the classic studies of patients whose connections between the two hemispheres have been cut to control epilepsy seizures that cannot be controlled by medication. We will explore the idea that each hemisphere has a life of its own, looking at such neurological conditions as the "alien hand syndrome." Numerous questions will be posed. For example, do the brains of left handers differ from those of right handers? Can the brain explain such concepts as right = good (e.g., righteousness) and left=bad (e.g., sinister). Do left or right brain lesions outside of the language areas alter the human personality? This seminar should be of particular interest to those students going into psychology or the medical neurosciences.

BIBB 020 301

Thursday | 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Music and the Brain**Michael Kaplan**, *Lecturer in the Biological Basis of Behavior*

Every human culture that has ever been described makes some form of music. The music of different cultures covers a wide range of styles, but also displays fascinating similarities, and a number of features are shared by even the most disparate musical traditions. Within our own culture, music is inescapable-there are very few individuals who do not listen to some form of music every day and far more who listen to music virtually all day long. Appreciation of music comes very early: newborns prefer music to normal speech and mothers all over the world sing to their babies in a fundamentally similar way. And yet, despite this seeming ubiquity, the real origin and purpose of music remains unknown. Music is obviously related to language, but how? Why do so many cultures make music in such fundamentally similar ways? What goes into the formation of music "taste" and preferences? Does music have survival value, or is it merely "auditory cheesecake", a superfluous byproduct of evolution as some critics have maintained? What is the nature of musical ability and how do musicians differ from non-musicians? In this course, we will look for

answers by looking at the brain. Almost 200 years of scientific research into brain mechanisms underlying the production and appreciation of music is beginning to shed light on these and other questions. Although the sciences and the arts are often seen as entirely separate or even in opposition, studying the brain is actually telling us a lot about music, and studying music is telling us just as much about the brain.

BIBB 060 301

Tuesday | 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Sector VI - Physical World

Introduction to Environmental Earth Science

Alain Plante, Associate Professor of Earth and Environmental Science

This seminar is offered by Professor Plante to interested freshmen enrolled in his lecture course, Introduction to Environmental Earth Science. The course as a whole exposes students to the principles that underlie our understanding of how the Earth works. The goal of Earth System Science is to obtain a scientific understanding of the entire Earth system by describing its component parts (lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, biosphere) and their interactions and by describing how they have evolved, how they function, and how they may be expected to respond to human activity. The seminar extends the work of the main course with in-depth discussions of relevant current events and a social media project.

Students must enroll in both the freshman seminar (section 301, below) and each of the following:

ENVS 200.001 | Tuesday and Thursday | 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

ENVS 200.201 | No separate meeting, but registration is required

Quantitative Data Analysis

ENVS 200 301

Monday | 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Honors Physics I: Mechanics and Wave Motion

Eugene Mele, Professor of Physics and Astronomy

This course parallels and extends the content of PHYS 150, at a significantly higher mathematical level. Recommended for well-prepared students in engineering and the physical sciences, and particularly for those planning to major in physics. Classical laws of motion: interaction between particles; conservation laws and symmetry principles; rigid body motion; noninertial reference frames; oscillations.

Students must enroll in both the lecture (PHYS 170.301, shown below) and one of the labs (PHYS 170.302 or PHYS 170.303, below). The lecture meets for a fourth hour on Mondays from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

302 NG 15 T 0300PM-0500PM STAFF 15 OPEN LAB

303 NG 15 R 0600PM-0800PM STAFF 15 OPEN LAB

PHYS 170 301

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday | 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Sector VII - Natural Sciences & Mathematics

Structural Biology and Genomics

Ponzy Lu, *Professor of Chemistry*

Structural biology is the scientific method of describing, predicting and changing the properties of living organisms, including humans, based on "complete" genome chemical structures (sequence) and 3-dimensional structures of cellular components. The intellectual and technical revolutions that occurred during the 20th century made this possible. It is today's approach to understanding biology and solving problems in medicine. We will discuss how macroscopic biological properties, such as reproduction, locomotion and viral infection, are determined by the physics and chemistry of proteins and nucleic acids. Changes in biological function, in hereditary diseases like cystic fibrosis or sickle cell anemia, result from single amino acid changes in individual proteins. Much larger changes in genome and protein structure are often tolerated without consequence. Understanding and exploiting these phenomena at the molecular level is the basis of the technology in the agricultural, energy and drug industries. The broad range of medical, social and political problems associated with the advances will be considered. We will attempt to distinguish real progress from fads and fashion. The weekly reading assignment will be *Science* and the Tuesday *New York Times*. This is a two-semester seminar with 0.5 credit unit each semester of the academic year.

CHEM 022 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Seminars in Mathematics

Proving Things: Analysis

Jerry Kazdan, *Professor of Mathematics*

This course focuses on the creative side of mathematics, with an emphasis on discovery, reasoning, proofs and effective communication, while at the same time studying real and complex numbers, sequences, series, continuity, differentiability and integrability. Small class sizes permit an informal, discussion-type atmosphere, and often the entire class works together on a given problem. Homework is intended to be thought-provoking, rather than skill-sharpening.

MATH 202 301

Tuesday and Thursday | 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.