

Freshman Seminars

SPRING 2013

|

Sector I - Society

Desire and Demand

Marilynne Diggs-Thompson, House Dean, Riepe College House

The goal of this seminar is to understand and to investigate both historical and contemporary issues related to a culture of consumption. What cultural and socio-economic factors have led present day patterns of consumerism? When, why, how did issues of consumer confidence, and measures of consumer spending become critical and integral to the health of global economies? What are some of the characteristics of mass and conspicuous consumption in the Americas and abroad? And, during periods of national and household austerity can and will contemporary patterns of consumption change? Course readings are interdisciplinary anthropological, historical, social, economic and political - and require a critical examination of global/local linkages. Discussions and research assignments incorporate topics such as popular culture, consumer culture, globalization, off-shore production, economics, marketing, consumer finance and the real estate market. In order to better understand the link between consumption and production factors an overarching question is what is the relationship between outsourcing and/or offshore production and modern consumption?

Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

ANTH 086 301

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

Citizenship and the Politics of Belonging

Noah Tamarkin, Andrew W. Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellow, Penn Humanities Forum in Anthropology

What does it mean to be a citizen or to be denied citizenship? What does it mean to belong or to experience exclusion? This course examines these questions through readings that cross national, regional and disciplinary boundaries in order to introduce and critically examine concepts such as nation and transnationalism, indigeneity and autochthony, and migration and diaspora. All of these concepts contribute to the ways in which we understand citizenship and belonging, and citizenship and belonging in turn constitute multiple and sometimes conflicting centers and peripheries. The goal of this course is to historicize, understand, and critically examine the nation-state form and to understand its role in shaping lives as central or peripheral. We pay particular attention to the ways that race, ethnicity, and identity do and do not map onto people and places, and the interrelatedness of "political" and "cultural" bases for the conferral and denial of rights and belonging.

ANTH 145 301

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

Media Activism Studies

Victor Pickard, *Assistant Professor of Communication*

This seminar provides an introduction to the politics and tactics underlying various types of media activism. The class will examine interventions aimed at media representations, labor relations in media production, media policy reform, activists' strategic communications, and "alternative" media making. The course will draw from an overview of the existing scholarship on media activism, as well as close analyses of actual activist practices within both old and new media at local, national, and global levels. We will study how various political groups, past and present, use media to advance their interests and effect social change. Each member of the class will choose one case study of an activist group or campaign to explore throughout the semester.

COMM 112 301

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

Dreams in Jewish Culture and Tradition

Yechiel Schur, *Adjunct Assistant Professor of History*

This Freshman Seminar explores narratives about dreams and their interpretations in the Bible, rabbinic texts, medieval texts (e.g. mystical, philosophical works, stories, etc.) and in the works of modern Jewish writers and artists such as Freud, Kafka, and Chagall. No prior background required.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

HIST 101 401 JWST 103 401 RELS 026 401

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

The Constitution and War

Justin Wert, *Visiting Professor of Political Science*

During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln asked if constitutional government was forever destined to be either too strong for the liberties of its people or too weak to protect itself. Since the terrorist attacks on 9/11, Americans are still again asking this question. Waged both at home and abroad, the "War on Terror" raises some of the oldest and most fundamental questions in the study of American constitutionalism: Who has the constitutional authority to make war? How does the Constitution apply in wartime, if at all? Might war justify "extra-constitutional" action? What is the relationship between international law and the Constitution? These questions have vexed the American polity since its inception. Indeed, the constitutional powers of war and peace have aptly been characterized as "an invitation to struggle." This freshman seminar course will continue this struggle, introducing you to these central questions and debates.

PSCI 010 301

Wednesday | 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Freshmen Speigle Seminar / ICA / Glenn Ligon

Gwendolyn DBois Shaw, *Associate Professor of History of Art*

Over the last three decades, the American artist Glenn Ligon (b. 1960) has explored the more disturbing aspects of history, literature, and contemporary society in his work as a way to interrogate various neglected representational experiences and initiate new ways of seeing that which has often been purposefully occluded. Ligon's art draws on source material as diverse as 19th century advertising images of escaped slaves, the often vulgar racial humor of 1970s comedian Richard Pryor, and the sexually graphic photographs of Robert Mapplethorpe in order to raise

questions about race, gender, and sexuality in both the past and the contemporary moment. In 1998 the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) at Penn opened UnBecoming, an important exhibition of Ligon's early work. In 2011 his work was the subject of a major mid-career retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Between these points lies the mission of this seminar.

This is a follow-up to the Fall freshmen seminar on Ligon for students interested in continuing. During the Spring, with the help and guidance of the staff of the ICA, we will work closely with the institutional archives of UnBecoming to develop a small public exhibition revisiting the show and its importance to the history of the ICA. We will travel together to Brooklyn, New York, to visit with Ligon himself at least twice during the semester. Over the course of the term, you will receive experience in didactic label writing, archival research, curatorial practice, exhibition planning, and other museum fields, all of which will be helpful should you wish to pursue a career in the art world (museums, galleries, auction houses, academic research and education, etc).

Only students enrolled in the Fall 2012 seminar on Ligon's work are eligible to register for the Spring. Enrollment is based on the student's desire and commitment and is at the discretion of the professor. The class will be limited in size.

Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

ARTH 100 401 AFRC 100 401

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

Sector II - History & Tradition

Empires: From Akkad to America

Lauren Ristvet, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Empires have been an enduring phenomenon for more than 4,000 years, from the rise of Akkad in Mesopotamia to the American invasion in Iraq. How and why do empires emerge? How do empires work? Why do empires endure (or collapse)? This class will study the origins, structures and consequences of imperialism, by comparing ancient and modern empires from all over the world. In addition to a study of the political aspects of imperialism, we will analyze the cultural and economic facets of imperialism, particularly acculturation, cultural hybridity and issues of identity. We will analyze a wide-range of data, including art and artifacts from the Penn Museum, administrative and historical records, novels and films. Empires covered may include Egypt, Assyria, Achaemenid Persia, Rome, Han China, Sassanian Persia, the 'Abbasid Caliphate, the Mongols, Mughal India, Mali, Inka, Aztec, Spain, Ottoman, France and America.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

ANTH 103 301

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

Turkey - Past and Present

Laurent Dissard, Andrew W. Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellow, Penn Humanities Forum in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

Come learn about the birth of Christianity, the Ottoman Empire, the Trojan War, and some of the world's earliest villages. This Freshman Seminar will explore both the ancient archaeology and contemporary history of Turkey. Often simplified as a bridge between East and West, we will instead examine the role played by the past in the formation of a modern nation-state. In other words, what is the relationship between the ancient and the present of this Middle Eastern country? Themes such as Turkish nationalism, secularism and Islam, Turkey's ethnic minorities, modernization

and traditions, will guide our lectures, discussions and readings throughout the semester. As we evaluate the impact of history and archaeology on contemporary Turkish culture and identity, students will read across the social sciences, incorporating literature, cinema, music, and food, in order to complement their classroom experience with a lived awareness of the country.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

NELC 020 401 ANTH 020 401

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

Sector III - Arts & Letters

Women and Literature: Contemporary Fiction

Rita Barnard, Professor of English

This course will cover a range of fiction (and a few memoirs) by late 20th-century and contemporary women writers from the U.S., the U.K., Canada, Africa, and the Middle East. We will study two novels each by five highly acclaimed writers. These are likely to include: Toni Morrison (*Song of Solomon and Beloved*), Margaret Atwood (*Tracks and The Round House*), Jeanette Winterson (*Oranges are Not the Only Fruit and A Passion*), Maxine Hong Kingston (*The Woman Warrior and China Men*), Marjane Satrapi (*Persepolis I and II*), Pat Barker (*The Ghost Road and Toby's Room*), Chimanda Ngozie Adichie (*Purple Hibiscus and Half of a Yellow Sun*), and Margaret Atwood (*Oryx and Crake and The Handmaid's Tale*). These works include historical as well as futuristic novels; they deal with various forms of violence and oppression (war, crime, slavery, discrimination, etc.) as well as various forms of resistance and creative self-affirmation. Questions of style and form will also be important in this seminar: we will consider how these writers revise various received traditions and genres (e.g., the Bible, fairy tales, and legends), how they deploy narrative strategies like magical realism, science fiction, and the graphic novel, how they investigate official and unofficial versions of history and dominant and marginalized forms of knowledge. Also important are the politics of textual interpretation; we will therefore study one critical work over the course of the semester to help us come to a broader and more theoretical understanding of our methodologies of reading. This is Rita Felski's sprightly, skeptical, and imaginative book, *Literature After Feminism*. All interested freshmen are welcome in this course, irrespective of gender and possible major: all that is required is a taste for powerful writing and a willingness to get up a little early on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

ENGL 016 401 GSWS 016 401

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

Blood, Sweat & Pasta: Ital-American Representation in American Popular Culture

Frank Pellicone, House Dean, Harrison College House

Popular culture frequently serves a bounteous spread of representations of Italian-Americans to an audience hungering for more. In this course we will explore historic events, social conditions, aesthetic trends, and political motivations behind the proliferation of ruthless gangsters, lovable buffoons, irresistible lovers, and claustrophobic families comprising the pantheon of Italian-Americans images of our shared American consciousness. To understand the rise of these popular stereotypes, and, perhaps, to dismantle them we will focus our discussion on novels by authors such as Pascal D'Angelo (*Son of Italy*), John Fante (*Ask The Dust*); Mario Puzo (*The Fortunate Pilgrim*); Pietro di Donato (*Christ in Concrete*); Jerre Mangione (*Mount Allegro*); Helen Barolini (*Umbertina*), Lisa Scottoline, (*Come Home*), and Francine Prose (*Household Saints*). We will also read Albert Innaurato's comedic play (*Gemini*) and selected poetry of John Ciardi. In addition to literary analysis, we will discuss representation of Italian-Americans in American cinema and television, and films such as *The Godfather*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *Rocky*, *Marty*, *Raging Bull*,

Big Night, and *Radio Days*, along with episodes of television shows such as *The Jersey Shore*, *The Golden Girls*, *The Sopranos*, and *Everybody Loves Raymond*.

ITAL 288 402 CIMS 240 402

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

Music and Bodies

Amy Cimini, *Andrew W. Mellon Post Doctoral Fellow in Music*

How can music affect how we inhabit and understand our bodies and how does that understanding affect how we conduct our social, political and cultural lives? Whether we sing, play, compose, arrange, listen or dance, music can seem to address the very core of our corporeality, and therefore, aspects of our sense of subjectivity, agency and sociality. This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary study of music and culture by exploring debates about music's effect on the mind and body from the early modern period to the present among musicians, composers, listeners, critics and scholars. Topics will include music, healing and medicine, dance, experimental practices, music and the law, cognitive research and theories of embodied performance and listening. This course requires no formal musical training or prior knowledge, and listening assignments will be drawn from a wide range of historical styles and popular genres.

MUSC 016 301

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

Aural Analysis: 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. 4 small in-class presentations, frequent short writing assignments and in-class quizzes will determine the final grade.

MUSC 016 302

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

Sector IV - Humanities & Social Sciences

Music in Urban Spaces

Molly McGlone, *Assistant Dean for Academic Advising*

Music in Urban Spaces explores the ways in which individuals use music in their everyday lives and how music is used to construct larger social and economic networks that we call culture. We will read musicologists, cultural theorists, urban geographers, and sociologists who work to define urban space and the role of music and sound in urban environments. While the readings we do will inform our conversations and the questions we ask, it is within the context of our service to music programs in West Philly schools (one Elementary and one High School), that we will begin to formulate our theories of the contested musical micro-cultures of West Philadelphia. We will first consider what the listening and performing culture was when we were growing up and how, if at all, this music reflected the

local definition of our environment as urban, suburban, or rural. In addition to reading that will help us define the musical genres, styles, and aesthetics of recent urban music, we will teach and learn from West Philly students. We will ask, for example, how does the music the high school students present reflect, reject, or reinforce stereotypes about race, ethnicity, gender, or class? In what ways does the participation of elementary school students in classical music training contribute to or allow for social or economic mobility in urban spaces?

Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

MUSC 018 401 URBS 018 401

Monday | 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 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 032 301

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

Russia and the East

Lisa Yountchi, *Visiting Scholar in Slavic Languages and Literatures*

As 19th century Russian philosopher and poet Soloviev suggests in his *Ex Oriente Lux*, Russia's relationship with the East is a fundamental aspect of Russian national identity. His suggestion is by no means unique. Throughout history, Russian writers sought to understand what it meant to be Russian through Russian's relationship with Eastern peoples, cultures, and literatures. Beginning in the 19th century, as Russian expanded its borders further east, this search became more pressing.

This course examines the important role of the East in Russian literature and nationalism. Focusing specifically on the Caucasus, Central Asia, Iran, and Turkey, this course will analyze how Russian writers connected the East to Russian identity, and how their approaches implicate different artistic periods (Romanticism, Realism, Socialist Realism, Post-Modernism) and different political atmospheres (Tsarist Russia, Soviet Union, Post-Soviet).

Students will also ascertain how Russian literature *on the East* has affected and influenced literature produced *in the East*. In particular, we will analyze how Soviet Central Asian writers, Iranian Socialists, and contemporary Turkish writers were influenced by Russian literature and Soviet ideology. Readings will include works by: Pushkin, Tolstoy, Platonov, Aimatov, Hedayat, Pamuk, and others. All readings will be in English.

Cross-Cultural Analysis

RUSS 222 401 NELC 222 401 COML 217 401

Monday and Wednesday | 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Sector V - Living World

Forensic Neuroscience

Daniel Langleben, *Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Perelman School of Medicine*

Law and judiciary analyzed human behavior long before psychology, psychiatry and neuroscience were scientific disciplines. For example, intent is a prerequisite of criminal responsibility, motive is used to identify likely suspects and mental illness can be a mitigating factor in penalty determination. The recent progress in behavioral neuroscience and the introduction of brain imaging techniques, such as functional and structural Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Positron Emission Tomography, into the discovery, trial and penalty phases of the forensic and legal proceedings, has forced an urgent and ongoing re-evaluation of many aspects of the judicial system, including the role of the jury system itself. The goal of this course is to enable students to understand the present and the potential future role of behavioral neuroscience evidence in the justice system. The introductory part of the course will provide students with an understanding of the behavioral neuroscience constructs and techniques that are critical to law, such as motivation, violence, empathy, deception and morality. Students will then be asked to critically evaluate the use of brain imaging and other quantitative neuroscience techniques as evidence in representative legal cases. In each case, teams of two to three students will be assigned to serve as neuroscience advisors for defense or prosecution and argue the strengths and weaknesses of the neuroscience evidence in the case. Students will be asked to prepare written arguments outlining their neuroscience evidence, present their arguments in class and defend them against the opposing team. Case presentations will be followed by class and instructor comments. Performance evaluation will be based on students' class participation (20%), oral case presentation (40%) and the written term paper (20%) developed from their case presentation. Through this course students will learn the basic concepts in behavioral neuroscience, medical imaging and scientific legal evidence and be able to critically evaluate neuroscience data in forensic and legal settings. This course is open to all undergraduate students and will be of particular interest to students with interest in law, neuroscience, criminology and psychology. Background in science or biology is helpful but is not required.

BIBB 050 301

Tuesday | 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 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 cover a wide range of styles, but also display 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 musical "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 are 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

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

The Superbug Epidemic

Hillary Nelson, Associate Professor of Biochemistry & Biophysics, Perelman School of Medicine

The discovery of penicillin ushered in a new medical era - the antibiotic era - where patients no longer died from simple infections. We are now in a seemingly never-ending cycle of new antibiotics. However, the pipeline for antibiotics has slowed and we are rapidly entering the superbug era. We will use antibiotic resistance as a lens through which to understand the critical role that science plays in public health policy. At the end of the course, students should understand how these science-based public health decisions are made with the help of different stakeholders, which in this case include the government and healthcare system, basic and clinical scientists, the food industry and pharmaceutical companies, doctors and veterinarians, individuals and their communities.

BIOL 008 301

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

Language and Evolution

Charles Yang, Associate Professor of Linguistics

Language is a uniquely human gift. How did this ability evolve? For a trait that inconveniently left no fossils behind, piecing together the puzzle must take indirect routes. This seminar provides a multi-disciplinary approach to this exciting and controversial question. We will discuss the nature of language, whether (and which of) its components can find counterparts in other species, and how to develop an evolutionary argument in a rigorous fashion.

LING 059 301

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

Sector VI - Physical World

Honors Physics II: Electromagnetism and Radiation

Charles Kane, Professor of Physics and Anatomy

This course parallels and extends the content of PHYS 151, at a somewhat higher mathematical level. Recommended for well-prepared students in engineering and the physical sciences, and particularly for those planning to major in physics. Electric and magnetic fields; Coulomb's, Ampere's, and Faraday's laws; special relativity; Maxwell's equations, electromagnetic radiation.

Students must enroll in both the seminar (section 301, shown below) and one of the labs (302 or 303, below). The seminar meets for a fourth hour on:

Mondays from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

PHYS 171.302 (lab) | Tuesday | 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., or

PHYS 171.303 (lab) | Thursday | 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Quantitative Data Analysis

PHYS 171 301

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

Sector VII - Natural Sciences & Mathematics

Structural Biology and Genomics Seminar

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 minute 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 new 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 that continues from fall 2012 with 0.5 credit unit each semester.

CHEM 022 301

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

Vagelos Integrated Program in Energy Research (VIPER) Seminar**Andrew M. Rappe**, *Professor of Chemistry*

This is the first part of a two-semester seminar designed to introduce students to the VIPER program and help them prepare for energy-related research. Research articles on various energy-related topics will be discussed, and students will be guided toward their research topic selection. Library research, presentation of data, basic research methods, research ethics, data analysis, advisor identification, and funding options will also be discussed. Sample energy topics discussed will include: Applications of nanostructured materials in solar cells; Solid oxide fuel cells; Global climate modeling: radiant heat transfer; Nanocrystal-based technologies for energy storage; Photo-bioreactor systems for mass production of micro-algae; Advanced rare earths separations chemistry; Modeling of oxides for solar energy applications; and Electronic transport in carbon nanomaterials.

VIPER 120 301

Wednesday | 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Seminars in Mathematics**Proving Things: Algebra****Andreea Nicoara**, *Assistant 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 arithmetic, algebra, linear algebra, groups, rings and fields. 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 203 001

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